

Addis Ababa University

College of Social Sciences

School of social work

**Title: The Role of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches to
Mitigate Social Problems in Selected Areas of Addis Ababa**

Prepared By: Minychel Ambelu

Advisor: Comdr. Demelash Kassaye,

(PhD)

May, 2017

Addis Ababa,

Ethiopia

The Role of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches to Mitigate Social Problems in Addis Ababa

Minychel Ambelu Mekonnen

**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa
University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master
of Arts in Social Work**

May,

2017

DECLARATION

I, the under signed, declare that thesis proposal entitled " The Role of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches to Mitigate Social Problems in Selected Areas of Addis Ababa " is my original work and has not been presented for degree requirement by any other individual; and that all the source materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Student Name

Signature.....

Date

Confirmed by:

Name (Thesis Advisor)

Signature.....

Date.....

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

**The Role of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches to Mitigate Social Problems in
Addis Ababa**

By

Minychel Ambelu Mekonnen

School of Social Work

Approved by Board of Examiners:

.....
Advisor

.....
Signature

.....
Examiner

.....
Signature

.....
Examiner

.....
Signature

List of Acronyms

- AADS** - Addis Ababa Diocese Secretariat
- BFED** - Bureau of Finance and Economic Development
- CSA** - Central Statistical Agency

DDP	-	Diocese Based Development Program
EOC	-	Ethiopian Orthodox Church
EOTC	-	Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church
EOC-DICAC	-	Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter Church Aid Commission
FGD	-	Focus Group Discussion
IRDP	-	Integrated Rural Development Program
OHACC	-	Orthodox HIV/AIDS Campaign Center
OVC	-	Orphan and Vulnerable Children
PLWHA	-	People Living With HIV/AIDS

Acknowledgements

This paper would not be possible without the support and guidance of many people. The researcher wants to express gratitude to all people who have helped to finalize this research paper. During the process of this study, special support and contribution was forwarded by certain individuals for whom, the researcher wishes to record appreciation separately here.

First of all, my heartfelt gratitude goes to my advisor Comdr. Demelash Kassaye, (PhD) without you; this paper would not be successful. Thank you very much for your constructive ideas, comments, and suggestions and for sharing the in-depth knowledge on the role of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches to mitigate social problems these all helped me throughout the process of this study.

Then, I would like to thank, the administration office of St. Mary church, Holy trinity cathedral church ,St. George church, Bole Medhanialem Cathedral church and EOC-DICAC for their contribution and providing necessary information concerning to the issue.

I am also very much thankful to the staffs of the Graduate School of Social Work. Thank all of you for your support, encouragement.

Finally, nobody has been important to me in the pursuit of this paper than my family. I would like to thank all my parents, for their passionate appreciations they are

the ultimate role models for me.

Thank

You!!!

Table of Content

Contents

Page

Abstract

This study focused on investigating the role of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido churches in mitigating social problems in Addis Ababa. As far as the knowledge of the researcher towards the study of religious institutions is concerned, most of the previous studies carried out in both academic and non-academic organization focuses on specific issues of cultural, spiritual, and social environment roles. However, little is done to understand the role of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches from the stand point of mitigating social problems. This gap has been the central point of the study. The study is qualitative by design. Both primary and secondary sources used to generate pertinent information to the study. In line with this, the researcher used the common methods such as In-depth interview and focus group discussion (FGD) to obtain primary data. Whereas, secondary

data have been collected from various materials of published and unpublished sources such as books, journals, internets and other related sources assumed important for this particular study. Data gathered in this way were subject for thematic analysis. Currently, increasing the number of vulnerable orphans and elders, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, and housing problem are the major social problems that gain a due attention by the selected Ethiopian orthodox Tewahido churches. EOTC plays a great role in the day to day life of the society and they aimed at serving the human beings on the basis of truth. The researcher implication for the future researchers on this issue is that Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches give a due attention for various social problems but this study addressed only housing problem, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, orphans and elder's related problems. Therefore, it is better if they focused on other social problems that are not touched by this study.

Key Terms: Religion, Religious institutions, Social problems

Chapter One

- **Introduction**

The objective of this study is to investigate the role of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches to mitigate social problems. This paper comprises five chapters with different sub-sections. The first Chapter is an introductory part, which contains back ground of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, and scope of the study, significance of the study, description of study area and limitation

of the study. Chapter two comprises literature review on the role of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches. The next chapter presents methodological parts such as method of data collection, sampling technique, method of data analysis and ethical considerations. The fourth chapter deals with the analysis and research findings. The last chapter comprises discussion, conclusion and recommendations.

- **Background of the study**

Religion is a collection of cultural systems belief systems and world views that establish symbols and relate humanity to some supernatural or inanimate objects who are worshipped through ritual practices. In addition, religion is found in all known human societies and even records in the earliest societies show clear traces of religious symbols and ceremonies. Throughout history, religion has continued to be a central part of societies and human experiences, shaping how individuals react to the environments in which they live (Oluwaseun, 2013). Since religion is such an important part of societies around the world; scholars show great interest to know everything behind it.

Religion can be seen as both a belief system and a social institution. As a belief system, religion shapes what people think and how they see the world. As a social institution, religion is a pattern of social action organized around the beliefs and practices that people develop to answer questions about the meaning of existence. And religion persists over time and has an organizational structure into which members are socialized

(Oluwaseun, 2013).

According to Habibatbar (2012), the function of religion in human life is a lot and its influence is visible in all aspects of life. Its function can be divided into social and personal life. Religious functions in personal life are mental comfort, meaningful life, spiritual enjoyment, reduction of pains and physical health. In social life aspects are much too social unity, wellbeing in life freedom, social justice, helping others, less crimes and the growth of cultural and civilization.

Furthermore, the report made by Mengistu (2010), noted that history testifies that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church is the oldest Christian church in sub-Saharan Africa. It is a unique church in Africa in that it has developed its own religious traditions in which much of Ethiopian history, social life and ethics are deeply rooted. The church has been the repository of the country's rich heritage of an old civilization that dates back even before Christianity.

Ethiopia is facing different social problems and most of these problems are serious and complex which need the integration as well as collaborative approach between various responsible bodies to be alleviated. With regard to these, religious institutions especially churches have their own role in the mitigation process of social problems. Therefore, this is the intension of researcher for selecting this title and also the researcher have been try to investigate multi-functions of Ethiopian Orthodox Church as a responsible social institution in mitigating social problems that is helpful to attain social work perspectives. Overall, the aim of this study is to investigate the role of Ethiopian

Orthodox Churches to mitigate social problems in A.A.

- **Statement of the problem**

Throughout history, religion has continued to be a central part of societies and human experience; also it shapes how individuals react to the environment in which they live. Due to this reason, religion has become such an important issue for scholars around the world and they attracted the researchers to conduct various studies in relation to religion as well as religious institutions (Oluwaseun, 2013).

In Ethiopia, different studies were conducted in relation to the role of religious institutions. For example kumilachew (2015), has studied the socio economic role religion plays, with a particular reference to Ethiopian orthodox churches in A.A. In his study, role of churches in the provision of social support are three in type: emotional support, provision of food and provision of cloths. In addition, he also reported that the church's role in affecting the nature of social and interpersonal relationships of its followers is high. Moreover, the study has finally sorted out that religion is an inherently a social phenomenon and it has many effects on the socio economic life of the community.

Asselefech (2014) has reported a remarkable finding on the role of Ethiopian churches in the development of adult education in Gonder and A.A. In addition, she has pointed out the unique features of ye' Abinet temihret bets in light of adult education, the teaching learning methods in traditional church schools, the ancient Ethiopian orthodox church (EOC) curriculum, the livelihood of adults in ye' Abinet temhirt bet and the

contribution of Ethiopian orthodox church to the development of adult education in Gonder and A.A.

Beside the above scholars, Serkalem (2015) works on the use, application and integration of religion spirituality in clinical social service in A.A. In her study, she attempted to explore the contribution of religion in the process of helping patients in clinical social service. Furthermore, she tried to explore the actual need for the religious/spiritually integrated practice in Addis Ababa and the effective use of evidence-based spirituality integrated interventions as alternative ways of coping with health problems, especially in palliative care.

Abiyou, Hailu and Teshome (2015) investigated on the contribution of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido church in forest management and its best practices to be scaled up in the North Shewa Zone of Amhara region. Also they try to identify main constraints which hinder the society to learn from religious institutions and apply the best practices and habit of experiences on forest conservation.

As far as the knowledge of the researcher towards the study of religious institutions is concerned, most of the previous studies carried out in both academic and non-academic organization focuses on specific issues of cultural, spiritual, and social environment roles. Furthermore, the role of EOTC on the natural resource conservation, conflict resolution, adult education, HIV/AIDS and Health related issues have been the areas that various researchers engaged to discover. However, little is done to understand the role of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches form the stand point of mitigating social

problems. The gap with regard to the role Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches contribute to mitigate the social problem has been the central point of the study. Therefore, this study is critically examined and understands the efforts made by Ethiopian Orthodox churches and its followers in mitigating social problems.

Churches are not only a place for religious practices but they are also social institutions and engaged in different activities to mitigate social problems. Moreover, the outcomes of the study are useful to indicate the place of religious institutions in alleviating social problems and provide full-fledged information on the existing knowledge of social work education. The result of this study will also serves as an important source of knowledge.

Thus, the study is geared towards the following specific questions relating to the problem:

- What are the major contributions of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches in mitigating social problems?
- What are the major challenges of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches encountered in the effort of mitigating social problems?
- What are the major social problems that gain a due attention by Ethiopian orthodox Tewahido churches?
- **Objectives of the study**

- **General objective**

The general objective of this study is to investigate the role played by Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches to mitigate social problems in some selected areas of Addis Ababa.

- **Specific objectives**

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To point out the major social problems that are in due attention of the Ethiopian Orthodox Churches.
- To explain the contribution of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches in mitigating social problems.
- To identify the major challenges of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches in mitigating social problems.

