

Youth-adult Partnership Opportunities and Challenges... 1

Youth-adult Partnership Opportunities and Challenges: In Community and Community

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Abstract

The study qualitatively explored youth-adult partnership challenges and opportunities in rural community Arsi, Munesa and organization called Harmee Education for Development Association. United Nation defines youth as that between 15-24. Youth-adult partnerships is commonly referred as a connection in many positive youth development literatures. Positive youth development has five components; these components are Competence, Confidence, Connection (partnership), Character, and Caring. The study focused on the connection component, which is commonly perceived as partnership in many literatures. In this study 46 (34 youth and 12 adults) people were participated. Data was collected through focus group interview, individual interviews and document review. The collected data were transcribed, analyzed and discussed thematically. Data analysis was started right from the beginning of data collection. From the data major four themes were identified. These theme are segregation of youth by parents from adult's world, attitude and perception of youth and adults to one another as an obstacle to work together, the role of adult in creating opportunities for youth adult partnership and the opportunities in community based organization for positive youth development. The study revealed that the existence of negative attitude and wrong perception about youth have been a great obstacle for youth and adults to work together. Young people are protected and segregated from adults world and decision making process in their community.

The study implies for practice and further study of youth-adult partnership in different context and detailed study.

Key words: Youth, Adult, partnership

Chapter One

Introduction

Background

Youth are young people whose age is between 15 -24, however the age range for youth varies from country to country and it depends on the context of the country. African youth charter defines youth as people 15-35 years old (African Union, 2006). This confirms the variation that exists in defining youth age.

The study was conducted in Oromia region, Arsi zone, Munesa Wereda. Munesa Woreda is located at the south West of Addis Ababa, at 270 Km. Munesa Woreda zone is one of the densely populated Woredas of Arsi zone, Oromia region. The Woreda has close to 200,000 people, the majorities are farmers. From the total population less than 15% of it has access for electricity. Despite its closeness to Adama and Assalla town the Woreda's infrastructure is under developed

The youth in the Munesa Woreda have less access for youth services, recreational center, youth development program and other services are not available for the youth people, and even there is a no single youth center in the entire of the Woreda. The Woreda has the potential to avail youth services and to make youth development programs for the youth; however the sector of youth development has been overlooked. The Woreda sport and youth office totally focused on producing athletes, and barely giving attention for other needs of youth. Even though the area

is near to Addis Ababa, the community still maintained its culture and tradition. The area can be categorized under rural.

Young people are the resource that can transform the country if it is equipped with the necessary knowledge and nurtured to grow in to a successful adult. Africa is called a continent of young, because more than one-third of the total population is aged 10 to 24. To use this huge resource there is a need to create a favorable environment for youth to gain the so far experience and to build up on it.

The most Common adult relationships with youth are, arguably, familial relationships and teacher-student relationships (MacIntosh, 2012). One of the successful mechanism through which young people can get a practical and real life experience from adult is through youth-adult partnership. The concept of youth adult partnership is not common in traditional community and developing countries. Youth-adult partnership differs from others type of relationships in its equality and mutuality.

Youth -adult partnership is one component of positive youth development. Positive youth development is a new theoretical approach to maximizing positive developmental outcomes in youth (Duke, 2013). Positive youth development has widely recognized as a good trajectory for youth development. The perspective of positive youth development (PYD) contrasts to previous preventative approaches that focused on the problems or deficits of youth. The positive youth development approach focuses on the potential that all youth possess furthering the focus on understanding, educating and engaging in productive activities rather than correcting, curing or

treating (Armstrong, 2010). This approach has five components that help to better understand its characteristics called five C's that comprise of Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring (Duke, 2013). From this five C's, connection is the one that the study will focus on. In most study they use connection, relation and partnership interchangeably.

Youth-adult partnerships have been promoted as a key strategy to promote positive youth development and community building. However, despite the potential of youth-adult partnership to promote positive youth development, increase civic engagement, and strengthen community settings, the practice remains unfamiliar to many (Zeldin, 2013). This thesis will focus on one component of the positive youth development; connection of youth with adults. This connection between youth and adults is commonly referenced as a youth-adult partnership (YAP) in the youth development literature (Larsen, 2010). The term youth-adult partnership increasingly is being used to define a relationship in which both youth and adults have the potential to contribute to decision making processes, to learn from one another, and to promote change (Dana, 2010).

Youth-adult partnership is an influential developmental relationship because it shifts power in favor of the developing person while continuing to provide the scaffolding, empathy, and open dialogue that allows youth to benefit from the higher degree of control (Sulaiman, 2013). Understanding youth-adult partnerships, youth empowerment, the benefits of planning with youth as partners, and adult leadership styles is beneficial for all adults that work with youth and who work on projects and events aimed at youth (Sulaiman, 2013). The positive values youth gain while being in a youth-adult partnership will in turn affect a community (Larsen, 2010).

In general, the so far studies agree on the potential of youth-adult partnership to help youth navigate in to successful adult stage and prepare them for the real adult's world. Most of the studies also agree that when youth and adult engage in partnership both can benefit from what each uniquely can provide. Therefore, understanding the dynamics of youth adult partnership is helpful to maximize the benefit for both. To engage youth and adults in such relationship it requires getting out of the traditional way of thinking.

Statement of the Problem

There are a number of studies on the area of youth and youth development. These studies are conducted by Ethiopian and foreign scholars. Moges Desta, (2007) and Sisay Worku, (2008) studied adolescent and youth reproductive health. On the area of youth participation, perception of participation and engagement are studied by Abebe Asefa (2011), Mark, (2008) and Maynard (2008). Larsen (2010), Moncheski, (2012), Maynard (2008), Larson (2010), Kochert (2010), Schusler (2007), Hardman (2005), Wong(2008), and Petrokubi (2014) studied youth- adult connection. August,(2011)and Brumbaugh, (2013) studied youth perspective on their empowerment and adults perception on youth leaderships.

Desta Moges (2007) conducted a research on factors leading adolescents to premarital sex practice and the risk of pregnancy. This study indicated the support needed on the areas of adolescent reproductive health and put direction on the necessary support that adolescent girls need to save them from risks. On the same area Sisay Worku (2008) studied factors affecting sexual and reproductive health risk among rural workplace youth. The study suggested the

importance to provide a reproductive health education service and information in youth work place.

Abebe Asefa (2011) researched factors motivating and hindering youth participation in youth development program in Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. The study shows that youth were motivated for participation by four major reasons, the first was meeting personal goal and the second was the need for connection with adult, connection to other youth and followed by family involvement.

Mark Warren (2008) studied the ways in which positive youth development curriculum and strategies inform youth participation in leadership and decision-making, how young people understand their participation as decision-makers and leaders in these strategies. The study concludes that young people are highly interested in contributing to investments in their communities, when there is a connection between the project's vision and their values and vision for community transformation. Maynard (2008) also researched on fostering youth engagement. This study made a distinction between, voice, empowerment, participation and engagement of youth in context of youth-adult partnership to improve youth participation.

(Mutuku, 2011) studied youth perspectives on their empowerments in Kenya, the findings of this study shows different youth groups have divergent need and opinion for their empowerment and the need to consider different youth group for policy development.

Brumbaugh (2013) conducted a research on adult perceptions of youth leadership development.

This study shows the importance of leadership training to youth workers to improve youth-adult partnership and to maintain the partnership.

Larson (2010) conducted a research on connecting youth to high-resource adults. The study suggested the need to improve the skills of people working with youth. Schuler (2007) studied youth-adult partnership in creating positive environmental change. The finding indicates that environmental action plan on the subject that matters youth is important for positive youth development model and to develop the knowledge and improve participation of youth. Petrokubi (2014) and Moncheski (2012) studied youth-adult partnership in a local government youth commission and youth-adult partnerships in the development of youth & adult social capital.

The study conducted by Desta Moges (2007) and Sisay Worku (2008) focuses on the risk factors for youth in relation to sexual and reproductive health. Abebe Asefa, (2011), Mark (2008) and Maynard, (2008) studied the youth participation and engagement. Similarly, Larsen (2010), Moncheski, (2012), Kochert (2010), Schusler (2007), Hardman (2005), Wong (2008), and Petrokubi (2014) studied youth-adult connection and partnership. On the other dimension (Mutuku, 2011) and Brumbaugh, (2013) studied youth empowerment perception and the perspective of adults on youth leadership. In reviewing different literature on areas of youth, there is no enough published study on positive youth development, intended to pave way for youth engagement. The existing study conducted on positive youth development model by itself only focus on factors motivating, hindering and the effectiveness of the model. However, at the same time it is important to study the knowledge of youth-adult partnership. Even though there

are studies on youth-adult partnership, but all of the studies undertaken on youth –adult partnerships only concentrated on those youths already under youth development programs.

In Ethiopia, the practice of youth-adult partnership is not much known, so to facilitate this practice there is need to conduct a research on those youth who have no prior experience in youth-adult partnership and those youth who have engaged in some activities with adults. The other gap that needs to be filled in is that, those studies conducted on youth-adult partnership were studied in other country where the culture, norms, and level of people development are very different from Ethiopian context. The finding of a study conducted by Abebe Asefa (2011) shows youth people were motivated to participate to seek connection with adults and personal benefits. However, there is no study on the area of youth-adult connection at local level. There is a need to update this study to the same topic due to the time gap exist. Again this study also conducted in Addis Abeba, but there is a need to see the perspective of youth in rural areas on their participation and engagement.

The context of the country (culture and norms) and level of people development matters very much on youth- adult partnerships. In Ethiopian context the perspective of youth about their engagement and participation is not much known. There are many studies conducted in western countries regarding youth-adult partnership, however I did not come across studies conducted on youth-adult partnership in Ethiopian context. The majority of the studies on youth areas mentioned above focused on the risk factor and protective, rather than looking at the potential of the youth. The review identified the gaps that exist in youth-adult partnership. For this reason this study focused on opportunities and challenges for youth-adult partnership.

Research questions:-

How culture and context of the community can be a challenge for youth and adults to work together in the community?

How the adult and youth can create opportunities for youth-adult partnership in the community and Community development organization?

Significance of the Study

A varied of positive youth development literature have confirmed that youth-adult relationship or connection immensely contributes for positive development of youth. The research conducted in Addis Ababa on youth development by Abebe Asefa (2011) reveals that young people were attracted to youth development program in seek of connection with adults. This proves that youth greatly value the contribution of youth- adults' partnership for the development of youth. Therefore this study can contribute for making clear the obstacles that needs to be cleared for successful youth-adults partnership. The study reveals the perspective of youth regarding the challenges (which are context specific) while trying to work with adults, which is helpful for practice. The good thing in this research is that it incorporated the perspectives of both youth and adults. Having the perspective of both groups would ease for future facilitation of youth-adult partnership work.

The other contribution is that, the study reveals that both youth and adults understand the importance of working together and what they could benefit if they work together in partnership. It is important for practitioners to know how much youth and adults value working in partnership with each other, so that they can put in practice without trying to introduce the importance of

youth-adults partnership. The contribution of the study goes beyond practice, but it could be a base for policy devising that focus on the potential of youth and improve the participation of youth.

Limitation of the study

This study has a limitation that most of qualitative researches share. The sample of this study was 46 youth and adults which is very small to generalize the findings. The topic of this research by its very nature is a context based, affected by culture, location and other contexts. All of the participants are homogenous culturally; they are from rural Arsi community. I speculate that if the same study would be conducted somewhere in urban and in population with different culture, the findings would be different. The experiences of these participants can not represent the majority of youth and adults. Therefore, the result of the study could not be generalized to all youth.

Scope of the study

The study focused on revealing the challenges and opportunities that youth and adults face while working in partnership. The participants of the study were both those who have prior experience of working with adults in community service and who have not. The study was conducted within one month period of time, January- February 2016.

The study was conducted in Munesa Woreda, in Kersa town and the adjacent kebele called Kersa Anno. The participants of this study were adolescent boys and girls whose age is above 15 and adults. Since big generational gaps could have an impact on the findings, individual that are beyond age 50 were not considered. Only 46 youth and adults were parts of this study.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Though positive youth development is a very young phenomenon, there is ample literature regarding the topic. There are some literatures regarding youth –adult partnership and connection however, these literatures are mostly from Western countries. While doing this literature review, I hardly come across researches conducted on youth-adult partnership and youth development. The same is true for Africa regarding the literature of youth-adult partnership, in my effort to find literature on the youth-adult-partnership, connection and relationship I could not come across literatures on youth –adult partnership done in Africa.

