

**OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND POSITION OF FEMALE
FLOWER FARM WORKERS
THE CASE OF THREE FLOWER FARMS IN SOUTH WEST
SHOWA ZONE: OROMIYA REGIONAL STATE**



**BY
BETHLEHEM MELESE**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF GENDER
STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN GENDER STUDIES**

**July, 2009
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
ADDIS ABABA**

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF GENDER STUDIES

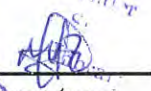
**Opportunities, Challenges and Position of Female Flower
Farm Workers: The Case of Three Flower Farms in
South West Showa; Oromiya Regional State**

Bethlehem Melese Tollosa

Signature 

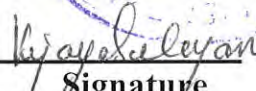
APPROVED BY BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Mulmebet zenebe
Chairperson

Signature 


Date 22/07/09

Dr. Vijaya Subramaniam
Advisor

Signature 

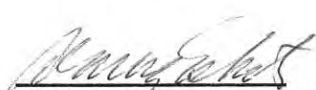
Date 20/07/09

Dr. Mulmebet Zenebe
Internal Examiner

Signature 

Date 30/06/09

Wzo. Almaz Eshete
External Examiner

Signature 

Date 30/06/09

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First of all, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to my advisor Dr. Vigiaya Subramanyam, for her helpful advise, devotion and encouragement from the beginning to the finalization of the study. My gratitude also goes to graduate school for the financial support, which helped me to conduct the research.

I am also very much happy to thank managers, female farm workers and supervisors of the three farms (Ethio Passion PLC, Saron Rose and ET Highland) for their enthusiasm and cooperation by giving information that was essential for the study. I would like to appreciate the government offices those provide information that enrich the study. I would like to thank Ato Ezana Haddis for the material support and his guidance.

Eventually, I also would like to thank my family especially my brother Abebe and my friends for their emotional and financial support that made this study real.

Table of Contents

page

Acknowledgment	i
Table of content	ii
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures and Pictures	vii
List of Annexes	viii
Acronyms	ix
Abstract	x
CHAPTER ONE	
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	3
1.3 Objective of the Study	4
1.3.1 General Objective	4
1.3.2 Specific Objective	4
1.4. Research questions	4
1.5. Operational definitions of key terms	5
1.6. Significance of the Study	5
1.7 Ethical consideration	6
1.8 Limitations of the Study	6
1.9 Organization of the paper	7
CHAPTER TWO	
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	8
2.1 Floriculture Overview	8
2.1.1 The Development of Floriculture Globally	8
2.1.2 African countries experience in the floriculture industry	10
2.1.3 Floriculture in Ethiopia	12
2.2 Women Working in Industries	15
2.2.1 Women's role and position	15

2.2.2 Possible opportunities	16
2.2.3 Challenges women face at work place	17
2.2.3.1 Low Wage	18
2.2.3.2 Harassment at work place	19
2.2.3.3 Health problems	20
2.2.3.4 Lack of labor union	21
2.3 Women participation in floriculture industry	22
2.4 Feminist thought on women employment	24
2.5. Legal and ethical provisions	27
2.5.1 Ethiopian Labor Proclamation	27
2.5.2 International code of conduct	27
2.5.3 Ethiopian code of practice for the floriculture industry	27
 CHAPTER THREE	
METHODOLOGY	29
3.1 Study Area	29
3.2 Profile of farms under the study	30
3.2.1 Ethio Passion PLC	30
3.2.2 Saron Rose	30
3.2.3 ET Highland Flora	31
3.3 Methods of Study	31
3.3.1 Quantitative Methods	31
3.3.2 Qualitative Methods	32
3.4 Data source	33
3.5 Sampling Technique	33
3.5.1 Quantitative Sampling Techniques	33
3.5.2 Qualitative Sample	34
3.6 Instruments used for Data Collection	34
3.7 Data collection procedure	36
3.8 Methods of Data Analysis	36

3.5.2 Qualitative Sample	34
3.6 Instruments used for Data Collection	34
3.7 Data collection procedure	36
3.8 Methods of Data Analysis	36

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION	37
4.1 Socio –Demographic Background of the Respondents	37
4.2 Female workers opportunities in the farm	40
4.2.1 Job opportunity	40
4.2.2 Income	42
4.2.3 Household expense coverage	43
4.2.4 Self confidence	44
4.2.5 Access to information.....	45
4.2.6 Access to education	46
4.2.7 More incentives	47
4.2.8 Working hours.....	47
4.2.9 Increased access to maternity leave	49
4.3 Challenges of female flower farm workers	50
4.3.1 Work related challenges	50
4.3.1.1 Lack of Training	50
4.3.1.2 Job insecurity and low wage	56
4.3.1.3 Over time and weekly rest	59
4.3.1.4 Lack of labor association	60
4.3.1.5 Lack of facilities and safety equipments	61
4.3.2 Gender Based Challenges	66
4.3.2.1 Discrimination	66
4.3.2.2 Sexual Harassment	66
4.3.3 Health associated challenges	71

List of Tables

Table 1: Main flower export countries	Page 13
Table 2: Quantitative method study design.....	Page 32
Table 3: Qualitative method study design	Page 33
Table 4: Distribution of respondents by their age.....	Page 37
Table 5: Percentage distribution of respondents by their Educational level	Page 38
Table 6: Characteristics of respondents by their marital status	Page 39
Table 7: Percentage distribution of respondents who get positive change.....	Page 41
Table 8: Percentage distribution of respondents who start education	Annex I
Table 9: Number of respondents who said there is maternal leave in the farm.	Page 49
Table 10: Number distribution of respondents by their access for ‘on job training’.	Page 50
Table 11: Number respondents who had ‘on job training’.	Page 52
Table 12: Percentage distribution of respondents’ employment status and signed agreement	Page 59
Table 13: percentage distribution of respondents in relation to their wage.	Annex I
Table 14: Number of respondents who get additional payment	Annex I
Table 15: Number distribution of respondents who work over time	Annex I
Table 16: Number distribution of respondents by their weekly rest in their respective Farms.	Annex I
Table 17: Number of respondents in relation to labor in respected farms	Annex I
Table 18: percentage distribution of respondents by their exposure to violence	Page 67
Table 19: Tasks performed in flower farm in deferent position	Page 78

List of Annexes

Annex – I Tables

Annex – II Pictures that show the flower industry

Annex – III Survey questionnaire for female farm workers

Annex – IV Interview guideline for farm workers

Annex – V Interview guideline for farm managers

Annex – VI Focus group discussion guideline for the discusscent

List of Figures and Pictures

- Figure 1: Percentage distribution of respondents by their Birthplace..... page 38
- Figure 2: Percentage distribution of respondents by their financial independency...Page 42
- Figure 3: Percentage distribution of respondents by their self-confidence Page 44
- Figure 4: percentage distribution of respondents by their access to information...Page 45
- Figure 5: Percentage distribution of respondents regarding Salary Increment. Page 47
- Figure 6: Percentage distribution in relation to working hours. Page 48
- Figure 7: percentage distribution of respondents in relation to health problem. ... Page 71
-
- Picture 1: workers taking rest under the green house after lunch. Page 62
- Picture 2: A green house worker working with out gloves and working gown... Page 65

Acronyms

CEDAW	Code for Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
EHA	Ethiopian Horticulture Agency
EHPEA	Ethiopian Horticulture Producers and Exporters Association
EIA	Ethiopian Investment Agency
ETI	Ethical Trading Initiative
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
HEBI	Horticulture Ethical Business Initiative
ILO	International Labor Organization
ICC	International Code of Conduct
IFC	International Flower Coordination
IIRR	International Institute on Rural Reconstruction
IRROB	Irob Relief and Rehabilitation Operations Brotherhood
MoI	Ministry of Information
MoLSA	Ministry of Labor and Social Affair
MoTI	Ministry of Trade and Investment
PLC	Private Limited Company
PPC	Personal Protective Clothes
PPE	Personal Protective Equipments
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
UWEA	Uganda Workers' Education Association
WHO	World Health Organization

ABSTRACT

The development of floriculture industry in Ethiopia has created opportunities for the country and its citizens. Ethiopia is now getting foreign exchange from flower export and the industry has also created job opportunities for both urban and rural population. Women specifically are the dominant work force in the industry. Since it is a new phenomenon, the industry has been assessed by few studies. Majority of the findings from researches and journals put in to question mark the farms labor and welfare system. In light of the findings, this study is new in its nature of assessing the positive impact of the industry on the employees. Thus it has an objective of assessing opportunities, challenges and position of female workers based on a case study of three flower farms in South west Showa zone (Sebeta) Oromiya regional state.

With the aim of the above objective sample survey was conducted, focus group discussion and Interview were held with female farm workers, managers and key informants and observation held by the researcher. The findings gathered from the above methods were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

The result discloses that female farm workers in the selected farms get few opportunities and have challenges due to the poor working condition. They are also working in the low paid position. Income, self-confidence, accesses for information, education and few incentives are some of the opportunities that female farm workers obtained after they get the job in the farm. On the other hand these workers come across challenges like: job insecurity, as majority of them do not have contractual agreements; low wage which does not cover their basic need; lack of training on various issues that may expose them to health and other forms of hazards and if given may protect them from injuries; inadequate protective materials, lack of facilities like: shower, rest room, cafeteria and clinic and the absence of labor union which is their constitutional right.

Based on the findings, majority of women in the farms this study covers are found in low and less skilled position. Except for one farm, men employees occupy the farms managerial positions. And the managers in the farms under the study are aware of the challenges that female workers face through, however due measurers do not seem to be taken to cope with the problems listed above.

Accordingly, the paper concludes that female workers in the flower industry have both opportunities and challenges and (but) are in the low job position. The challenges women face in the industry can be dealt with if the management gives attention for the issues. Due to managerial problems, workers are exposed for various challenges. Therefore the study recommends that farms should respect the constitutional right of workers and respect other laws and regulations like: labor proclamation, International Code of Conduct and Ethiopian code of practice.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Agriculture is the backbone of Ethiopia's economy and will continue to be for some time to come, as 80% of the population is engaged in agriculture, it covers half of the country's economy (MoI, 2005). The country's economy is predominantly agricultural which contributes about 50% of the total GDP (gross domestic product) accounting for 90% of export. Ethiopia's export is mainly dependent on primary products such as coffee, oil seeds, leather, vegetables and other goods (Ibid).

According to the ministry of information, since recent years the economic liberation and the strong commitment of the government to create a supportive environment for the development of private sector have been instrumental to the growth of export trade. One of these private sector export is cut flower (Ministry of Information, 2004).

Producing and exporting cut flower became highly profitable and created job opportunity for citizens in different countries. Israel, Netherlands, India, Kenya and Uganda are some of the countries that highly export flowers to the world market. According to Sisay (cited in Ezana, 2007), the 20th century international trade in cut flower industry has shown a dynamic growth switching to demand driven marketing. Flowers might be a special economic sector. In most developing countries the floriculture mainly depends on foreign markets and the domestic market doesn't get attention by many flower producers. Ethiopia is also one of African countries that export flower to foreign countries.

The Ethiopian government is keen to encourage investors, offering them a five-year tax holiday, loan and duty-free import of machinery, chemicals and fertilizers. Regarding investment, the custom duty exemptions, income tax holidays, exemption from taxes on remittance of capital and loss carry forward are some of the incentives given for both

domestic and foreign investors. Moreover, loan may be granted up to 70% of the total investment with 30% matching fund from the investor (MoTI, 2007).

Flowers are highly perishable products and transported by airfreight to the main consumer markets. Availability of sufficient air cargo capacity at competitive prices with a daily frequency is also high importance for the existence and growth of flower farms (England, 2005).

Ethiopia is an extreme example of the development challenges facing Africa, with at least 5 million people needing food aid to survive (Ibid). But hopes are raising that Ethiopia and its poor neighbors may be at a turning point. Horticulture is one area where private sector reforms have succeeded.

The floriculture industry has expanded explosively. According to the Ethiopian Investment Agency record starting July 1992 up to December 2008, 339 farms have been licensed. Sixty-six of the licensed farms are operational while the rest are in pre-implementation and implementation stage. 800-hectare land, which was covered by green house in 2007/2008, increased to 1200 hectare in 2008/2009 (EIA, 2009).

Even though floriculture is a new phenomena the export of cut flowers are increasing. Ethiopia's position among African suppliers of fresh cut flowers was relatively weak. For example in 2001 Ethiopia was the 11th African leading flower exporter. But now Ethiopia is the second. According to Ato Tsegaye, director of EHPEA, (ETV May 27, 2009) Japan, Dubai and Russia are the dominant countries where Ethiopia exports flowers.

According to Ethiopian Horticulture Producers and Exporters Association (EHPEA, 2008) Ethiopia has exported 18 million cut flowers to the world in 2005/06 with \$22,900,000 and 448,144,926 in 2006/07 with \$63,601,220 This report shows that flower industry's product is increase yearly.

Producing high value export products, such as flowers, supports the employment of many people (Ibid). Since its start in early 1990, floriculture had and is now employing around

70,000 people, mostly female workers (Ethiopia Today, 2007). These changes make it particularly interesting to investigate the effects of female formal labor participation on gender relations and values.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Floriculture is a new phenomenon which has been assessed both its advantage and drawbacks. Media and different journals talk about the benefit of the industry and the opportunities it created for citizens who were jobless.

Employment benefits obtained from the sector is also encouraging. The nature of operations in the production, harvesting, grading and packing is labour intensive. When all the licensed farms become operational 100,000 people are estimated to get job opportunity with additional social and economic benefits to the communities (Ethiopia today, 2008). Since the majority of the farm workers are women both literate and illiterate individuals can earn salary and become bread winner to their family. They also developed sense of independence.

To the contrary, some studies conclude that floriculture industry has negative impact on the life of the workers and the environment. The working condition in the industry and the life of the workers is in danger due to the chemicals and pesticides used in the farm and due to low wage (Ezana, 2007). Female farm workers are also over loaded in their household activity (Ibid).

According to Tigist (2007), "In addition to the chemicals that cause health problems women are exposed for verbal and physical violence and discrimination. Workers also don't have a right to organize labour union or association."

Even though this issue is sensitive and calls for researchers' attention, due to lack of awareness and unavailability of information, very few researches have been conducted on the challenges of the workers. The majority of the workers in the flower farms, more than 80% of the total workers are female. These women who became breadwinner to their families

face a lot of violence and challenges in the working area though have some other opportunities .

Therefore this study tried to assess the opportunities, challenges and position of female flower farm workers in three selected farms found in the south west showa region (Sebeta), namely, Ethio Passion Agro P.L.C (The former Oda Flower Farm), Saron Rose and ET.Highland flora.

1.3 Objective of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The main objective of this study was to find out opportunities, challenges and position of women who are working in the flower industry.

1.3.2 Specific Objective

Specifically this research has been designed to:

- assess the benefits and opportunities of female flower farm workers in the farm.
- examine the challenges they face at work place.
- to assess the job position of female workers in the farms under the study.
- know the managers' view about women's working situation and their role in creating a conducive working environment.

1.4. Research questions

- What are the benefits female workers get in the farm?
- What kind of change (positive or negative)happend in their life since they employed?
- Are there challenges that female workers face while working in the farm?
- What is the job position of female flower farm workers in the farm?
- What is the role of the management in creating safe and healthy environment for the workers in the industry?



1.5. Operational definitions of key terms

Flower Farm – A large farm land where various types of flowers grow for commercial purpose.

Discrimination- An act or treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, a person based on the group, class, or category to which that person belongs rather than on individual merit.

Gender Based Violence- Any kind of offensive act taking place in the work place or violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to some one based on the gender.

Sexual Harassment - Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, to another employee, against his or her wishes. The harasser can be the employee's supervisor, manager, customer, coworker,

Greenhouse – An enclosed glass house used for growing plants in regulated temperatures, humidity, and ventilation. A greenhouse is a structure with a glass or plastic roof and frequently glass or plastic walls; it heats up because incoming solar radiation from the sun warms plants, soil, and other things inside the building faster than heat can escape the structure.

Pack House (post harvest section) – A room where flowers are selected and packed to be exported.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This research will create some understanding about the flower farm workers and the problem they are facing. Since the study also saw the opportunity and position of female workers it can encourage the farm owners to see the gap and fill the rest of the workers' interest. It may also help them to give attention to their employees working condition.

Most importantly, it could be used as an indicator for the legislative bodies to give attention for the right of flower farm workers. This study will also be used as a source of information for various stakeholders such as: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, ILO, EHPEA, Ethiopian Horticulture Agency (EHA), Ethiopian Environment Authority (EEA) etc, and also give an insight for other researchers to do similar research on the area.

1.7 Ethical consideration

The researcher has given due attention and concern to ethical issues, as it is mandatory in a research. First the researcher has clearly explained the purpose and objective of the research for the farm workers, managers and key informants to forward clear impression about the study. The confidentiality of the information has been explained to them and their unwillingness to reveal their, ages, salary and other information, has been respected. Every picture taken in the farm is based on their agreement.

The participants have been informed that any information is obtained will be kept in confidence and will not bring any physical or psychological harm. A researcher has gathered information about the society's culture not to commit offence unknowingly especially while conducting interview and focus group discussion.

Moreover, participants have been clearly informed their right not to tell or any information that they do not want; to walk away at any stage of interview or discussion; to escape any question that is personal and even to pause the recorder when they feel uncomfortable. All information gathered from the Survey, Interview and FGD are held after an agreement of every respondent orally.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The researcher has faced a lot of challenges while conducting this research. The main challenge was unwillingness of the farm owners to open their door for the researcher.

The second challenge was convincing farm workers to be interviewed after the survey gathered since they think that the management will punish them if they give detailed information. However, the managers of the three farms were very cooperative to arrange workers to fill the questionnaire and have interview.

Searching and preparing a conducive environment for FGD participants was another challenge for the researcher. Informants shyness and unawareness to some sensitive issues like: Sexual violence, sexual harassment and HIV limit the researcher to obtain first hand information from the farm workers. In addition, as the study area is far from Addis Ababa and farms are found far places, financial constraint was also part of the problem that limited the researcher to achieve the entire goal successfully.