- **Significance of the study**

The findings of this study are useful to the social work practitioners to think the way using of the religious institution as area of intervention to mitigate social problems. In addition, this study helps policy makers to formulate a new policy in relation to mitigating social problems that hindered community problems. Other researches can also get the input to generate the research ideas not touched in this study. Furthermore, the result of this study serve as input to the Ethiopian orthodox Tewahido churches

(EOTC) to develop the intervention mechanisms helpful to minimize the social problems affecting development.

- **Scope of the study**

This study is limited in terms of geographical and theoretical aspects. Theoretically, this study has been limited to identify the role of Ethiopian orthodox churches in mitigating social problems. In relation to the geographical areas, this research is confined with the limit of four selected EOTCs in Addis Ababa such as St Mary church, Holy Trinity Cathedral Church, Bole Medehanialem Cathedral Church and St. George church. Before selecting the above mentioned churches, the researcher has conducted a preliminary survey in some EOTCs which are easily accessible to researcher. This gave a chance to have some kind of informal conversation with laities of EOTC. Also this helped to get preliminary information about EOTCs in Addis Ababa. Therefore, based on the information that obtained from informal conversation and previous knowledge, the researcher has selected the aforementioned churches. Beside these, the researcher also collects data from the EOC-DICAC and Ethiopian Sunday school department (Mahibere Kidusan).

- **Limitation of the study**

The researcher have been try to conduct FGD among elderly people who are supported by Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido churches at elders care center but they are not willing to participate in focus group discussion and this situation create difficulties

for the researcher during the process of data collection. However, it is obvious that all researches are not free from any kind of limitations. But, putting other plans to tackle the problems at the initial stage of the proposal helped the researcher to easily control the barriers while undergo the study.

1.7. Conceptual Definition of Terms

Social problem: it is a condition that influences a considerable number of the individuals within a society.

Religion: it is the set of beliefs, feelings, dogmas and practices that define the relations between human being and sacred or divinity.

Religious institutions: are the visible and organized manifestations of practices and beliefs in particular social and historical contexts.

Chapter Two

- **Literature Review**

This chapter presents a summary of literature with the intent of providing existing literature that focuses on the role religion on the society as well as Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches. With regarding to these, this section discussed the following major issues such as historical background of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches, the Potential role of the Ethiopia Orthodox Tewahido Churches, challenges of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches, the importance of Religion in Society and role of Religion in Social Support.

- **Historical Background of Ethiopian Orthodox Church**

The study of Ethiopian history has clearly indicated that the history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church is the history of one of the oldest Christian churches in Africa, and is united with the historical development of the whole country. The Church and empire though dissimilar institutions were so united that they were universally respected and feared as true sources of power and authority as well as of the national culture in Ethiopia. Churches and monasteries though distinct from each other were often associated, for every monastery housed at least one church, while many churches had

monks attached to them (Getnet, 1998).

Christianity emerged in Ethiopia possibly earlier, and gained an important role in Ethiopian life that was maintained until today. The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is a unique African church, deeply rooted in Ethiopian history, social life and ethics. It preceded the formation and development of Christianity in the West with several hundreds of years. While the Ethiopian Church was closely connected to the Coptic Church of Egypt, which was the first on the African continent, it developed its own liturgy, educational system for clergy and laymen, monastic tradition, religious music, and an extensive tradition of commentary and exegesis of the Bible (Abbink, 2003).

These Churches have got close contact with people and are highly respected and acceptable. Through its long history, the Church has acquired voluble heritages in the monasteries and Churches both inside and outside Ethiopian. There are more than 1000 monasteries and more than 1500 Churches. Through the long history of Ethiopia the EOTC has been an official religion of the country until the 1974 popular uprising. After that period, although the Church lost its title of being the official religion, its acceptance by the majority of the country's population is still retained (Militetsega, 2004).

EOTC started its task to serve the society not long after its introduction in the middle of the fourth century. In its old age the Church's structure has enabled it to serve the community not only as a spiritual center, but also used as a co-coordinator of all other institutions which were necessary for both material and spiritual well being of the

society. It was the only responsible learning center in the country until the eve of the 20th century. It was from Churches schools that the church servants (priests, deacons and others) and the civil servants of the government (Chroniclers, treasurers, judges, archivists and others) were trained and acquired the necessary skill to fit their respective positions (Abbink, 2003).

Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity has traditionally attracted the attention of historians, theologians, students of religion and philologists because of its long and complex history, its being a natural case for comparison with Western Christianity, and its long written tradition, as evident not only in royal chronicles, theological works, poetry, and hagiographies of saints and holy men, but also in its rich and highly interesting corpus of religious exegeses and commentaries. Despite the major contributions made to the study of this complex tradition during the last twenty years, it is still to a large extent understudied. These commentaries are often found in manuscript form in private and church or monastery collections, and many were never written down (Abbink, 2003).

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is numerically the largest of the five Eastern Churches such as the Coptic, the Ethiopian, the Syrian, the Indian, and the Armenian, which are by the historian Adrian Fortes cue called "The Lesser Eastern Churches", but which others prefer to call "The Oriental Orthodox Churches", to distinguish them from the Byzantine Orthodox Churches. Like the four other Churches in this group the Ethiopian Church believes in the full Divinity and the true Humanity of Jesus Christ and

is, therefore, perfectly Orthodox in its Christological teaching as is also confirmed by A. Wondm agegnehu and J. Motovu in theirbook" The Ethiopian Orthodox Church".

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church which has been thoroughly indigenized in the course of a nearly two-thousand year long history of Christianity, attained the status known as Ethiopianism, which is almost accepted as a contribution to African cultural nationalism and particularism based on a self-conscious cultivation of African indigenous values and attitudes. Ethiopianism is regarded as a nationalistic movement which is spreading among African Churches. It was basically not a political but a religious movement, expressing nationalistic aspirations in the Churches. The biblical source of Ethiopianism comes from Psalm 68:31, "Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands to God". The prophecy nurtured the hope of all Africans, of future glory for the Negro race, and of a Christian theocracy embracing the entire continent (Getnet, 1998).

The church is responsible for most of the civilization of the country from the time of its establishment. It has been the creator of religious arts, crafts and literature as well as secular and theological educational institutions and their curricula. The country owes even its calendar to the church and so many historians agree that much of what we know of the early and medieval history of Ethiopia is directly or indirectly connected with it. Therefore, it is difficult to imagine what the history of Ethiopia would have been without the church (Militetsega, 2004).

- **The Potential role of the Ethiopia Orthodox Tewahido Church**

The EOTC has very ancient origin and from its commencement the church

combined many roles. At its heart is the spiritual role of bringing the faith to the people and providing care. However, the Church has also remained to be a major teaching institution for over a thousand years. In fact the main focus was for the cultural, artistic and scientific development of Ethiopia for much of its history. EOTC has, for much of Ethiopia's existence, been the main teacher of arithmetic, literature, astronomy, crafts and skills, literacy and all forms of art. This role continues today. Not only do EOTC support schools and higher education institutions, but also its traditional teaching role continues through the monasteries and the courtyards of local Churches. This ancient tradition is confirmed by the Church's ability to embrace, absorb and transmit secular and scientific knowledge alongside its faith based teaching (Militetsega, 2004).

The communities have always accepted the multi faceted role of the EOTC no less in the past than today. Not only has the Church been able to combine its spiritual and secular roles, but also it has always stood firmly for social justice and fought against poverty, so it is perceived as a champion of poor communities. In addition to its understanding of community needs and its commitment to its followers, the Church has also proven its competence in delivering the community care and support needed, both spiritual and material. It is up on these foundations that community trust in the church is built (Abbink, 2003).

Development and Inter church aid commission (DICAC) is one of the prominent organizations that carry out different activities. It was established in 1973. It also involves in various activities such as agricultural activities of various kinds, encompassing

farming ,diary and cattle fattening going under parishes ,bringing substantial benefit to the community. Such projects are being implemented in Arsi, Eastern Gojam, South Omo, and East Harerge and in North Omo currently (Lemlem, 2009).

In recent times, EOTC has absorbed all of the major technical, managerial and analytical disciplines that are essential to effective program design and project implementation and EOTC has a staff of highly professional developmental practitioners specialized in every sector of importance to Ethiopians developmental challenges. Being one of the largest and oldest religious denominations in Ethiopia, EOC has the lion's share of followers. The Church has got more than 40 million followers, which accounts for about 60 % of the total population (Militetsega, 2004).

EOTC has also, from its inception, been a community based institution EOTC priests are not regarded as separate from the community, but are special members of their communities working and living in these communities like any other, but with a special role to play. The community development role is an integral part of the Church. In the content of Ethiopia current development challenges, EOTC is a significant vehicle for development, especially at the community level where HIV/AIDS will ultimately be defended (Abbink, 2003).

Starting far back in her history, the EOTC has been serving the community in various fields of life and is very close to her faithful whenever they are in need. In respect to this long standing tradition of interdependence the church has engaged in multiplicity

of activities to serve the community. In addition, throughout its long history, the EOTC has remained part and parcel of the Ethiopian society. It has a prominent stake in the country's socio-economic development endeavor. Moreover, EOTC played a vital role in the struggle against the recurrent droughts and famines that ravaged the country (Lemlem, 2009).

In the past four decades, the EOTC has significantly expanded its role as a major supporter of the implementation of the national multi- sector strategy and plan to combat AIDS. A major part of EOTC's contribution has focused on an extensive awareness campaign, providing both information and education about HIV/AIDS, and emphasizing the power of the spiritual and moral values of the faith for instilling behaviors that will prevent the spread of disease. The awareness and prevention outreach program has consisted of many factors: integrating HIV AIDS issues in to the Church's regular teachings; mobilizing Sunday schools and its members to carry the messages directly to the youth support for Peer education and counseling; and reinforcing the messages of abstinence and fidelity during public patriarchal rallies, spear headed by his holiness the patriarch and supported by selected archbishops and experienced preachers (Militetsega, 2004).