The literature part categorized in to the concept of youth, perspective on youth development, historical development of youth-adult partnership, the benefits of youth-adult partnership for youth, adults and for the wide community, the role of organization and adults to create opportunities for youth-adult partnership, intergenerational challenges for youth-adult partnerships and building blocks for successful youth-adult partnership.

Youth concept

The definition of youth is very challenging to define and what constitutes youth in different society. The concept of youth has been viewed historically in a number of ways, including a state of mind, legal age, developmental stage, or a cultural phenomenon, even status of employment (Staples, 2008). According to UN (United Nation) youth is a young people who fall between ages 15–24. In Malaysia’s youth council defines youth as those aged 15–40 (Ansell, 2005). In African youth charter youth or young people mean every person between the ages of

15 and 35 years (African Union, 2006). Ethiopian national youth policy define youth as a young people who are between age 15-29 (Ethiopian national youth policy, 2004). The definition of youth, child and adolescent is overlapping. Most countries and agencies define the age of youth based on the purpose of the program. However, most countries and agencies agree with the definition of youth used by United Nation.

The new perspective on youth development

Before the emergence of positive youth development, youth were considered as problems to be managed, and this mind-set generated strategies oriented toward intervention after the fact rather than prevention, (Campbell, et al 2013). Prior to this shift, researchers, scholars and practitioners developed youth-serving programs and institutions mainly on a deficit model: They considered high-risk youth behaviors and problems to be the focus of their work (Lerner et al, 2011).

Positive youth development (PYD) is strengths-based approach to working with young people that has roots in positive psychology, developmental psychology, developmental epidemiology, and prevention sciences (Lerner, 2009; Roth & Brooks- Gunn, 2003; Silbereisen & Lerner, 2007, as cited by Rainers, 2011). This perspective encourages adults to go beyond problem prevention and deterrence to support the development of skills and abilities that prepare all youth for healthy, happy, and productive adulthood (Rainers, 2011). The key components of positive youth development are five “Cs” (competence, confidence, caring, connection, and character). Working definition of these concepts capture many of the most positive characteristics of thriving young people and continue to be refined (Gavin, Catalano, &

Markham, 2010, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004; Lerner, 2007; Pittman, Irby, Tolman, Yohalem, & Ferber, 2003; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003, as cited by Rainers, 2011). The view of ecological human development is congruent with the new perspective of youth development.

Bronfenbrenner, (1979) posited the developing person is viewed not merely as a tabula rasa on which the environment makes its impact, but as a growing, dynamic entity that progressively moves into and restructures the milieu in which it resides.

The new vision and vocabulary used to discuss youth development that has emerged across the past 15 years has been associated with the use of several meta indicator of positive youth development, that is, terms that constitute latent constructs that may capture the essence of to-be developed indicators of the numerous mental, behavioral, and social relational elements that could comprise positive youth development (Lerner, et al, 2005). Initially these theoretical latent constructs were first discussed as the four Cs of PYD that is, competence, confidence, connection, and character. However, Eccles and Gootman (2002), Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003a, 2003b), and Lerner (2004) reviewed evidence from research and practice that converges in stressing the use of these Cs and potentially of a fifth C, caring or compassion (Lerner, et al, 2005).

Youth -adult partnership

Connection is one of the components of positive youth development. In youth development literature the connection between youth and adults is commonly referenced as a youth-adult partnership (Larsen, 2010). The phrase youth-adult partnership reflects that strong relationships emanate from reciprocity in leading and learning between youth and adults,

especially when the two parties are engaged as partners in community building or activism (Camino, 2000; Segawa, 1998, cited in Zeldin, 2005).

Connection is manifested through constructive and encouraging relationships with people and institutions such as school, family, and peers. Youth and adult partnerships are often keys to success when planning events for teenagers (Vance, 2007). Establishing and maintaining youth-adult and youth-youth partnerships are critical to developing a supportive atmosphere. This emphasizes the importance of peer and adult partnerships (Vance, 2007).

Youth-adult partnership is distinct from other forms of youth-adult relationships, with four core elements: authentic decision making, natural mentors, reciprocity and community connectedness (Zeldin, 2013). Youth adult relationship has benefits for both adults and to youth. Under certain conditions youth contributions to organization, and communities may promote adult and staff development, in addition to strengthening local institutions, policies and programs (Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Siesma, 2006; Mitra, 2009; Sherrod, Torney-Purta & Flanagan, 2010; Youniss & Levine, 2009; Zeldin, 2004, as cited in Zeldin, (2013)

Historical development of youth –adult partnership

Historically, youth was regarded as a period of storm and stress (Holt, 2008). This tendency to view adolescence as a time of storm and stress was associated with a deficit – reduction approach, whereby researchers examined ways to prevent and or reduce the challenges may encounter. Over the past 15 years a new perspective of adolescent development has emerged; this vision has been labeled as positive youth development (Holt, 2008). Youth concerned organizations, policy and aid organization also aggravated the assumption that focus

on the risky behavior of the youth such as teenage pregnancy, violence, and drug use (Camino, 2000).

UN convention on the right of children for participation state that there is need for participative initiative. Participative initiative characterized by projects, researches, and service initiated by adults in collaboration with children. Even though the work is initiated by adults, it does involve partnership with children and necessitates some sharing of power between adults and children and renegotiation of traditional relationships between them (Lansdowne, 2001). In most of civic and community development arena the participation and the engagements of the young people was very limited. In arenas of civic life, participation on public advisory groups, nonprofit boards, community organizing, neighborhood action groups, nonprofit boards are typically characterized by age segregation. Across developing and industrialized countries, youth are typically not granted admission into the most influential forums of decision making (Sulaiman, 2013). Confronting this status quo, the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child asserts that all young people have the right to express their views freely, be heard in all matters affecting them, and have their views taken seriously in accordance with their age and maturity (Lansdowne, 2001). Second, youth participation is seen as a strategy for youth development and effective citizenry. Age segregation across all arenas of community life has long been identified and questioned (Zeldin, 2013). The National Commission on Resources for Youth (1974) brought this perspective to policy by stating that youth and adults can, indeed should work together on concerns that matter (Zeldin, 2013).

Benefits of youth-adult partnership for youth

Connection established through youth- adult partnership has an enormous benefit and impact on the life of youths. To make the transition into adulthood, young people need and benefit from contact with high-resource adults in their communities (Larson P. J., 2010). The partnership between youth and adult benefits both adult and youth. Both adults and youth become more competent and confident in working for community improvement. Strong intergenerational relation helps to facilitate positive youth development (Zeldin et al, 2005). The contact between youth and adult provide youth with information, socialization, and access to the adult worlds they eventually need to join (Benson, 1997; Eccles &Gootman, 2002, as cited by Larson, 2010).The connections formed through youth adult partnership have been found to translate into opportunities for scholarships, awards, internships, and employment among low income and minority youth (Zeldin, B. D. (2013).

Youth–adult partnership is an influential ‘developmental relationship’ because it shifts power in favor of the developing person while continuing to provide the scaffolding, empathy, and open dialogue that allows youth to benefit from the higher degree of control (Suleiman, 2013). Through contacts with community adults, it is argued, young people gain information about how these diverse worlds function; have experiences playing meaningful social roles, and gain access to future opportunities (Ginwright, Noguera, & Cammarota, 2006). Adults can help prevent youth from engaging in problem behaviors, while concurrently, they can help promote knowledge, competency, and initiative among youth. Organizations, coalitions, and communities also derive benefits when youth and adults work collaboratively toward a common cause, and

society benefits when youth are connected to adults ~Kirchner, O'Donoghue, & McLaughlin, 2002; Scales, 2003; Zeldin, 2004, cited in Zeldin., 2013).

The role youth occupy in their relationship with adults influence them by impacting how they see themselves as an occupant of some role in their relationship and also influence others how they see youth because of the role they occupy. In ecological human development role has special meaning and describe it as a magic word. A role is a set of activities and relations expected of a person occupying a particular position in society and of others in relation to that person. Bronfenbrenner (1979) state that roles have a magic like power to alter how a person treated, how she/he acts, what she does, and thereby even what she thinks and feels. When youth engage in a meaningful role with adults towards solving a community problem, the role they play in community helps to change the attitude of the community about youth. Positive attitudes held by adults toward youth increased as a consequence of youths 'volunteering in community service projects (Calabrese & Schumer, 1986, as cited in Camino, 2000)

Adults provide youth with what has been called bridging social capital; contact with people from circles outside their own who provide access to otherwise inaccessible information, connections, nurture leadership potential and other assets (Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Putnam, 2000, as cited by Larson, 2010, Flage, 2010)

Benefits of youth-adult partnership for adult

Adults can also benefit from meaningful involvement of youth –adult partnership.

Ecological human development theory sees a person as not only influenced, but it exerts the same force on the environment in which he or she lives and also the relation between the person and the environment is reciprocal (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). That means there is reciprocal relationship, flow of experience and benefits to both sides, not only unidirectional.

Adults engaged in youth-adult partnerships begin to perceive young people as legitimate, crucial contributors to organizational decision-making processes, increase commitment and energy related to the organizations they are involved in (Lynette Flage, 2010). Zeldin, McDaniel, Topitzes, & Calvert, (2000) reported that adults involved in partnership with youth feel more effective and confident in working with and relating to youth, and gain an increased understanding of the concerns or needs of youth (Lynette Flage, 2010). Adults and organizations involved in youth-adult partnerships become more connected and responsive to youth in their communities (Zeldin et al., 2000, as cited by Lynette Flage, 2010). Adults who engage in mentoring youth plays a generativist role that help pass on knowledge and wisdom to young people and, in so doing, satisfy their own life-stage need to have a stake in and exert influence in guiding the next generation (Camino, 2000). When adults engage with youth to solve a community problem and when they get close to each other adults start to change their preconceived negative attitude about youth((Camino, 2000, Zeldin, Larson, & O'Connor, 2005)

Impact of youth-adult partnership on community

Today's youth are full of ideas and energy, and often want to make positive changes in their community. Youth are very much aware of the problems that face their communities and will help solve problems if empowered through participation (Rennekamp, 1993; Zeldin, 2000;

Rasmussen, 2003; Brennan, Barnett, & Baugh, 2007, as cited by Lynette Flage, 2010). Youth participation helps build strong communities, building healthy communities contributes to youth development, and adults' negative attitudes about youth can be overcome when adults work with youth to address community concerns (Camino, 2000). Community benefits have been reported when young and older people work collaboratively towards a common cause (e.g. Browne, 2005; Kirchner, O'Donoghue, & McLaughlin, 2002; Zeldin, 2004; Zeldin et al., 2005 as cited by Charlotte. 2011).

Despite the contribution of youth-adult partnership in civic engagement, positive youth development and building healthy community, yet the practice of youth-adult partnership is very limited (Zeldin, Petrokubi, Camino, 2008, Zeldin,Christens,Powers, 2013).

Strong relationships between younger and older adults can also be explicitly orientated towards building community and civil society (Charlotte. 2011).

Intergenerational Challenges for youth-adult partnership

Modern Western society provides few opportunities for youth to interact with adults other than family members (Darling, Hamilton, & Shaver, 2003; Schlegel & Barry, 1991), and reciprocal negative attitudes between youth and adults create barriers to these interactions (Gilliam & Bales, 2001; Zeldin, Camino, & Calvert, 2003, as cited by Larson,2010). Youth are largely isolated from non-family adults spatially, socially, and psychologically in almost all spheres (Larsen, 2010). Substantial obstacles, however, stand in the way of youth's interactions with community adults who can provide them assets. To begin with, the age segregation of society limits the opportunities for youth and adults to interact (Larson P. J., 2010). Adults and

youth often hold ambivalent or negative perceptions of each other, and these perceptions discourage interactions when opportunities are available and reinforce mutual separation (Camino & Zeldin, 2002; Gilliam & Bales, 2001; Jones & Perkins, 2005 as cited by Larson, 2010). When adults and youth make good-faith attempts to work together, problems often arise (Larson P. J., 2010).