1.9 Organization of the paper

The paper is organized in five chapters. The first chapter deals with the Introduction part with sub division of background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, definition of key terms, significance of the study, ethical consideration and limitations of the Study. The second chapter includes literature review and Feminist thought on women employment. The third chapter deals with research methodology and the study area profile. The fourth part includes data presentation, analysis and findings. And the last chapter, chapter five contains the Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Floriculture Overview

2.1.1 The Development of Floriculture Globally

Producing and exporting flowers started in 20th century globally. “Cut flowers are internationally traded as high value commodity. World -wide, retail trade is worth over US \$ 25 billion per annum .The largest markets are Germany, Japan and USA. The retail value of each of these markets is 3-5 billion US\$ per annum” (Sudan Tribune, 2008).

Spencer (2008) explains that, the flower industry works like a simple chain: growers grow flower, sellers obtain. Then the flowers are sold to vendors or to wholesalers before consumers buy them in bunches or bouquets. Floriculture (as a major non traditional agricultural export sector) continued to increase tremendously in terms of acreage and flower varieties (UWEA, 2006). Exported cut flowers from the Netherlands to Germany are the primary component of the international flower industry and as well as a significant part of the European trade, which by itself accounts for a big part of the world trade (Ibid).

In American continents Colombia is the United State major supplier. Japan gets its cut flower supply from the more diverse base, with New Zealand, Europe, the Philippines, and Taiwan being the most important ones. On the supply side, few sellers group dominate the industry. The Dutch Flower Group and Surely Group are the largest flower suppliers in the European market. Both of them have divisions that deal with wholesale, imports and retail. Their sub-companies also perform the process of production and distribution throughout the year (Spencer 2008).

There are about twenty to thirty types of cut flowers in the international sales. Rose, Chrysanthemum, Tulip, Lily, Carnation, Gerbera and Freesia are the most popular. Within each of these flower types there are many varieties and each year new ones are released. This is because, in addition to agronomic characters, novelty is an extremely important factor in the successful marketing of new varieties.

Table 1: Main cut flower Exporters from 2004-2005

Country	Export value (US\$ Million)
Holland	1,590
Colombia	430
Israel	135
Thailand	70
Kenya	70
Ecuador	50
Italy	50
Spain	45
Zimbabwe	35
New Zealand	30
Australia	10-30

(Retrieved from <http://www.mdgbangla.org>)

As the above table shows Holland, Colombia and Israel are the first three leading exporters to the world market. Among those twelve leading exporters, only Kenya from African countries competes to the world cut flower market.

Since floriculture becomes a worldwide export commodity and main income source for many countries, countries also have different experiences, as it is a newly emerged industry. For example Roses have become one of the top five sources of export revenue for Ecuador. In just five years, Ecuadorian roses have become the new status flower in the United States that help generate \$240 million a year and tens of thousands of jobs in this once-impooverished region north of Quito. (Mena and Silvia, 2005)

Costa Rica is also one of the countries that export flowers to the world market. In Costa Rica, which grows large quantities of leather leaf ferns used as a green accent for flower arrangements, the expanding industry has run afoul of neighbors and raised charges of government lack of ability and ineptitude in protecting worker health. (Ibid) A study by a

professor at Costa Rica University between 1994 and 2000, reveals that the occupational health situation in the Costa Rican floriculture industry as very poor (Tenenbaum, 2002).

Colombia is the largest flower exporter in the world after Holland (see table 1). Hence the industry is playing a vital role in generating an income for the Colombian people. 65% of the workers in the Colombia floriculture industry are women out of the 800,000 of Colombians who depend on the flower industry for their livelihood. The country now supplies about 60 percent of the U.S. flower market and the government counts on the industry to serve as an important alternative to coca, the basis of cocaine. Flower exports were up to 29 percent in 2005 over 2004. Even though workers in Colombia flower farms face similar problems but their working condition is better than other countries (Ibid).

However the industry also caused health problem for many of its workers. According to the studies by the International Labor Organization and the Catholic University (ILO, 1999), showed that women in the industry had more miscarriages than average and more than 60 percent of all workers suffered headaches, nausea, blurred vision or fatigue.

Sylvie Jolly, a television journalist with Radio-Canada, reported in February 2002 on some of the problems in Ecuador's floriculture industry. "Many of the pesticides used in the industry have been banned from use in the United States or Canada, because of the hazard they present to humans." Regarding work practices, she says, "because owners don't want to lose time by waiting for pesticides to dry or disperse: Immediately when the spraying is finished, workers have to go back to cut roses while leaves are still wet with product (Thompson, 2003).

2.1.2 African countries experience in the floriculture industry

Among African countries, Kenya is the first flower exporter to the world market (see table1). It is true that Kenya is the leading exporter of flowers to Europe, commanding 25% of total sales. As a result Kenya beats Israel and Colombia, which are second and third, respectively. And it is no wonder that every year, at least extra 200 hectares of land are put

under flower farms - arguably the fastest expansion rate in the world. (News and Press, 2005).

The Kenya horticulture industry also employs over 50, 000 people, and therefore indirectly supports hundreds of thousands of Kenyans (ETI Briefing, 2005). Among those workers in flower farms are predominantly women. Insufficient protections for cold store workers lack of potable water, scarcity of clean water to wash hands before eating are some of the complaints of Kenyan flower farm workers. Many workers complaining of work-related illness unfairly dismissed or intimidated to prevent them from complaining further or seeking compensation (Ibid).

Due to this, NGOs, government, industry and other stakeholders formed the Horticultural Ethical Business Initiative (HEBI) in Kenya to work together to assess the situation for workers on flower farms and create a common code and social auditing methodology. HEBI members hoped that this in turn would enable workers and management to address issues arising from the improved audits (Ibid).

The cut flower industry has exploded recently in Tanzania also. Floriculture production in the country is increasing even though pesticide is poisoning the workers. In the 1980s, according to an International Labor Organization (ILO, 2000) report, pesticides poisoned 368,000 Tanzanian people annually. On the cut flower industry there cited in the study: a shortage or lack of material safety data sheets and instruction manuals; worker ignorance of the identity and hazards of chemicals, improper storage of chemicals; lack of emergency treatment for accidental poisonings; no training for operators to recognize early signs of accidental poisoning, improper use and maintenance of personal protective equipment (when provided), and inadequate disposal of waste are some of the deficiencies in pesticide handling listed by Tanzanian government.(Ibid)

Flower farming has been promoted in Uganda's exports arising out of the need to diversify its exports as new foreign exchange earner. Majority of workers in Uganda cut flower farms are women. A research conducted by Uganda Workers' Education Association (UWEA, 2006) reveals that these women face a lot of problems like: sexual harassment,

short period of maternity leave and lack of childcare facilities for those breast-feeding. Pregnant workers are not given any special treatment till delivery.

Flower farm workers in Uganda similarly are subjected to various challenges and violence. For example the few workers who are aware of their rights, the supervisors are gagged for fear of losing their jobs and victimizing. In some instance, treatment may depend on the workers past record with the supervisors (Ibid).

2.1.3 Floriculture in Ethiopia

Ethiopia has long been known for exporting agricultural products like coffee and oil seeds to foreign countries. Agriculture is the rock-bed of Ethiopian's economy . It plays a key role both in the development of the nation as well as in the well being of its people (MoI, 2004).

Ethiopia possesses enormous natural potential resources by virtue of its endowment. Its endowments are likely to facilitate and enhance its development in the agricultural, agro-industrial, construction and tourism sectors. Ethiopia is exerting efforts to create a more business-friendly atmosphere. Modestly speaking the country has been a destination for investment opportunities, which has assured potential for investment fortunes (Ministry of Information, 2005).

As a result, recently horticulture became one of the sectors that many local and foreign investors are interested in. So the export of cut flowers is increasing and grows to be one of Ethiopia's export goods.

Ethiopia's burgeoning flower industry developed out of the European flower market, which began in the northern part, and expanded rapidly at the end of 20th century into the southern. Until 2000, one third of traded cut flowers were grown in southern areas, mainly East and South Africa (Jimma Times, 2008). Ethiopia has now also become one of the places where the industry is booming. The climate is one of the reasons that cause Ethiopia preferable for flower production. According to Ethiopian embassy in china:

Over two decades have elapsed since Ethiopia started exporting horticulture products. Ethiopian agro climate condition makes it suitable for the production of a broad range of fruits, vegetables as well as cut flowers. The range of altitude, temperature and soil variability of the country has created an enormous ecological diversity and a huge wealth of biological resources.

In reference to the above mentioned study, Ethiopia has globally competitive advantage in the production of roses in quality, freight cost and production cost. The major flower varieties produced in the country and entered in to export business includes, Roses, Allium, Carnation and Carthamus Static (Yellow, purple, White) (Spencer, 2008).

The total number of licensed projects increased from 235 in 2006 to 339 in 2008 with aggregated capital of 12.2 billion birr. Out of them 139 of the projects with an aggregated capital of 5.7 billion birr are owned purely by foreign investors and the rest owned by local investors and foreign investors joint with domestic ones (EIA, 2009). The Ethiopian floriculture demand in the international market is very high. For instance the Ethiopian rose competes in quality with roses grown in Holland as well as in Columbia (Ibid).

To grow high quality roses the altitude plays a vital role, because the country's diversified agro ecology varies in terms of altitude, soil classification and other natural resources especially with the provisions of all the necessary agronomic practices and infrastructure requirements. Ethiopia has a comparative advantage in the production and export of cut flowers as a result of its suitable agro-ecological conditions locations and relatively low labor cost. (MOI, 2005)

In addition to the climate, the attractive incentives government offers cheap labor and production cost have attracted not only domestic investors but also foreign investors from Europe and Middle East.

Ethiopia which is located in the horn of north-eastern part of Africa, popularly known as the horn is regarded to be a gate way of investment opportunities due to the availability of natural resources, good power supply and communication

facilities, political stability, investor friendly policies, relatively cheap labor, easy access to markets, incentive bonanza etc. (Ethiopia Today, 2007)

A score of investors from the Netherlands, Germany, India and Israel have secured licenses for floricultural development covering 450 hectare of land in 2006 (Mail & Guardian online, 2007). The number of foreign investors and the land they get is increasing yearly. “The reason for the growing involvement and interest of investors in the Horticulture and Floriculture industries is the renewed commitment of the government to reactivate the agricultural export sector.” (Ibid) According to the statistics from Ethiopian Investment Agency more than 1000 hectares of land taken by 139 foreign investors until Dec 2008 (EIA, 2009).

Moreover, the Ethiopian Horticulture Producers and Exporters Association believe floriculture has become a flourishing business in Ethiopia; the country would take the lead among African countries in the industry if on-going efforts continue unimpeded (IRROB, 2007).

Ethiopia was expected to earn more than \$125 million from flower export in 2007, a five – fold increase on the 2006 figure. For example last year (2007/2008) the coffee sector exported around 170,888 tons and earned \$525,203 million, which doesn't have a significant change from the previous year. But the flower sector exported 1,105,5 million stems and gained \$111,731 which has \$48.132 difference from the previous year (MOTI, 2008).

For this reason many believe, though coffee remained to be the Ethiopia's top foreign currency earner for over half a century, it may be dominated by flower sales reaching unprecedented numbers. The IRAN DAILY (2007) confirms this idea by saying: “the smell of flowers is displacing the aroma of coffee as a driving force in the Ethiopia economy.”

2.2 Women Working in Industries

2.2.1 Women's role and position

Even though, women cover the majority of agricultural work, they remain as invisible parts of the development that is taking place in our country. "That women play a substantial role in development is no longer a disputed fact. As mothers and housewives, they engender the labor force and sustain and maintain households through cleaning, cooking, fetching water, collecting fuel wood and caring for the young, the sick and the old" (Tanzran, 2005).

Even if women are found to be the major food producers, policy makers, development planners and agricultural service deliverers still perceived farmers as only males (FAO, 2005). For this reason, women find it more difficult than men to gain access to valuable resources such as land, credit, agricultural inputs, technology, extension training and services that would enhance their production capacity.

Women participate in every kind of job opportunities even though women's labor does not get the appropriate attention and acknowledgment (Evans & Barbara, 1989). Women were the lowest-paid workers in most job classification and more likely to be employed in seasonal and temporary work because a particular society saw their participation in the paid work force as a temporary phenomena short step in their progression towards the expected adult roles of wife and mother (Mercedes, 1997). In agro- based developing economies, women are responsible for household food security and contribute to the production of marketed agricultural produce.

In terms of where they are employed, more women are engaged in agriculture in the low- growth and transition economies. In the high growth economies (Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand), they are found more in the service sector, and are increasing in the industrial sector (Pineda, 2006).

In Africa, women undertake about 90% of the work involved in food 'crops' processing and providing water and fuel wood for the household and 80% in food storage and transport from

the farm to the household (Evans & Barbara, 1989). Furthermore they contribute 90% of the labor for hoeing and weeding, and 60% for harvesting and marketing and processing of agricultural products (Tanzran, 2005). Women's participation in the labor force sector, a status in employment, and incomes compared to those of men are as varied as the national economies with in a country depending not only on economic trends but also on cultural factors and national policies (Pineda, 2006).

These trends are explained by changing patterns of work. There is an increase in export – oriented manufacturing exemplified by enterprises located in economic zones, which employ 80% women on the average. “Service industries such as data processing, telecommunications, tourism, finance and insurance, which also employ more women, are on the rise” (*Ibid.*)

The supply side cause of women's employment in export factories in developing is more simple and universal: like men, the need and want to work (Tinker, 1990). As a result even women not previously in the labor force, recently they dominantly flock to the export factories. Their reasons for waiting to work are primarily economic to enhance individual and family income – but there are also social and cultural factors involved. In most developing countries the structure of the economy does not provide many modern wage jobs for women, most of whom are concentrated in inferior employment in farming, domestic service in the informal sector (*Ibid.*).

Many jobs are conceived as ‘male’ or ‘female’ preserves for which members of the opposite sex are not considered. This is especially apparent in certain professional and supervisory occupations, which are reserved for men, and in some low skilled blue-collar jobs for which only women are thought fit (ILO, 1984).

2.2.2 Possible opportunities

Women who work outside home may get better opportunities than those who don't. Those who spend their day at work can have access for information and new technologies. Women develop self-confidence when they have a job because being an employee makes a different life style for a woman. Earning income is the major benefit that women get when they start

working outside home. They may also have a better attitude for themselves and can control their reproduction.

Others point to the changed supply of female workers due to increased longevity and decreased fertility, resulting in significantly different life patterns no longer defined by the rhythms of pregnancy, child birth, and lactation (Evans & Barbara, 1989).

Historians and economists debate the cause of these changes. Certainly the managerial revolution and the growth of the service sector drove much of the economic change in the twentieth century. Creating job opportunity to women Economic growth and raising productivity raised real wages for both men & women significantly (Ibid)

2.2.3 Challenges women face at work place

Working women face a lot of challenges at the work place. High discrimination, gender division of labor, sexual harassment, low wage, gender based violence, lack of union are some of the challenges that women face at their workplace. Women are usually exposed for those mentioned and other problems due to many reasons.

According to Hale (1996:8-9) cited in (Pineda, 2006) *women are flexible in the following sense: They are recruited when needed and more easily dismissed when the time comes to move on. They have always been vulnerable to temporary, part time work without proper agreements or trade union rights. They are paid less, particularly if they are young and inexperienced. As a result they suffer from "increased insecurity, intensity of work, health and safety risks, disregard for family responsibilities, and problem of organizing.*

Lack of or little education, being un-skilled and /or semi-skilled worker, lack of awareness about rights and being female at the labor force are also major causes for their challenges. "Globalization also adjusted the labor market because it has led to three main trends in the labor market: flexibilization, informalization and migration. These trends are built on

gendered realities that place women in more vulnerable, disadvantaged, and marginalize position in relation to men” (Ibid).

Whatever the case, employers who have greater access to cheap pools of suitable female labor gain a huge advantage at the expense of displaced and exploited women workers. However, technological developments also lead to polarization in the work force between the high status and multi-skilled specialists (mostly men), and the semi-or –low skilled flexible workers (mostly women). When jobs require higher skills due to technological trends, women who have less access to training tend to be displaced. (Ibid)

2.2.3.1 Low Wage

In 19th century the Women’s Industrial Council in England and similar organizations raised women’s employment as a public issue and investigations found out that women’s employment as a problem. They give serious attention for wage difference between men and women and the effect of women’s industrial employment on their physical and moral health and on home and family life. (Pennington & Belinda, 1989)

Even when fully employed, large numbers of people lived in poverty because of the unevenness of wage-rates and the existence of casual labor in many industries. Inadequate or irregular earning came to be seen as a major cause of poverty (Ibid). New employment opportunities within so-called "free zones" and "export processing zones (EPZs)" can help women rebuild their lives as well as their country's economy after wars or natural disasters (ILO, 1999)

However the wage earned by women workers in different export industries is typically lower than average wage for the manufacturing factors as a whole. There are many reasons for this. Kessler, (1990) believes that custom or tradition played uncalculated but an acknowledge role in case of men and women wage because they are gendered:

A critical part of the chemical mix that determined the wage of workers in general involved something intangible called ‘custom’. If a male worker was paid according to some formula that reflected the value of what he produced and the

difficulty of replacing him, he was also paid according to what he and other workers thought he was worth.

So according to Kessler, custom or tradition influenced male and female wages in different ways.

As cheap labor in export-oriented industries meant to earn more dollars for the country, women are oftentimes subjected to super-exploitation and deplorable working condition. Many women workers who are unorganized, unheard and/or invisible have to make do with stagnant wage while prices escalate (Pineda, 2006).

The job characteristics of these industries also fit well with the needs and characteristics of female labor constrained by sexual division of labor. Readily learned skills requiring manual dexterity and patience with tedious tasks make women appropriate workers, conditioned as they are by culture and extensive experience with sewing, food processing, and other household tasks (Tinker, 1990).

Since Export industries are typically of more recent vintage that dominate most third world manufacturing sectors: thus their workers are younger, have less seniority and receive lower wages. Export industries are also usually labor intensive and must be competitive on the world market: they consequently pay less than tariff-protected (Ibid).

2.2.3.2 Harassment at work place

For young girls limited by education, family, poverty and geographical location the move to work outside the home only reaffirmed their dependent status and reinforced their familial responsibilities, and in the factories their youth and naivety made them vulnerable to exploitation (Mercedes, 1997). Among this vulnerability, sexual harassment is very common at work place. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexually determined behavior, such as:- physical contact, a demand or request for sexual favors, showing pornography, any other physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature.