The EOTC has been engaged in HIV/AIDS prevention activities providing social support to people living with HIV/ AIDS (PLWHA) and orphan children affected by HIV /AIDS. Counseling services are equally important to the care and support response to the need of PLW HA, family and orphans. To this end, skilled counselors and home based

care providers to assist intervention is essential over the past implementation period EOC-DICAC was able to conduct several preventive activities in different regions of the country. The major activities conducted are patriarchal rallies, mass education, sensitization/orientation seminars, educators or communicator workshops and counseling, home based case alternative life skill training and production and distribution of materials. The Church has great influencing potential to influence attitudes and decisions of individuals Churches and communities so that they fulfill their duty to provide care and support for PLWHA and to work for human dignity and human rights to avoids stigma and discrimination (Lemlem,2009).

The EOTC started development activities in a formal way since the established of EOC- DICAC (Ethiopian Orthodox Church development and Inter Church Aid) in 1972 at its establishment, DICAC was involved in emergency food relief assistance to combat drought that affected to the country and remained very much relief assistance to combat drought that affected the country and remained very much relief oriented till the establishment of the Diocese based development program (DDP) and integrated rural development programs (IRDPs) in 1994. It has also been implementing parish centered mini- income generating projects until 1993 in wide spread geographical locations with little participation of the community. Some of the projects were flourmills, dairy farm, fattening, oil mill, carpet making etc (Militetsega, 2004).

- **Challenges of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahiodo Churches**

The EOTCs have roles in social support and interaction, but their participation

was low on the scene. Their participation is below what someone expects from a religious institution. In most churches social support is delivered in unorganized manner. Many reasons are mentioned behind the low participation of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Churches in providing social support and interaction. The major reasons are financial problem and corruption. Some argue that the participation of EOTCs on social support is not greater due to financial problem which resulted from lack of religious devotions among laities. In contrast, others argue that there is no financial constraint in the Church. For them, corruption is the major reason that hinders the Church participation on social support. This leads various Churches in the city to be embezzled and this situation affects the Churches participation on social support. With all these challenges, churches are participating not only in the provision of social support and interaction but also in healthcare services (Kumilachew, 2015).

- **The importance of Religion in Society**

Religion is a fundamental aspect of human society. It can influence the social, economic and even political aspects of human society. This is because religion offers prescriptions for social order, individual behavior, and collective action. All religious traditions give expression to the relationship between what are acknowledged and understood to be the most compelling objectives of human life and day-to-day conduct. Though it is true that religion influences the human society, it has to be understood that the religions of the world can be distinguished from each other in terms of the attitudes toward society that they prescribe and honor (Capps, 1987). In other words, the role

religion played is varied not only from one society to another but also from one religion to the other.

According to Durkheim, any religion was not false. He argues that “all religions are true in their own fashion; all answer to the given conditions of human experience”. The main point of Durkheim argument is that religion is socially constructed and it functioned at an individual and social level to keep society in check, assist in social control, and provide individual meaning for each person’s life. The functional definitions, like that of Durkheim and Ortner, are crucial to understand the significant roles religion play in human societies. Here, it is implausible to hold that all religions serve the same function (Harrison, 2006).

- **Religion and Social Support**

Social support may be broadly defined as an “emotional, informational or practical assistance from significant others, such as family members, friends, or coworkers etc., and that support actually maybe received from others or simply perceived to be available when needed” (Thoits, 2010). Therefore, when we say the role of religion on social support, it is to mean that the emotional, informational and material support that individual’s gain from religion.

The role of religion on social support cannot be understood by relying on a single research because researchers may emphasize on one aspect of social support while ignoring the other. For instance, Krause (2001) discusses the emotional aspects of social support in religious setting and ignores the material aspect of it. In his work *Church-*

based Social Support and Religious Coping (2001), he identified three basic dimensions of social support in religious setting (Krause, 2001).

The first dimension is emotional support from church members. In relation to this, Krause used two indicators: feeling of love and care between members of the same congregation, and the tendency to talk private problems and concerns for fellow members. By using those indicators, he argued that religion influences social support because it leads individuals to offer emotional support to their fellow members (Krause, 2001). The second dimension is spiritual support from church members. Members of the same congregation helped each other to live according to their religious beliefs and to know God better. Besides, fellow parishioners share their own religious experience with others. The third dimension is emotional support from the clergy/pastor. In this respect, pastors are concerned about the private problem and wellbeing of followers (Krause, 2001). Krause explanation is not enough to fully understand the role of religion on social support because he was only emphasized on the emotional aspect and ignore the material aspect of social support in religious settings.

In addition, Levy and Razin (2011) stated that the role of religion in social support can be seen in terms of two major components such as spiritual and material component. The spiritual component arises as religious individuals behave more cooperatively, which, given their beliefs, will bring about good fortune in the future. Only religious individuals can be motivated by the spiritual payoff as only they can potentially believe that cooperation yields rewards (Levy and Razin, 2011).

Gaduh (2012) also shows the association between religion and social support. He found that religiosity is associated with a higher willingness to help and trust of individuals within one's own community, but not with the trust of strangers. He also argues that religiosity is associated with more religious discrimination and negatively associated with tolerance. In this sense, religion is linked to parochial altruism, which is altruism towards members of one's own groups combined with hostility towards members of the out-groups.

Conclusion

As the above literatures reviewed, Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church has traditionally attracted the attention of historians, theologians, students of religion, philologists and other scholars because of its long and complex history. The EOTC has very ancient origin and from its commencement the church combined many roles. At its heart is the spiritual role of bringing the faith to the people and providing care. However, the Church has also remained to be a major teaching institution for over a thousand years. In fact the main focus was for the cultural, artistic and scientific development of Ethiopia for much of its history but also it has various contributions in the social aspects.

EOTC started its task to serve the society not long after its introduction in the middle of the fourth century. In its old age the Church's structure has enabled it to serve the community not only as a spiritual center, but also used as a co-coordinator of all other institutions which were necessary for both material and spiritual well being of the society. In respect to this long standing tradition of interdependence the church has

engaged in multiplicity of activities to serve the community. In addition, throughout its long, vivid history, the EOTC has remained part and parcel of the Ethiopian society. It has a prominent stake in the country's socio-economic development endeavor. Moreover, EOTC played a vital role in mitigating social problems like struggle against the recurrent droughts and famines, supporting vulnerable segment of the society and so on.

In general, EOTC has also, from its inception, been a community based institution. EOTC priests are not regarded as separate from the community, but are special members of their communities working and living in these communities like any other, but with a special role to play. Overall, starting far back in history, the EOTC has been serving the community in various fields of life.

Chapter Three

- **Methods and Procedures**

This section deals with the methodological approaches that have been used in the

research. The main topics extensively dealt in this section are the research design, sampling techniques (selection of research informants), methods of data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations in carrying out the entire study.

- **Research Design**

This study utilized qualitative approach with a central premise of investigating the role of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches in mitigating social problems. The researcher has been used qualitative approach for the purpose of capturing the attitudes as well as the perceptions of participant. In addition, qualitative design is chosen due to its flexible nature, helpful to understand real life context and ability to allow the active involvement of the study participants. (Creswell, 2007) In terms of strategy of inquiry, this study utilized descriptive case study. Case study, as indicated in Yin (2003), investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context.

- **Study Area**

This study was conducted in some selected Ethiopian orthodox Tewahido Churches in Addis Ababa such as St Mary church, Holy Trinity Cathedral Church, Bole Medehanialem Cathedral Church and St. George church. Beside these the researcher also collects information from Ethiopian Orthodox Church – Development Inter Church Aid Commission and Ethiopian Sunday School Department (Mahibere Kidusan) in Addis Ababa.

The religion with the most believers in Addis Ababa is the Ethiopian Orthodox

with 74.7% of the population, while 16.2% are Muslim, 7.77% Protestant, and 0.48% Catholic (CSA,2007). Since other religions are not the main focus of this research, the researcher focuses on Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches which are administered by the Addis Ababa Diocese Secretariat. According to the information obtained from Addis Ababa Diocese Secretariat, there are 162 Orthodox Churches in Addis Ababa and there are 36 million orthodox Christians in Ethiopia. These churches are engaged in various activities such as social support, health, and other activities which are important to the society. Therefore, this study describes the role of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches in mitigating social problems in Addis Ababa. (Bureau of Finance and Economic Development, 2013)

- **Method of Data Collection**

This section deals with data collection methods and the researcher was used both primary and secondary sources. Using both techniques helped the study to generate pertinent information to the study. According to Kothari (2004), the primary data are those which are collected for the first time, and thus happen to be original in character. On the other hand, secondary data are those which have already been collected by someone else.

- **Primary source of data collection**

In the qualitative research there are several methods of collecting primary data. Therefore, the researcher used the common methods such as In-depth interview and focus

group discussion (FGD) to obtain primary data.

In-depth interview

In-depth interviews are those interviews that are designed to discover underlying motives and desires. Such interviews are held to explore needs, desires and feelings of participants. In other words, the aim to elicit unconscious and also other types of material relating especially to personality dynamics and motivations. With regard to these, this method is a conversation between people in which one person has the role of researcher. Interviewing may pose challenges because of human interaction between the interviewers and participants also this method of collecting data involves presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses (Kothari, 2004).

In order to select the informants, the researcher went to the office of the churches selected as a study sites such as St. Mary church, Holy Trinity Cathedral Church, Bole Medhaniyalem Cathedral Church, St. George church Ethiopian Sunday School Department and Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter Church Aid Commission. Before conducting the interview, the researcher explained the objectives of the study to heads of the administrative position in the churches and asked them to provide names of individuals who are potentially good enough to provide relevant and accurate information on the role of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches to mitigate Social problems. Individuals who are designated were finally communicated to undertake the

sessions of interview on the role of EOTC in mitigating social problems.

Focus group discussion

In this study, the researcher used focus group discussion (FGD) for the purpose of exploring the efforts of Ethiopian Orthodox Church in mitigating social problems. In addition, the method was preferred to meet the advantage in acquiring deeper understanding and gathering detailed information from the target groups on the issue.

The researcher tried to conduct FGD among elderly people who are supported by Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido churches at elders care center but they are not willing to participate in focus group discussion. Due to this reason, the researcher organizes only one focus group discussion with religious leaders and six religious leaders were involved in the focus group discussion. The researcher gathered information regarding to the contribution churches in mitigating social problems.