Status and power differential between youth and adults create pitfalls to collaborative relationships (Camino, 2000) and Zeldin (2002). Most of the time adults struggle to give up their power to youth because of the traditional orientation (Camino, 2000). As adults typically have greater experience, knowledge, and other forms of power, they often approach these interactions in ways that youth experience as over-controlling, paternalistic, or patronizing (Larson, 2010). This intergenerational obstacle occurs across demographic groups; however, they appear to be particularly significant for low-income youth. In urban areas, residential higher segregation by social class and ethnicity intensifies low-income youth's isolation from high-resource adults (Furstenberg, Cook, Eccles, Elder, & Sameroff, 1999; Jarrett, 2003; Wilson, 1987, cited by Larson, 2010).

Successful youth-adult partnerships face numerous obstacles. How adults view young people's capacities can be a major obstacle to youth empowerment (Scales, Leffert, & Lerner, 1999, p 63, as cited Larsen, 2010). Young people are often mistreated and disrespected simply because they are young and this is reinforced by assumption and attitude that adults are often better than young people (Bell, 2003). Previously held negative beliefs regarding age and lack of experience of youth have challenged youth involvement in communities (Lynette Flage, 2010). If

young people are not viewed as essential contributors of their community because of these misconceptions and stereotypes, the expectations and opportunities are lowered for them by adults (Brennan, Barnett, & Baugh, 2007 as cited by Lynette Flage, 2010). Often infantilize young people treating them like empty vessels to be filled in by the more powerful and knowing adult teachers and huddled to the corner in decision making (Ginwright, Noguera, & Cammarota, 2006, Camino, 2000). To bridge this gap Zeldin, Larson, & O'Connor, (2005) recommend that community programs, including out-of-school and after-school programs for youth, are an important context where this intergenerational isolation can be bridged.

The time when adolescents should be transitioning into mature roles in the lives of their communities, their interactions with adults are often restricted to the school building, which itself is divided by fairly rigid role distinctions between teachers and students (Ginwright, Noguera, & Cammarota, 2006). Though all adults passed through stage of youth, in all culture youth is regarded as a stage of problematic, confusion, challenging for self and for others.

The role of organization in creating an empowering setting for youth

Youth-adult partnership has benefits for organization to widen its impact at multiple level by improving youth engagement in public action, and improving staff capacity (Zeldin, Petrokubi, Camino, 2008, Zeldin, Christens, Powers, 2013). Strong relationships between youth and adult do not emerge spontaneously in youth organizations, but they result, foremost, from the intentionality of adults as they interact with skill and compassion on a day-to-day basis (Zeldin, Larson, & O'Connor, 2005). Many adults are confused as to their proper role to establish a balance relationship with youth and have retreated to the view that power in

relationships is zero-sum, with the consequent belief that adult staff the way” or “give up their power” in order to empower youth and give them a decision making position (Camino, 2000, Zeldin, 2013). In order to this for adult, it is the responsibility of the organization as a whole to help guide adults in locating the appropriate balance in power in their relationships with youth (Zeldin, 2005). The ecological human development theory posited that adults need to balance their power in relationship in favor the developing person (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Organizations need to create a motivating, a comfortable work environment, a partnership culture for youth and considering youth partnership as a core priority, not like side project. The key components of culture of partnership in organization is having partnership value, structure of partnership for balanced power and having public oriented actions that facilitate intergenerational dialogue (Zeldin,S., Petrokubi,J, Camino, L, 2008).

Building Blocks for successful youth-adult partnership

Partnerships with adults and peers should give young people opportunities to work with others in ways that encourage their input and builds upon their strengths while also teaching them new skills (Huebner et al., 2003 , as cited by Vance, 2007). Larson, Walker et al. (2005) contend that adults who facilitate these partnerships should understand youths cultural framework, developmental levels, preferences, and other group and individual factors to help establish connections with youth and facilitate connections between youth((Vance, 2007). Kilroy, Dezan, Riepe, & Ross, (2007) mentioned adults need to be educated about the potentials and process of youth-adult partnerships to maintain their relation.

To maintain youth-adult partnership authentic decision making, natural mentors, reciprocal activity, and community connectedness are the core elements (Zeldin, 2013). Once two persons begin to pay attention to one another's activities, they are more likely to become jointly engaged in those activities. In dyad relationship reciprocity, balance of power, affective relation and giving attention to the other are important (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Camino, (2000), Zeldin, (2005) state that adults should play multiple roles to strengthen youth-adults partnership through playing the role of teaching, coaching and providing youth with clear role.

Objective of the study

The general objective of the study is to understand what opportunities and obstacles exist for youth-adult partnerships in youth and community development organization.

The specific objective:

1. To gate familiar with the nature and experience of youth-adult partnership that might exist at local context
2. To understand the challenges that youth face in their partnership with adults
3. To explore the opportunities of youth-adults partnership that might exist in the community and Community based organizations

Ethical issue

Since I am familiar with local community and the organization there was no need to get a letter from the university. The researcher had tried everything to build trust with the participants of the research. Before proceeding to the interview the researcher had read the consent paper to the participants of the researcher and assured them there would be no harm for being part of this research and gave them a freedom to continue or not to continue at any time during the interview and their identity will never be reported on the research. In this research report the name used in the result section is a pseudo name.

Chapter Three

Research Method

This study aims to explore the opportunities and challenges for youth-adult partnership in community and community based organization. Exploring the experiences of youth and adults will enable me to gain understanding into the individual realities of youth and adults the opportunities they see and the challenges they face in working together as a partners. The research was conducted in kersa, Munesa, Arsi, Oromia region. Kersa is located at south east of Addis Ababa at distance of 270 km. The rationale selecting this community is because of the presence of one community based organization for long time in that area and working in varied community activities with the participation of the community and due to my personal connection to that organization.

Study Design

Youth-adult partnership is a recent research phenomenon in youth development area, understudied; there is no scientific knowledge at local level and in Ethiopian context. Qualitative method has been used to explore the detail youth-adult partnership challenges and opportunities using cross sectional interview. Exploratory case study design was employed. Multiple individuals and groups were interviewed over a short period of time. Data was collected from different sources.

Within the qualitative paradigm it is essential that a philosophical framework is selected to organize and guide fieldwork and interpretation. Establishing a theoretical perspective provides the researcher and audience with clarity and focus for all aspects of the study. A

theoretical perspective should be selected based on the strengths and limitations of the approach and its “fit” with the purpose of the study. Ontologically I believe that reality is subjective and there are multiple realities as it is seen by the participants of the research. For this study constructivism perspective is selected.

Constructivism focuses on the meaning-making activities of individuals. The central question related to constructivism deals with the reported perceptions, “truths”, explanations, beliefs, and worldviews of the individuals involved (Patton, 2002).

The theoretical perspective most appropriate for the topic of youth-adult relationships is the constructionist framework, which includes both constructivism and social constructionism. This framework operates from the premise that the human world is different from the natural, physical world and must be studied differently (Patton, 2002). Because human beings have the capacity to interpret and construct reality, human perception is not real in an absolute sense, but is created and shaped by cultural and linguistic constructs.

This approach encourages an in-depth examination of individual “realities” as well as exposes shared meaning that exists among group members. By focusing on individual perceptions, it is possible to capture the divergent realities of youth and adults. The shared meaning, which exists among members of the group, will reflect the way the individuals in the group, particularly the youth and adults, interact.

Constructivism focuses on the meaning-making activities of individuals. The central question related to constructivism deals with the reported perceptions, “truths”, explanations,

beliefs, and worldviews of the individuals involved (Patton, 2002). Youth may perceive that the adults do not value their contribution even though in reality (or at least the adults' reality) the youth' contributions are valued. If youth do not perceive that they are valued and have meaningful opportunities to be involved, they will react or respond in a way that is consistent with this belief.

The constructionist framework emphasizes the validity of all realities and promotes all perspectives as valuable. It gives a voice to the voiceless and, in so doing, addresses inequitable power dynamics. Because of their young age and lack of experience, youth are often voiceless among adults. Many adults prefer to retain power over teens and often resist allocating or sharing power with them.

However, equitable distribution of power among youth and adults is a necessary aspect of youth-adult partnerships. Youth-adult partnerships aim to give youth a voice and empower them to contribute to their own development and make a difference in their lives. The constructionist framework captures the perspectives of all participants and as such aligns seamlessly with the ideals of effective youth-adult partnerships, making it a sound fit with this topic.

Study participants

The participants of this research were youth people whose age is between 15-24 and adults who have been engaged in some forms of connection or relation with adults and other youth in the community and adults who have had the experience of working with youth and adults who have sort of relation in school or in other place. Three staff members' community development organizations called HEfDA were part of the study. In this study 12 girls (youth),

three from elementary school and nine from high school who have some experience of working with adults in school were part of the group interview. HEfDA has a project that supports girl students through tutorial class in high school and preparatory school. This project is run by a committee drawn from the girls' students, teachers and parents. Totally 46 people were participated in this study, 20 individual interviews and four focus group interview with 26 individuals.

Sampling technique

The sampling technique was purposive sampling technique. The reason purposive sampling technique chosen was that since the nature of this research requires a detail reflection with the participants on their experience of working with each other (youth and adults). The nature of the participants determine the richness of the data, and the experience of working for some time with each other or some kind of relation enable them(participants) to give their own perspective about each other. Participates were selected through the support of the school management and the HEfDA project staff members working on girls support program.

Method of data collection and procedures

To collect data there were semi-structured focus group interviews and in depth individual interviews. Focus group interview was chosen due to its importance to make easy the participants understand more about the question, shape their own response on the experience of the other participants.

Data was collected from both adults who have been working with youth and who had an experience of working with youth, youth and adults in the community with no experience of

working with each other. Youth people who have been working with the organization in community development were interviewed in a group; likewise adults who have had experience of working with these young people were interviewed. Youth groups and adults who have been working together were interviewed separately. The same data were collected from the staff of the organization that have been working in this project and directly engaged with this specific activities that youth and adults are working together. In addition to the interview and group interview, minutes of the project recorded by committee reviewed in the organization to see the written document that specifies the role of youth while working with adults and to see their participation in decision-making.

Throughout interview the interviewer posed context-appropriate probes to solicit additional details based on their response to the prior questions. The interviewer encouraged the interviewee's reflect on their experience and the understanding regarding adult-youth partnership. Each individual interview lasted 30-45 minutes with most lasting about an hour; all interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

Data was collected two times. After I have collected the first data and transcribed it, and I realized that there is need to go back and conduct additional interview by revising my research questions. From the first data collection and transcription i had learned and draw a lesson that helped for the second data collection and also gave me new perspective for my second round interview.

Data quality assurance

To ensure the quality of the data and research the researcher had taken care of every step from the participant selection to data collection and interpretation. Participants were selected purposefully to get the required information. The collected data were triangulated by collecting data from three sources, from youth, adults and staff members of HEfDA who have been working with youth group and adults and through three data collection methods, i.e. Individual interview, FGI and document review.

To reduce losing important concepts during data collection, data analysis was started right at the beginning of data collection and interpreted the meaning while collecting data and checked the meanings of the interpretation with the participants of the research.

Every steps of the research were recorded starting from the data collection procedure, data analysis and to the end of report writing. Members checking were done right away during the interview. Once the participant completed their idea the interviewer reflected back to them to make sure he understood correctly what they said.

Conceptual definition

Youth-adult partnership: is a practice of multiple youth and adults deliberating, acting together and youth voice in decision for common goal with respect and mutuality for an extended period of time (Zeldin, 2013). Youth-adult partnership is found in the dynamics of group interaction, with young people developing relationship and interaction with adults. Youth-adult partnership differs from other types of youth-adult partnership, in youth adult there is a mutuality of learning and teaching among youth and adult.

Youth: In this research youth is those young people between 15 -24 years old (UN-definition).

Adult: Any person who is above 25 years.

Partnership: is a relationship between two or more people that are involved in the same activity (Redmond, 2008).