According Mena & Silvia (2005),

A woman, as an individual, can suffer any kind of violent action, or be the victim of a crime, just like a man. But women are also the victims of another series of crimes based on their condition as women. A series of social and cultural factors allow for such forms of aggression. Women may become victims of violence due to their comparative physical weakness, and their culturally assigned sexual role of docility and submission. Men then apply the power that they are given by the different sexual and social role that they are assigned; this is manifested in a variety of situation, including the workplace.

Jimma Times (2008) also sees female flower farm workers challenges and said, “Women workers are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, sexual harassment, no maternity leave, overcrowded housing and low wages.” The issue of sexual harassment and abuse has been given little importance in the labor sphere. Cultural stereotypes and prejudices prevent people from considering such incidents to be crimes. Since women confront and put up with similar aggressions in the home, sexual harassment and abuse in the work place is not considered a unique situation. (Mena. and Silvia, 2005)

2.2.3.3 Health problems

There are ILO standards (Pineda, 2006), which aim to protect working women’s health, particularly during and after pregnancy. These include excluding women from types of work involving exposure to lead and radiation, and prohibition of night work and overtime work for them. There are conventions which say that women should as much as possible not be made to carry heavy loads and to underground work in mines.

Ethiopian Labor Proclamation No 377/2003 Article 92 states that an employer shall take the necessary measure to safeguard adequately the health and safety of the workers. The proclamation specifically ensures women’s health in Article 87. The Article says,

- It is prohibited to employ women on type of work that may be particularly hazardous or harmful to their health.
- No pregnant woman shall be given an assignment outside permanent place of work provided; however, she shall be transfer to another place of work if her job is dangerous to her health or pregnancy as ascertained by a medical doctor.

Moreover, CEDAW also give emphasis for pregnant woman's health condition. Art 11 says, "In order to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or maternity and to ensure their effective right to work state parties shall take appropriate measure to provide special protection to women during pregnancy in types of work proved to be harmful to them." However working women especially in labor intensive industries are highly exposed for various health problems in developing countries (Tinker, 1990).

The case of floriculture workers is the same as workers in multinational cooperation. Jimma Times (2008) for example, reveals that flower farm workers develop health problems as a result of being exposed to dangerous chemicals and working conditions on the job. "Workers are forced to work long hours, can be dismissed at will and often handle dangerous chemicals without the proper protective equipment."

2.2.3.4 Lack of labor union

Labor union can be one way of empowering women at work pace. According to one employee in Canadian garment factory (Mercedes, 1997), the lesson of trade union activism lasted a lifetime she said. Being a member of labor union helped her to learn how to speak in front of others and developed self-confidence. This is because that attending various meeting asking questions about different issues help women to know about their rights and duties at work place.

According to Pennington & Belinda (1989), there are different reasons, which cause absence of union and affected women workers to organize themselves in the late 19th and early 20th. Some of them are the character of women's occupation; they generally employed as semi-skilled or unskilled workers among whom, has less awareness about union; their wage is the second reason. Since majority of the women earn low wage it is difficult for them to pay

According to Saito and Weidman (1991), this is particularly true in the case of Sub Saharan Africa where women provide most of the labor and make key decisions for many agricultural practices. In many parts of Ethiopia, women are the main labor providers to produce food items for household consumption with the exception of ploughing and sowing, which is mainly reserved for men, Ethiopian women participated in every aspects of Agricultural Production such as weeding, harvesting and post harvest activities.

According to Zenebwork cited in Tigist (2007), although women played a very considerable role in Agricultural productivity, most records and the society underestimated or completely ignored their participation .For example Official Census records are mostly reflecting gender biased results which grouped men as farmers and women as housewives or domestic workers, though the reality makes women an integral part of the production process and expose them to dual responsibilities as domestic and productive workers.

This women's participation in production, applies not only to food production which is long recognized as primarily a women's activity, but also increasingly to other agricultural activities that range from processing and marketing to cash cropping and animal husbandry.

On the other hand, the role of Ethiopian women has not been restricted to subsistence farming only instead they are engaged in different income generating activities. In the recent years, with the spread of Commercial farms, Ethiopian women begun to be employed as plantation workers because of the labor-intensive nature of the farms especially in the floriculture industry. The new initiatives taken by the government to expand number of Commercial farms especially those, which are engaged in the production of different floriculture products seemed profitable to the state. In these farms there are large numbers of Ethiopian women who are employed by the different organizations because of the special necessity to employ women than men (England, 2005). In other words flower farm production requires very sensitive, active, patient and caring personality that is commonly associated with women character (Ibid). Due to this stereotypical thinking most of the farms tend to recruit more women than men.

Even if women are highly employed in these industries various studies reveal that women working in the floriculture industry are disadvantaged due to various challenges they are exposed to. In Ethiopian case very few studies have been conducted on the area. The finding of majority of the researches is similar. Safety and health issues, labor union, working hours, equality of treatment, type of employment, medical and other facilities are major issues raised by the researchers (ILO, (2000), Tigist, (2006), Ezana, (2007) and Taddese, (2008).

According to Tigist female workers in the industry are not provided with adequate wage and benefits. They are also assigned to time taking and low paid jobs. Ezana also finds out unequal treatment of male and female workers and job insecurity due to lack of contract agreement. Similarly Taddese's research reveals lack of labor union and absence of freedom to form association a major workers problem in the floriculture industry.

Even though these and other works have assessed the working condition of flower farm workers none of them assessed the opportunities and management's role in creating conducive working environment. Hence the researcher got interested to find out whether female flower farm workers are benefited by the job opportunity they are provided with and whether the management plays a vital role to tackle female workers challenges by creating safe working environment.

2.4 Feminist thought on women employment

Feminist theory aims to understand the nature of inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relations and sexuality. While generally providing a critique of social relations, much of feminist theory also focuses on analyzing gender inequality and the promotion of women's rights, interests, and issues. Themes explored in feminism include discrimination, stereotyping inequality in all social, political and employment objectification (especially sexual objectification), oppression, and patriarchy. (Lovell, 2003)

Feminist theorists begin from the realization that, in the context of a patriarchal society, men and women live different lives and consequently, have different experiences. There is an attempt to understand the power and privilege differential exhibited between men and women. By analyzing its origin, feminists developed different theories to address this paradigm,

Different feminist theories have different perspective about women and employment. Marxist feminism for instance believes that Primary source of female oppression is the capitalist economic system i.e. inferior position of women linked to class-based capitalistic system and family structure within this system (Ibid). Marxist feminism arises out of the doctrines of Karl Marx, whose theory is centered less on the material aspects of life than on the more broadly defined social ones. It sees women's subordination as a consequence of the introduction of private property and then women became the property of men and the first oppressed class.

Since women always have unpaid work (housewife) and most low paying and boring jobs, their oppression caused by their economic dependence in the family but also in the work force, according to Marxists this keeps an exploitable reserve labor force (Gimenez, 1998). Capitalism creates a systematic inequality; Marxism understands this inequality to arise from processes, which are intrinsic to capitalism as an economic system. A minority of people (the capitalist class) own all the factories/energy sources/resources, etc. which everyone else depends on in order to live.

The great majority (the working class) must work out of sheer necessity, under conditions set by the capitalists, for the wages the capitalists pay (Lovell, 2003). Since the capitalists make their profits by paying less in wages than the value of what the workers actually produce, the relationship between the two classes is necessarily one of irreconcilable antagonism. The capitalist class owes its very existence to the continued exploitation of the working class (Ehrenreich, 1976).

Drawing upon a Marxist study of class oppression, social feminists argued "the capitalist economic system oppresses women as a group, just as it oppresses the working class as a

whole” (Ibid). According to socialist feminists this capitalist system of women's oppression can be eradicated when women workers stand in solidarity with each other. When industrialisation changed the way in which the system produces goods, women's lives changed completely (Lovell, 2003). Socialist feminism attempts to overcome these problems through the production of historically situated accounts of women's oppression that focus on both capitalism and patriarchy.

On the other hand, liberal feminists do not challenge capitalism or patriarchy or any other fundamental structures of society, but rather look for the removal of barriers that prevent women operating effectively in the public sphere on equal terms with men (Ibid). The emphasis of liberal feminism is on inequality between men and women in the public sphere of life - employment, education and politics. They explain women's exclusion or inequality with reference to ideas of female inferiority or incapability that inform the upbringing and education of both men and women.

Consistently with the above theories women in the floriculture industry are exploited for low wage and division of labor. Female workers in the industry earn less than male workers since there is division of labor. Women are forced to enter this labor force due to their economic dependency on family or husbands. In addition to the capitalist system they are oppressed by the patriarchal nature of the society. Employers and co-workers express their superiority over female workers in the course of gender based violence and harassment.

Women are considered as caregivers and emotionally attached with flowers so the floriculture industry highly demands female labor than male. However, this preference in the floriculture industry exploited them for various challenges. Women are looked-for for their nursery ability and assigned in tedious, low skill and routine job i.e. caring flowers but men are needed for masculine labor which is high paid and has more value than the female one.

Since both men and women provided equal labor force there should not be any kind of discrimination in the case of payment and access for benefits. To guarantee this equality laws and rules should be issued from the legislative body.

2.5. Legal and ethical provisions

2.5.1 Ethiopian Labor Proclamation

The Ethiopian labor proclamation revised in 2004 clarifies the workers and employers employment relations at the work place. The proclamation has about 191 Articles that guarantee the rights and duty of workers and employers obligation. Article 12, specifically states the employer's obligation like: to provide worker with necessary working materials; to pay workers wage; to respect worker's human dignity; to defray the cost of medical examination of; to all the necessary occupational safety and health measures etc. The proclamation also secures workers' right for annual, maternal and sick leave with payment.

2.5.2 International code of conduct

The international code of conduct is organized by International Flower Coordination (IFC) in order to improve Labour, Social, Health and Safety Standards; Use of Pesticides and Chemicals and Environmental Protection Standards in the floriculture industry. The code of conduct mainly focuses in the above three major issues. The ICC developed these standards based on a participation and discussion with Flower Producers, Importers, Supermarkets, NGOs, International Unions and Specialists in Europe, Africa and South America (IFC 2004).

The Guideline integrates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Covenant on civil and political rights, Covenant on economic, social and cultural rights and the relevant core ILO Labour Conventions. Since it does not force companies to follow the guideline, the ICC simply provides information for companies to improve their working environment with the purpose of getting better competition in the market.

2.5.3 Ethiopian code of practice for the floriculture industry

Ethiopian Code of Practice was developed by the Ethiopian Horticulture Producers and Exporters Association (EHPEA) and called *EHPEA Code of Practice for sustainable flower production*. The code of practice was prepared to provide a mechanism that enables the Ethiopian floriculture sector to achieve the highest performance standards in order to

obtain and safeguard its continuous improvement and sustainable development thereby improve competitive position, by ensuring:

- Long term economic viability of the sector
- Sustainable and safe development and skills enhancement of labour force
- Continuous and responsible management of the environment
- Active contribution to the community in which they operate
- Enhancement of consumer health and safety

(EHPEA code of practice, 2007)

The code of practice was issued in 2007. However, issues that are raised in the code are very limited in its implementation by many flower farms.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Designing a research is the process of making all decisions related to the research project before they are carried out (Blaikie, 2000). The steps of the research that is study area, methods of the study, sampling techniques, source and instruments of data collection, data collection procedure and methods of data analysis are discussed under this section.

3.1 Study Area

Conducive policies set to promote free market economy, sustainable peace and good governance has witnessed the commitment of Ethiopia to achieve the 2015 Millennium Development Goal and become competitive in the global market. Taking advantage of these favorable policies, a number of domestic and foreign investors are undertaking different investment initiatives throughout the country (Ethiopia Today, 2007).

Floriculture is one of the investment areas that attract both domestic and foreign investors to invest their capital in different parts of Ethiopia. Oromiya is one of the regions where such significant development endeavors are taking place. The region's suitable climate, excess water and fertile soil are among others that make the place preferable for flower production. Above 70% of flower projects are found in Oromiya region (Ethiopian Investment Agency, 2009). This has made floriculture to become second production next to coffee in the region.

Sebeta, the study area, is one of the towns found in the Southwest Showa zone of Oromiya regional state where a number of flower projects operate next to Holleta (west Showa zone). Sebeta has an area covering 87572 hectare, 87% of it covered by agriculture and 0.4% or 357.3 hectare taken by floriculture industry. Its altitudinal variation ranges from 1800 to 3335 meters above sea level. Its temperature varies from 12.5oC to 24.3oC, which is suitable for the flower production. Majority of the population of Sebeta are engaged in agriculture and some of them work in the recently developed floriculture industry (Sebeta town Administration).

According to the information from Sebeta investment bureau there are about eighteen flower farms in Sebeta out of which eleven of them are on production. These farms have created job opportunities for about 2979 people. When as by the time the rest seven farms start production more than 6000 people will have job in the farms. The study conducted in three flower farms found under the administration of Sebeta town. The three farms selected based on their long years of operation and number of workers. The farm managers and owners compliance also contribute for the selection.

3.2 Profile of farms under the study

3.2.1 Ethio Passion PLC

Ethio Passion Private Limited Company is found at Alemgena while their head office is found in Addis Ababa. It is a share company owned by France and Ethiopian investors. The company started operating in Ethiopia in 2004 and officially started exporting flower on March 2006. The farm generally holds 20 hectare but only 6 of its total area is on production. Amelia, Sorraya, Sunlight, Moulin Rouge, Black Bacara, are types of flower found in Ethio Passion show house. Sweet Candia, Friendship, Teracota and Azafran are flowers for commercial. Holland, Russia, Japan and Dubai are countries where the farm exports those flowers. The farm has about 200 employees of whom about 85% of them are female workers. The term of employment in the organization is permanent after three months of contract. Salary is therefore paid on a monthly basis (Production Manager of the farm).

3.2.2 Saron Rose

Saron Rose is found in Sebeta town Dima woreda. An Ethiopian Investor owns the farm. It was established in 2006 and start production in May 2007. Saron Rose landed in 20 hectare. 6 hectare of the land is on production and 4 on expansion. The farm started working with 20 million birr, other than now the capital is estimated to be about 35 million birr. There are about 250 workers, 48 of them are permanent and the rest are daily laborers. Out of 48 permanent workers only 5 of them are women supervisors who were promoted from green house and pack house. Male permanent workers in the farm are hired based on

their profession (majority diploma holders). Among the daily laborers women constitute 90% Spray workers in the farm get frequent milk supply.

The farm exports various types of flowers to Dutch and Dubai. Milva, Upper Gold, Upper Class, High& Magic, High & Peace, Black Backra are some of the flowers that the farm exports (Saron Rose Production Manager).

3.2.3 ET Highland Flora

ET Highland Flora also found in Sebeta town Dima woreda, 29km far from Addis. ET highland farms started exporting flowers to the international market around December 2005. The farm covers 20 hectare and 12.4 of it is covered by green house. The farm has about 420 employees, 390 of them are women. The term of employment in the organization is permanent after three months prohibition period. Every employee has the right to ask permanent position if he/she works 90 days in the company and no wage difference between women and men is applied. The farm export different varieties like: Alyssa, Aqua, Bibi, Duo Unique Poeme, Tropical Amazon, Valentino, Viva, Wild Calypso etc. Starting from July 2007- July 2008, they sent 19 million stems (ET Highland Farm manager).

3.3 Methods of Study

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed in the study. The quantitative method was used as a supporter for the qualitative one. Both methods used by many researchers in order to obtain quantifiable and subjective information. “We need both quantitative and qualitative indicators and methods of data collection to measure gender inequality and build a more accurate picture. The quantitative and qualitative data should compliment each other” (Beetham and Justina, 2007).

3.3.1 Quantitative Methods

Quantitative method has been employed for the purpose of collecting primary data through survey method. “An important feature of the use of quantitative is their highly structured nature” (Blaikie, 2000). Since it deals with the ‘external’ reality quantitative research

conceived as reliable and valid (Ibid). There fore the researcher used structured questionnaire for gathering primary data in the study.

Table 2: Quantitative method study design

Study Area Sebeta Town	Flower Farms	Women Population	Sample Size(10% of Employees)
Alemgena Woreda	Ethio Passion P.L.C	170	17 women
Dima Woreda	Saron Rose	180	18 women
Dima Woreda	ET Highland Flora	390	39 women
Total		740	74

3.3.2 Qualitative Methods

One way to emphasize the strength and minimize the weakness is to use more than one method in a study. A researcher can cover the weakness of one method with the strength of another (Best and James, 2008). Combining method is applied in many social science researches. According to Axinn and Lisa (2006) “All methods have strength and weakness. Combinations of multiple methods that achieve this counterbalancing aim are a particularly valuable.”

Qualitative methods are also considered important to gender researcher for evaluating the nuances of many of the social phenomena important to an analysis of gender relation that can not be easily quantified by numerical statistics or values (Denzin and Lincoln, (1994). In order to obtain detailed and consistent information the researcher therefore used the following design to collect the needed data.

Table: 3 Qualitative method study design

Qualitative Methods	Number of female farm employees	Number of Managers	Number of key informants	Instruments used
-Interview	6 (2 from each farm)	6	8	Interview guide
-FGD	12(4 from each farm)			FGD guide
- Observation				
Total	18	6	8	

3.4 Data source

The study employed both primary and secondary sources. Farm workers, supervisors, Farm managers in the three farms and key informants are the primary data sources of the research through survey, interview and FGD. Relevant documents like: office documents, annual reports from different offices, magazines, books, published and unpublished researches from ILO, Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), Ethiopian Investment Agency (EIA), EHPEA and websites were reviewed through document analysis as secondary sources.

3.5 Sampling Technique

3.5.1 Quantitative Sampling Techniques

Female flower farm workers have been selected purposefully due to the nature of the study. First the researcher selected three farms (ET Highland, Saron Rose and Ethio Passion) by using lottery methods from 11 floriculture industries, which are found in Sebeta. After selecting three industries the study was collected from the total number of 740 female farm workers, by taking a sample of 74.

To determine the sample size (74) the sampled population (10%) taken from each farm i.e, 17 female workers from Ethio Passion PLC, 18 from Saron Rose and 39 from ET Highland by using random sampling using five intervals from the attendance list. Female workers

who were present at the data collection date had equal opportunity. Therefore a cross-sectional study was employed by using structured questionnaire.