It is best to select a group that is relatively homogenous in order to reduce improper citation and imbalance. It is also important for the moderator to create an environment convenient to everyone without fear and discomfort. The moderator poses some open ended questions to guide the discussion, taking notes and recording the

session to use as points reference latter in the time of analysis (Ruth Campbell, 2008).

- **Secondary Sources**

In this study, different data have been collected from various materials of published and unpublished sources such as books, journals, internets and other related sources assumed important for this particular study. The data collected through such techniques were finally incorporated in a part where reviewing of literatures are administered.

- **Sampling Technique**

In this study, the researcher was used purposive sampling technique to deliberately select participants based on their experiences and relation to the issue undertaken in this study. Also the researcher selects this method because of the purposive sampling being flexible in its nature to change the size of sample and criteria (Palys, 2008). In addition, purposive sampling also helps to develop criteria that most guide to select the participants taking place in both In-depth interviews and focus group discussion (FGD).

According to Palys (2008), Purposive sampling is virtually synonymous with qualitative research. However, there are many objectives that qualitative researchers might have, the list of purposive strategies that may be followed is virtually endless, and any given list will reflect only the range of situations the author of that list has considered. The general theme here is that the biggest questions all researchers need to

ask themselves are what they want to accomplish and what they want to know. The appropriate sampling strategy will follow from that.

To say one will engage in purposive sampling signifies that one sees sampling as a series of strategic choices about with whom, where and how one does one's research. This statement implies that the way that researchers sample must be tied to their objectives. A second implication follows from the first: There is no one best sampling strategy because which is best will depend on the context in which researchers are working and the nature of the research objectives (Palys, 2008). To this end, the researcher developed an inclusion criterion, possibly drawing the informants issuing in-depth information based on their knowledge and experience.

- **Method of Data Analysis**

This study utilized thematic analysis. With regard to this, the processes of analysis are commenced right after every interview and also after all the information have been collected. According to Creswell (2007) analysis strategies of data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis then reducing the data into theme through the process of coding and presenting the data. The data which were collected from interview and FGD were analyzed first by organizing data into categories on the basis of themes, concepts and similar features. The themes are

organized in the way that they can address the purpose of the study, the objectives, and the research questions.

3.6. Data Quality Assurance

The researcher used different techniques to check the reliability of data. According to Creswell (2014), the use of multiple approaches of data quality assurance will enhance the researcher's ability to assess the accuracy of findings as well as convince readers of that accuracy. The following are some strategies which are listed by John W. Creswell to assure data quality:

- **Spend prolonged time in the field**

In this way, the researcher develops an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and can convey detail about the site and the people that lends credibility to the narrative account. The more experience that a researcher has with participants in their settings, the more accurate or valid will be the findings. In regarding to this, the researcher spends more than two months at field.

- **Use peer debriefing to enhance the accuracy of the account.**

This process involves locating a person who reviews and asks questions about the qualitative study so that the account will resonate with people other than the researcher. This strategy is involving an interpretation beyond the researcher and invested in another person who adds validity to an account.

- **Ethical Considerations**

In this study the researcher have been try to respect the value as well as privacy of participants. In addition, to obtain the reliable, detail and elaborated data from participants, the researcher also practiced the concept of rapport building, considering the confidentiality and anonymous of the participants. Moreover, ethics help to consider the concern of participants, helps to establish good relationship with participants, helps to show respect for participants and it is contribute to the validity and reliability to data.

According to Creswell (2014), besides conceptualizing the writing process for a proposal, researchers need to anticipate the ethical issues that may arise during their studies. Writing about these anticipated ethical issues is required in making an argument for a study as well as being an important topic in the format for proposals. Researchers need to protect their research participants; develop a trust with them; promote the integrity of research; guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on their organizations or institutions; and cope with new, challenging problems. Ethical questions are apparent today in such issues as personal disclosure, authenticity, and credibility of the research report; the role of researchers in cross-cultural contexts; and issues of personal privacy through forms of Internet data collection. Ethical issues in research command increased attention today.

The ethical considerations that need to be anticipated are extensive, and they are reflected through the research process. These issues apply to qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research and to all stages of research. Proposal writers need to anticipate

them and actively address them in their research plans. Accordingly, it is helpful to address them as they relate to different phases of inquiry (Creswell, 2014).

3.8. Trustworthiness of the Study

According to Stake (2010), the trust-worthiness of the study is one of the requirements of contemporary research. Reactivity and researcher bias are the major challenges for trustworthiness of qualitative studies. Becoming a researcher, especially for a person doing qualitative research, is partly a matter of learning how to deal with bias.

A study is assumed to be trustworthy when carried out honestly and ethically and its findings represent experiences of the participants as much as possible (Padgett, 2008). In order to ensure the trustworthiness of a study, it is important to know the possible threats and how to deal with them. In order to minimize researcher biases, the researcher have been try to put all collected data from emic perspectives of participants.

Chapter Four

- **Data presentation and analysis**

This chapter deals with the major findings meeting the specific objectives of the study. The findings are extracted from various sources such as focus group discussion (FGD) and interview with religious leaders and religious officials (chair persons of welfare associations and secretariat of different Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido churches). participants took part in interview were similarly selected from officials at Ethiopian orthodox church development and inter church aid commission, Mahibere kidusan (Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido church Sunday school) and individuals who supported by churches.

The first part presents the major social problems that gain a due attention by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido churches. Part two discusses the major contributions and experience of Ethiopian orthodox Tewahido churches in mitigating social problems. Finally part three discusses the major challenges of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido churches encountered in the effort of mitigating social problems.

Personal background of participants

The participants of the study are individuals from different age group, gender and

educational backgrounds. In terms of age category, it consisted of adults and elders. In terms of gender, 4 were females while 10 are males from the total 14 selected key informants were females and ten of them were males. In the focus group discussion (FGD), all were males since the positions in a leadership at churches have been dominated by males. The study has finally selected considerable number of elders from churches elderly welfare associations recommended as keen to provide pertinent information by Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido churches. However, it failed to do so because they are unwilling to participate in FGD.

- **The major social problems that gain a due attention by EOTC**

Social problem is what it is born from a society and that is not an ideal situation. That is, as long as a society did not meet its needs then the social problems will always exist. The existence of social problems in a society defined by the community itself and usually by an institution that does have special organizations or government. Social problems encountered in the community are usually very diverse (Soerjon, 2011). Therefore, it is very difficult to address all social problems. Due to this reason, the researcher was focused only the following major social problems greeted by Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido churches.

- **Elders and Orphans related problems**
- **Elders related problems**

Ethiopian orthodox Tewahido churches (EOTCs) having a wide range of tasks,

besides the spiritual services. The informant at holy trinity cathedral church explained that, even though the numbers of people who require support are too many to be addressed at a time and even if the EOTC has a wide range of activities to accomplish, priorities should be set and the most vulnerable segments of the society and acute issues be addressed first. Therefore, caring elders who have not any supporter become primary concern of different Ethiopian orthodox Tewahido churches. It is one of the prime responsibilities of our church to care for and help the elders who are left helpless.

This is not a new idea that we are embarking on today; rather, it is the command of the holy apostles long –dated. They commanded us to help the helpless, vulnerable and destitute elders. These are not only our ambitions but also the desires of our partners to see them realized. Therefore one of our primary concerns should be to care for these vulnerable elders and facilitate a lifelong support. Regarding to the elders related problems; informant from Menagesha Genete Tsigie St. George church discusses that:

The holy bible commands to care those elders and for all humans by doing good things. There is a clear in morality, in bible and humanitarian obligation to provide whatever care, support and assistance that is appropriate or feasible for elders. He also explained that, the holy bible proclaimed and shows in the Old Testament concerning to caring for the poor, visiting a sick and to be feed the hunger is blessed by God. In addition to these, caring of elders in the Old Testament is one of the ten commands, said, Honor your father and mother it means, take care for them in

their needs of food, clothing, shelter, medical care and other social needs. Therefore, Menagesha Genete Tsige St. George Church gives a due attention for the vulnerable elders.

Additionally, the informant at Holy Trinity elders caring center stated, we all elders at this center previously lived in difficult situations without any supporters. Additionally, most of us were incapable to do any work and we engaged in begging around the parish churches. However, this welfare association completely changed our life and the association is providing shelter, flour, food, oil, cloth, medical care and so on.

- **Orphans related problems**

Caring and guiding children is the responsibility of parents but if children have no parents or their parents are not able to do it due to various reasons, others including religious institution should take the responsibility of caring and supporting those children. The informant at Bole cathedral Medhaniyalem Church discussed, Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches use Bible for their day to day activities and in the Bible there are words about children in both Old Testament as well as New Testament. For instance, in the New Testament the importance of children in the Bible attended by the numerous allusions to them.

Almost all the FGD participants argued that Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido

churches are being the mile stone in spiritual, social and cultural affairs of Ethiopian. The practice of taking care of children especially those who are in difficult situations is not only based on humanitarian concern, rather it is both scriptural and theological. In Mathew 18:5, we read “whoever received one little child like this in my name received me”. Therefore, the informant expressed that due to these reasons, the church give a due attention for mitigating children related problems and currently we are performing various activities in relation to the issue.

- **HIV/AIDS**

EOTC has been active in response to HIV /AIDS since 1980s through the spiritual service. The informant at the Ethiopian Orthodox church development and inter-church aid commission explained that:

There was weak intervention in some of the health related programs until the establishment of a program under EOC-DICAC becomes evident to contribute in the national response. EOC-DOICAC established a separate unit known as “Orthodox HIV/AIDS campaign center“(OHACC) in March 2001 G.C. This unit was fully authorized to direct, plan, coordinate and implement HIV/AIDS activities at all levels. During these times the campaign center focused awareness creation and prevention activities in Addis Ababa, Amhara, Ormiya, SNNPR, Tigray and Diredawa regions. Then the unit has been promoted to program level, the program officially launched its five year strategic plan in October 2004 G.C to strengthen the response to HIV/AIDS. Ethiopian Orthodox Church development and inter church

aid commission HIV program is a seamless blend between spiritual values drawn from faith or behavior that uphold principles of abstinence, fidelity, and love and acceptance of others and the practical, every day realities of community life.