Interview Design

I utilized focused group interviews to capture participants' experiences regarding youth-adult partnership. Group interviews were conducted to obtain a variety of perspectives in a short amount of time. Patton (2002) described focused group interviews as a one to two hour interview with a small group of people, typically six to ten participants with similar backgrounds. The objective of employing group interview was to get high-quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others (Patton, 2002).

To maintain the integrity of focus group interviews, every aspect was specifically focused. "The groups are focused by being formed homogeneously, female and male grouped in to different groups and youth and adults interviewed separately. The facilitation is focused, keeping responses on target. Interactions among participants are focused, staying on topic. Focus groups are a collectivistic rather than individualistic research method that has emerged as an empowering approach (Patton, 2002). This type of approach is particularly appropriate with youth whose views and voices are often suppressed or ignored. Youth feel supported and empowered in a setting comprised of peers who have similar experiences and feelings.

Data analysis

I integrated data collection by checking my evolving interpretations with participants. Immediately while interviewing the participants interpretation was checked with the participants. At the end of each interview I did checking of my interpretation with the participants. From the beginning my plan was to have 40 samples for study; however I have found that the interview had to continue until I would get no new information. Theoretically sampling stops when the researcher decides the study has reached saturation (Ezzy, 2002). The data collection continued until the data reached at level of data saturation.

There were two staff members of HEfDA supporting me and facilitating for the data collection in the field. This staffs are sociology and psychology profession. At the end of each interview there were peer debriefings with this staff, we had reflected on the important issues have noticed during the data collection.

Analysis was inductive or bottom-up approach, which uses the perspectives and words of research participants to inform codes (Duke, 2013). The recorded interview was transcribed verbatim and analyzed through thematic analysis. The researcher read the transcribed and reread the data and properly reviewed to find the concepts and themes regarding the opportunities and the challenges for youth adult partnership. The data was coded based on the words and perspectives of the participants. The coded data were interpreted and further elaborate it to make the data meaningful and to make sense the findings

Chapter Four:

Data presentation

The focus of the study was to explore the challenges that youth and adults face to establish partnership with each other and figure out the opportunities that might exist to create youth-adult partnership in their community. The data is orderly presented in eleven topics in a way it gives meaning. Under each topic brief explanations are provided and followed by firsthand information excerpted from the interview transcription. The topics discussed in this section are; youth-adult partnership, the nature of youth-adult partnerships, opportunities for youth-adults partnership, challenges for youth-adult partnership, perception of youth and adults

s/n		Gender	Age	Grade level
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regarding each
other, the
attitude of

youth and adult towards each other, the impact of tradition on youth-adult relationship, importance of youth-adult partnership, and youth-adult partnership opportunities in HEfDA(NGO).

Demography of the participants

Table-1.Female participants

1	Youth	Female	16	10
2	Youth	Female	19	11
3	Youth	Female	15	7
4	Youth	Female	20	10
5	Youth	Female	17	9
6	Youth	Female	18	9
7	Youth	Female	18	10
8	Youth	Female	19	11
9	Youth	Male	16	11
10	Youth	Male	18	11
11	Youth	Male	16	7
12	Youth	Male	17	10
13	Youth	Male	18	11
14	Youth	Male	15	6
15	Youth	Male	16	7
16	Youth	Male	18	7
17	Youth	Male	17	8
18	Youth	Male	18	8
19	Youth	Male	20	11
20	Youth	Male	19	10
21	Youth	Male	21	12
22	Youth	Male	20	11
23	Youth	Male	19	10
24	Youth	Male	18	9
25	Youth	Male	17	8

Table-
2.Male
participants

Table: 3-Adult participants

s/n	Category	sex	Job
1	Adult	Male	Farmer
2	Adult	Male	Farmer
3	Adult	Male	NGO Employee
4	Adult	Male	NGO Employee
5	Adult	Male	NGO Employee
6	Adult	Male	Teacher
7	Adult	Male	Teacher
8	Adult	Male	Teacher
9	Adult	Male	Teacher
10	Adult	Male	Teacher
11	Adult	Male	Teacher
12	Adult	Male	Teacher
13	Adult	Male	Teacher

The nature of youth-adult partnerships

The nature of transaction between youth and adults in the study area is characterized by a traditional relation that gives power to adults over the young people. Adults have the power to order youth and young people at family level and whenever there is a community level work. The children and youth are expected to do what they are told to do by the adults without challenging them. The connection youth and adults have in the community is found to be the relation that is built on labor intensive activities that does not engage the youth and children in decision making process. From the interview made with both groups (youth and adult) it is clear that there is no evidence that show partnership, and equal decision making. The adult do not treasure the ideas and opinions of youth as equal to the adult's opinions. The youth are valued for their energy to carry out labor intensive activities rather than their contribution of ideas and opinions. Kasim (adult) said, *"Youth people have energy but don't have the experience of how to do, so youth can help in labor force and adults can guide and give idea."* The adult recognize the

importance of working in partnership with youth, but they only see the importance of working with youth from their energy point of view to work on labor work, physical activities, but they do not show any appreciation for the unique idea that youth can contribute. Similarly I have understood from the interview that I did with the youth, they (youth) have the tendency to think their contribution from the point of labor work, rather than generating new ideas, and initiating something new.

Parents are over protective and unhappy when their children interact with those people above their age. Children are expected by parents to maintain the traditional way of relation with adults to show high respect, obey all what the adults has to say, and not to challenge the adults. Parents believe that there should be a gap between the children and the adults. This believes comes from the community's view that children should work with children and adults should work with adults. Especially when it comes to girls, parents are very reluctant to let their daughter's work with adult male above their age. However, the reason why parents are unhappy when their children interact with adult is different for boys and girls. Zenebech (youth) said, *"My parents do not want to see me with men above my age, because they suspect me as having other affairs with them."* Parents want to make their children safe and not to be exposed for other danger. Similarly Mulu (adult) said, *"It is difficult to have close connection with youth, especially with girls, because of the fear of not to be perceived wrongly by the community."* Even from the youth side there is a tendency of keeping their relation with same sex.

There are parents' who do not want their children to have close interaction with adults; if parents see children interacting with adults equally they definitely condemn children. Meskerem

(girl) said, *“In our community it is not easy for girls to establish partnership with boys let alone with adults, because of the attitude of other boys; if one girl showed up frequently with certain boys they will be perceived as having romantic relation.”* In rural area it is not good for a girl to be seen many times with certain boys, for it would be interpreted by other as having romantic affair.

Challenges for youth-adult partnership

There are certain challenges that hinder the youth and adults not to establish a good connection with each other. In all interviews conducted with youth and adults three common challenges were identified for youth-adult partnership. The participants (youth and adult) reiterated the challenges that make difficult to work together and push them apart. These challenges were wrong perception about each other, negative attitude and lack of experience in youth-adult partnership. These three challenges were found as a prominent pitfall for the youth-adult partnership. The detailed accounts of these three challenges are given as follows.

Perception of youth and adults

Wrong perception of youth and adults about each other is one of the obstacles that make rough the relation of youth and adults. The youth have a distorted perception about adults and likewise the adults. The wrong perception they have regarding each other led them not to work closely together. Youth are perceived as they do not have any clue about the problem of the community, as part of the problem and as they want to defy the traditions of the community.

The participant of group interview (adult-teachers) said, *“there is a difference between us (those who are educated) and illiterate people on our perception about children and youth”*.

Kasa (adult-teacher) was one of the participants of the FGI. He is a member of student-teachers association committee in Kersa high school and worked with students closely as a committee for the last three years. He reported that formerly he had a wrong perception about youth, but after working closely with youth he changed his perception. Kasa said that:

Before joining this committee I didn't have a belief that these young people would have the courage to speak with such confidence and I had a doubt about their knowledge. But now I have learned that they have a confidence and I said uhh... these young people are not like what we think of them, they have better ideas. I used to judge them simply by their age, because I didn't know how they are smart and confident enough.

Working for long time with youth has helped the adult to change their perception about youth and to understand them well. The adult participants (teachers) believe that because of their daily interaction with youth in school, they have somewhat good perception of youth. Those youth who have been working with teachers (adults) in school as committee had echoed on how their working relations with adults have changed their perception about adult. Alemu (adult) said, *"I believe that since we are educated people we have a different perception regarding youth people and again our regular contact with youth has a huge impact on how we perceive and see youth."* However, those people who do not have the opportunity to work closely with youth have a wrong perception regarding youth. In both FGI conducted with adults (teachers from high school and elementary school) have mentioned that their education and experience of working with young people made them to have a confidence on youth and understand them well more than others. Alemu (adult), who was the participants of the FGI said:

...to my understanding our education status matters to what extent we listen to the young people, the more we are educated the more we understand them correctly,

At the same time I think our age matters, for example I am a little bit young, so it is not difficult for me to approach and interact with the youth, so that makes easy for me to work with them.

The attitude of youth and adult towards each other

The youth and adult have negative attitude towards each other, which make difficult for them to establish partnership. The participants (youth and adults) have mentioned that the youth and adult look down on each other's undermine knowledge of each other. Youth have negative attitude for adults and likewise adults have negative attitude for the children and youth. Kasim (youth) said, *"Adults have negative attitude towards youth and the youth have negative attitude for adults, with no any tangible ground the adult undermine the ability of children and youth."*

Dakaba (youth) who is a youth with disability participated in individual interview said:

Adults do not want to take any ideas from children and youth, they have the tendency to stick to the past tradition, they do not want to learn and try new things, because of this most youth prefer to spend their time with youth and same age level.

The other individual Interviewee named Wondimu (youth) said, *"The main challenge for youth to work with adult is the negative attitude we have for each other, we undermine the knowledge of adults and adults undermine the knowledge of youth."* Adults' judge young people based on their age, they despise children and youth without seeing the knowledge they possess and without understanding what they can do. For this reason youth try to avoid working with adults. Youth people have wrong perception and thinking about adults. There are youth people who perceive adults as backward; they do not have the current and contemporary knowledge and energy like youth do. A youth participated in group interview had said, *"There are certain youth who consider working with adults is backwardness."* This is also one factor why some youth do

not want to work with adults in order to escape from the mock of their peers as the youth reported.

Adults do not have a firm believe on the knowledge and capacity of youth and children.

The adult have a doubt on the capacity of youth as mentioned by the adult. Engida (adult) said:

...adults undermine the young people, they do not have a trust on them....the way we handle our relation with youth matters for youth-adult partnership, if we are too open for them they will not give us a respect nor obey for adults. Adults should not be very open to young people, we have to maintain our distance; so that adult will be respected and can work with youth.

Adults' believe in the importance of keeping distance and not to be too open for youth and children. Adult believe that keeping clear distance between youth and them (adult) would help to have a fruitful relation and establish partnership with adults. The idea is that if the adult is too transparent for children and too close friendship with them (children and youth) they would mess the relation. Rather the adult think that the youth should be respectful to the adult and should know how to interact with the adult. The youth should not treat the adult as they treat their age group.

Youth-adult partnership Experience

The experience of youth and adults in working as partners is very rare and the culture of working together based on equality is not practiced. From the participants I have learned that the youth and adults do not have a meaningful working relationship. Youth do not have a good deal experience in working with adults. Adults have said that they do not have as such an organized working relationship with youth in the community. Kasim (youth) a grade 12 students in Kersa preparatory school said, *“this day’s we the youth have diverted our attention to education; we*

are not working with adult this much, to be honest I have no any experience of working with adults outside of my family circle.”

The youth understand the importance and benefits of working with adults for their development. The youth believe that they can contribute and benefit from working with adults. Eba (youth) told the importance of working with adults and explained what he could contribute if he would work with adults, he said:-

I believe that working with adults has great importance for youth, I can learn from them, and as well the adults can learn from me since I am an educated young person. Whenever there is any activity in our community that requires labor force I can contribute a lot, because I am young and have energy, so in such case adults can contribute their ideas.

Even though the youth knows the importance of working in partnership with adults, they do not have the experience. The youth only work with adults whenever they are needed by adults only for labor work. Dachasa (youth) a grade 12 student said,

We do not have experience of working as a team with adults; youth do not participate in any kind of decision making process in our community with adults, let alone partnership. My relation with adult is limited to labor work and activities that does not require any discussion and decision, because the discussion and decision always be made by the adults.