3.5.2 Qualitative Sample

According to their long years experience and willing to participate, 4 workers, 2 supervisors and six managers were participated in the interview. The researcher conducted a Focus Group Discussion, with two groups of farm workers each with 6 individuals. The FGD discusscent were selected purposely from different departments who are active and recommended by their colleagues. Key informants were selected from Ethiopian Horticulture Agency, Sebeta investment and women's affair bureau, Sebeta Health Center and St.Gebrel Clinic at Sebeta for the interview.

3.6 Instruments used for Data Collection

Survey Questionnaire

Questionnaire is one of the tools that have been used to gather primary data in the study. Before developing the main questionnaire pilot study made by selecting 15 female flower farm workers to examine the type of the questions and improve the quality of the questionnaire. After taking of the feed back from the pilot survey the questionnaire revised and the main questionnaire developed.

The questionnaire has both open and close-ended questions so choices were provided for close-ended question and blank space for open-ended questions to gather comprehensive responses. The survey questionnaire has five parts: personal information, job related information, questions regarding opportunities, challenges and position. To make it more communicative and clear, it was translated from English into Amharic language. Enumerators with good educational background who speak both Amharic and Oromiffa were hired to assist the respondents who can hardly read and write. They have been given proper training about the aim of the study and the content of the questionnaire.

Interview

Qualitative methods, such as open ended interview questions, which often involve the use of topic guidelines, have been used to generate rich information and to validate the sample survey findings. Hence, in order to gather fresh information from the study subjects, face to face interview was conducted with six (two from each farm) female farm employees and six managers, three from ET Highland, two from Saron Rose and one from Ethio Passion.

Key informant discussion was held with different professionals and stakeholders working in the area, to increase the validity and depth of the finding. Interview with key informants conducted through independent guideline considering their special position they held in different bureaus and professions. As a result, propagator from Kenya (At Saron Rose), Nurses at Sebeta Health Center, Trainers at EHPEA Training Department, and responsible individuals from Ethiopian Horticulture Agency (EHA), Sebeta Investment Bureau and Women's Affair Office were contacted to gather ample information. The findings of key informant discussion were used for triangulation of primary and secondary data. All the interviews were conducted by the researcher herself using an interview guideline. Moreover the interview was held after all interviewees gave their consent orally.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

The Focus Group Discussion has been arranged with the purpose of supporting the data obtained from the survey and Interview. Two groups organized for the FGD each consisting of six individuals who are farm workers. The discussion was arranged outside the farm. Nine questions used as a guideline for the FGD and tape recorder used for recording the discussion

Observation

Personal observation was undertaken in the three farms: Ethio Passion, Saron Rose and ET Highland by the researcher herself. Different pictures were taken in support of the observation in gathering first hand information, for this reason this method helped the finding to be more reliable and valid.

3.7 Data collection procedure

The data collection procedure started with the survey. First the questionnaire has been distributed to 74 female farm workers. After finalizing the sample survey the researcher, has conducted the interview with six female farm workers and six farm managers. After that the FGD arranged to support the information obtained from the survey and the interview. Personal observation of the farm has been undertaken since the beginning of the fieldwork.

3.8 Methods of Data Analysis

Data from primary and secondary sources were analyzed by using statistical tools and qualitative description to answer research questions. Data gathered from the survey was summarized into SPSS program and analyzed by descriptive statistics that is frequency and percentage. Thus tables and figures were used to support the discussion. Furthermore, the data collected from in-depth interview, key informant discussion, FGD were taped thus transcription was essential to use the data for qualitative description. Photos taken at the time of observation was also used to support some ideas. The Ethiopian labor Proclamation, FDRE Constitution, CEDAW, African Charter and the International Code of Conduct were the secondary sources of information that the researcher used to analyze findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION

This chapter has two parts. The first part is about socio-demographic background of the workers and the second part deals with the analysis based on the finding from both quantitative and qualitative methods. The analysis flows according to the specific objectives stated in chapter one by combining findings from the survey, interview, FGD and observation.

4.1 Socio –Demographic Background of the Respondents

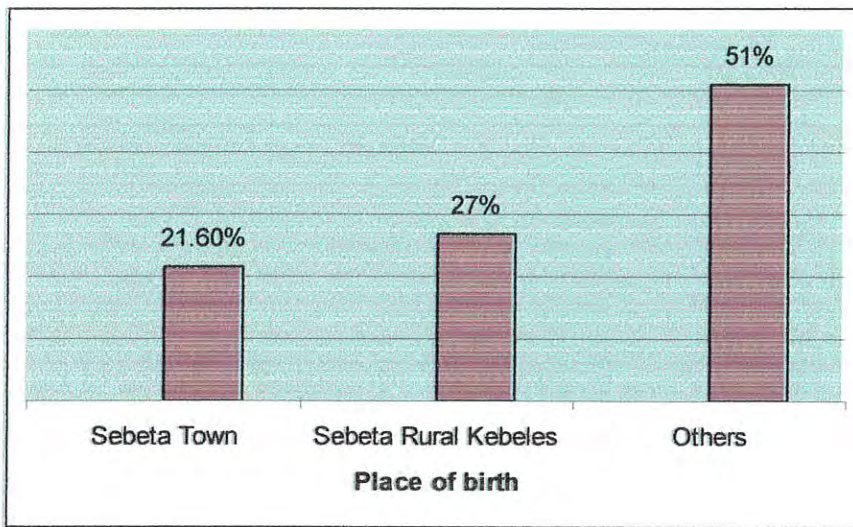
The survey finding reveals that the majority of female flower farm workers are at the young age. The reason is the tasks in the industry are labor intensive that needs young workers who are able to hold the burden.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by their age

Age groups	Frequency	Percent
<18	10	13.5
18-30	52	70.3
31-40	5	6.8
41-50	4	5.4
>50	3	4.1
Total	74	100

As shown on table 4 the majority of the respondents (70.3%) are between the age group 18-30 years. There are also workers who are less than age 18 (13.5%) and above age 30 (16.3%). The floriculture industry is known for its young laborers, as it is labor intensive.

Figure 1: Percentage distribution of respondents by their Birth place



According to the above figure, migrant workers dominate the labor force at the floriculture industry. More than half (51.4 %) of the respondents who are driven by the unemployment are migrant from different Regions (out of Sebeta town). The migrant workers who came to Sebeta were, after they are informed that the industry employs a large number of female workers. The majority of them came from Jimma, Ambo, and other towns of Oromiya region. There are also workers who came from long distance like Amhara region and Tigray.

Table 5: Percentage distribution of respondents by their Educational level

Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Illiterate	26	35
Basic education	5	6.8
Elementary (1-6)	18	24.3
Junior (7-8)	9	12.2
Secondary (9-10)	9	12.2
Preparatory (11-12)	6	8.1
Diploma	1	1.4
Total	74	100.0

Individuals who are both illiterate and literate have the chance to be hired in the industry. Table 5 for example shows that 35 % of the respondents are not able to read and write. Those workers who were never attended school are the dominant labor force of the industry.

There are also workers who are at elementary, junior and secondary level 24.3%, 12.2% and 12.2% respectively and 8.1% of the respondents are at the preparatory level. Majority of the workers who are at secondary and preparatory level have a chance to be promoted in to the supervisor position. One respondent who is a diploma holder is agronomist in one of the farms under the study.

Table 6: Characteristics of respondents by their marital status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	35	47.3
Married	24	32.4
Widowed	2	2.7
Divorced	13	17.6
Total	74	100.0

As depicted in table 6, the number of single female workers is greater than other marital status. Nearly half (47.3%) of the respondents are single and 32.4% are married during the survey. Due to family responsibility the nature of the work in the industry might be difficult for married women than to the other groups. The data from the survey also show that 2.7% and 17.6% of the respondents were widowed and divorced respectively.

In floricultural industry workers living in a group with friends and co-workers are very common.

4.2 Female workers opportunities in the farm

The findings from the survey, interview and FGD reveal that workers have some opportunities and benefits in the farm, even if the benefits they get differ from one farm to the other.

4.2.1 Job opportunity

Floriculture industry has become one of few industries that provide high job opportunities especially for female job seekers. According to the survey conducted with 74 female workers in three flower farms, all of the respondents believe that the industry has created high job opportunities for young female. “The floriculture industry is playing a significant role in creating job opportunity. Until 2006, more than 20,000 people are hired in the industry above 70% of who are female” (Akerma, 2007).

According to ILO study (2000), the floriculture industry plays a significant role in promoting the overall economic growth in addition to generate hard currency. Specifically, since the industry is labor intensive it creates huge job opportunity and seemed to have a contribution to the reduction of poverty, unemployment and other social problems.

The data in the three farms under the study revealed that female workers outnumbered male ones. For example in Ethio Passion PLC out of 200 workers 170 of them are female which means 85% of the total workers population. In Saron Rose out of 225 workers 180 of them are women. Similarly in ET Highland out 420 workers female laborers constitute 390. These findings clearly show that flower industry is highly dominated by female workers. According to Ethio Passion Manager, “this is because women are better professionals in caring flowers as they do for their children. Therefore they are preferable for the job than their counterparts.”

Requirements at the time of employment in the industry are not common. The management does not post any vacancy to hire new employers rather when the industry is in need of laborers; workers themselves disseminate the information to others. Saron Rose manager said, “The industry does not have labor shortage. People come daily to ask if there is a vacant place or not. Thus we do not bother that much when workers leave the farm.”

Out of 74, 65 (87.8%) of the respondents said that they were not asked any kind of requirement at the time of employment. Majority of them were only asked their name, and then hired. Six respondents were asked to bring their birth certificate to crosscheck their age. Therefore according to the finding any woman who is interested to work can get the job that is provided. In relation to the question pregnant woman, 91.9 % of respondents declare that, since there is no pregnancy test at the time of employment, pregnant woman also can have a chance to get a job in the industry, if her pregnancy is at early stage and can not be recognized. The rest (8.1%) of them did not response to this question. But majority of respondents in the interview believe that since the management gives maternity leave for female workers, it is possible for a pregnant woman to be hired.

Women's independence and participation in productive work has long been a big issue of many feminists and theoreticians in the filed of feminism. Liberal feminist for example, argue that women should have equal participation with men in the employment arena. So it is a good opportunity for a woman to work outside home. The job opportunity in flower farms, even if it has some challenges (like health, wage, facilities etc.), has also created a lot of positive changes (like income, self confidence, Information access etc.) and enhanced female flower farm workers' life. According to the survey finding for instance, 55 or 74.3% of the respondents believe that there is a positive change in their life after they get job in the farm.

Table 7: Percentage distribution of respondents who got positive change

Getting positive change	Frequency	Percent
Yes	55	74.3.
No	19	25.7.
Total	74	100.0

The majority of respondents (73%) agreed that the positive change has taken place in their life especially with regards to their income, household expense coverage, self- confidence, access for information, are some of the main points as benefits they got due to the job opportunity in the farm.

Beyond the obvious economic benefits women in developing countries often cite various non economic benefits to explain why they appreciate, with out necessarily enjoying, their work in the labor intensive factories. These benefits include the ability to earn independent income and spend it on desired consumer purchases or save for marriage or further education; the ability to support their families and repay their debt to parents; the opportunity to delay marriage and child bearing; the opportunity to enjoy some personal freedom and the companionship of other women etc. (Foo &Lim, 1987; Lin, 1986) cited in Tinker, (1990).

An interviewee also said that the reason I am working in the farm is not only for the wage, rather it creates me an opportunity to know people and have some kind of independence.” All interviewee and FGD discusscent agree with the idea.

4.2.2 Income

Even though the salary workers earn in the farm is low and not enough for their living expense, but when workers are asked whether the salary has brought any positive change, majority of them agreed earning money itself is a positive change in their life.

According to Tinker, (1990)

Lower wage in export industries than in manufacturing as a whole don't however mean that these workers are poorly paid relative to all others in the economy. Wage earned by women in export factories are also usually higher than what they could earn as wage laborers in alternative low skilled female occupations, such as farm labor, domestic service, most informal sector and other service sector activities.

Figure 2: Percentage distribution of respondents by their financial independence



The majority of the respondents (92.5%), who believe there is a positive change, agree that working in the farm has created financial independence for them even though they are less paid and do not fully cover their medical insurance. They explain that their salary can cover some of their household expenses.

One of the interviewee said, "I know that our wage is very small and do not fit with living expense, but I always think that something is better than nothing because I had nothing before I get job in the farm" and she added that "now I can even contribute for my household expense." Similarly a focus group discusscents (who lives with parents) also believes that the salary they get from the farm is low, but it makes them to cover their monthly expense. So they do not expect their family to pay for their education and their transport.

According to ET Highland farm manager, floriculture industry created a wide job opportunity for those who were jobless and dependent on their family. She agrees that although the income workers get from the farm is not enough for their living expense; it is a good opportunity for them to earn money without long years of experience and education. Wage influence on the life of the workers has two sides. One is the positive change for those who live with parents or their husband, the other paradigm is little or no change for those who live alone and pay for house rent. However Marxist believe that the dependence of women on men, and the attempt to pursue a high wage strategy for men, may have led to relatively low wages for women (Gimenez, 1998).

4.2.3 Household expense coverage

Out of 55 respondents, who have accepted that the farm created a positive change for them, 35 (63.6 %) of them responded that the money they get in the farm made them to cover their household expenses. The rest (20) of them do not agree that, they are not able to cover the expense though there is a positive change in their life.

In our society it is the husband who is responsible to cover all expenses including his wife's clothes and cosmetics. So women are usually housewives and dependent

on their husband's income. Therefore, they face a lot of problem at the time of divorce. But now things are changing, for example I work in the farm so I earn some money, which helps me to cover half of my expense, said one of the interviewees.

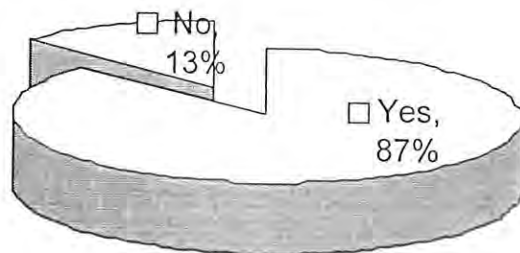
According to the study by Zelalem (2007), 47% of the respondents have been earning less than 150 birr annually before they get employment in the farm. But after they start working in those companies, 72.5% of the respondents are able to earn 2976 birr annually.

In the same way respondents consider the income they get from the farm as a tool that helps them to cover some household expense. Even if workers earn low wage they believe that the salary made some difference in their life. However a life change goes beyond the household coverage like; change in families' life, nutrition and health condition.

4.2.4 Self confidence

Working outside home is uncommon for women who are uneducated and housewives. However, after the development of floriculture industry in Ethiopia a number of women got job in the industry. This job opportunity has created a means for female workers to develop sense of independence and self-confidence. Besides the income, majority of farm workers believe that they have developed sense of independency after they are hired.

Figure 3: Percentage distribution of respondents who believe they develop confidence



The above figure, for example, shows that 48 (87.0%) respondents out of 55 (who said there is appositve change) proved that working in the farm increased their self confidence

as a working woman in the society and their family. A discusscent in the FGD also agreed with this.

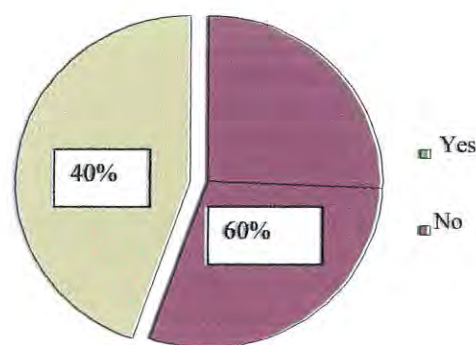
Before I got a job in the farm I was at home helping my parents especially my mother in house hold activity. Therefore I always ask my father money for anything that I need for personal expense, which apparently has negative psychological influence. But after I was employed here, I never asked money from my father. Now I even sometimes give some money to my mom and I feel very much independent and have developed high self-confidence in that respect.

Based on this finding, we can conclude that these industries are not only helping female workers in paying salary by providing the job opportunity but also helping them to change their self-esteem and have a positive attitude for themselves.

4.2.5 Access to information

Most of the respondents believed that access of information on different issues are better after they started working at floriculture industry. They get information through the radio or from their colleagues.

Figure 4: Percentage distribution of respondents by their access to information



22 (40%) respondents, out of 55, said they are exposed for information after they start working in the farm. This is because in some industries there is a speaker at the gate of

22 (40%) respondents, out of 55, said they are exposed for information after they start working in the farm. This is because in some industries there is a speaker at the gate of each green house and in the pack house, which helps workers to listen news, dramas and music. However the researcher observed that workers in one of the farms under the study (ET Highland) only have this chance. As the manager explained the speaker is a gift from local NGO called 'KULECH'. Other farms also have been given the speaker but they do not give attention to adjust suitable place for that.

Ayelech one of the interviewees from ET Highland said, "After I start working in the farm I am able to control my birth because my friends told me how to use contraceptive" Having discussion on various issues with colleagues is also taken as a source of information by many of female workers. They believe that they get solution for different family problems when they discuss each other.

4.2.6 Access to education

Majority of the farm workers are illiterate or at a low educational level. Some of them have quit their education due to different reasons. But after the industry has been established a number of girls started their education since they able to cover their tuition fee.

According to table 8 (see Annex I), 45.9% of female workers have started education at night since they get job in the farm. The reason behind this is they become capable of covering their education and transport fee. But the rest of the respondents didn't start learning because of some family responsibility and lack of interest. **table 8**

I was grade four when my father is died five years age and I would have been a grade nine student by now. But I couldn't continue my education because my mother was unable to cover the household expenses and my education fee. After I was employed in the farm, I managed to continue my schooling because I can cover the education fee by myself. I will be grade six next year", said one of the interviewee.

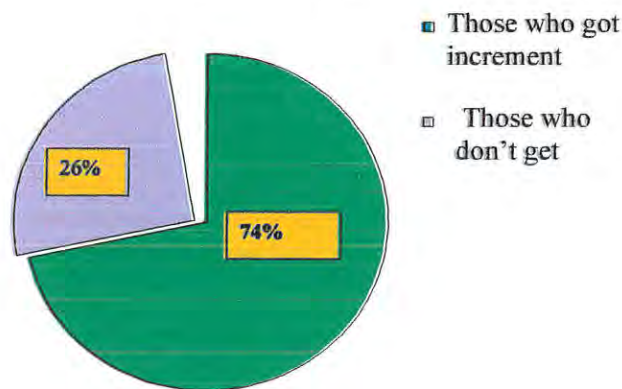
All of the farms under the study (Ethio Passion PLC, ET Highland Flora and Saron Rose) adjusted the working hours for workers to start evening classes. Workers in the two farms

entrance and exit time adjustment created an opportunity for workers to attend night classes.