Moreover, the informant at EOC-DICAC also added that Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches possesses more than half of the population of the nation and half a million of priestess throughout the country, it successfully mobilized thousands of voluntary community workers; clergy and community based advocates, women leaders and youth advocates for the purpose mitigating HIV related problems. The reason for the success is that the majority of the people have a strong belief on religious leaders. In addition, HIV/AIDS is the major concern and EOC-DICAC has been involved in, with special emphasis on the prevention and control of the disease and networking with other stakeholder. The church has proven to have a comparative advantage especially in addressing the critical issues surrounding the spread of HIV/AIDS, pandemic and stigma denial and discrimination.

- **Unemployment**

Unemployment is not only economic problem but it is also social problem because it has various social effects such as hanger, homelessness and so on. One of the informants

at holy trinity Cathedral church explains religious institution like Ethiopia Orthodox Tewahido churches can play a significant role in mitigating this social problem by emphasizing the importance of hard work and dignity of labor. The practice of begging was widespread in A.A and currently it seems like uncontrollable phenomenon but every responsible body should contribute towards this social problem. With regard to these, Holy cathedral church perform various activities in collaboration with EOC-DICAC.

- **Housing problem**

House is one of important and basic necessities for human survival but it is a critical problem in A.A city. Due to these reason, Menagesha Genet Tsigie St. George Church welfare association give a due attention for this social problem and they perform various activities in collaboration with help age international and other NGO's. The key informant at St. George welfare association discussed that:

Through the support for urban older people in Addis Ababa project – in cooperation with UN – OCHA, IOM and Help age international, St. George has constructed and renovated the house of more than 50 elder people and their dependents. The informant also added that in the future, St. George welfare association plan to conduct further projects towards this social problem. Also other Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches (EOTC) should work devotedly to mitigate this problem because serving the poor is the primary responsibility of churches.

- **Contribution of EOTC in mitigating social problems**

Regarding to the contribution and experiences, the informants from the selected Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido church narrated that the churches have a lot of contributions. One of the key informants at the Holy trinity Cathedral said, “on the basis of functional principle EOTC cannot be seen as the separate institution from the society and it established as a religious institution and having its members has been found to serve people in different ways". Almost all the FGD participants Stated EOTC plays a great role in the day to day life of the society this is because the church in its very foundation by Christ Jesus aimed at serving the human beings on the basis of truth of hence, the church has a great responsibility to address as well as mitigating the major societal problems by playing its own roles.

It is very essential to take consideration how very great responsibility the EOTC have and how very wide scope of functional role it ought to play. Because, it makes easier for realizing the church’s weight of responsibility up on the society which in turn is to be determined by the strength of church’s. The other informant at Ethiopian Orthodox Church development and inter- church aid commission stated that:

The church is primarily committed to bring religion up on individual and corporate life by the implication of the Gospel to build the kingdom on the earth. Furthermore, EOTC plays many functional roles in a society and has abundant contributions in different ways to mitigate social problems. The common and major function is inspiring and teaching peoples to a useful social end; for instance, it fosters various societal based organization to serve the people who are in difficult

circumstances. On the other hand, the church also acts as an ethical source. It works a lot to maintain a stable society by reconstructing the social life. To perform these and other activities, the church engaged in cultivating the right character and attitudes, in man.

Almost all FGD participants stated, the church is obliged to make the principles and ideas of the religion and control the social order and practices of the society and there by diffusing the social responsibility through the creation of new dynamic public conscience. Also EOTC has an obligation to address the major social problems as well as to make an insight in to the results of existing condition on the spiritual, moral and physical aspects. So as to realize the consequences of the present conditions up on the character, personality and morality of the individual and the family to react them by means of preaching, teaching and so on.

The EOTC has its own strength both as a religious and social institution. According to the informant at Mahibre Kidusan, EOTC give a due attention for her responsibility to make her children keep the commandments of God and the Holy traditions of the church fathers. For this reason, the basic and important principles, rules and regulations of schools issued by Holy Synod in 1994 G.C. Now a day after the church centralized her Sunday schools. Gradually, Sunday school comes to be recognized by various parishes as the primary instrument for religious and moral education of children and youth.

The church has give a deep concern for children and youths in assigning teachers,

especially the teachers who teach in Sunday school have to understand the youth's psychology, aim and problems because the youths are the backbone of the church, they may be the successors of the bishops, priests and religious teachers. In relation to the strength of EOTC the informant at Holy trinity cathedral church explained that:

Even though, the church is primarily committed to bring religion up on individual and corporate life by the implication of the gospel to build the kingdom of god on earth. On the other hand, it plays many functional roles in "society and has great many contributions. One of the most familiar functions is inspiring people to a useful social end; for instance, it fosters many agencies of services. For mitigations major social problems of the society the church also acts as an ethical source; it maintains a stable society by reconstructing the social life. To do this, the church is engaged in cultivating the right character and attitudes in man. Above all, the church takes in hand the economical situations in such a way that it can join various institutions like educational, health and others in order to mitigate societal problems in collaboration with these institutions.

The informant at Mahibre Kidusan also stated, Sunday school is one of the departments of the church by which the word of God is taught by preacher and to educate in the form of oral system to the children and youth as well as to other learners clustered in group of classes. Now a day, the church centralized the Sunday schools and the youths from various schools become members and started to participate in different weekly activities.

- **Biblical declaration of caring Elders**

Caring and supporting the vulnerable elders is one of the major responsibilities of EOTC based on the order of Holy Bible. With regarding to this, the informant at St. Mary church stated that Holy Bible commands to care those elders and for all humans by doing well works. Regarding to caring elders in the Old Testament, one of the Ten Commandments said, "Honor your father and mother" it means, take care for them in their needs of food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care and other social services. Although the concept and practice of modern care venture, the church's concern for elders is Biblical. Regarding to this, the EOTC formulate the law to help elders and peoples who live in difficult situations. On the book "the word of proclamation" (QaleAwadi), the church proclaims the following role:

"The EOTC would cooperate with governmental organizations and nongovernmental organizations and respected persons to help and rehabilitate the disabled and needy people including orphans, elders to solve their social and psychological problems. The church would help orphaned children in order to continue their education . . ." (Word of Proclamation, chapter 4 No, 19 P. 22).

Therefore, starting from the early time the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Churches has contributed and playing a vital role in mitigating various social problems of the country. Now a day the churches as both social and religious institutions has also been active in addressing elderly people problems by implementing different projects as well as potential activities.

- **Efforts of EOTC in mitigating elders related problems**

Almost all FGD participants strongly argued that many elders have been living miserable life. Therefore, to care and support these elders the church should be primarily responsible in addressing elderly people problems based on the order of the Holy Bible and the practice of the early church. EOTC formulate the rule to help elders, nevertheless from the total numbers of elders in the country the church could not cover all the support to them. Therefore, other responsible bodies should work in collaboration with religious institutions to achieve a remarkable results regarding to these social problems. Regarding to Efforts of EOTC in mitigating elders related problems, the informant at Menagesh Genete Tsigie St. George church stated that:

Currently, the church plays its significant role to support elders who are living in difficult circumstances. The parish of the church runs a Migbare Senai (welfare association) it established under the parish council, based on the constitution of the EOTC (Qale Awadi) in 1990 G.C. This welfare association was established by his grace Abune Philipos, Woizero Maria Lione, Doctor Tshay Birhane Sellasie and few Ethiopian volunteers. Therefore, this association starts the care and support program for elders officially since 1990 G.C. Mean firstly, the idea was initiated and started just to feed the poor people by charitable Christians and church leaders through alms giving from the worshipers and the association provide foods for holy days.

The main objective of this welfare association is to ensure the overall

development of the needy elders. Due to this, the life of the elders under the welfare association changed in many directions, such as their basic needs have to some extent fulfilled. At present this welfare association runs its programs not only in Addis Ababa but also in Debre Libanos district at Agat Medehaniaalm church but the researcher focused only in Addis Ababa.

- **Enrollment of St. George Church Elderly Association**

A total of 124 elders are supported by the programs which designed by welfare association in collaboration with different NGOs like Help Age International. The service given to the elders from the welfare association is home based care, financial support to fulfill their needs, helping them by giving the treatment of HIV/AIDS and other related diseases, giving them vocational training to develop their ability and create source of income, counseling service, psychological support and in general solving their socio-economic problems.

According to the informant from this welfare association explained, additionally the welfare association supporting elders through psychological advices at the beginning of every month, when they come for their monthly payments, elderly people has given advice and lessons concerning to their spiritual life, financial utilization, social interaction, rules and regulations of the welfare association, nutrition and other important things for them. In addition to this, the member of the welfare association, always follow up the daily life of the elders by visiting their home and caring them. Generally, the welfare association has rendered services suchas financial support, material support,

medical support, psychological support and spiritual counseling support.

- **Enrollment of Holy Trinity Cathedral elderly welfare association**

The Menbere Tsibawot Holy Trinity cathedral elderly welfare association established under the parish council during the region of emperor Haile Selase in 1968. The informant at this welfare association stated that:

Since the establishment period this association contributes a lot of things in mitigating elderly people problems. This welfare association working in collaboration with Ethiopian orthodox church development and inter – church aid commission and other volunteers. One of the remarkable achievements is building elders residential care center in which currently 15 elders are living. The program under this welfare association meets the most basic needs of the beneficiaries by giving them shelter, food, cloth and medical care.

In addition, the informant from Holy Trinity Cathedral elderly welfare association explained that the most elderly people in the center are incapable to do any work. Therefore, the aim of the welfare association is providing for those elderly people by giving flour, food, oil, cloth, medical care. This association also performs the funeral ceremony when one of the elders was died. The welfare association has activated and guided under EOC – DICAC which has responsibility to direct and monitor the activities around the church welfare association. As the researcher has got in his result the life of elders who supported in this welfare association is improved than before.

- **Biblical declaration of caring children**

The child was expected to grow and become strong, full of wisdom and blessed by God's Favor. With regarding to this, the informant at St. Mary church stated that:

In the Bible children are seen as gifts from God that can bring both joy and sorrow thus; they are to be loved honored and respected as a person. They are important in God's kingdom and not to be harmed. Shortly after the creation, God instructed Adam and Eve to be fruitful and increase in number. Since then children has special places in the Bible, especially for those who has not parents there is an obligation to care and support for the people of God.