Hussen (adult-teacher) said, *“We do not have any partnership with youth, in our community working in partnership with youth is not familiar.”* Youth are excluded from participating in decision making and discussion with adults in the community. The working relationship of youth with adult has been limited to receiving order from adult and acting accordingly. The youth work with adults whenever there is mass work in the community that requires all community members to take part in. There is no other small scale community level

activity that brings youth and the adults to work together. The opportunities that brought youth and adult together are neighborhood cleaning, during crop harvesting and tree plantation.

Tesfaye (youth) talked about his experience of working with adults, he said:

I have worked with them (adult) in a group work in our community, like during crop harvesting and other mass activities that are being carried out in our community, but I do not have a good working partnership with them. Whenever there is any community level meetings and decision making stage our parents are the one who participate in, they discuss with other adults, and then they inform us(youth) to engage in the implementation of what they have agreed.

The parents are the one who take part in decision making process with the community, but children and youth are the one who implement the decision of the parents.

The experience of working with adults for youth has been limited to labor work, and activities that require physical engagement. Youth are not invited to the decision making stage, but they are needed to implement what the adults decided. Youth have repeatedly mentioned about their experience of working with adults in cleaning their environment by the order of adults and working in mass activities. Dasta (adult) is resident of Chopa kebele and a father of three children and a leading member in his community in working and organizing people. He said, *“We have a community school in our village that was built by our community, during the construction of this school we had invited young people to work with us.”* Dasta also reported that they engaged youth in discussion and they have had a good understanding of each other while working together. I have learned from the adults that those youth whom the adult work with are above the age of 18, not as low to age 15 and youth are not part of committee and do not have a decision making role while working with adults.

The impact of tradition on youth-adult relationship

The long held tradition of the community has made difficult to establish youth-adult partnership. During group interview and individual interview the participants repeatedly mentioned tradition as a barrier for the youth-adult partnership. The community has deep rooted and long held traditions that discourage and protect the youth and children from adult's world. From the interview with the adult and youth different traditional sayings and idioms that discourage children and youth were identified, which is used to discourage the youth. These idioms and sayings are intended to distance youth and children from adults and to tell the youth not to come close to adults to work together on the bases of equality. The youth participant Gemechu said:

In our tradition children have to spend their time with children and adults with adults. We are not encouraged to come close to the adults to work together; we are only expected to obey for what they say. If we challenge them (adult) we might be perceived as not respectful children, not modesty and we are condemned. There is one saying in our community, if children confront adults in discussion and argue with adults they will be labeled as “barefaced” (idiomatic expression of the local community which means shameless and disrespectful).

Traditionally children and youth are bound to respect what the adult say and act accordingly. The deviance of children and youth from cultural expectation will make them to be criticized and attach their behavior with different inappropriate behavior. Children are not allowed to interfere with the discussion of the adults and if they do they will be condemned for transgressing the tradition of the community. The role of children and adults is to listen to what the adults has to say. Children and youth people are expected to give high respect to adults or older people. The nature of the respect is something that is mixed with fear, accepting everything

adults say without questioning. These all expectations led the youth and children to distance from the adults and limited their interaction with those above their age.

There is a sharp division created by the community in what activities children can engage or cannot engage with adults. The matter of decision making and the things that need consultation is left for the adults. The adult participants from this Anno Taji community school were very positive to work with youth people. Participant teachers told that the influence of the tradition has made difficult to interact and work closely with children and youth. Dabala(adult) who was born in that area and a teacher in Anno Taji Community School, recalls how it was not easy for him to interact with adults when he was young. He recalls his experience, and said:

When I was a young I used to participate in different community activities. It was not easy for me to talk with adults. The kind of respect we have to show to those above our age make very challenging to work with adults. Our tradition does not encourage youth to work with adults.

Arsi community is well known in using idiomatic expression to encourage or discourage people and they tend to summarize long speech by short sayings. The participants have mentioned some idiomatic expressions used by the local community regarding children and youth. The community expresses the perception that they have regarding the knowledge of children idiomatically. There are a number of idioms that portray how children are in the eyes of adults in the community. I have mentioned some idiomatic expression and their message that being used to discourage the youth and undermine knowledge of young people which was mentioned by the participants. “ Tikseen ijole ganama samii ilalti, galagal lafa lalti” “Children who keep cattle gaze up to the sky in the morning and look to the earth in the dusk.” The

message of this idiom is that children pretend as if they can do something in the beginning (looking to the sky in the morning represents having a confidence to start something in the beginning, and look to the earth in the dusk means unsuccessful, feel ashamed for their failure to accomplish what they pretend to do in the morning when they come back to home from keeping cattle in the evening. “Areed qulleen dubii jalaqabdi malee hin xumurtu” “*Those who don’t have beard, they start to talk, but could not finish.*” This idiom is used when they (community-adult) want to tell young people that, ‘they are not mature’, they don’t have enough knowledge, wisdom, and they just start something that they could not conclude. Having beard represents the begging of wisdom and demonstrates maturity.

The adult undermines the capacity of the youth and children in decision making. The adults express their perception by idiom, “*Ijoleen ganama mana jarte, galgala digdi*” “*Children construct house in the morning and knock it down in the evening.*” The adult use such sayings when they want to discourage children and young people not to interrupt their discussion. The message is to tell that, children lack concrete knowledge; young people talk but could not realize what they talk, they are just clueless; they do something without aim and decision making capacity. When the adults use these idioms at the presence of children, it is like reminding them that they have to know their place and status.

As I have understood from the participants the traditional barriers that once used to block youth from interacting with adults have been decreasing as the participants reported. The adult participants who are at their early adult age said they can easily work with youth and young people, because they believe that there is no big generational gap between the youth and them

(early adult). Similarly the youth believe that it is easy for them if they can work with early adults, with those who are somewhat close to their age. For the older people always wants to stick to the past tradition, so that makes difficult for youth to interact with those late adults.

Tesfaye said that, *“The traditional barriers that is used to hinder youth not to interact with the adults have been decreasing, however the age of the adult’s matters to establish a successful partnership.”*

Importance of youth-adult partnership

Youth-adult partnership has a benefit for both youth and adults who work together. The group (youths and adults’) recognize the importance of working in partnership. Youth can benefit from the experience of adults, and the adult can benefit from the new idea that youth can bring in. The youth group mentioned that they can benefit a lot by working with adults in many ways. Dakaba(youth) said:

If youth and adults work together, it has a lot of benefit for both. For example I can learn from the experience of adults, and the challenge they have passed through. The adults also can learn from the youth about family planning and contemporary technology. Since young people are the hope of this country, they are the one who shall lead this nation in the future. So they can replace these adults by sharing their experiences.

The youth have an interest to work with adults and to benefit what both group could give uniquely. Adults can guide the youth and inherit the norms of the community, share their experience to youth and adults can help the youth in decision making process. The youth clearly see the benefits of working with adults and understand the significance of working with senior people. Tesfaye(youth) said:

Having energy alone is not enough to accomplish something significant; if we do not have the experience and tested knowledge we will not be successful. In Arsi culture there is a saying like 'First is first in many things' this means adults are ahead in age from youth, ahead by experience from youth, they have learned lots of things from ups and downs of their life. So they can share us their experience as someone who is senior to us.

Opportunities for youth-adults partnership

The study reveals the existence of ample opportunities to establish youth-adult partnership in community. In the area there are different micro-projects that have been done by local NGOs and government. These micro projects are seen as potential opportunities. The youth believe the availability of opportunities in their community to work with adults. Asefa (youth) said *"...in fact there is an opportunity to work with adults in different micro-projects in my community, however I did not participated so far, for the reason I have never been invited by adults to work with them."* Most of the time whenever there is any micro projects that requires the participation of the community members, youth and children are not directly invited to work with adults. Even though the children are interested to engage in community activities, they are not invited independently to work with adults. The youth also consider cultural practices as an opportunity where youth can meet and create a partnership with adults and learn from them.

Kasim (youth) said:

Formerly there was culture of engaging young people in a traditional dispute resolution process, in such events father used to take his son to give him the opportunity to learn from their experience and from the process they pass through to reconcile people, however these days I don't see such opportunities for youth.

The youth only gets the opportunity to work with adults once or two times per a year. These opportunities are a season based like cleaning their neighborhood and working on farm land with adults. During this mass work the relation of youth and adults is characterized by

being ordered and obeyed. Whenever there is a need to clean their neighbor the adult's order the youth. The youth also mentioned that working on environmental protection is one of the opportunities that the youth and adult can work together and establish partnership.

Tesfaye(youth) said:

Father is the representative of the household and participates in any meetings held in our community, they don't give the opportunities for their sons or daughters to take part in such meetings, which can bring close the young generation to the adult.

The role of youth during community work with adults is to listens the decision made by the elders and adults and implementing the decisions made by the adults. Dakaba(youth) who is the residents of the adjacent Kebela to Kersa town said, *"so far I have not participated in any activities that engage youth and adults as a group in my community. Whenever there is something to do the village (Kebele) leaders just request family, they do not tell to the youth."*

Adam (youth) mentioned that, *"without the permission of my parents I cannot participate in any community activities. I only work with adults when my parents delegate me to engage in the community activities."*

The government and non-government organizations have great role in creating opportunities for youth-adult partnership. The youth and the adults believe that the government and NGOs are in a good position to bring youth and adults together by creating community level activities where youth and adults can work together in partnership. Fayisa (youth) said:

...the government can facilitate a volunteer work for the youth; there are a lot of educated youth people in our community who are unemployed, even we students

want to give back to our community, like teaching kids out of school or adult education, so doing this would help the youth to bring them to adults.

Providing volunteer opportunities for youth to serve their community will help the youth to be understood by the community in a positive way and demonstrate their knowledge. As well they can contribute to their community and change their image. The other participants called Tesfaye said, *“We are distanced from the old generation and the adult do not know our skills and capacity, so if we get the opportunity to work with adults it will help us (youth) to be understood by adults and appreciate our skills.”*

The Government and NGOs are not the only responsible body to create the youth-adult partnership opportunities. The community has a great role to initiate community service work and give the opportunity to all members of the community to work together. Engida (adult) said, *“...adults should take the responsibility to create the opportunities for the youth-adult partnership, and invite youth to work with them in partnership.”* They told the importance of initiatives taken by adults to create opportunities for youth-adult partnership and stated the reason why adults should take the initiative. Engida (adult) added, *“Adults would be reluctant to join youth initiatives because of their negative attitude for young people and wrong perception they have regarding children and youth.”* Similarly, other adult participant called Alamu mentioned the reason why should adults take the role of initiating the opportunity for youth – adult partnership. Alemu said, *“...it is easy for adults to approach youth and invite them (youth) in to their initiative, than youth to approach adults, it would be not easy for many youth to convince and attract adults in to their initiatives.”* There is an inclination from the adults’ side

to believe and convince the importance of certain initiatives if they are only taken by adults and they want to maintain the leadership position.

Youth-Adult Partnership opportunities in HEfDA(NGO)

The research explored opportunities that might exist in community based organization and how they are offering opportunities for youth to partner with adults in their projects. The exploration is done in NGO called HEfDA, an indigenous community development organization working in Arsi, Munesa Wereda. The organization has different projects that work on women, girls, youth, people with disabilities and support micro-projects to improve school facilities and spring water development in the community. There are a multitude of opportunities in the organization to establish youth-adult partnership. However there is lack of awareness the significance of having youth as a partner in their projects. Kadir (HEfDA's staff) said, *"We understand the importance of youth in our community development projects; we want them to be part of what we do, and youth are involved in implementing some of our projects."* Helen Dejene a project officer for a project that supports girls in school said, *"HEfDA wants to see the participation of the girls in our project, designing and implementation process, and be an active decision maker in the project that support girls in schools."* In the projects that support girls in school girls are committee member to run the project along with teachers and parents.