4.2.7 More incentives

Regarding the incentives transportation, health insurance and promotion are some of the incentives that are provided for some workers but none of them get school benefit or education under the farms' sponsorship. Salary increment also considered as incentive for the workers.

Figure 5: percentage distribution of respondents regarding salary increment



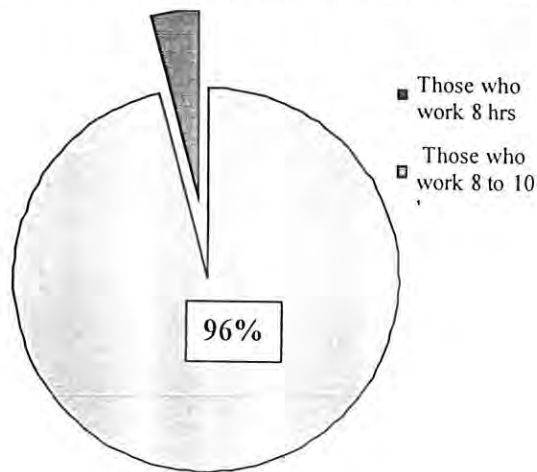
When they are asked if they ever get salary increment, about 72% of respondents admitted that they get salary increment every six month. Sometimes bonus will be given for those who perform best and have not been absent from their job in the month. Permanent workers also get annual, maternal and sick leave. All the above mentioned benefits and opportunities are analyzed from the workers point of view. Ever since the workers in the farm do not have deep knowledge about laws and regulations, rights and duties they focus on minor things like wage and incentives that can be easily compromised.

4.2.8 Working hours

According to the Ethiopian labor law, a worker should work daily for 8 hours and 48 hours weekly. So as the following figure shows, even though majority of the workers perform their tasks within 8 hours, still there are some of the respondents who work more than eight hours. Especially Saron Rose farm workers as they do not have weekly rest, they work for

hours. Especially Saron Rose farm workers as they do not have weekly rest, they work for about 56 hours weekly, which completely disagree with the Ethiopian labor proclamation Article 61 sub Art, 1 “Normal hours of work shall not exceed eight hours a day or forty eight hours a week. “

Figure 6: Percentage distribution of respondents in relation to working hours



Out of 74 respondents 71 (96%) of them said that they work for eight and less than eight hours per day. The rest three respondents, work for 9-10 hours. Workers in the interview said that working hours in the industry varies depending on the amount of production in the farm. If there is high production, the working time goes 10-12 hours daily especially the workers at post harvest section. Every work done that exceeds eight hours per day taken as over time and paid. The pack house workers usually are on duty for over time this sometimes affects workers' night classes but at the exam time students are permitted to go.

Almost all of respondents said that over time tasks are done with payment. With out payment no one will be willingness to do more than eight hours but sometimes the management may force workers to work over time especially pack house workers at the time of high production. This is because after harvesting it is the duty of pack house workers to pack the flowers in to boxes and make ready for export.

Since majority of them work for about eight hours, 52 (70%) out of 74 respondents believe that they are not overloaded. The rest 22 (30%) believe that they are overloaded and need some kind of consideration. According to the management and the interview with key

informants additional jobs or overtime tasks in the farm done based on additional payment or overtime payment. Therefore, working over time can be considered as a benefit for those who are low paid.

4.2.9 Increased access to maternity leave

Maternity leave for female workers is a constitutional right, which is stipulated under the Constitution of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopian 1995. Article 35 Sub Art. 5 of the Constitution, Article 88 of labor proclamation and Article 11 of CEDAW, guaranteed working women right for maternal leave. A pregnant worker shall have maternity leave with her full payment. The duration for the leave depends on the health of the mother and the child. The labor proclamation stated the minimum duration of three months or 90 days of leave with pay before and after her delivery.

Table 9: Number of respondents who said there is maternal leave in the farm

Maternal leave	How long		Total
	2 months	3 months	
Yes with Pay	3	47	50
Yes without Pay	0	3	3
I don't know	-	-	15
No	-	-	6
Total	3	50	74

The data from the survey finds out that female workers are entitled for the maternal leave in the farm. However, some interviewees informed that a pregnant woman get maternal leave if she works for two years and above. A study by Uganda Workers' Education Association (UWEA, 2006) in three farms reveal that women in the farm are not entitled for maternity.

According the interview with the management workers in the farm are provided with maternal leave. Regarding this one of the ET Highland manager said "If a woman works more than three months or after prohibition period, it is our obligation to give maternal leave. Therefore every permanent female worker is entitled for 3 months maternity leave."

4.3 Challenges of female flower farm workers

4.3.1 Work related challenges

A hostile work place creates safety and health concerns on several levels, ranging from a lack of training and safety information to physical assault. Distractions while working can lead to take improper safety precautions, resulting in on-the-job injuries. The effects of a hostile work place can be reflected in acute as well as chronic stress reactions (Mena & Silvia, 2005).

According to this study, chemicals and pesticides, lack of training, job insecurity, low wage, labor and human rights like absence of union, discrimination, sexual harassment, are some of the primary safety and health hazards and challenges for female flower farm workers. While these challenges affect both men and women, women working in the industry have additional safety and health concerns, and some safety and health hazards have a greater impact on female farm workers. Inadequate physical protections, their educational and living status, are factors that add to women's concerns.

4.3.1.1 Lack of Training

Table 10: Number of distribution of respondents by their access to on job training

Getting of Training	Farms			Total
	ET Highland Flora	Saron Rose	Ethio Passion	
Yes	22	6	14	42
No	17	12	3	32
Total	39	18	17	74

As shown on table 10, except Saron rose, more than half of the workers in ET Highland and Ethio Passion have got trainings on different skills. But majority of the workers in Saron Rose did not get the chance to be trained. That may have effect on their work and performance in the farm and expose them for injuries that affect their entire life.

As a result inadequate information and lack of education and training, about work place safety and health greatly concern women workers in the farm (since they are more than 80% and take no protection). The culture and attitudes of farm workers, supervisors, and managers about health and safety training often overlook risk taking and unsafe work practices. Because at the time of employment a new worker does not get adequate training about the type of the job and the work environment in general.

While new employees in flower industry are not always provided with information and training on how to work correctly and safely, opportunities to learn through practice may be inoperative. Female workers are not always given sufficient opportunity to learn or test new skills. Due to the hostility that often accompanies it, women in particular do not benefit from the formal training, which is common among their male peers. The management says men are given the formal training due to the nature of the work they are directly contacted with chemicals. Majority of the interviewees and FGD discussants believe that they would have been more secured if they had training at the beginning of their employment. One of the interviewee said,

I did not get any training when I start working in the greenhouse. The supervisor showed me how to bend and harvest flowers then I started doing what I have been told after 30 minuets. I think it is a good work culture if new employees get some training and clear information how to perform the task and how to protect themselves from hazardous exposure.

Training and personal development education in the floriculture industry is a very essential quality criterion for the workers. On-job training is also a fundamental issue for workers in any industry. The kind of training may vary but trainings about health and safety issue should be mandatory for all workers in the farm as it is the legal right of every worker.

Female workers right to get training is stated specifically in CEDAW article 11(sub article1.c) “Women also have the right to all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive vocational training and retraining including apprenticeships, advanced vocational training and recurrent training.” Contrary to this article, the on-the-job skill-

based training done in flower farm is usually by observation, rather than by direct instruction. This learning method is frequently inadequate for the workers.

According to the survey finding workers in the three farms have been trained only on few subject areas within long period of time. When we compare the three farms, workers in ET Highland Flora have better access for training than Ethio Passion PLC and Saron Rose.

Table 11: Number of respondents who had access to ‘on job training’

Types of trainings		Farms			Total
		ET Highland Flora	Saron Rose	Ethio Passion PLC	
<i>On Chemicals & Pesticides</i>	Yes	6	3	4	13 (40%)
	No	16	3	10	29 (60%)
	Total	22	6	14	42 (100%)
<i>On safety issues</i>	Yes	4	4	3	11 (26.2%)
	No	18	2	11	31 (73.8%)
	Total	22	6	14	42 (100%)
<i>On gender issues</i>	Yes	3	1	5	9 (21.4%)
	No	19	5	9	33 (78.6%)
	Total	22	6	14	42 (100%)
<i>On health and HIV/AIDS</i>	Yes	21	-	12	33 (78.6%)
	No	1	6	2	9 (21.4%)
	Total	22	6	14	42 (100%)
<i>On human rights and obligation</i>	Yes	4	2	3	9 (21.4%)
	No	18	4	11	33(78.6%)
	Total	22	6	14	42 (100)

As shown on table 11 from the total respondents (42) who were taken on job training 40%, 26.2%, 21.4%, 78.6% and 21.4% of them trained on use of chemicals, safety issues, gender issues, health and HIV/AIDS, and human right and obligation respectively. The number of

respondents those have been trained, about chemicals, is very insignificant. Even though 22 respondents in ET Highland said that they have got training, only 6 of them have been trained about chemicals. Similarly out of 14 trained people in Ethio Passion PLC only 5 of them were trained about chemicals and pesticides. In Saron rose, very few respondents (only three people) got the training. This finding clearly shows that farm managers don't give much consideration to train their workers about chemicals and pesticides. Since flower industries use different kinds of chemicals and pesticides, each worker in the farm is exposed to chemicals (Akerma, 2007). However female workers in the farms under the study have very limited knowledge about the issue.

The lack of training or lack of knowledge about those hazardous chemicals will have a negative effect on the life of workers. Facilitating training to protect workers from any kind of injuries at the work place is not the kindness but the duty of the employer, as it is issued by the Ethiopian labor proclamation Article 92. The article clearly explains that "An employer shall take appropriate measures to ensure that workers are properly instructed and notified concerning the possible hazardous of their respective occupations and the precautions necessary to avoid accident and injury to health; ensure that directives are given and also assign safety officer; establish an occupational, safety and health committee." For this reason, the above mentioned points in the proclamations should be obligations of every employer (not moral obligation) at any industry who follows the proclamation.

Moreover, workers were asked if they have got training on safety issues and personal protective equipments (PPE). The result of the survey disclosed that inadequate training about PPE has given for very few workers in the three farms.

As it is mentioned above flower industries are highly users of chemicals and pesticides that exposed workers for different kinds of health problem. But the survey finds out that even though the management is aware of this fact, it does not facilitate trainings about Safety issues and protective materials. As table 11, clearly shows insignificant number of respondents 4 persons both in ET Highland and Saron rose trained about safety materials and only three persons have got training on safety issues in Ethio Passion.

Even though managers in the entire three farms claim that all workers have access to trainings whereas very few respondents (11 individuals) get training about safety and protective materials. Similarly many informants in the interview said that workers in the farm are facing a lot of challenges due to lack of knowledge on how to use PPE. As they are hardly informed about the type and toxicity of chemicals and pesticides, workers in greenhouse do not use properly the safety materials they are provided. The researchers also observed that while women working in the greenhouse with out wearing gown and gloves, which expose them for the chemical contamination.

The employers' ignorance of training contradicts with the Ethiopian labor proclamation Art 92 sub art 3, which states employer's responsibility to provide workers with protective equipment, clothing and other materials and instructing them of its use. As a result, workers who handle chemical (spray group) do not even know the type of the chemicals they are dealing with.

In addition to training about chemicals and PPE, workers were asked on the survey whether they had training opportunity on gender issues like: sexual harassment, violence or discrimination. Out of the 22 respondents those who got training at ET Highland Flora only 3 of them were trained about gender issues and gender based violence. The rest, 19 workers, never got training about gender issue. Except one, respondents from Saron Rose were not also given the training. The data from Ethio Passion also reveals that few people, five, were given the training on gender issues out of 14 respondents.

Awareness on gender issues can help female workers to protect themselves from various gender based challenges and harassment. Very few of them who have been trained also believe that training on gender issues and about women rights is very essential and useful information for female flower farm workers.

Another question that was raised, if workers were trained about HIV and other health issues, greater numbers of respondents in ET highland than Ethio Passion said that they got training. 21 individuals from ET Highland and 12 respondents from Ethio Passion were given training about HIV/AIDS. None of the respondents from Saron Rose have been trained about HIV. In relation to this finding, one of the informant in the interview claimed that the management do not often try to facilitate such kind of training for the workers. When nurses came from Sebeta Health Center to educate workers about HIV, the administration wouldn't allow therefore lack of knowledge about reproductive health and HIV exposed female farm workers for serious problems. The data gained from FGD discloses that, unwanted pregnancy and HIV are also other problems that female workers are experiencing.

An interviewee said,

Majority of us do not have knowledge about sexuality, as it is unusual to talk with family and friends about it. Even here in the farm except few, workers feel uncomfortable to talk. Therefore at the time of relation ship female workers will be exposed for unwanted pregnancy since they do not know how to prevent it. This regularly leads women to have illegal marriage. But if we were learnt about contraceptives here, it would have been good.

In addition to these problems female farm workers are not aware of their rights and duty. The contract agreement paper in the two farms (ET Highland and Ethio Passion) does not specify the rights and obligation of workers. And workers also did not get training on rights and obligation at the work place. As a result the farm workers hardly know the level of their rights in the farm. Knowledge about rights and duties at the work place is a very essential thing in any work place. Any worker in any industry should be aware of workers right and duty.

The survey result shows very few respondents were trained in the area of workers right and duties. Especially workers in Saron rose couldn't get the chance, only two people answered that they have got the training. Respondents from ET Highland and Ethio Passion are also few, four and three individuals respectively. When their training is limited to observation and when they lack formal training, women feel they are at a distinct disadvantage.

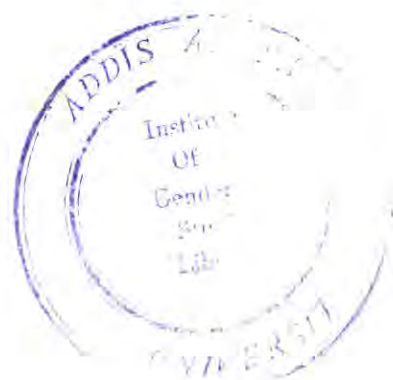
4.3.1.2 Job insecurity and low wage

Table 12: Percentage distribution of respondents' employment status

Employment Status	Signed contract agreement		Total
	Yes	No	
Permanent	18	13	31 (42%)
Contract	14	3	17 (23%)
Daily Laborer	0	26	26 (35%)
Total	32	42	74(100%)

Majority of the respondents, 31(42%) said they are permanent workers in the farms under the study, 17 (23%) are contract workers and the rest 26(35%) are daily laborers. However, out of 42% respondents, who consider themselves as a permanent worker, only 23.3% of them have signed a contract agreement with their employers. 14(18.9%) contract workers out of 17 (23%) signed an agreement paper also. All respondents (26) who are daily laborers do not sign agreement paper. When they were asked if they have received a copy of their agreement paper out of the total signed respondents (32) who are both permanent and contract, only 12 of them received the copy of the agreement.

This lack of knowledge among the workers and management's ignorance uncovered workers for job insecurity, which contradict with the labor proclamation Article 7, "Where the contract of employment is not made in written form, the employer shall, within 15 days from the conclusion of the contract, give the worker a written and signed statement." Since majority of respondents do not received copy of the agreement, they do not have job assurance while they work in the farm. Due to this reason, workers accept whenever they are fired from their job.



Even though, the managers of the three farms (Ehtio Passion Private Limited Company, Saron Rose and ET Highland Flora) claim that the wage of the employees differ according to their work experience, there are experienced workers who earn equal wage with new comers. The researcher also observed that the difference that results from their experience has insignificant difference in their wage. The average payment of women laborers is found to be eight birr per day, which means one birr per an hour. Where as daily laborers in other field like construction get 20-25 birr per day.

From the total respondents, 63% of workers' wage ranges between 200 and 300 birr. (See table 13 Annex I) The wage workers are paid in the flower farm is very low when it is compared to the workload they perform in the farm. According to the survey finding more than half of the respondents are paid 8-10 birr per day. Beginners at Saron rose and Ethio Passion get 8.50 birr and 8 birr at ET Highland per day.

The Marxist explains that women's wage is incomparable with the work loads that they perform as a result they will be dependent of men's. This is because employers argued that the wages for males needed to be living wages or family wages – sufficient to support a family (Lovell, 2003). Similarly, female workers in the flower farm earn less than those of men. Certainly male and female workers assigned in different section but female workers provide equal labor force with their counterparts. An interviewee says

The salary we and the men earning vary due to the work we are performing. However we can also do what men are doing except spraying like: transporting flowers from green house to pack house, putting them in to cold room labeling their size, and so on. To be honest the labor works chemical spraying and construction, done by men workers are so simple when it is compared with what we are doing in the green house and post harvest section.

In another farm the researcher observed that women transporting flower from green house to pack house. But they earn similar to the green house workers. 86.5% of respondents in the survey complain that the salary they get in the farm is not enough for tasks they are performing in the farm. They said the salary they are earning doesn't

even cover for half of the work they perform. All of them from the interview argue that the amount of money they earn can not be compared with the workload they are expected to bear and it is not enough to satisfy their daily needs, let alone fulfill their family expenses. Moreover, the wage does not consider the current living expense that rapidly increases from time to time, in which it hinders them to balance their demand with their wage. 86.5% of them from the survey claim, they are unable to meet the month with their monthly salary, so it is very difficult to fulfill families' basic needs. Even if workers claim about the low wage, they also accept the salary as one of the opportunity they get from the farm.

There is salary increment in the farms but the amount of the increment is very low and the duration is not fair regarding the workload in the farm. 53 (74%) of the respondents got a salary increment of 50 cents to 1 birr with in six months. Workers may get additional payment while they work overtime or on holiday but bonus for performance, for holiday and at the time of high profit is rare in flower farms. Out of 43 respondents only 6 of them got a bonus for their performance and attendance (See table 14 Annex I).

Despite the fact that women are provided with employment opportunity in the flower farm, they still remained to be poor and suffer from the heavy workload that they encounter both in the field and in the household. In addition, since most flower farm organizations pay similar wage, employees are not that much encouraged moving from one flower farm to other. A discusscent in the FGD said:

Workers always think to change their working farm to another but the same thing will happen in the other farm. Therefore they prefer at one place not to loss the increment they even getting. Because, when an experienced workers hired in another farm they hire as a beginner since they cannot get experience paper from where they were serving earlier. Therefore, though things are bad, we would like to work in one place not to miss the increment.