In addition, if the child hasn't any parent and live as an orphan, Christians are responsible to care the child as their son or daughter as Christ love them and said don't forbid the children come to me. Christians also must love, care and accept orphaned children always.

- **Radicalizing Role of EOTC towards Orphans problems**

Children in Ethiopia are affected in many social circumstances. One of the key informant at holy trinity cathedral explained, even though, the written rule and regulation on the word of proclamation (Qale Awadi) concerning to carrying orphans, has Biblical

bases but it had not fully implemented by the EOTC. This shows that many duties are expected from the church to solve the problems of these children. However, Holy Trinity Cathedral Church in addition to the spiritual activities, it has implemented different programs to mitigate the problems of orphans in collaboration with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter – Church Aid Commission. Educational support, medical support, spiritual and psychological counseling are the major support provided by the church for orphans. The other informant at Holy trinity cathedral church stated that:

The church works in harmonization with various volunteers to mitigate orphans problems. For instance, there is the project known as “7th round global fund” and from this project the church received financial support, then she invests on 120 orphans who lived in difficult circumstances. Monthly 160 birr paid for their parents, cloths, educational materials also given for the orphans. In addition, Holy trinity cathedral church has its own clinic in which some of the orphans gain medical services without any payment. The clinic also gives basic knowledge about how to keep their personal hygiene and other medical treatments.

In regarding to orphans, the key informant at St. Mary church stated, the church designed and implemented some activities that has been extended to include community based child assistance where different services such as provision of educational materials, provision of food and provision of cloths by working in collaboration with Sunday school department. In addition, for 20 orphan parents the church monthly pay 170 birr.

On the other hand, the key informant at Bole Medihanialem Cathedral Church explained, the church is not only work on the religious aspects but also plays its significant role as the social institution in mitigating social problems, for instance, the church gives a due attention for orphans. Currently, the church build school that render educational service for only orphans without any payment. In addition, the welfare association organized street based programs to mitigate the worst aspects of street life by providing services for street children. These programs tend to be less expensive and serve large number of street children. The major supports under this program are provision of food and cloths.

- **Feeding programs of EOTC**

Some written documents gives some information concerning to the contribution of church to mitigate social problems of the society, and still now the churches continue their contributions. Feeding the poor people is one of their contributions that have been provided by EOTC. Of course, the church does not have permanent feeding programs but they try to provide feeding programs especially for peoples who live in streets during holydays.

Almost in every churches this program running by youths of Sunday school department. They are working to provide food and clothes for the needy people during the religious holyday such as New Year, Christ mass and Easter holydays by collecting money from the church community. The church plays its role to institutionalize the youth's activity to sustain and extend the service at least once a day teach its followers to

support the youths of Sunday school or work voluntarily. Not only this but also the churches working with other concern bodies, searching fund from donors.

- **Efforts of EOTC to Relinquish HIV/AIDS**

The EOTC is engaged in a wide variety of spiritual and social activities, in spiritual fields the church focuses mainly on liturgical services, evangelization and missionary activities. In social activities, the church has been engaged in relief, rehabilitation, charity and developmental activities etc. Most of the time, these social activities programs are carried by the Ethiopian orthodox church development and inter church aid commission (EOC – DICAC). Regarding to the enrollment of EOTC to relinquish HIV/AIDS, one of the key informants at EOC – DICAC said that:

Even though, it is not satisfactory the churches have been trying to solve various health related problems of the society including the pandemic disease of HIV/AIDS. To avert the spread of HIV/AIDS, EOC – DICAC start the first HIV/AIDS program in the form of education since 1985 E.C on the declaration of world council of churches (WCC). To fight against HIV/AIDS in 1998 E.C., EOC – DICAC has been implementing pioneer project on HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support programming. Also this organization established a separate unit in its development commission in March 2001 E.C a department known as orthodox HIV/AIDS campaign center (OHACC) which is responsible to direct, plan, coordinate, monitor and evaluate.

Furthermore, the informant at EOC – DICAC also stated, HIV/AIDS pandemic has caused the worst shock in the socio –economic and political development of the country. The church has shown much positive influence in responding to the pandemic. EOC – DICAC will redirect its intervention to more plausible means to bring about behavioral change among the community, promoting community based care and comprehensive support for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and orphan and Vulnerable children (OVC), establishing voluntary counseling and testing service, mobilizing and training different segments of the community, organizing and training of target groups in income generating schemes and supporting and strengthening research on HIV/AIDS.

On the other hand, the issue of HIV/AIDS is a current area of discourse to the potential effects of the disease on most productive group and thereby on economy is fully recognized. But what is not given a due emphasis is its impact on the elderly people. This is so either because of the belief that elder persons are sexually inactive and are not a risk in contacting the virus which causes HIV/AIDS in equally shared by elder persons. Therefore, Ethiopian orthodox church development and inter – church aid commission gives a due attention in taking care of elders those affected and infected by HIV/AIDS.

In short, the key informant at EOC – DICAC stated, the Biblical teaching of Christ and church tradition provides adequate frame work from church to serve God's people in this era. Also the church has close connection with its followers and the church had a deep concern to the poor, ill and others who are in the challenge full circumstances.

In teaching and leading the laity to the kingdom of God, EOTC traces its services to the foot step of the Apostles. Therefore, EOC – DICAC designed and implemented different programs that has been included health care services especially it give a due attention in mitigating HIV/AIDs related problems.

- **Efforts of EOTC towards housing problem**

As stated before, Menagesha Genete Tsigie St. George Church runs the welfare program as one of its programs prescribed by the Kale Awadi or constitution of the EOTC. The mission of this welfare association is to improve the living conditions of vulnerable and destitute people residing the surrounding kebeles of St. George church. The program aimed to meet the most basic needs which are food, shelter and health services.

According to the key informant at St. George welfare association, the major problem that is partially solved by this welfare association is housing problem, some of elders do not have residential house and some have got but need repair and maintenance. Therefore by this welfare association through the “support for urban older people in Addis Ababa” project in cooperation with UN – OCHA, IOM and Help age international, St. George has renovated the house for more than 50 older people and their dependents. The key informant from this welfare association explained and she voiced:

The project support for urban older people in Addis Ababa” changes the life of

many elders. For instance, there is a woman called w/o Tiru and she migrated to Addis Ababa 40 years ago for seeking employment. She found employment as a house keeper with an Ethiopian family. But she got pregnant and was forced to leave the house when her mentally challenged son was born. Tiru then moved in to a kebele owned house north of St. George church, where she has been living for the past 20 years. Tiru and her son owned no bed and have slept on the floors for years squashed together in the limited space that they call home. The ceiling was low and old, allowing rain to leak in to the room sometimes resulting in flooding and attracting rats. She would use plastic sheets to protect her son and herself from harsh weather. In addition, the toilet and the kitchen were situated next to each other causing them frequent illness. The rent is 80 birr per month, a portion of which she receives in support from the church. She is forced to beg to make up for the difference of the rent and food expense since she has no relatives to support her and no one to take care of her son in order for her to earn a living. Due to not having a source of income, she can only afford to eat once a day. Through the support to urban older people project, St. George welfare association could renovate the house, adding a dividing wall between the kitchen and the toilet and chimneys to remove smoke and odors reducing resultant health risks. The roof has been mended and the floor cemented, flooding and cold weather no longer is a worry for w/o Tiru.

The informant from St George welfare association (MIGBARE SENAI) added that not only W/O Tiru but also there are a lot of peoples who supported by the project

entitled “support for urban older people in Addis Ababa” in cooperation with UN – OCHA, IOM and Help age international, St. George welfare association for example;

W/O Zenebech was born in Yifat. She got married but her marital life was discontending thus she migrate to Addis Ababa to start a new life living with her uncle 40 years ago. She neither remarried nor had children. Her relatives not support her since they themselves are very poor. She has been making ends meet by brewing and selling Tella for most of her life time, yet now due to her old age related impairments she is no longer able to do so. Having no income, she was forced to endure hunger, living with health problems and in a house breaking down around her. Therefore, St George welfare association was able to renovate the house with funds received from 'support to urban older people' project, getting rid of the holes in the ground that were an obstacle to her mobility and providing safety from extreme weather. Her health condition has improved since the medical consultation and treatment the church has provided her with. Furthermore, she has received food support permitting and cash transfers for meeting her basic needs.

According to the informant at St. Gorge welfare association, in the future, this association plans to start a program in well organizing way for supporting school drop aids and their families in partnership with Help Age International Ethiopia and World Granny, individual donors (both from within Ethiopia and from abroad) and the ministry of social and labor affairs.

- **Holy activities of EOTC towards unemployment**

EOTC is an apostolic and ancient church, which has been giving services in both spiritual and social aspects. The church has been rendering not only spiritual services but continually providing social services as well. According to the key informant at EOC – DICAC, Churches further plays many functional roles in a society and has great many contributions. With regard to these, unemployment is one of the social problems which greeted by EOTC especially Holy trinity Cathedral Church perform various activities towards this problem in collaboration with EOC-DICAC.

In the context of our countrywomen are subjected to discrimination in labor and other markets. Although Ethiopia economy is showing significant growth, the majority of the population still lives below the poverty line. The informant at Holy trinity Cathedral Church said that:

Poverty is higher in female headed households since it is difficult to transform their capabilities in to income as they tend to specialize in unpaid reproductive activities. Therefore, holy trinity Cathedral Church gives a due attention for such problem and works to empower the poor women's. The selection criteria are the beneficial must be poor women, those who have interest to be organized with others and women who are previously in various business activities but lack resources. Based on these criteria, the church selected more than 40 women. Since 2010, and the church organized the selected beneficiaries and provide different trainings like how do start a business, business promotion and market linkage by working in collaboration with EOC – DICAC. Then the Holy Trinity Cathedral Church gives a startup

capital up to 5000 birr for each woman.