It is very challenging to bring together people who are at different age level. The organization had tried to bring youth and adults together for economic empowerment purpose through a scheme called saving and internal lending community (SILC); however they find it difficult to manage different age people in one group. One of the challenges as I have learned

from the organization is that people who are at different age group have a different interest. In one saving and internal lending community (SILC) there were 10-14 people of different age group. In this group they save their money and take loan from what they have saved. In this group any person can join, there is not age and sex limit. However, in the meantime there was a problem in those SILC that had a mix of youth and adults in one group. There was a difference of interest between adults and youth and some groups quickly dissolved. Different age groups have a different interest and priorities, and things that passionate them. Bringing people of different age, those who have different passion and priorities is challenging. Beka (HEfDAs staff) said regarding his experience of bringing youth and adult together in one working group:

HEfDA has tried once to organize youth and adults in one group to work together to improve their livelihood. However it was not successful due to the combination of different age groups, different age groups have different interests, for this reason the group failed and disintegrated. Since then we have been organizing them based on their age group based on our past lesson.

In the organization there is a project that has a committee in school that has girls (youth), teachers and parents. The intention of the HEfDA in establishing committee that contain girls, teachers and parents was not to give opportunities for girls to partner with adult, but just help the organization have a say and opinions of the beneficiary girls to run the project effectively. Even though it was not planned for that purpose, the opportunity helped girls to have connection with adults. Damme (girl) a grade 12 student mentioned that, “working as a committee with adults helped us to benefit a lot, they share us their experience, encourage us, and we are able to understand the real behavior of adults because of working in close connection with them.” The other girl called Ebise Marga said that:

This project helped us to get the opportunity we could not get normally at home, at home we do everything that we are told to do by our parents, whether we like it or not we have to do it. But in this committee we have the right to say whatever we want, challenge adults, speak our mind regarding what is going well in the project and what need to be improved.

The girls believe that their ideas and opinions are taken seriously as equal to adults during meeting. Teachers who are the member of the committee confirmed what girls mentioned regarding their active participation. However, the meeting minutes does not support their claim. It was important to triangulate what girls (youth) and teachers (adults) said about the active participation of all committee members. Meeting minutes was reviewed to make sure the active participation of girls in the committee decision making process and whether the ideas of girls are taken seriously during their meetings. The meeting minutes can say a lot whether the voice of the girls committee members were taken seriously and recorded properly on meeting minutes. The committee has recorded each and every decisions made by the committee. The reviews of document show the voice of the girls were not recorded seriously and their opinion is not boldly visible on the meeting minutes.

The participation of youth and children is very limited in the organization and reinforced the traditional role that youth have in the community. HEfDA has other projects in rural area that engages youth in different community development micro projects and youth livelihood program. As Kadir (HEfDA's staff) said,

The participation of youth in community development micro-project is limited to labor activities and labor work like, digging, collecting stone for construction and fetching water during construction, their participation in planning and decision making in the projects is rear.

Chapter Five

Discussion

In this chapter the data were discussed in detail and organized according to the significant findings and emerged themes. Four themes were identified from the data. The major themes were segregation of youth from adult's world, negative attitude and wrong perception to one another as an obstacle for youth and adults to work together, the role of adult in creating opportunities of youth-adult partnership and the opportunities in community based organization for youth-adult partnership. These four themes are discussed broadly by linking with previous research findings. Finally there is an implication made for practice and research based on the study results. This study confirmed some of the research literature regarding youth-adult relationships challenges and also the importance of youth-adult partnership for the empowerment of youth.

Young people are protected and segregated from adults world and decision making process in their community. The youth feel that they are protected from partnering with adults. Across all interviews conducted with youth people it is clear that parents are unhappy when their children interact with adults outside of family circle. It is similar to the western community that

youth and children do not get ample opportunities to interact with adults. Modern Western society provides few opportunities for youth to interact with adults other than family members, and the age segregation of society limits the opportunities for youth and adults to interact (Larson, 2010,). It is identified that there is a boundary created by the family for their children not to interact with other adults. The community does not encourage the young people to have an interaction with older and people who are beyond their age. The study conducted by Larsen, (2010) shows that youth are largely isolated from non-family adults spatially, socially, and psychologically in almost all spheres. This study confirms that youth people do not have a strong connection to adults and nonfamilies members. Parents are unhappy when their children establish strong connection with adults, even with teachers. This over protection of parents limits youth people from having connection and partnership with adults; which directly affects the benefits youth would gain to develop positively and to get familiar with the world of adults.

Parents have a ground why they are unhappy when their children interact with adults and why they are protective. Parents have the fear that their daughter would be exploited sexually and the boys learn inappropriate behavior from adults at the stage they should not at this age. Especially it is very challenging for girls to work with male adults on the bases of partnership. There are girls who reported that they have been avoiding boys not to interact with them and distance from having strong relationship with adult male for they are warned by their parents. There are parents who give strict order to their children not to be seen with boys and men above their age. What was once done to protect youth from manifest exploitation, now serves to reinforce the ‘outsider’ status of youth, to the point where they deprive youth of experience

important to their growth and development (Zeldin, 2013). It is clear that the intention of parents is to protect their children from risk. However the protection not to interact with adults left the youth not to benefit from what adults can offer for the development of the youth.

Adolescents today are probably more isolated from contact with unrelated adults than at any time in the past, especially the extension of schooling have resulted in adolescents spending much of their time in social contexts with a high concentration of peers and few opportunities to form close, trusting contacts with adults outside the family (Berzonsky, 2003). The youth diverted their attention to school and distanced from community life that bring them where they can meet adults. This is also the other factor that separated the youth from the adults. This shows the cause for the segregation of youth from the opportunity to experience adults life is reinforced by the nature of schooling.

In the community there is a division of role between children and adults, which imply what and where children should be. The role that children and youth have in the community does not allow different age groups to come in to one group and play their own role within the group. Bronfenbrenner (1979) state that associated with every position in the community there is a role expectation, that person who occupy that position is expected by others to act according to the expectation and act accordingly.

The position and role that children have in the community determines with whom they should spend their time, how they should act and define who they are. The community designates the hard and labor work for youth and children and excludes them from decision

making position, which means the community expects the youth and children to engage only in labor work. The time when adolescents should be transitioning into mature roles in the lives of their communities, their interactions with adults are often restricted to the school building, which itself is divided by fairly rigid role distinctions between teachers and students (Ginwright, Noguera, & Cammarota, 2006). The discussion platform and decision making role is reserved to the adults. The role of the children is to receive order from the adult, implement what the adults decided to be done in their community. In arenas of civic life, participation on public advisory groups, nonprofit boards, community organizing, neighborhood action groups, nonprofit boards are typically characterized by age segregation (Sulaiman, 2013). Mass-work during farm activities is the only areas where youth can get a little opportunity to interact with adults (teachers), in which their interaction by itself is very limited. This sharp role division between the world of adults and youth deny the young generation not to experience the glimpse of the adult's world experience that would prepare them for the stage they enter soon and to grow with knowledge of the world of adult's.

Segregation of children and youth by parents from adult's world is caused by the traditional role division and lack of awareness about the concept of youth-adult partnership. The adult and children have segregated role that set them apart. As well lack of awareness about the concept and importance of youth-adult partnership, reinforce to maintain the traditional and rigid role division between children and adults. The concept of youth-adult partnership is not familiar in the community. Despite the fact that youth-adult partnership has an enormous potential to promote positive youth development and increase civic engagement and community change, the

practice remains unfamiliar (Zeldin, 2013). The relation that the youth have with the adult is the kind of traditional relation that is based on receiving order from the adults and being obeyed. The participants (youth and adult) confirmed the idea that their relation is a traditional way which gives the power of decision making to adults. Children and young people are not encouraged to have a connection that is based on equal power status with adults.

Youth-adult partnership is an intentionally established relationship that is intended to build the youth, make them experience adult's world, it is based on equality and shared power among youth and adults. The relationship that youth have with adults is a relation which is based on ordering the youth and the youth obey what adults say. The existing youth-adult relationship which is like child –parent and student-teacher provide very little opportunity for youth and children less autonomous decision making opportunities. Youth-adult partnership is unique in many ways from other kinds of relationship like student-teacher relation, child-parent, and child-adult (Zeldin, 2013).

This research revealed that, the norm which is developed at home and the tradition of the community affected the nature of youth interaction with adults outside of their family circle. Sometimes students are invited to attend meetings in their school, however they do not engage properly and speak out their mind, rather the students prefer to keep silent and agree with what adults say. This shows that it takes for youth to develop the skill of speaking in public by breaking the traditional norm that limits them not to equally talk with adults. The result suggests the need to work on the young generation to break the traditional norms that hinders the youth not to interact with the adults.

Creating boundary between youth and adults and traditional role division limits the opportunities of youth to interact with adults and learn what they ought to learn at this stage. Limiting the arenas of youth interaction to youth alone would decrease their opportunities that would help them to prepare for adults world. As well, lack working together lead to develop wrong perception about one another and negative attitude.

Adults and youth often hold ambivalent perceptions of each other, and these perceptions discourage interactions when opportunities are available and reinforce mutual separation (Larsen, 2010). This study revealed that there is unsure perception and negative attitude between youth and adults. The youth and adults have wrong perception about the capacity and knowledge of each other. This wrong perception has been the major obstacle that hinders youth and adults from working together. How adults view young people's capacities can be a major obstacle to youth empowerment (Scales, Leffert, & Lerner, 1999, p 63, as cited Larsen, 2010). The youth are often seen by adults as emotional, part of a problem and lacking knowledge. As well the adults are seen by the youth as rigid, lacking contemporary knowledge and far backward. Both youth and adults have negative attitude to one another, if not demonizing each other like past. Having negative attitude to one another and lack of understanding what one can offer could discourage relationship and decrease the interest to work with each other.

The youth and adult understand the importance of working together. Even though they have unsure and negative attitude to one another, they value the importance of working together and appreciate what each group could contribute. It seems that the negative attitude that is held by the adult this time is milder than the previous. Previously youth people are seen only as part

of problem, as a group no solution and contribution comes out of it. The study conducted before 15 year by Alford, (2001) shows that many adults believe that young people's opinions don't matter, that youth are not capable of contributing in a valuable way. However, this days adults believe the contribution youth can make and they value the importance of working together. This is might be the indication in the improvement in the attitude of adults towards youth. Despite the fact that both groups clearly understand the importance of working together, but the cultural norms and the wrong perception they held regarding one another pushed them apart. Young people are often mistreated and disrespected simply because they are young and this is reinforced by assumption and attitude that adults are often better than young people (Bell, 2003, Alford, 2001).

Traditionally the community believes that youth don't have concrete knowledge, don't see as an actual people who can effect change in their community and doubt their ability to make a real decision. Often adults infantilize young people treating them like empty vessels to be filled in by the more powerful and knowing adult teachers and huddled to the corner in decision making (Ginwright, Noguera, & Cammarota, 2006, Camino, 2000). Study conducted by (Flage, 2010) shows negative beliefs regarding age and lack of experience of youth have challenged youth involvement in communities. The same is true in this community that the wrong perception held by the adult led them not to engage youth and children in any decision making process. Fathers are the one who take part in the discussion as representative of the household whenever there is any meeting. Youth are not invited to take part in the discussion, but labor work is put aside for youth.

The community use different sayings and idioms that portray children's capacity and knowledge of youth that is intended to discourage youth and children not to be around adults. Children and youth are told through idioms the inappropriateness of children's participation in discussion held by adults, and they tell them as if they don't have enough knowledge, and skills. This kind of communication reinforces the notion which is traditionally accepted that adults are better than children, make youth and children not to have confidence to talk with adults and discourage young people not to interact equally with adults. Because of their negative and wrong perception, the adult do not have confidence in youth's knowledge and skills. Adults judge young people based on their age, without seeing the knowledge they possess and without understanding what they can do.

The adults who have the opportunity to work with youth have better understanding of the youth's capacity and knowledge. The cause for youth and adult to be polarized in attitude and perception could result from lack of experience for working together. Unless these groups come together and work together for some time they cannot understand each other, their ideas, and capacities. This study confirmed the findings of Flage, (2010) and (Hardman, (2005) that said adults change their attitudes, behaviors opinions, and beliefs about youth as a result of having relationships with young people in the program sites. Those youth and adults worked together as a committee of student-teachers-parents association told how working together changed their perception and attitude regarding each other. When the youth and adult work together for some times it helps to understand each other, see what each can do and their capacity. When people work together the negative attitude they held regarding each other would vanish. In the

community where this research conducted the youth do not have experience of working with adults in partnership, and do not have a meaningful participation in their community. This lack of opportunities for meaningful and true participation led the youth and adults to have ambivalent attitude to one another. Those adults who got the opportunity to work with youth have positive attitude and clear perception about youth.