Even though workers face challenges in the farm, they prefer to stay than changing their profession. The limited option of employment doesn't also give these women ample

opportunity to leave the work and find another. This may be attributed to the reality that most of the employees are uneducated. On the other hand, these women are willing (ready) to tolerate the above stated challenges (not to disturb their household responsibility) instead of finding some other better jobs since the flower farms are found near to their village.

4.3.1.3 Over time and weekly rest

A number of workers in ET Highland work over time relative to the other farms. Except in ET Highland, green house workers in Ethio Passion and Saron rose do not work over time. Only pack house workers work overtime in the two farms. But in ET Highland, greenhouse workers work over time daily at the pack house. This is because there is high production rate in ET Highland than Ethio Passion and Saron Rose. So, workers at ET Highland can get a better income at the end of the month. When they are asked for how many hours they work over time, out of 34 respondents 30 (88.2%) of them work 2 to 4 hours daily (See table 15 Annex I). But at the time of high production workers are forced to work even for 6 and more hours contrary to the labor proclamation Art 62 which says over time not to be exceeds 2 hours in a day.

In addition to over time payment if workers assigned to a task at their day off or on public holidays they will get twice of their daily payment that increases their wage some how. But the labor proclamation put the day off work and holiday work separately from over timework because the proclamation states that workers should get 2 ½ of their daily salary when they work at their weekly rest and in public holiday. Nevertheless, none of the farms pay 2 ½ for the task performed both in holiday and rest day. Even occasionally the management give another rest day and order them to work with the usual payment. Thus this day off exchange disturbs their social life and social programs. Sometimes after their day off missed out once, workers will get difficulty to ask their compulsory rest day.

Every employee in any organization and industry should have a day off weekly and workers at any type of job must work only for six days. The day off depends on the nature and type of the work. Workers in ET Highland and Ethio Passion have a weekly day off. But contract workers in the two farms do not get weekly rest day as these workers are

considered as daily laborers. In the contrary weekly day off is only given for permanent workers (managers and office workers) in Saron Rose (See table 16 Annex I).

According to the data from the interview Saron rose workers have a day off within fifteen days that means they work for fourteen days without day off. Ethiopian labor proclamation 377/2003 Article 66 says, “A worker shall be entitled to a weekly rest period consisting of not less than twenty – four non-interrupted hours in the course of each period of seven days” workers in the farm are not aware of this labor right. Thus almost all of them believe that it is the willing of the management to offer day off weekly. Hence they just accept whatever the management gives.

4.3.1.4 Lack of labor association

Lack of labor association in the floriculture industry is the main issue of different studies conducted on the area. A study conducted in Uganda flower farms (UWEA, 2006), reveals that farm workers face a lot of problems due to lack of association in the farm. As a result workers don't have any access or way to express their feeling freely and voice their concern. According to Tigist's (2007) finding also, a research on four flower farms, workers in flower industry are suffering due to the absence of union at the work place. In the same way this study looked at female farm workers' challenges because of the labor union absence.

Similarly the data gathered from the three farms reveal that there is no labor union in any of the farms under the study. But few respondents said that there is a union in the farm, which shows that some workers even do not know the non-existence of the association. 11 of the respondents answered they even do not know whether there is association in the farm or not (See table 17 Annex I). According to the production manager of ET Highland, the reason for the absence of the union is lack of interest among the workers and unaware of the procedure to organize the association. So she claims that the labor and social affair bureau is the responsible body to handle this issue. But the workers complain that the management does not give attention even though they raised the question to be organized. An

interviewee said that the existence of labor association is very helpful for the workers to get credit for their question and to have secured working condition.

Similar to the finding of Jimma Times (2008) and Taddese (2008), one of the key informants from Ethio Passion said, “let alone the management to raise the issue, workers fired when they try to organize their colleagues to form union. We are aware of it and know how to form the union, we also have interest but in fear of losing our job we would like to keep silent until they become positive for the idea.” This workers labor right that is guaranteed in the proclamation and the constitution has been violated.

4.3.1.5 Lack of facilities and safety equipments

Lack of adequate facilities like clinic, restroom, and cafeteria were the primary in the three farms under the study. In a hostile environment, where women already feel vulnerable, calling attention to these problems is not always possible or productive. One of the interviewee explained that, even though everyone feels that rest room is essential for the workers in the farm, none of them have complained to the administration about the lack of adequate restroom facilities because they do not think it is their right to ask.

The availability and cleanliness of restrooms facilities are major concerns of farm workers. Even though there is a separated rest room only in Ethio Passion, workers in the farm mentioned that they do not use the restroom at lunchtime due to its dirtiness. In addition to the suffocation, the room does not have chairs or bench. There fore workers prefer to eat their lunch and take a nap out side.

They also suffer due to absence of rooms to change their clothes and put their stuff and lunch boxes. So it is common to put luggage and lunch box at the green house or around the work place. Assistant manager of Saron Rose admitted “we did not think to build a house for workers to put their things but we put few boxes in each green house for their clothes, but to be honest, I really do not know where they put their lunch box.” Workers who are in the pack house eat and take rest on the floor; but for greenhouse workers it is

very hot to eat there so they prefer to eat outside, under the trees and every where near to the greenhouse.

Picture 1: Workers taking rest under the green house after lunch



As the above picture indicates female workers are forced to eat lunch under green house's shadow and rest there. For a visitor it is common to see people sleeping everywhere at lunchtime.

Respondents to the survey said that toilet facilities, when available, are filthy or are some distance from the place they are assigned. Since the location where toilets are constructed is far, female workers from each greenhouse and pack house should travel long way to use the toilet. The supervisors are also not happy to permit workers to go to the toilet. For this reason, they are forced to hold their urine for a long period of time that cause kidney problem for majority of female workers especially who are in the greenhouse.

One of the key informants from Ethio Passion said, "There were two toilets in the farm one is near to the pack house and the other far at the back. Recently they closed this one and all

of us are forced to go to the one, which is too far for pack house workers. Therefore we usually hold our urine and urinate at lunchtime.”

The situation is similar both at Saron Rose and ET Highland. There are toilets in the farm but in a very distance location the same as Ethio Passion. The toilets in Ethio passion and Saron Rose are clean but have no toilet paper and were not equipped with running water or sanitary napkins. The lack of water, in the toilet, for washing up was also a problem. Women have a more frequent need for washing, especially during monthly menstrual cycles.

The availability of shower in the farm for greenhouse workers is unthinkable. The shower in the farm is only available for spray group because they have exposed to the chemicals and pesticides. But workers in the green house have also exposure to the chemicals and suffer from the hot temperature those who work in the greenhouse

Though Saron Rose manager claim that shower is available for every body, workers complain that the shower gives service at the working hours while they are on duty then it will be closed at lunchtime and after 4:30 in the afternoon. Just for propaganda purpose they say there is shower but they are not using it. So the use of its presence in the farm is a question for the greenhouse workers. A worker from green house said “Rather, it would be better if they construct rest room for us than the shower. It is worthless”

Regarding protective materials, workers are provided with poor safety materials. As per the researcher’s observation, greenhouse workers in Saron Rose especially use no personal protective equipments (PPE). Thus scar and skin irritation on the hands of female flower farm workers, who work both in greenhouse and pack house, are common. This is because that at the time of harvesting, greenhouse workers are exposed to chemicals when they put flowers in the bucket, which has post harvest water (water mixed with chemical). Even though they are given gloves sometimes, majority of them often work without gloves due to lack of knowledge and size of the materials, as a result the management does not enforce punishment for workers who do not use PPE.

4.3.2 Gender Based Challenges

4.3.2.1 Discrimination

Gender discrimination at the work place is common in third world countries especially in export industries (Tinker, 1990). For the question that, if they have ever faced discrimination in the farm 37.8% of respondents agree that there is discrimination in the farm. Among them, 4 respondents claim that they had gender discrimination by their co-workers and supervisors. Even though they know it is their right to apply to the management when they are subjected to discrimination by supervisors, only one of them did and the rest three kept quite.

For the question whether there is some discrimination in giving training and promotion 30(40.5%) said there is no discrimination at the time of promotion rather workers get promotion according to their experience and educational level. However 23 (31%) of the respondents said there is discrimination at the time of promotion, training and in salary increment and promotion. An interviewee also said,

The management discriminate workers when it gives increment and promotion. For instance there are women who have been hired with me and earn better than me now. For promotion especially, someone has to be active and talkative to be promoted in to supervisor position. If you are quite and calm you will be disadvantageous. They often do not consider the experience you have thus usually we are confused with the criteria of promotion.

Alternatively, African Charter Article 13 stipulates, state parties shall ensure transparency in recruitment, promotion and dismissal of women and combat and punish sexual harassment in the workplace. The management on the contrary claims that education and performance are the only criteria through which workers get promotion.

4.3.2.2 Sexual Harassment

Formal labor has been overwhelmingly male dominated for years, and on many jobsites women are not welcomed. Sex discrimination and anti-women attitudes are still extensive on workplace, despite the fact that sex discrimination is illegal (Mercedes, 1997). This

discrimination affects all women in some form or the other. Working women have no exception. In fact, working women most commonly face the reaction to women taking new roles, which belong to male domains within patriarchy. Sexual Harassment at work is an extension of violence in everyday life and is discriminatory, exploitative, thriving in atmosphere of threat, terror and act of vengeance. Even though the number of respondents who have faced sexual violence in the farm is few, it does not mean that women are safe from sexual harassment.

Table 18: Percentage distribution of respondents by their exposure to violence

Exposure to violence	Frequency	Percent
Yes	14	18.9
No	60	81.1
Total	74	100.0

According to the survey, 14 people said that they have faced a gender-based violence at the work place that can be sexual, verbal or physical. Out of the fourteen respondents majority of them (11 of them) claim they have faced verbal violence by their supervisors and only five respondents admitted that they encountered sexual and physical violence too.

Studies find that sexual harassment is still endemic, often hidden, and present in all kinds of organizations (Ibid). Yet it is still not always viewed as a problem, which has to be systematically tackled. Even though respondents on the survey conceal the presence of sexual harassment, the finding from the in-depth interview and FGD reveals that sexual harassment is the issue of female farm workers.

As Mena and Silvia, (2005) stated, sexual harassment is all about expression of male power over women that sustain patriarchal relations. It is used to remind women of their vulnerability and subjugated status. This patriarchal power can be revealed by subjecting another person to an unwelcome act of physical intimacy, like grabbing, brushing, touching, pinching.

People's understanding and knowledge about sexual violence determine their attitude and action towards it. Since all of the workers have different idea about harassment there are acts that are not considered as harassment. In addition to this misunderstanding, fearing or being shy about the subject matter affects the finding of the survey. So explaining the meaning of harassment was essential as a result few respondents disclosed that sexual harassment could happen in the farm by male co-workers. The production manager of Saron Rose said, "As both male and female workers are in the same compound female workers might encounter violence or harassment by their male colleagues but I do not think serious things like rape could be happen because the management directly fires the worker who dares to commit such insane act."

Female workers who have male supervisors especially those who work in the greenhouse have a chance to be the subject to sexual harassment. But according to the researcher's observation majority of greenhouses in the three farms have female supervisors that decrease women exposure for harassment. A key informant who came from Kenya also said,

The degree of sexual harassment in Ethiopia is less than Kenya; this is because in Ethiopian flower farms, majority of the workers in the green house and pack house are women so are the supervisors since they are promoted in their working place, supervisors are usually women. Therefore the chance is very rare for female workers to be sexually harassed by their supervisors or colleagues.

However this can not protect or secure female workers from sexual attacks as they spend their lunchtime everywhere under the greenhouse. Hence, there will be a high possibility to be harassed whether verbally or sexually. Majority of the workers understand sexual harassment as an act for sex but showing a person any sexually explicit visual material, in the form of pictures; making an unwelcome remark or request with sexual connotations, like sexually explicit compliments; making sexist remarks; being engaged in any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, which could be verbal, or even non-verbal, like staring to make the other person uncomfortable, making offensive gestures are signs of sexual harassment (Mercedes, 1997).

Several studies have shown that female flower farm workers suffer from gender and sexual harassment, a factor associated with low job satisfaction as well as psychological and physiological health symptoms and workplace injuries. Mena & Silvia (2005) also said harassment by co-workers and/or supervisors were an important predictor for symptoms of increased psychological and physiological distress.

Sexual harassment is a serious problem for female workers anywhere. Sexual harassment in the workplace is not only an issue of equal employment opportunity or equality of treatment but it is also increasingly recognized as human rights issue since it violates laws by perpetuating sex discrimination in employment. Under Article 35 sub Art 3 of Ethiopian constitution and Article 11 of CEDAW women are entitled with the right of equality in the field of employment without any kind of discrimination and violence. Since it is their human right, an employer is responsible to take all kinds of appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against female workers including sexual harassment.

We can also call sexual harassment acts like requests by supervisor for sexual favors from a junior in return for promotion or other benefits. It is also sexual harassment for a boss to make intrusive inquiries into the private lives of employees, or persistently ask them out. It is sexual harassment for a group of workers to joke and laugh amongst themselves about sexual conduct in an attempt to humiliate or embarrass another person.

Sexual harassment in various forms is a fact of working women life, for most women, the problem is gaining increased attention in all workplaces and civil rights remedies are more aggressively pursued, many are beginning to see it not only as an issue of employment discrimination, but as a real workplace safety and health issue as well. The International Human Right Declaration, CEDAW, Beijing Plat Form, Ethiopian Constitution, labor Proclamation and even the International Code of Conduct are some of legal provisions that give due attention for harassment as women human right.

However, the researcher observed that there are no written materials that rule the farm workers by explaining what harassment means and the step of sanctions. So the punishment for committing sexual harassment varies in each farm. Moreover, due to lack of training on

Gender issues and harassment in the farm, majority of the workers are not aware of how and where to report if harassment happens. A trainer from the Ethiopian Horticulture Producers and Exporters Association said,

The association has training department to eliminate this and other challenges of farm workers but the farm owners and managers are usually unwilling to facilitate training for their workers. This is because, it is not mandatory for a farm to train its workers so owners do not want to pay for the service. Consequently we have prepared some posters on some basic issues like safety and health issue, Gender violence (farm policy on harassment) and personal protective clothes (PPC) in three languages: in Amharic, English and Oromiffa.

However, the researcher observed that except ET Highland, the rest do not post the posters in the farm. Even some workers in the ET Highland are not clear with the poster in the wall. Another trainer from EHPEA training department said,

Sexual harassment training for all employees clears perceptions and understanding of sexual harassment, impact of sexual harassment on individuals and understanding of the policy and complaints mechanism. Setting up a mechanism does not mean that there is sexual harassment in their workplace. Prevention is always better than cure, and being aware of things before hand always helps. It is very difficult to change employee's attitude towards sexual harassment without employer's close scrutiny.

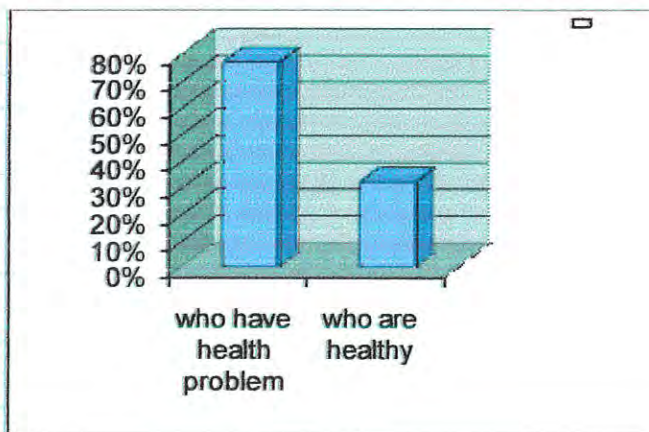
Though employers are responsible for the security of every worker in the farm, they are not that much concerned for their workers' problems. Labor proclamation article 12 says it the obligation of an employer to keep register containing weekly rest days, public holidays and leave utilized by the worker, health condition and employment injury of the worker. Thus, it is very useful if employers also document the results of any sexual harassment complaint or investigation and inform all employees that it is their obligation to report sexual harassment if they either experience or witness.

4.3.3 Health associated challenges

An increasing numbers of women enter the labor market concerns about their health and safety is growing. In addition to the primary safety and health hazards faced by all flower farm workers, there are safety and health issues specific to female workers. The large percentages of females within the floriculture industry and the serious health and safety problems unique to female farm workers have a direct effect. Safety and health problems in flower farms do not create barriers to women entering and remaining in the field. In turn, the large numbers of women workers in the industry could not change the environment in which these safety and health problems arise or continue.

Facing health problem is one of the major issues for flower farm workers. The different types of chemicals that are used in the flower farms are claimed to pollute the environment. Even though these chemicals are very crucial to grow healthy flowers cause both long and short term damages on the health of employees and the environment in general. Since the majority of the farm workers are women, they are vulnerable to different diseases caused by the polluted environment. According to Brassel and Rangel, (cited in Tigist (2007)) most of the health problems faced by flower farm workers includes: headache, dizziness, nausea, diarrhea, skin eruption, fainting, premature birth, congenital malformations, reduced fecund ability, miscarriage, defective birth, respiratory problem and so on. The survey finding support majority of the above mentioned health problems.

Figure 7: Percentage distribution of respondents in relation to health problem



Gender issues and harassment in the farm, majority of the workers are not aware of how and where to report if harassment happens. A trainer from the Ethiopian Horticulture Producers and Exporters Association said,

The association has training department to eliminate this and other challenges of farm workers but the farm owners and managers are usually unwilling to facilitate training for their workers. This is because, it is not mandatory for a farm to train its workers so owners do not want to pay for the service. Consequently we have prepared some posters on some basic issues like safety and health issue, Gender violence (farm policy on harassment) and personal protective clothes (PPC) in three languages: in Amharic, English and Oromiffa.

However, the researcher observed that except ET Highland, the rest do not post the posters in the farm. Even some workers in the ET Highland are not clear with the poster in the wall. Another trainer from EHPEA training department said,

Sexual harassment training for all employees clears perceptions and understanding of sexual harassment, impact of sexual harassment on individuals and understanding of the policy and complaints mechanism. Setting up a mechanism does not mean that there is sexual harassment in their workplace. Prevention is always better than cure, and being aware of things before hand always helps. It is very difficult to change employee's attitude towards sexual harassment without employer's close scrutiny.