In addition, the members of Holy Trinity Cathedral Church welfare association follow up the activities of these women and at this time they started their own business as well as their living condition become better than before, the researcher also trying to contact some of these women and some of them stated, the church has been give a deep concern for them and the support change their life to some extent but the support from the welfare association is not sufficient because, as everything is very expensive and still they faced financial constraints for running their businesses.

- **The major challenges of EOTC**
- **challenges of EOTC**

Most of the Ethiopian orthodox churches faced a lot of challenges in their day to day activities and in their further holy as well as spiritual activities. The following are some of the major challenges of EOTC:

- **Lack of effective leadership**

Around the circle of the church administration it is always believed there is a sort of problem that hinders properly administering and properly managing peoples and resources. The church in its basement and internal order is rather a perfect institution.

And it is known for being the center of multitude of intelligential (Leikawnt). But the personal disorder of the individuals in the administrative circle has resulted in a lack of efficiency, improper management of resources, failures of plans and objectives.

Additionally, regarding to the lack of effective leadership the informant at St. Mary Church stated that:

Today, the great church of Ethiopian orthodox Tewahido remains to be a nominal one. It failed to contribute as much of its expectation held to the Christian society of the modern age. It lugged behind in its administrable activity as compared with the newly established and flourishing religious organizations. In general, many developmental as well as further functions of the church are not performing

properly that is why it becomes the victim of every critic as an escape – got.

In addition, one of the major challenge which discussed by FGD participants is related with the lacking effective administration system. Unlike governmental and non-governmental organizations means of administration, the church administration is exceptionally more dependent on personal activity rather than the laws, policies and regulations that seriously run the way of administering. Eventually, there is a fault as a result of the disorder of personalities of the individuals who are responsible to run the administration. Quite very often, the church of Ethiopia is supposed to have a sort of challenges in the administration circle as many people are able to realize, the problem is really connected with the church administrators activity in general.

- **Self – centeredness among religious leaders**

The church administration simply follows outdated criterion for employing candidates in the common saying “He, who is born and grow under the church, is aware of its laws”. Such and so weak approaches to the church administration finally met by a great critics of modern thinking; thus the church’s developmental and other social activities are retarded. Overall, the self – centered attitude of individuals within the church administration has become the major problem that the church is ever facing whose making any attempt to undertake a sort of developmental as well as social activities. The informant at Bole Medhanialem Cathedral Church explained that:

The self – centeredness of the religious officials is the major problem that set an obstacle on the church social activity. Because, individuals with such an attitude do not concern more about the betterment of activity. And they do not take in to account the present situation of the church in relation to the principles of modernism and are negligent of what to be done justly. They rather give deaf ear to the conformity and harmony with the need of the tomorrow’s fate of the church. But such individuals are confined only to think and care of their individual life of their good name, their colleagues and relatives.

Moreover, like other social service rendering institutions and organizations, the EOTC as a religious institution also has a great social responsibility to carry out. It has its own wide scope of activity which can be concluded under its administration. However, according to informant at Bole Medihanialem Cathedral Church, the administrative part

of the church has limitations and consequentially resulted in pulling down the church overall activities. Even though it may be necessary to make some adjustments in the administrative structure, the major problem is found to be interred – related with matters on whether or not carrying out one’s responsibility and so the inquiry of the problem related to the individual’s personalities is so urgent.

- **Lacking legitimacy of welfare associations**

Almost all informants from the church welfare association stated, the church runs the welfare associations as one of its programs prescribed by the Kale Awadi or constitution of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. These welfare associations established with a mission to improve the living conditions of vulnerable and destitute people. But since the establishments these welfare associations has various challenges and problems. For instance, they perform every activity under EOC – DICAC and have not their own legal personality for many years and informants said they are still claiming to have their own legal personality, but the EOC –DICAC is still unwilling to raise its hands and this situation makes challenge for them to collect funds as well as to perform further activities.

- **Financial constraints of EOTC welfare associations**

The welfare associations of EOTC play a significant role especially in mitigating both elders and orphans related problems by implementing various projects. However, the informants at St. George welfare association and Holy trinity cathedral church

welfare association discussed, Sometimes the welfare association aid is interrupted due to the financial constraints. This situation creates difficulties for improving the futurity of welfare association programs.

Chapter Five

5. Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

This section of the paper presents a discussion of findings based on the research objectives. In addition, this section also includes the conclusion and recommendation part of the study.

- **Discussion**

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido church is an apostolic and ancient church which has been rendering not only spiritual services but continually providing social services as well. Based on these premises, the church has been fully committed to support the disadvantaged and marginalized segments of the society. Helping and fulfilling the spiritual and basic necessities of human beings is the desire of God, revealed in the Holy Bible. Therefore, EOTC still now plays a significant role in mitigating the major social problems which stated in the previous chapter.

The first objective of this study is to point out the major social problems that gain a due attention by EOTC. Social problems encountered in the community are usually very diverse (Soekanto, 2011). Therefore, it is very difficult to address all social problems. Due to this reason, the researcher was focused only the following major social problems greeted by Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido churches. Under this objective the major findings are increasing the number of vulnerable orphans and elders, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, and housing problem are the major social problems that gain a due attention by EOTC that selected as research site.

All churches which selected as research site have their own reasons for giving a due attention for these social problems. And they stated that the holy bible commands to care those elders and for all humans by doing good things. Also there is a clear in morality, in bible and humanitarian obligation to provide whatever care, support and assistance that is appropriate or feasible for elders. On the other hand, Caring and guiding children is the responsibility of parents but if children have no parents or their parents are not able to do it due to various reasons, others including religious institution should take the responsibility of caring and supporting those children as well as they also have special places in the Bible.

Additionally, HIV/AIDS is pandemic and it caused the worst shock in the socio – economic and political development of the country. Unemployment is not only economic problem but it is also social problem because it has various social effects such as hanger, homelessness and so on. Also House is one of important and basic necessities for human

survival but it is a critical problem in A.A city. Due to these reasons, EOTCs have a due attention for these social problems,

The second objective of this study is that explain the contribution of EOTC in mitigating social problems. Under this objective the major findings revealed that EOTC plays many functional roles in a society and has abundant contributions in different ways to mitigate the above mentioned social problems. In addition, EOTC has considering as an obligation to address these social problems as well as to make an insight in to the results of existing condition on the spiritual, moral and physical aspects.

The role of religion in social support can be seen in terms of two major components: spiritual and material component. The spiritual component arises as religious individuals behave more cooperatively, which, given their beliefs, will bring about good fortune in the future. Only religious individuals can be motivated by the spiritual payoff as only they can potentially believe that cooperation yields rewards (Levy and Razin 2011).

Most of EOTC which selected as a research site established welfare association to facilitate their activities in the process of mitigating social problems as well as to participate on charitable activities. The aim of these welfare associations is supporting orphans and elders who are living in difficult situations. For instance, St. George Church welfare association support 124 elders in collaboration with different NGOs like Help Age International. The service given to the elders from the welfare association is home based care, financial support, medical care, and provision of food items. In addition, holy

trinity cathedral church welfare association working in collaboration with EOC- DICAC and other volunteers. One of the remarkable achievements is building elders residential care center in which currently 15 elders are living. The program under this welfare association meets the most basic needs of the beneficiaries by giving them shelter, food, cloth and medical care.

On the other hand, holy trinity cathedral church in addition to the spiritual activities, it has implemented different programs to mitigate the problems of orphans. For instance, this church support 120 orphans who lived in difficult circumstances under its program. Educational support, medical support, spiritual and psychological counseling are the major support provided by this church for the orphans. Also monthly 160 birr given for their parents, In addition, holy trinity church has its own clinic in which some of the orphans gain medical services without any payment. Furthermore, Bole Medihanialem Cathedral Church explained, the church build school for more than 100 children's that render educational service for only orphans without any payment.

To keep the pace of sustainable socio – economic services, the EOTC had established development and inter – church aid commission in 1977. EOTC has been active in response to HIV /AIDS since its discovery in the 1980s through the spiritual service but there was weak intervention until the establishment unit known as “Orthodox HIV/AIDS campaign center“(OHACC) in March 2001. This unit was fully authorized to direct, plan, coordinate and implement HIV/AIDS activities at all levels. Since the establishment period this unit focused on awareness creation programs, prevention

activities and provision of medical treatment for people who are living with HIV.

In regarding to the efforts of EOTC towards housing problem especially St. George welfare association give a deep concern and through the “support for urban older people in Addis Ababa” project in cooperation with UN – OCHA, IOM and Help age international, St. George has constructed and repair the house for more than 50 elders.

On the other hand, unemployment is one of the social problems which greeted by EOTC especially Holy trinity Cathedral Church perform various activities towards this problem in collaboration with EOC-DICAC. Also this welfare association design a project for unemployed women’s and the selection criteria are the beneficial must be poor women, those who have interest to be organized with others and women who are previously in various business activities but lack resources and switch their business. Based on these criteria, since 2010, the church selected more than 40 women and provide different trainings like how do start a business, business promotion and market linkage. Then the Holy Trinity Cathedral Church gives a startup capital up to 5000 birr for each woman.

EOTC from its inception, been a community based institution and priests are not regarded as separate from the community, but are special members of their communities, working and living in these communities like any other, but with a special role to play. The communities have always accepted the multi-faceted role of the Church no less in the past than today. Not only has the Church been able to combine its spiritual and secular roles, but also it has always stood firmly for social justice and fought against

poverty, so it is perceived as a champion of poor communities. In addition to its understanding of community needs and its commitment to its followers, the Church has also proven its competence in delivering the community care and support needed, both spiritual and material. It is up on these foundations that community trust in the church is built. (Militetsega, 2004)

Finally, the third objective of this study is identifying the major challenges of EOTC in their effort of mitigating social problems. Under this objective the major findings indicate that, lacking legitimacy of welfare associations, self – centeredness among religious leaders ,financial constraints of welfare associations and lacking effective administration system are the major challenges of EOTC in mitigating social problems..

However, even though the church is primarily committed to bring religion up on individual and corporate life by the implication of the gospel to build the kingdom of god on earth. But they played many functional roles in “society and has great many contributions. One of the most familiar functions is inspiring people to a useful social end and they serve as an ethical source. Above all, the church takes in hand the economical situations in such a way that it can join various institutions like educational, health and others in order to mitigate societal problems in collaboration with these institutions. Finally, these all things can be considered as the major strength of EOTCs.