The adult have great role in creating empowering environment for youth. They can create an opportunities for youth where they can meet, partnership and get connected with the adults in the community. The question of who should create the opportunity for youth-adult partnership had been a point of discussion and identified as one of theme for this research. In the community where youth and adult have wrong perception and attitude to each other, taking initiative to create the opportunity for youth-adult partnership can have the implication of giving or not giving power to one another. Customarily the one who will create the opportunity by initiating community level activities shall have the power to decide issues related to the initiative. Most of the time adults struggle to give up their power to youth because of the traditional orientation (Camino, 2000). The finding conform the notion that adults are not willing to relinquish their power for the sake of youth. The traditional belief that undermines children and youth challenges the adults to interact with youth based on equality and to accept youth with respect. In order to form and sustain the relationships, a sense of trust and mutual respect between youth and adults is necessary. Even the best-intentioned adults may not yet understand what youth partnership means. This good intention of adults to take the initiative to support youth has to be support by knowledge and skills, so that their partnership would be successful and genuine. Camino, (2000),

Zeldin, (2005) states that adults should play a multiple role to strengthen youth-adults partnership by playing a teaching role, coaching and providing youth with a clear role.

Supportive relationships with non-parental adults are considered to be among the key developmental assets predicting positive youth outcomes (Hardman, 2005). Different literatures unveiled the role that adults can play in creating empowering environment for youth. The participants (adult) suggest that adults should create the opportunity for youth-adult partnership and invite youth to join them. For adults to be able initiate a project and activities that is relevant to youth they need to engage youth and get training to effectively handle their partnership. Better understanding these processes can be beneficial for practitioners and programmers. Youth-adult partnerships are collaborations between adults and youth in the decision-making and planning processes. To establish a true partnership between youth and adult it requires a better understanding the process of youth participation and engagement. When adults enable youth to be a part of the decision-making and planning processes, youth voice, empowerment, and participation become important tools for facilitating engagement (MayNard, 2008).

Youth would be more interested to engage and participate in activities that is relevant to them not that the adult feel relevant for them and forming personal connection with the goal of the organization that would help them in the future for personal growth (Abebe Asefa, 2011, Larson, 2011). Any adult initiative that is intended to engage youth as a partner should take in to consideration what most interests the youth, need to form a connection with the intrinsic needs of the youth and the things that is helpful for youth based on their perspective.

Too often the role of taking initiative has the implication of power control and retain leadership role at the hands of the one who initiate it. However, in most cases whenever someone take the role of initiating activities and projects, the power of decision making remains at the hands of the one who initiate it. When the power remains at the hands of the one who initiated (adults) or one person it makes challenging to create a true partnership. To change the trends of the one who take the initiative take the role of leadership and decision making, it is important to make intentional decision by the adults from the beginning to share the power of decision making and leadership role to the youth. The good intention of adults to create the opportunities where they can work with children and youth requires the understand concept of youth-adult partnership, its potential significance for positive youth development. Eventhough the work is initiated by adults, it does involve partnership with children and youth and necessitates some sharing of power between adults and youth and renegotiation of traditional relationships between them (Lansdown, Promoting children's participation in democratic decision-making, 2001).

To establish a successful youth-adult partnership requires changing in role and sharing power to youth from adult. Bronfenbrenner, (1979) posit that it is significant to balance and shift power in favor of the developing person and give opportunity to exercise control over the situation, this would led to optimal learning and development. For youth to learn more and develop personally they need the help of adults and adult should change their long held traditional belief and attitude that look down youth's abilities and their role in the community.

The other adult gave the same idea that adults should take the initiative, however the justification was different. The adult justifies that it would be easy for adults to approach and

work with adults that youth to approach adults. We can see the good intention and willingness of adults to work along youth and create the opportunities for partnership. Even though adults have the willingness to partner and work with youth, their negative attitude regarding youth, made them not be comfortable and reluctant to participate in the initiatives of youth. However, usually the willingness of adults failed to be supported by action. Adults often have good intentions but are not accustomed to working with young people on issues affecting organizations and communities (Flage, 2010). In the community where children and youth not valued for their contribution and not allowed to interact equally with their older it is very challenging for adults to share power with youth.

Community based organizations can play role in providing opportunity for youth-adult partnership in the areas of their engagement. McGuire, (2012) said that community projects play vital role in creating opportunities to bridge intergenerational gaps, linking role for youth, creating social capital opportunities for its youth, through youth adult partnerships, exposing youth to resource rich adults and offering unique life changing experiences. Organization needs to have a children and youth in their decision making process. Article 12 of United Nation state children and youth has the right to be listened and their ideas to be taken seriously (Lansdown, 2001). The participation of youth as a decision making partner on the issues of their community is not a privilege rather it should be taken as the right to be heard and their ideas respected as equal to adults. There is a need for an organized and structured opportunity for the children and youth to be heard and to have a meaningful partnership. The participants of this research suggested that NGOs and local government organization can play a role imperative to create

opportunities for youth and adults to come together for common goal and establish partnership for a shared purpose. The youth participants suggest government and NGOs to create the opportunities and bring youth and adults to work in partnership.

This research had explored the role that local community development organization (NGO) called HEfDA is playing in creating opportunities for youth to get connected with adults and have partnership in the organization. Despite the fact that youth-adult partnership has great benefit for organizations, the youth and adult partnership practice is not familiar in the community and the organization. The organization has a project that brings youth and adults to work together as a committee. Bringing youth and adult together whenever there is a project work helps the youth and adults to understand each other. However, this bringing of youth and adults never meant to give opportunities for youth and adults to establish a partnership. Youth-adult partnership requires an intentional planning and deliberate action to help youth people get exposed to adult's world and benefit from their connection. Intentional development of personal networks has implications for how youth development programming develops networking opportunities for youth and in particular whom youth should be connecting with and the intentionality and goals of the social connections (Mcguire, 2012). There is youth involvement in the organizations project implementation during like school building, spring development and other project activities.

In most cases the participation of youth limited to the labor work like digging, collecting stone for construction, and fetching water. Participating in such activities by itself has positive side, it makes the youth develop the feelings of ownership for what they did and eventually this

could lead them to positive development trajectory. The World Bank (1994) defines participation as a process through which stakeholders' influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them (Huxley, 2010). Within a genuine participation of youth, youth-adult partnership could be practiced, and exercised. In true participation there is shared decision making, responsibility, active, informed and voluntary involvement of people. To bring a true youth-adult partnership, there should be a true participation where the voice of youth and adults equally heard and seriously taken.

There are multiple opportunities in community development organizations for youth-adult partnership. Community development organizations could give the opportunity for youth to partner with adults at board level and at wide project implementation area, and at community level. Providing opportunities for youth to partners with adults in the organization helps both the youth and the organization itself. Youth-adult partnership has a benefits for organization to widen its impact at multiple level by improving youth engagement in public action, and improving staff capacity (Zeldin, Petrokubi, Camino, 2008, Zeldin,Christens,Powers, 2013). Owing to lack of experience and lack of awareness regarding the importance of youth-adult partnership for organizations', HEfDA does not have any youth member at board and general assembly level. This lack of knowledge about the relevance of having youth as a partner in organization makes reluctant and not eager to have at every level. There is promising opportunities in the community development organizations for youth to partner with adults.

HEfDA engages the local community in planning, designing and implementing projects. This community participation can be seen as a fertile soil where youth can connect with the adult

and create partnership with the intentional help of the organization. The organization deems that youth people are participating in their projects; however the participation of youth is limited to participating in labor work alone. Youth people are not counted as partners in decision making, they are just a group waiting to be ordered to implement what the adults decide.

The exploration done in this organization revealed that, though there is opportunities to establish youth-adult partnership, that potential is not tapped and taken forward to the level of partnership due to lack of experience in the organization to have youth and children as a partner. The organization believes that the participation of the community is very high and they design and implement projects with the participation of the community. The question is who community, is it old men and women or girls or boys?. The participation of old people or adults alone cannot make the development strategies real community development. Flage, (2010) argue that the process of community development is one that involves all segments of the community including young and old in the community. Community development often requires partnerships, and a true partnership exists when each person's contribution is valued (Flage, 2010). According to Status Report of African youth and young (2012) the group of population aged 10-24 contribute to one third of the population in Africa, this might be more in Ethiopia. However this number of the community group is not participating and contributing as it is required.

Conclusion

The research has tried to uncover the opportunities and challenges for youth-adult partnership, and the dynamics of youth –adult interaction. The study confirmed what other

research uncovered regarding the challenges that youth face to work with adults. Most of the challenges are the result of long held tradition of the community and the attitude shaped by the tradition. Lack of experience in the community has been found as another challenge for youth and adults to work together in partnership. It is true that, this research is a context based, which is limited to specific rural setting, which does not allow the findings to be generalized. This means it implies for the need of further study in different settings and in different context. So it would make the knowledge of youth-adult partnership comprehensive by giving a context based research findings. As a social worker professional I can see an immense opportunities where youth and adults could work together. The community has a lot of challenges that is waiting to be solved by the participation of the community that needs the active engagement of its members. These challenges can be seen as an opportunity for the community where the youth people learn to shoulder responsibilities, exercise leadership role and engage with adults. Creating this kind of opportunity have no any cost to the community or don't require for additional cost to any community development organizations, but it only requires the careful and intentional planning to make the partnership successful.

Implication for Social Work

The findings of this study revealed that the youth and adults don't have a good experience of working in partnership, where both parties have equal voice and share power of decision making. This calls for the need to introduce youth-adult partnership in the community and in community development organizations. From the adults side there is a tendency to recognize youth people only from their energy to accomplish labor activities (physical activity),

but less appreciate their knowledge and skills. The adult needs to appreciate equally the soft skills of the youth and their unique contribution that the young people could provide. This lack of recognizing the capacity and skills of youth emanates from lack of experience in working together in true sense of partnership. Youth and adults need to have opportunities to work together so that they can understand each other well and help them to change their attitude about each other. Adults engaged in youth-adult partnerships begin to perceive young people as legitimate, crucial contributors to organizational decision-making processes (Flage, 2010).

The initiative to create the opportunities for youth-adult partnership like participative community service, projects and researchers should be taken by adults. Collaborative initiative should be taken by adults in collaboration with children and local organization should back such initiative.

Youth-adult partnership requires intentional planning and skills. To fill the gaps that exist in the skills, youth development organizations and community development organization have to help the youth and adults through providing short term training on communication skills, leadership and sharing responsibility. What makes challenging for adults to work in partnership with youth the issues of power sharing with youth. Youth development organizations have the responsibility to guide adults in locating the appropriate balance in power in their relationships with youth, (Zeldin, Larson, & O'Connor, 2005). Therefore, it is important to work on adults to make the youth-adults partnership successful and make adult relinquish their power for the sake of empowering youth.

Non-government organizations and government organization have to work to create the opportunities for youth to work with adults. These organizations have the capacity to locate resourceful adult with whom youth can establish a partnership and benefit from their partnership with adults. There are different NGOs working at community level by engaging the local community in their planning session. However they don't fully engage the youth in their discussion, and planning. Projects at community level need to engage youth in decision making process and have youth as a partner to work together. Any community development organization that deems working with the participation of the community should not exclude the children and the youth from their discussion and decision making process. Since any activities undertaken in community would affect all community members, youth people should be counted as a partner and get the opportunity to work with adults. Zeldin, Larson, & O'Connor, (2005) recommend that community programs, including out-of-school and after-school programs for youth, are an important context where this intergenerational isolation can be bridged.

Previous finding and this study confirms youth and adults change their attitude and perceptions after working together for some time. Therefore, it is imperative to facilitate for extra-curricular activities where youth can connect with adults and work together. So this would give them the opportunity to understand each other and change their wrong perception and attitude.