Though employers are responsible for the security of every worker in the farm, they are not that much concerned for their workers' problems. Labor proclamation article 12 says it the obligation of an employer to keep register containing weekly rest days, public holidays and leave utilized by the worker, health condition and employment injury of the worker. Thus, it is very useful if employers also document the results of any sexual harassment complaint or investigation and inform all employees that it is their obligation to report sexual harassment if they either experience or witness.

chemicals or fertilizers, fainted at the time of pesticide spraying and injured by sharp materials at the time of construction etc. Other job related health problems like kidney problems; back pain, dizziness, skin irritation are not the management's head ache.

According to CEDAW, Article 11 Sub article 1 (f): "Working women have the right to protection of health and to safety in working condition, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction." Nevertheless respondents in the interview complain that their working condition in the farm is unsafe and do not have health insurance. One of an interviewee said,

When I started working here I had menstruation disorder. I did not see my menstruation for six months. I did not tell to the manager and even to my supervisor because I know that they won't cover my medical expense thus I went to clinic and was examined with my personal expense. The doctor told me that it might be the cause of chemicals. After that when I took medicine and became ok. But I still have a fear that may happen again. Anyways this is not only my case my friends also face such kind of menstrual disorder sometimes.

The working situation by itself forced employees to stand for long hours and perform their jobs. As a result, employees suffer from various pains like back pain, kidney problem and other related diseases. Their problem is also aggravated by the inadequate supply of safety materials like gloves, warm clothes and boots for those who are working in the refrigerated room. A medical nurse from Sebeta Health Center confirmed that female farm workers are regular patients from flower industry. Dizziness, headache, TB, kidney problems and skin irritation are the major health problems that cause the workers to come to the health center. The head nurse suggested that chemicals and pesticides are primary causes of the above problems and the workload in the second place.

According to Ezana (2007), the employees work in a very difficult working environment, which exposes them to extreme hot and extreme cold temperature rooms i.e., greenhouse and refrigerated room respectively. Those employees who work in the greenhouse do not get ventilated or fresh air while those who are in the refrigerated room suffer from cold

related disease like bronchitis, tuberculosis, tonsillitis and others. The researcher also observed women working in a very high temperate in propagation room.

If all workers have regular medical checkup it would be easy to cure patients before they are seriously injured. But regular checkup is only provided for the spray group (only men). Workers in the green house or pack house (more than 80% women) do not have access for regular medical checkup even if they are also exposed for chemicals and pesticides.

HIV/AIDS is another major health issue that the researcher finds out in the farm. According to the information from HIV/ AIDS officer at Sebeta Health Center, workers in the farm are highly exposed to the diseases for a number of reasons. One is lack of training or awareness about the disease and its transmission mechanisms. As the survey finding shown above (see table 11) majority of farm workers did not get the chance for training related to health and HIV/ AIDS in the farm. The officer blames farm managers for their unwillingness to let experts from the Heath Center to educate workers.

Another reason is high turnover of workers for better salary and incentives. Since turnover is common in the flower industry workers are exposed to date different people when they move from one place of work to another. An informant from Saron Rose said,

Female workers usually date male workers from construction and spray group. When they leave the farm, their partners will have affair with other new comers. Majority of the workers do not use condoms as it is considered as shameful to buy it from shop. Hence if the workers get training they will be able to practice safe sex. Now the management puts condom boxes in available place for all workers, this might help workers to think of protection.

Moreover, female workers who migrated from different places face both financial and social challenges. This arises from their feeling of loneliness and exposure to attacks. As a result, they usually need some kind of security and start dating some one who can protect them from this .In addition to that since female farm workers are paid low they make

search for someone who can share their household expense, said Ato Alemu HIV/AIDS officer at the Health Center.

A discusscent in the FGD shares her experience:

When I was working in another farm, I started dating someone in the farm. He was a sprayer. I earned 7 birr per day and he earned 10. After we become very close, we had experienced unsafe sex and I became pregnant. We even did not have HIV test when we got married (not legal) and started living together. After I gave birth, it was hard to pay for house rent and cover our household expense with his salary. So he took me to his parents' house but lately it became difficult for me to live with his mother. Therefore I returned to my family and back to work in the farm and earn 340 birr monthly. The money assists me to raise my child because my x husband is not helping any more. (She did not take HIV test still).

The HIV health officer informed the researcher that there are workers in the farm who are HIV positive and majority of them started taking ART. All of them do not want to tell the managers about their situation hence they work even in a very rough situation which makes their health status very weak. Though workers took HIV test and know the result, they are not comfortable to tell the management in fear of losing their Job. In relation to this, one of the managers said that workers encouraged taking HIV test and will be assigned to less contaminated area if they are positive and informed the management.

4.4 Job position of female workers in the farm

High job opportunity for women and their position in the farm is paradoxical. Though majority women get employment in the farm they are found in low skill and low paid position, which are in greenhouse and post harvest section. This is due to the reason that these work places are very tiresome and need workers patience to perform the task appropriately. Therefore spraying chemicals and construction (better paid position) considered as male intensive work done by male labor. Workers themselves believe that

these positions are not suitable for women due to the toxicity of chemicals, as it is believed that women could be pregnant at any time and are weak for such kind of heavy tasks.

Table 19: Tasks performed in flower farm in different position

<p>Administration (office work) Production manager- Managing the production Farm manager-hire and fire workers -Passing messages - Deal with customers Department manager- controls the work in the respective departments Secretarial work</p>	<p>Green house - Preparing and raising flower beds -Weeding paths -Bending flower stems -Planting -Cleaning the green house -Carrying organic wastes -Harvesting flowers -Pruning</p>
<p>Supervision -Quality control -Following the productive process -Coordinate workers -Arrange chemical spraying programs -Take workers attendance - Following the transportation process</p>	<p>Pack house - Arranging stems -Cleaning the post harvest area -Classifying, cutting and measuring flowers -Packing flowers according to their varieties -Collecting trash -Carrying flowers to the cold room</p>
<p>Chemical spraying and constriction Spray chemicals according to the farm program Construct green house at expansion and repair when it is necessary</p>	<p>Cleaning -Clean the compound and offices -Cleaning workers bath room -Cleaning cold storage room</p>

Female workers in the farm are assigned to labor intensive job positions like in greenhouse work, pack house, cleaning. Workers perform their tasks in these sections in a very uncomfortable environment especially working in greenhouse work needs patience and tolerance with the high temperature. Female workers in the green house are responsible for the healthy growth of flowers. If a plant gets infection with a disease it is the worker who is responsible to inform supervisor.

Pack house or post harvest section is also another tedious work place for workers. Unlike the green house, workers suffer from the low temperature here. The nature of the work forces workers to stand for the whole day, which has a negative effect on their health. Cleaning and supervision is relatively less tiresome. Women at the managerial position are very rare in the flower farm. The researcher in the visit observed that only one of the farms have female managers.

Similarly, ET Highland is one of the farms that have female farm manager. “When women are at the managerial position in the flower industry, the working situation of female workers is differing”, said ET Highland manager. Workers in ET Highland for example do not hesitate to report any kind of violence’s they experience and they have good relationships with the manager. A discusscent in FGD said,

The manager in our farm is very responsive person. We feel at ease to talk to her about our problems including personal. She protects female workers from any kind of violence even it happens outside the farm. If the farm manager was male I do not think workers will complain for each problem they face in the farm.

The level of their education may limit female workers from a better position in the farm. But there are many graduate women who fill the criteria for the managerial position. However child bearing and rearing were rose as causes by many farm owners not to hire female managers

4.5 Management’s view about female workers situation

“An employer shall ensure that the work place and premises do not cause danger to the health and safety of the workers and take appropriate pre-executions to insure that all the processes of work shall not be a source of or cause of any hazards to the health and safety of the workers” (Ethiopian labor proclamation 377/2003 Art. 92 Sub art. 6). Managers of the three farms were interviewed to find out how they are playing their role in creating both opportunities and friendly environment for the farm workers. The obtained results are discussed below.

According to the International Code of Conduct, Special measures have to be taken to protect drinking water sources, ground water, surface water, rivers, dikes and lakes have to be taken and Special attention must be given to the protection of the fauna and flora inside the farm and the surrounding areas (IFC, 2004). In line with this code the managers at the three farms has conducted risk assessment at the beginning and at the time of expansion to find out environmental and labor condition risks. Conducting risk assessment is a very essential issue at work place especially like flower farms.

As the industry uses different chemicals and pesticides to grow healthy flowers the management is responsible for the type of the chemicals used in the farm. WHO has leveled the chemicals according to their toxicity and banded some which are very dangerous to the human beings. Even though they are unable to show the list of banded chemicals, managers in the three farms confirmed that only less toxic chemicals are used in the farm to safeguard the workers health.

Chemical containers and toxic wastes are treated under management supervision in accordance with acceptable procedure. Containers by any means are not released for personal use but regular safety and health training do not give due consideration by the management. It is believed that workers can protect themselves by observing the working situation in the section. Not to pay service charge to training givers, managers usually do not get interested to contact EHPEA's training department.

A sign for no-entry at the time of chemical spraying and re- entry after spraying at the gate of green house is very mandatory to protect workers from the chemical infection .So production managers of the two farms (Ethio Passion PLC and ET Highland flora) put a sign at the green house gate, indicate the type of the chemical or pesticide, its level of toxicity and the duration of no- entry and re- entry time. The Farm manager at ET Highland also explained,

The sign that we put at the green house is very crucial if not workers will be highly exposed to the chemicals. We also told supervisors to inform green house

workers to go out at the time of chemical spraying. As majority of them are not literate we also put a common sign in red to prohibit them to enter. All these things are done to protect our workers from any kinds of accident since it is our responsibility.

For the absence of regular medical check up and clinic in the farm, the production manger of Ethio Passion said, “The farm would like to facilitate medical check up for all workers but due to number of the workers and hospital costs we only facilitate regular medical check up for spray group as they are highly exposed for chemicals.”

All of the three farms do not run clinics rather workers who are trained by Red Cross give first aid when accident happens. If the injury is serious the patient will be taken to the clinic in town. ET Highland refers workers to private clinic called St. Gebrel in Sebeta town. Workers from Ethio Passion and Saron Rose are sent to Sebeta Health Center. According to one of the nurse in St.Gebrel Clinic “ET Highland flora sends workers if they are seriously injured. The farm has a referral paper which tells the patient’s name and the type of accident. Then we give the patient the necessary treatment and deal the medical charge with the management not the patient.”

The managers said that workers in the farm do not have facility problems like toilet, pure drinking water and hand washing facilities. But shower, rest room, clinic and cafeteria are still the missing ones, which are the management’s long run plans.

The cause for the absence of labor union in the farms under the study considered as lack of interest among the workers that contradict with the information gathered from the workers. On the other hand workers in the interview reveal their interest to be organized. Organizing workers or labor association helps both the management and workers but farm owners fear the questions that could be raised so they don’t encourage their employees to form labor association.

However, the management believes that women are hard workers and productive in the farm. One of the manager said, if women were not the dominant labor of the industry the production might be opposite to the present situation. However the salary workers earning is contrary to their contribution for the industry. The management compromises the low wage by saying that workers also get income from agriculture (some workers have land). Unlike the two farms, annual leave and sick leave is given only for permanent workers in Saron Rose. All green house and pack house workers are daily laborers no matter how long they work in the farm. But now the administration is on the process of preparing the contract paper.

To protect any kind of gender based violence and harassment in ET highland 'Farm policy on harassment' poster that is prepared by EHPEA is posted at the gate of pack house in Amharic and Oromiffa language. Thus workers at the farm are aware of what violence means and where to apply. As the general manager in ET Highland is female, workers do not hesitate to report any kind harassment. The manager at ET Highland said,

Female workers can be exposed to violence and harassment in and outside the farm. If a woman is harassed in the farm compound and informed the management the individual will be fired with out any excuse. But if the case happens outside the farm by any body to our workers, we directly contact the police station and accuse the person. Regardless of time we will follow the case. Because we do not want our workers to be hurt and they should not develop sense of insecurity.

Consequently the manager even protects workers if violence happens to them outside the farm. Saron Rose and Ethio passion managers do not believe that any kind of harassment happens in the farm. This is because workers do not know where to apply their case therefore the management is hardly able to know the existence of the issue. Even if managers have some ignorance about female workers condition in the farm, there are opportunities to create mutual understanding between the two parties. Managers in the farm are planning to eradicate workers problems some how. The managers' initiative, in the three farms, to build rest room, cafeteria, clinic, and prepare contract paper is a hopeful beginning for the workers security in the farms.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

This study is designed to find out opportunities, challenges and job position of female workers in three selected flower farms around Sebeta. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gather information to answer the research questions.

According to the finding from the survey female workers believe that they have opportunity for income and are now able to cover some of their household expenses. Majority of respondents developed confidence after they get the job in the farm. Though they are few, workers also have access to information and started their education since they are able to cover their tuition fee. Salary increment, transport, health insurance and promotion are the incentives female farm workers get from the organization.

Despite the limited opportunities that female workers have they also face various challenges in the farm. Majority of the workers' about 75% have health problems: back pain, gynecological problems, headaches, dizziness, nausea, kidney problem, skin irritation, and respiratory problems are some of the common disorders that flower farm workers encounter. These problems are aggravated because the employers fail to provide the employees with the appropriate safety materials and basic trainings. Lack of knowledge due to absence of training about reproductive health and HIV also pushed workers unwanted pregnancy and HIV/AIDS.

Regarding employment condition, except Saron Rose, workers in Ethio Passion and ET Highland are permanent. However the data from the survey and interview revealed that majority of them did not sign contract agreement paper and get the cope. Luck of work experience paper and severance pay (for permanent one) is another challenge for workers

when they leave the organization. Consequently workers take a picture (while they are working) for their working evidence.

Absence of trade union in the three farms is another problem that limits the workers to exercise their right. Farm managers have given many reasons for this. The three farm managers claim that lack of interest and harmony among the workers are the obstacles that discourage the management to organize the workers or let them to organize themselves. Low level of workers education is also raised as a reason. Moreover the management thinks promoting and organizing trade union (labor association) is the responsibility of the 'Labor and Social Affair bureau of the Zone.

On the contrary, respondents said that the management deliberately discourages them to organize themselves in fear of the many questions that workers may raise. In one farm workers get fired when they raised this issue. In fear of such kind of action workers prefer to keep silent even they have a lot to ask. The absence of workers' association has discouraged employees to forward their complaints and get appropriate solution for their grievances.

The farm workers wage is the issue that is raised in many studies. Similarly workers in the three farms under the study are paid low. On average workers earn nine birr a day whether they are permanent or daily laborer. Thus majority of the respondent are under the range of 200-300 birr salary. This may lead to a conclusion that workers are struggling to cover their basic needs with this small amount of money in the face of the ever rising cost of living. Since there is no labor union they have no place to file their compliant over wage. As a result workers had a general strike in one of the farms to get salary addition.

On the concept of facilities, the study finds out that workers are not provided with necessary and basic facilities. Clinics, rest rooms, shower for green house workers, cafeteria and room for storing personal properties are not available in the farms. Therefore workers eat their lunch everywhere and take rest under the green house. Trained people in two farms give first aid though it not satisfactory compared to the risky working condition.

Regarding working hours, except Saron Rose, workers in the two farms work 48 hours weekly. Over time is common in all farms for post harvest workers. But the over time goes above the limited hours in the labor proclamation. Workers may work from three up to seven hours at high production and high export seasons. Moreover, problems such as lack of medical insurance/medical expenses coverage/, sick leave, annual leave, as well as other benefits and rights of employees are the factors that made employees more vulnerable in the floriculture industry.

While female labor dominates the floriculture industry, women are in low paid position under the studied farms. 98% of female farm workers are in green house and pack house earning small amount of salary. Except ET Highland's manager, department managers, agronomists, assistant managers and production managers in the three farms are men. It is fact, majority of female laborers are illiterate and have poor educational background.

The finding from the interview with the managers indicated that though the management knows the above-mentioned challenges, except some minor improvements, the management does not seem to play a vital role to make the working environment conducive. Managers have a plan to solve all problems in the farm but due to high turnover of managers some planned actions left out from taking effect. Constructing cafeteria, rest room, clinic, and develop contractual agreement paper is the short run plan of the farms under study. Nevertheless, high wage increment, labor association on job training, experience paper, severance pay and medical check up are not listed in the management's to do list.

5.2 Conclusion

Nowadays, commercial farms, like floriculture, are expanding in Ethiopia, assuming an increasingly prominent role in the growth of the country's GDP. Ethiopian floriculture industry becomes one of the flourishing sectors that generate foreign currency for the country.

Recent initiatives by the government of Ethiopia to promote this sub-sector have met with private sector interest. Before 2002 there were only 25 farms but now the number of licensed farms increased to 339. This sector is providing employment opportunities for both men and women. However the number of women farm workers in floriculture highly exceeds the number of men. This is due to the fact that women are more suitable and professionals on caring flowers.

Women working in the industry have different opportunities like high job opportunity income, confidence, and access to information, access to education, some incentives, fair working hours and maternal leave.

On the other hand workers are exposed for problems like lack of training, job insecurity, and low wage, excess over time and absence of weekly rest, lack of labor association, lack of facilities and safety equipments, discrimination, sexual harassment and various kinds of health challenges.

Regarding their job position female workers in the three farms under the study found in low paid position that is greenhouse and pack house.

To conclude, even though female labor is preferable and dominates the sector women working in the farm deal with a lot of challenges with few opportunities they are provided, and almost all of female farm workers found themselves in low position and are less paid.

5.3 Recommendations

The findings in this study depict that, even if women have some opportunities in the farm, they also are encountered various job related, health and gender based challenges. These challenges are aggravated by the management's ignorance of workers labor and human rights related queries. As a result the following points are recommended.