- **Conclusion**

The aim of this study is to investigate the role of EOTC to mitigate social

problems in A.A. With regard to this, the biblical teaching of Christ and church tradition provides adequate framework for church to serve God's people in this era. The EOTC has tradition from the early beginning Christianity, and it had a deep concern to the poor, the ill and other segments of the society who are in the challenge full circumstances. In teaching and leading the laity to the kingdom of God, the EOTC traces its services to the foot step of the Apostles.

Ethiopia is a unique country by her culture and traditions. Also EOTC plays a great role in the day to day life of the society. This is because the church in its very foundation by Christ Jesus aimed at serving the human beings on the basis of truth. Hence, the church has a great responsibility of functioning within the society by playing its own roles.

The EOTC has a great contribution for Ethiopian civilization, history, religion and culture from the time of its establishment. It has been contributed for religious arts, crafts and literature as well as secular and theological institutions and their curricula. The country owes even its calendar to the church. It is vital importance to realize how very great responsibility the EOTC has and how very wide scope of functional role it ought to play because it makes easier for estimating the EOTC weight of responsibility up on the society.

Even though, the church is primarily committed to bring religion up on individual and corporate life by the implication of the Gospel to build the kingdom of God on earth. It further, plays many functional roles in a society and has great many contributions. On

the basis of functional principle, the EOTC cannot be seen separate from the society.

Overall, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido church is ancient church, which has been giving services in both spiritual and social aspects. The church has been rendering not only spiritual services but continually providing social services as well. Based on these premises, the church has been fully committed to support the disadvantaged and marginalized segments of the society. These all things show that EOTC plays a vital role in mitigate social problems.

- **Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings, the researcher suggests the following points for improvements of EOTC activities in mitigating social problems.

- The welfare associations in the parish churches should apply professional guidance and counseling services for the betterment of their activities.
- Most of the welfare associations in the parish EOTC, have limited effort to participate in fund raising activities. Due to this reason, sometimes their aid for elders and orphans interrupted. So, they should implement various strategies that initiate donors in providing funds.
- The support from EOTC welfare associations for vulnerable segment of the society is not as much of its expectations. Therefore, the organization should upgrade its capacity and service facilities in order to support more vulnerable peoples.
- More intervention of the church needed to carry out the problems of elders and orphans through the following interferences:-
 - Celebrate annual elders and orphans day to get support from outside

community.

- Establish different development activities around the church in the name of elders and orphans.
 - Organizing different awareness creation programs regarding to HIV/AIDS.
 - EOTC should perform a lot of activities to create employment opportunity that incorporate elderly peoples.
-
- The EOTC administration simply follows outdated criteria for employing candidates in view of common saying “he, who is born and grow under the church, He is aware of its laws”. But such types of approaches bring a sort of problem that hinders properly administering and managing peoples and resources. Therefore, the church administration should give a serious attention in employing candidates.

References

Asselefech G/kidan,(2014).*The Role of Ethiopian Orthodox Church in the Development of Adult*

Education: The Case of ye' AbinetTimihert Bet.

AbiyounHailu and Teshome,(2015). *The Contribution of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church in*

Forest Management and its Best Practices to be Scaled up in North Shewa zone of Amhara Region, Ethiopia. Agriculture, forestry and fisheries.vol.4, No, 3, 2015, pp.123 – 137

Archbishop Yesehaq, (2015). *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church: Brief History of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.* .

Brriball K.L and while A, (1994). *Collecting Data Using Semi-Structured Interview. Journal of Advanced Nursing* 19,328-335.

Bureau of Finance and Economic Development,(2013). *Socio-Economic Profile of Addis Ababa: Background Information of Addis Ababa city.*

Dana Lynn, (2011). *Introduction to Primary Research: Observations, Surveys and Interviews. Parlar Press. Volume 2,*

British Council, (2008).*Observation Checklist.* Accessed from WWW.teachingenglish.org.uk/.../ [Accessed date Dec 28 2016]

Getent Tamene,(1998). *Features of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the clergy. Asian and*

African Studies, 1, 87-104

Hussein Habibitabar, (2010). *Personal and Social Function of Religion. Journal of Basic and*

Applied Scientific Research.vol, 2(9), 2012, pp. 9517 – 9522

Jon Abbink, (2003). *A Biography on Christianity in Ethiopia. Leiden: African Study Centre*

John W.Creswell,(2014).*Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approache*, 4th ed. Sage Publications

Kumilachew Sheferaw, (2015). *The Socio-Economic Roles of Religion: The Case of Ethiopian*

Orthodox Tewahedo Churches In Addis Ababa.

Lemlem Kassa, (2009). *The Role of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church on Agricultural*

Activities: Case of Getesemani BeteDenagil Tebabat nunnery.

Mengistu Gobeze, (2010). *Journal of Ethiopian Church Studies. The Ethiopian Orthodox*

Tewahido Church Sunday Schools Department

Mahiberekidusan Research centre.vol.1, 2010, pp.73-75.

Militetsega Andebrhan, (2004). *The Contribution of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido*

Church to

Poverty Reduction.

Margaret C. Harrell, Melissa A. Bradley, (2009). *Data Collection Methods: Semi*

Structured

Interviews and Focus Group Fund National Defense Research

Institute.

Nick Fox, (1998). *How To We Observations In a Research Project*, Institute of General

Practice

Northern General Hospital Sheffield.

Owwaseun, David and ISSA, (2013).*The Role of Religion in Modern Society: Masses*

Opium or

Tool for Development. In: International Journal

of Sociology and Anthropology. Vol, 6 (1),

January, 2014, pp. 8-17

Palys, T, (2008). *Purposive Sampling*. In L.M. given (Ed.) *The Sage Encyclopedia of*

Qualitative

Research Methods. (vol.2). Sage: Los Angeles, pp. 697-8.

Padgett, K., D, (2008). *Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research*. (2nd Ed)

Sage

Ruth Campbell, (2008). *Guide to Focus Group Discussion*. Micro Report, 138.Pp, 1-4.

Robert Elliott and Ladislav Timulak (2005). *Descriptive and Interpretive Approaches to*

Qualitative Research. A Research Hand

Book, pp. 147 – 158.

Richards. L,(2006). *Qualitative Research Design; A Practical Guide: Part 2*. London:

Sage.

Serkalem Tafesse, (2015). *The Use, Application and Integration of Religion/Spirituality
in Clinical Social Service: The Case of Clinical Social Service
Providers in Addis Ababa*.

Stake. R (2010). *Qualitative Research: Studying How Things Are Going*. New York:

Guilford Press.

Appendixes

Appendix I

Consent Form

My name is Minychel Ambelu. I am from graduate school of social work at AAU. Currently, I am conducting a study on the role of religious institutions in mitigating social problems: The case of Ethiopian Orthodox Church in some selected areas of A.A, to meet the partial requirements for graduation with MSW. To this effect, I would like to request your consent to take part in answering the research questions. In addition, I would like to ask your consent that the interview will be tape recorded and it will take time up to 1 hour. The other point is that, your personal information will be kept confidential when the findings are publicized. Finally, I would like to say thank you for your participation and the information that I will get from you is very important for the progress of my study.

Signature of participants.....

Appendix II

Guiding questions for semi-structured interview

- How do you see the contribution of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches in mitigating the prevalence of social problems?

.....

.....

..

.....

.

- What are the major social problems in due attention of the Ethiopian Orthodox Churches?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- What are the major experiences Ethiopian Orthodox Church had in mitigating social problems?

.....

.....

...

.....

..

- How do you see the strengths, weakness and challenges that the Ethiopian orthodox churches encountered in the effort of reducing social problems?

.....

.....

..

.....

.

- What are the major approaches which implemented by Ethiopian Orthodox

Churches to mitigate the prevalence of social problems?

.....

.....

....

.....

....

- What are the main activities which performed by Ethiopian Orthodox Churches to reduce social problems?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- How do you explain the role of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches on the social support?

.....

.....

.....

.....
.....

- In what ways the Ethiopian Orthodox Churches incorporate other responsible bodies to mitigate social problems with collaboration?

.....
.....

.....
.....

.....
.....

Appendix III

Guiding questions for focus group discussions

- How do you explain the major activities that are performed by Ethiopian Orthodox Churches in order to mitigate social problems?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- How do you see the approaches of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches to reduce social problems?

.....

.....

.....

.....

- How do you see the importance of religious based programs of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches to mitigate the prevalence of social problems?

.....

.....

..

.....

...

- How do you explain the other pivotal role of Ethiopian Orthodox Churches besides the religious practices?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Appendix IV

Description of study participants

Name	Sex	Age	Religion	Place of interview
MemherSelemon	M	39	Orthodox Christian	Holy trinity Cathedral Church
MemherZeru	M	35	Orthodox Christian	Holy trinity Cathedral Church
Assemamaw	M	40	Orthodox Christian	Holy trinity Cathedral Church
TafetWondiem	F	62	Orthodox Christian	Around Genfele
EsetDemeku	F	58	Orthodox Christian	Around 4 killo
ShewayeZelege	F	45	Orthodox Christian	Around 4 Killo
MemherYonas	M	55	Orthodox Christian	St. Mary Church
MeriGetaYohannes	M	65	Orthodox Christian	St. Mary Church
LikSeyoumMirutse	M	60	Orthodox Christian	St. Mary Church
Sisay G/Egziabher	M	50	Orthodox Christian	EOC – DICAC
ZenebechTilaye	F	48	Orthodox Christian	St. George Church
KesGulelat	M	52	Orthodox Christian	St. Mary church
MemherAmare	M	47	Orthodox Christian	4 KilloMahebereKidusan
MemherHaileyesus	M	50	Orthodox Christian	4 KilloMahebereKidusan
KesAkalu	M	62	Orthodox Christian	St. Mary Church
KesGetnet	M	65	Orthodox Christian	St. Mary Church
MemherAsrat	M	55	Orthodox Christian	Bole Medhanialem cathedral Church

Source: constructed by the researcher (2017)