To make adult-youth partnerships successful there are certain skills that both groups should have. Camino, (2000) revealed the skills that is crucial for the success of youth-adult partnership. These skills are communication, teamwork and coaching. Effective communication

produces mutual insight and deepening of respect between youth and adults. Teamwork is important aspects of successful partnerships which tended to have flexible roles for youth and adults, tolerance for differences, and appropriate responses to developmental challenges (Camino, 2000). To establish effective and successful youth-adult partnership it is imperative to provide a sort of training on communication and team work for both youth and adults. Lack of communication skill is one of the barrier that distance youth and adults. The adult expects the youth to speak to them with great respect, which Ethiopian people use while communicating with those above their age, the way addressing older people, showing all the traditional respect used by Ethiopian. Failing to do so sometimes led the adults to label the youth as disrespectful to adults and lack of courtesy.

It is evident that youth-adult partnership is the unifying element of positive youth development and youth civic engagement. A myriad of studies shows the role of youth- adult relationship and partnership for positive youth development and to narrow the intergenerational gaps. However, the value of Youth-adult partnership is not recognized by many, or there is gap of knowledge by practitioners on the recent phenomena of positive youth development. UN convention on the child's right states the need to engage children and youth as partnership in any initiative. The youth development organization and community development should have youth as partner in their board of organization, in their committee members and engage them in community initiated projects in decision making process.

This study revealed that adults who have had worked for some times with youth have a positive attitude and changed their wrong perception regarding youth people and are keen to

work with youth. This verify that when both groups get know each other well of, would help to remove the obstacle that pushes youth and adults apart from working together. Therefore it is recommended to create volunteer community service activities where youth can work along with adults and get to know well each other. This would help to improve the attitude of adults, help adult understand the capacity of youth and at the same time would help youth to get familiarized with adults.

It is evident that, in Ethiopia the practice and the knowledge of positive youth development are very limited. Almost all literatures used in this research are mostly from western countries, this shows that the up-to-date youth development philosophies are not getting appropriate attention from scholars and youth development organizations. Scholars in youth development area need to give attention and conduct research on this recent phenomenon of youth development philosophy (Positive youth development) to make it familiar in youth development organizations, and to grasp the attention of policy makers

This study explored youth-adult partnership opportunities and challenges that exist in rural area and in one community development organization. The findings of the research confirmed much of the findings of researches conducted in western countries in regard to the challenges for youth-adult partnership. For the reason this research was conducted in rural setting context, it is imperative to conduct the same research especially on the opportunities for youth-adult partnership in cities and urban context. In cities and urban areas there are diversified NGOs that could be seen as a promising for youth-adult partnership, however it is equally important to study the attitude of staff members of organization considered as potential for youth-adult

partnership opportunities and their readiness to play role in creating opportunities. There could be other challenges for youth-adult partnerships in connection with emergence of the internet and social media development.

Social media has changed the nature of people's interaction, decreased the contact of youth with adults, however it is not studied to unveil regarding which areas of social interaction, and among which groups of people the interaction have been changed, and what is the implication for youth-adults to work in partnership. This new trend could be the other area of study in connection with youth-adult partnership. The findings could vary from the findings of this research, so it would help to have a broad understanding of the youth-adult partnership opportunities and challenges in different context and eventually the results could be generalized.

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Appendices A : Consent Form

Date_____

Consent form

Dear participants of this research

I would like to thank you for your willingness to participate in this research. My name is Darara Mole. I am studying social work at University of Addis Ababa. The purpose of this research is to explore youth adult partnership opportunities and challenges in their community. The interview and discussion that I will going to do with you will take 1:30 to 2:00 hours. I appreciate your collaboration for volunteering to stay with me for this couple of hours. The research will not have any risk or harm on the participants of the research. Participation in this research is depending on the full consent of the participants. The participants of the research will be kept anonymous. On the report of the research there will be no any information that might identify you by any means. Participants are free to discontinue from participation. Discontinuing from participation or refusing to give any information will not have any consequences and penalty.

If there is any participant who feels discomfort to talk in group, we can arrange an isolated session. At the end of the research I will give a summary of the findings to anyone who is interested to know about the findings of the research. At any time you are free to ask what is not clear, so that I will help you to understand.

I guarantee that I will not use any names and addresses in the final report, or store or categories information using names and addresses. This will help to ensure that what you have said during the discussion will not be traced back to you by third parties.

I guarantee that I will not disclose directly any information provided in this group to third parties, unless permission has been granted to do so. As some of the comments made in this group may be of a personal or private nature, other participants should respect the confidentiality of individuals and also not disclose information directly to third parties

Thank you very much

Appendices B: Interview Guide

Individual Interview Guide for youth

Dear Participants of this research, I would like to thank you for your willingness to participate in this research. I am conducting this research for the partial fulfillment of MSW/program in social work/in Addis Abeba University. The purpose of this research is to get an insight of the dynamics of youth-adult partnership and the challenges and opportunities exist for youth adult partnership and to utilize the findings for further strengthening the connection between youth and adults. Your authentic and honest answer is very crucial for the success of this research. Taking part in this research has no any side effect or harms on anyone who is taking part or the relative of the participant. During the interview and at any time of your participation you have a full right to discontinue from your participation. During this interview session you don't need to mention your name and as well your name will not be mentioned on the report of this research.

Background information

1. Age_____2. sex_____

2. Education level_____

What do you know about youth- adult relationship in which youth and adults share role and have equal power in decision making?

What opportunity do you have in your community to work with adults to work in partnership?

Follow up: Who facilitates that opportunity?-If there is any opportunity

Follow up: Please can you elaborate it?

What does the nature of your partnership look like with adults when you get the opportunity to work with them (adults)? (Is it based on equality, or is it one way)

Follow up: How do you see your relationship with adults?

What is the major obstacle that hinders you/as a youth/ and adults to establish a good working relationship in your community?

Follow up: What barriers do you think need to be removed in order to establish youth-adult Partnership in your community?

Follow up: What are the usually described problems from the side of youth that hinders adults to work with youth?

Is there any cultural or familial norm that challenges you from establishing good relationship with adults?

Follow up: If yes (Q7) please would you give me some example? (you may give some examples of proverbs commonly used in society that discourage or encourage the equal partnership between youth and adult)

Do you think it is important for youth and adults to work together in partnership in which youth have equal voice in decision making with adults?

Follow up: what is the importance of working with adults for you, please can you mention it?

On what kind

Follow up: Please tell me in detail why it is important or not.

Follow up: How would you like adults treat you to work with you? of issues do you think adults and youth need to establish partnership to work together in their community?

Follow up: With what kind of adults would you like to establish partner?

On what kind of activities does the adult most of the time invite youth?(labor work or decision making meeting)

Follow up: have you ever been invited to any consultation or decision making meeting for something to be done in your community?

Who should initiate the relationship (partnership) to work together, Adult or youth or organizations?

Follow up: Why?

In which initiative would you like to engage in partnership with adults, is in youth led initiative or adult led initiative?

Follow up: Why you prefer youth led or adult led, please would you elaborate it more?

What opportunities do you see for youth to work in partnership with adults?

If you have anything to add on what we have been discussing you are well come.

Thank you very much for your time and collaboration. If you have any additional idea or suggestion you are well come.

Individual Interview guide- for Adults

Background information

Age_____ and sex_____

Education level,_____ Job_____

Have you ever worked with youth as a partner in your community?

Follow up: If yes what kind of work?

Follow up: What is the nature of your relation and connection with youth?

What opportunities do you see for youth and adults to work together in your community?

Follow up: If yes what are these opportunities?

Whom do you think should create the opportunities for youth and adults to work together? Or facilitate for the youth-adult partnership

What are challenges for you to work with youth/young?

How does difference in age affects your work with youth?

Follow up: Is there any challenges that you face because of generational difference?

What barriers should youth and adults have to overcome in order to work together, based on your experience?

Follow up: What are the behavioral barriers that you think youth should overcome to work with you as a partnership?

Do you see any importance of youth-adult partnership or the importance of adults working with youth?

Follow up: if yes, please would you mention some of its importance?

Follow up: Give me some examples

What do you bring to the table that youth cannot while working with them?

Follow up: Give me some example

In which initiative would you like to engage in partnership with adults, is in youth led initiative or adult led initiative?

Follow up: Why you prefer youth led or adult led, please would you elaborate it more?

Thank you very much for your time and collaboration. If you have any additional idea or suggestion you are well come.

Focus group Interview for youth

Number of participants _____.Sex_____.Place_____

What do you know about youth- adult relationship in which youth and adults share role and have equal power in decision making?

What opportunity do you have in your community to work with adults to work in partnership?

Follow up: Who facilitates that opportunity?-If there is any opportunity

Follow up: Please can you elaborate it?

What does the nature of your partnership look like with adults when you get the opportunity to work with them (adults)? (Is it based on equality, or is it one way)

Follow up: How do you see your partnership with adults?

What is the major obstacle that hinders you/as a youth/ and adults to establish a good working relationship in your community?

Follow up: What barriers do you think need to be removed in order to establish youth-adult Partnership in your community?

Follow up: What are the usually described problems from the side of youth that hinders adults to work with youth?

Is there any cultural or familial norm that hinders you from establishing good relationship with adults?

Follow up: Describe the Cultural or personal barriers (you may give some examples of proverbs commonly used in society that discourage or encourage the equal partnership between youth and adult)

Follow up: Please tell me in detail why it is important or not.

Do you think it is important for youth and adults to work together in partnership in which youth have equal voice in decision making with adults?

On what kind of issues do you think adults and youth need to establish partnership to work together in their community?

Follow up: With what kind of adults would you like to establish partner?

On what kind of activities does the adult most of the time invite youth? (Labor work or on meeting)

Follow up: do they invite you during decision making stage for the community activities that would be conducted

Who should initiate the relationship (partnership) to work together, Adult or youth or organizations?

In which initiative would you like to engage in partnership with adults, is in youth led initiative or adult led initiative?

Follow up: Why you prefer youth led or adult led, please would you elaborate it more?

Follow up: Why

If you have anything to add on what we have been discussing you are well come.

Thank you very much for your time and collaboration. If you have any additional idea or suggestion you are well come.

Focus group interview guide for Adults

Have you ever worked with youth as a partner in your community?

Follow up: If yes what kind of work?

Follow up: What is the nature of your relation and connection with youth?

What opportunities do you see for youth and adults to work together in your community?

Follow up: If yes what are these opportunities?

Whom do you think should create the opportunities for youth and adults to work together? Or facilitate for the youth-adult partnership

What are challenges for you to work with youth/young?

How does difference in age affects your work with youth?

Follow up: Is there any challenges that you face because of generational difference?

What barriers should youth and adults have to overcome in order to work together, based on your experience?

Follow up: What are the behavioral barriers that you think youth should overcome to work with you as a partnership?

Do you see any importance of youth-adult partnership or the importance of adults working with youth?

Follow up: if yes, please would you mention some of its importance?

Follow up: Give me some examples

What do you bring to the table that youth cannot while working with them?

Follow up: Give me some example

Thank you very much for your time and collaboration. If you have any additional idea or suggestion you are well come.

Interview guide for (HEfDA) staff

How does your organization create an opportunity for young people to work in partnership with adults in your projects?

Do you have a written a policy for youth to work in partnership with adults in your program?

Do you purposefully bring in-youth to work with adults as a partner?

Follow up: What do you hope youth people can learn by involving them in this program?

What do you hope youth people can contribute or learn by involving them in your organization (program)?

How do you see the importance of youth-adult partnership in your organization?

How do you see the voice of youth while working with adults as partnership in your program?

What do you think the main challenge for youth to work in partnership with adults?

Follow up: Have you ever tried to bring youth and adults to work together for common purpose and faced challenged?

Follow up: If yes please tell me what are these challenges?

Do you think there are any cultural and familial norms that discourage youths to establish partnership with adults?

. Whom do you think should take the initiative for youth-adult partnership?

What role can HEfDA play to give opportunity for youth to establish a partnership with adults?

Follow up: Please can you mention?

If you have anything to add you are most well come

Thank you so much for your time.

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