For farm managers and owners

1. Women represent the majority of the workers in the flower farm. As they are the assets to the sector, farm managers and owners need to value and give credit to their unlimited contribution. Organizations engaged in this industry should provide their employees with the appropriate privileges, wages and rights in order to motivate the workers, to increase their productivity and develop their sense of belongingness to their respective farms.
2. Facilitating regular training in the farm helps workers to protect themselves from any kind of injuries caused by lack of knowledge because trainings can bring attitudinal changes among the workers and also raise awareness on self-protecting mechanisms. Trainings and information programs are also essential in order to enhance accident prevention and safe work practices therefore the managers should facilitate regular on job trainings.
3. Farms should also take into consideration the side effects that result from the use of high toxic (banded) chemicals in the flower farm, affecting the health of their employees and the environment while they maximize their profit. Employers should, hence, not force their employees to work in a greenhouse where strong chemicals are sprayed before certain period of time.
4. Farms should cover the medical expense of their workers since farm workers are subjected for various health problems due to the chemicals and their working condition. In order to minimize the rate of sickness that results from the type of job that workers perform, employers should create a convenient work environment. They should therefore,

provide their employees with facilities such as sitting benches in the packing rooms, sleeping rooms that could be used during sickness and should also employ mechanism such as shifting workers from one working area to another.

5. All farms should have meeting with the workers monthly or under certain period of time. This will help the management to understand workers challenges and interest that leads to find out solutions. Otherwise workers interest and devotion for their job won't get due consideration.

6. The management in the farms under the study should also develop a committee for receiving workers' complaint on harassment and notify the sanction procedure of offenders.

7. Even though the managers' ignorance is the cause of many challenges for employees they don't want to take the blame. Therefore employers should have an obligation to take care of their employees and not deny the constitutional rights of workers to form an association.

For employees

8. Employees should be aware of their legal rights and be strong enough to organize and mobilize themselves so that their grievance or problems could be addressed. There should be unity among the workers to tackle their challenges in the work place.

9. Female workers, especially, are advised to take HIV test before they have sex with and use condoms in order to prevent themselves from unwanted pregnancy and the transmission of STDs like HIV/AIDS. May be condoms should be available in every farm with campaigns to raise awareness also.

10. Providing breakfast for employees at Ethio Passion is very encouraging. Therefore it will be very good for the workers if other farms also provide food as incentives for employees.

For the government and organizations

11. The government bodies of the region should assess the implementation of laws and regulations in the flower industry. Since people's life is under the umbrella of the industry their constitutional right should be respected. Therefore the Sebeta administration office has obligation to facilitate auditing system in the flower farms that are under the administration.

12. Codes like the ICC and Ethiopian code of practice should be mandatory, to be followed by all flower farms. EHPEA also should review the code and add specific rules about workers' right and safety in the industry. The association and Ethiopian Horticulture Agency in collaboration with concerned government bodies should take strong action against farms, which don't obey the code and violate the law.

13. It is the belief of the researcher (based on the findings) that in order to ensure the benefits of the farm workers in the industry, the government should take the lead in protecting employees by introducing rules and regulations to be implemented by the employers. It is also recommended that the government should not only introduce rules but also enforce them. Women's organization and labor organization should also pressure the government to guarantee the female farm workers' rights.

REFERENCES

- Awards in support of Ethiopian exporters (2007, January). *Ethiopia Today*, Press and audiovisual department, Ministry of information: Addis Ababa.
- Beetham, G. & Justina, D. (2007). Feminist research methodologies and development: overview and practical application. *Gender and Development*. Vol. 15, pages 199-216.
- Best, J. W. and James V Kahan, (2008) *Research in Education*. 10th ed. Hale of India pvt. India: New Delhi.
- Blaikie, N. (2000). *Designing Social Research*. Polity press UK: Cambridge.
- Blumenstyk, Goldie (1997). *Strands of Feminist Theory*. Introduction
(<http://pers-www.wlv.ac.uk/~le1810/femin.htm>)
- CEDAW, (2003). Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women.
(www.un.org/womenwatch/law/cedaw/text/econvention.htm)
- Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds). (1994) *Handling of qualitative research*. Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ehrenreich, B.(1976).What is Socialist Feminism? *Working Papers on Socialism &Feminism:* New American Movement (NAM). Retrieved from www.cwluherstory.com
- EHPEA, (2008) Ethiopian Horticultuer Producers and Exporters Association Annual Report.
- EIA, (2009) *List of Investment Projects Approved on Flower Production Form July 1992-December 30,2008*. Ethiopian Investment Agency. Addis Ababa
- England, A.(June, 2005). *Flower farms sprout in Ethiopia, hinting at a way out of poverty*, in print edition C-4 (www.blacwellreference.com)

- Ethiopia floriculture raising (2008, August). *Ethiopia Today*, Press and audiovisual department, Ministry of information: Addis Ababa.
- ETI Briefing. (February, 2005). *Ethical trade initiative, addressing labor practices on Kenyan flower farms*. Report of ETI involvement 2002-2004. UK: London,
- Ethiopian Embassy in China (www.ethiopiaemb.org.cin/bulletin/05-01/003.htm)
- Ethiopian Television News, Wednesday May 27, 2007
- Evans, S. M. & Barbara J. N. (1989). *Wage Justice. Comparable Worth and the Paradox of Technocratic Reform*. University of Chicago. U.S.A: Chicago
- Ezana Haddis, (2007). *An Assessment of the working conditions of flower farm workers: the case of four flower farms in West Showa Zone: Oromiya Regional state*. M.A Thesis Regional and Local Development Studies.AAU: Unpublished.
- FAO. (2005). *Agriculture: Gender and food security*. Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/Gender/en/agri-e.htm>
- Forum For Environment, (2007). Flowers and Plants with a Socially and Environmentally Sound History. *Akirma, No17*. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.
- Gimenez, M. E. (1998). *Marxist feminism / Materialist feminism*. Center for Digital Discourse and Culture at Virginia Tech University, Retrieved from <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/feminism/mar.html>
- Horticultural Congress, (2002). Horticulture in Canada spotlight on the prairies. *Cronica Horticulture*. Magazine of the international society for horticultural science. Vol.42 (No. 1), Retrieved from WWW.fao.org/inpho/content/compend/text/ch16-04.htm

- ILO. (1984). *Women work and demographic issues*. Report of an international seminar. Switzerland: Geneva.
- ILO. (1999). *World of work No29 April. Low-quality jobs for women: opportunity or dead-ends?* Retrieved from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/magazine/29/women.htm>
- ILO. (2000). *Impact of the Flower Industry in Uganda*. By Asea, P. & Darlison, K. Sectoral Activities Program Working paper WP.148 Geneva: International Labor office,
- IRAN DAYLY, Monday December 17, 2007
- IRROB, (April 16, 2007).Addis Ababa. (<http://www.irrob.org/page/page/4420320.htm>)
- Jimma Times, (2008, February). *Ethiopia: Cut flower Bonanza: At What Cost?*
Retrieved from (<http://www.Jimmatimes.com/piop.23443>.)
- Kessler, A. H. (1982). *Out to work: A history of wage earning women in the United States*, New York. United States, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kitumbo. H. I & P. G. Riwa, (1999). On the occupational Health and Safety in the flower Industry in Tanzania. *African Newsletter No.3*. The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. Finland: Helsinki.
- Lexington. K. (1990). *A woman's wage: Historical meaning and social consequences*. The University press of Kentucky Lexington: Kentucky.
- Lovell, T. (2003). *Feminist social theory from "Feminisms of the second wave" & "Feminisms transformed"*, Retrieved from <http://uregina.ca/~gingrich/319m1703.htm>
- MacDonald, L.A. (1990). "Training Outline: Ergonomics in the Building Trades" Training Materials developed for the Women in Building Trades, Jamaica Plain.

Mail & Guardian online, February 24, 2007

Maykut, P. & Richard, M. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: Philosophic and practical guide*. London: Routledge Flamer.

Mercedes, S. (1997). *Angeles of the workplace: Women and the construction of gender relation in the Canadian Clothing Industry*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Mena, N. & Silvia, P. (2005). *Sexual harassment in the workplace: The cut flower industry*. Case Study Northern Sierra of Ecuador International Labor Right Fund.

Ministry of Trade and Industry. (April, 2008). *Export and Investment Incentives Available for Exporters and Investors in Ethiopia*. Export Promotion Department.

Minister of Information, (2004). *Facts about Ethiopia*. Press and Audiovisual Department, Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

Minister of Information, (2005). *Export Products of Ethiopia*. Press and Audiovisual Department. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

News and Press. (August 25, 2005). *Kenya: Complaints by workers mar bloom in flower farms*. The Nation (Kenya) Retrieved from <http://www.floriculture/Kenya/workers.org>

Pennington, S. & Belinda, W. (1989). *A Hidden Work Force*. Macmillan Education LTD. UK: London.

Pineda, R. O. (2006). *Women in Asia and Pacific: A trade union perspective*. Retrieved from <http://www.isgnweb.org/pub/08-002.htm>

Proclamation No 1/1995 1st Year No. 1 (1995, August) *FDRE Constitution*. Federal Negarit Gazeta of FDRE. Addis Ababa.

- Proclamation No. 377/2003 10th Year No.12 (2004, February) *Labor Proclamation*. Federal Negarit Gazeta of FDRE. Addis Ababa.
- Ritzer, G. (1992). *Sociological Theory*. (3rd Edition). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Rose, M. (22 August 2008). *Ethiopia: Company eyes shift from chemical use at flower farm*. *The Daily Monitor*. Addis Ababa.
- Spencer, T. (2008) *Flower exporters from Around the World*.
<http://www.articlebase.com/business-opportunities-articles/flower-exporters-from>
- Sudan Tribune, (2008). Valentine's Day pushes Ethiopia, export cut flowers in mass. *Sudan Tribune* nov 26. <http://sudantribune.com/psip.php?article25971>
- Taddese Lencho, (2008). *Baseline survey on Occupational Safety & Health, Social Dialogue, Child labor, HIV/AIDS, Labor Standards and Gender in Floriculture and Cotton/Textile Sectors in Ethiopia, and Solid Waste Management in Addis Ababa City*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Tanzam, N. (2005). *Gender in agriculture and technology*. Uganda: Kampala fountain.
- Tenenbaum, D. (2002). Would a Rose Smell as Sweet? *Environmental Health Perspectives*. Vol.110 (No.5), National Institute of Environmental Health Science, pp.240-247, Retrieved from www.ehp.niehs.nih.gov/members/2002/110-5/focus.tml
- Thompson, G. (February 13, 2003). *Behind roses' beauty, poor and ill workers*. Retrieved from <http://www.ehponline.org/members/2002/110-5/rosefield.jpg>
- Tinker, I. (1990). *Present inequalities: Women and world development*. New York: Oxford University press.

Tigist Workneh, (2007). *An assessment of the working conditions of flower farm workers: The case study of four flower farms in Oromiya Region*. M.A Thesis. Institute of Gender Studies. AAU: Unpublished.

UWEA, (2006). *Promoting women workers' Rights in African Horticulture*. Progress Research report presented to women world wide regional workshop. Uganda: Kampala.

Zelalem Teferra (2007). *Floriculture Industry and Local Communities in Ethiopia*. The Case of Golden Rose Agro-Farm LTD. In Tefki Area, south West Showa. Unpublished.

Annexes

Annex – I

Table 8: Percentage distribution of respondents who start education

Access to Education	Frequency	Percent
Yes	25	45.9
No	30	54.1
Total	55	100.0

Table 13: percentage distribution of respondents in relation to their wage

Salary Range	Frequency	Percent
< 250	24	32.4
251 - 300	22	29.7
301 - 350	23	31.1
351 - 450	4	5.4
Total	73	98.6
	74	100.0

Table 14: Number of respondents who get additional payment

Additional Payment		Reason				Total
		Bonus	Over time pay	Work on holiday	1 and 2	
Yes		6	21	8	8	43
No		0	0	0	0	0
Total		6	21	8	8	43

Table 15: Number distribution of respondents who work over time

Over time		Farms Name				Total
		ET Highland Flora	Saron Rose	Ethio Passion		
Yes		23	8	3		34
No		14	10	14		38
Total		37	18	17		72

Table 16: Number distribution of respondents by their weekly rest in their respective farms

Weekly rest		Farm name			Total
		ET Highland Flora	Saron Rose	Ethio Passion	
	Yes with pay	34	0	15	49
	Yes without Pay	0	0	1	1
	No	4	18	1	23
Total		38	18	17	73

Table 17: Number of respondents in relation to labor union in respected farms

Labor Union		Farms Name			Total
		ET Highland Flora	Saron Rose	Ethio Passion	
	Yes	0	0	4	4
	No	32	14	13	59
	I don't know	7	4	0	11
Total		39	18	17	74

Annex – II

Picture 3: Workers fetch water for their household



Picture 4: Workers at pack house stand for eight hours daily



Picture 5: Green house workers themselves transport flower to pack house



Picture 6: No-entry and re-entry sign at the green house gate at Ethio Passion PLC



Picture 7: Farm workers staff lounge at Ethio Passion



.....
b. If yes, how often? / How much is that? _____

20. What kind of benefit have you got /are you getting from the farm?

- 1) Transport allowance 2) Re-fund for medical cost 3) Education fee
4) Promotion 5) Provident fund 6) All of them

21.a. Is there maternity leave with full pay for female workers?

- 1) Yes 2) yes without salary 3) No

b. If yes, for how long? _____

22. Is there sick leave if someone gets sick?

- 1) Yes 2) No

23.a. Have you ever undergone in any training to develop your personal skill and job carrier?

- 1) Yes 2) No

b. If yes, what kind of training have you undergone?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>How many times</u>
About chemicals and pesticides	_____	_____	_____
Gender Issues (reproductive Health, violence etc)	_____	_____	_____
Safety materials	_____	_____	_____
Health and HIV	_____	_____	_____
Rights and duties	_____	_____	_____
Others/ if any	_____	_____	_____

24. How many hours do you work daily? _____

25. Do you think that you are over burdened?

- 1) Yes 2) No 3) I don't know

26. Do you have a weekly paid day off?

- 1) Yes 2) Yes but no payment 3) No

27. How much do you get when you work on your day off?

- 1) Double of daily salary 2) daily salary 3) no payment

28. How much do you get when you work on national holidays?

- 1) Double of daily salary 2) daily salary 3) no payment

29.a. Do you work overtime? 1) Yes 2) No

b. If yes, for how many hours do you work for over time jobs weekly? _____

30. How do you work for overtime?

- 1) With payment 2) without payment

31.a. Do you think that your life has been changed after you get a job in the farm?

- 1) Yes 2) no

b. If yes, what kind of opportunity you think you have got after you became farm worker?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Earning income	_____	_____
Sense of independency	_____	_____
Exposure for information	_____	_____
Education	_____	_____
Abel to cover household expenses	_____	_____
Abel to cover children's' education fee	_____	_____
Positive change in health and nutrition	_____	_____
Any other, specify _____		

32.a. Does the farm have workers' association?

- 1) Yes, there is 2) no 3) I don't know

b. If there is, are you a member of the association?

- 1) Yes 2) no

c. If no, what is the reason? _____

33. If there is, do you think the association helps the workers in solving their problems with the management?

- 1) Yes 2) no

IV Questions regarding challenges

34. a. Have you faced any kind of discrimination because of your sex?

b. If yes, what kind of health problem have you faced? (Multiple chose are possible)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Persistent cough	_____	_____
Kidney problem	_____	_____
Rapid weight loss	_____	_____
Serious wound or injury	_____	_____
Skin rash or irritation	_____	_____
Tuberculosis	_____	_____
Asthmatic	_____	_____
Frequent headache	_____	_____
Gynecological problem	_____	_____
Miscarriage	_____	_____
Other, specify _____		

41 .If you have been through the above health problems what do you think the reason is?

- 1) The work is tiresome
- 2) due to the chemicals
- 3) Due to long working hours
- 4) lack of rest
- 5) Other, specify _____

42. Does the farm cover your medical cost for accident/ injury which is job related or happened at work place?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

43. Do you carry out regular medical check-up at the farm's cost?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

V. Questions regarding position

44. What is the position for the majority female workers?

- 1) Green house
- 2) Packing house
- 3) Construction
- 4) Supervision
- 5) Production management
- 6) Management
7. Other, specify _____

45.a. Is there a chance to get promotion in the farm?



Annex – IV

Interview guideline for the farm workers

1. What is your Job position in the farm?
2. For how many years or months you worked here?
3. How much does a new comer earn at the beginning?
4. Are you provided with adequate protective materials for your task?
5. Do you think the job opportunity in the industry has brought any positive change?
6. Do you work over time? How with payment or with out?
7. Have you ever faced or heard any kind of violence or discrimination in the farm?
8. How do you explain the management's role in creating friendly working environment for the workers?
9. Is there labor union in the farm? Have you heard about it?
10. Do workers get regular training in the farm?
11. Does the farm covers your medical expense?
12. In your opinion what do you suggest to the management in order to meet your interest?

Annex – V

Interview questions for the farm managers

1. Name of the farm? _____
2. Position in the farm? _____
3. Area under cultivation? _____
4. How do you rate the work of female workers in your farm?
5. Do the workers have labor union? If no, what is the reason?
6. Do you put signs of no-entry and re-entry at the green house gate at the time of chemical spraying?
7. Do employees get safety and health trainings regularly?
8. Do you facilitate regular medical checkups for all employees?
9. Have you received a report for any violence against female workers? If yes what kinds of measure have taken?
10. What is the work position of majority of women?
11. How much do you pay for the workers? Do you think it is enough for the living standard?
12. Do female employees have a separate place for storage their personal belongings, eating food and taking rest?
13. Is there any kind of incentives for female workers?
14. What are the criteria you apply for workers promotion? Is there any chance for female workers to be promoted?
15. Do you think female employees are secured from violence and health problems in the farm?
16. What is your general opinion on the performance and productivity of female workers?
17. What kind of plans measures are you planning to improve the working condition?

Annex – VI

Focus Group Discussion guideline

1. How do you explain the working condition in the farm?
2. What kind of challenges you face at the work place?
3. Are you aware of your rights?
4. What is your opinion about workers' and management's relation?
5. Are female workers treated equally with men?
6. Is there any kind of violence or harassment by co-workers, supervisors and managers?
7. What is your attitude about HIV and sexually transmitted disease?
8. Are you satisfied with the opportunities that you are provided?
9. What do you recommend to the management regarding your working situation?

Declaration

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

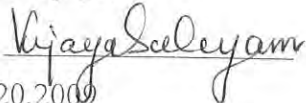
Name: Bethlehem Melese

Signature: 

Date: July 20, 2009

Confirmed by the Advisor

Name: Dr. Vijaya. S

Signature: 

Date: July 20, 2009