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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE of EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS AND INCLUSIVE
EDUCATION

**THE CHALLENGES AND OPORTUNITIES OF FEMALE WITH
VISUAL IMPAIRMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN SOCIAL
ACTIVITIES IN CASE OF ETHIOPIAN NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF THE BLIND (ENAB)**

BY

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The Challenges and Opportunities of Female with Visual Impairment to Participate in Social Activities in Case of Ethiopian National Association of the Blind (ENAB)

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declared that this thesis entitled “the challenges and opportunities of female with visual impairment to participate in social activities in case of Ethiopian national association of the blind” is my own work and has not been presented the honor of the degree in any university and all sources, materials, borrowed ideas used for this thesis have been properly recognized. It is being submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of masters of art (MA)

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to identify the major challenges that hold back the participation of female with visual impairment in the society and to show the available opportunities for female with visual impairments to participate in social activities. It is known that social participation has various benefits for human domain. But female with visual impairment are isolated and excluded from social participation by ill customs, negative attitudes, low social skill, inaccessible physical environments, low economic income, and ETC. Qualitative research method and phenomenology research design were used in this study. Purposive sampling technique was employed to conduct the study. The study was conducted with 7 key interview informants and with 10 focus group discussion participants who purposively selected generally 17 participants were involved in the study. Total blind females and age from 25-55 were included in the study. The data analysis was used thematic data analysis and the data is described based on the research questions organization. The participants of the study described the challenges they experienced in relation to negative social attitude, low social skills, negative cultural attitude, inaccessible physical environment, and low economic status. The respondents of this thesis were also discussed about the challenges and opportunities based on the questions posed to them. The result of this study is members of the society consider female with visual impairment as incapable and incompetent to make social participation. The finding of the data also indicated that female with visual impairment have low social skill. Female with visual impairment met so many impediments to participate in social activities. Despite the challenges female with visual impairment encounter, the society gives priority for female with visual impairment which is a great opportunity. In addition, members of the society also began giving recognition to person with visual impairment. Persons with disability should have the opportunity to be actively involved in decision-making processes about policies and programme, including those directly concerning them. In order to ensure self-determination, female with visual impairment must be supported to make their own decisions over their lives, their bodies and how they choose to seek justice has been recommended at the end.

Abbreviations

(CEDAW)	Convention on the Elimination of Domestic Violence Against Women
(ENAB)	Ethiopian National Association of the Blind
(ENHPS)	Ethiopian National Housing and Population Census
(FENAPD)	Federation of Ethiopian National Association of Person with Disability
(FMHE)	Federal Ministry of Health of Ethiopia
(FV)	Female with Visual Impairment
(FGD)	Focus Group Discussion
(ICD)	International Classification of Diseases
(PWD)	Person with Disability
(SP)	Social Participation
(UDHR)	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
(UN)	United Nations
(UNCRPD)	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
(UNESCO)	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
(WHO)	World Health Organization
(WB)	World Bank

Chapter One

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Disability is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions (ICF, 2001 as cited in ADB2005). This implies disability has multidimensional effect. Disability is often defined as a physical, mental, sensory, or psychological condition that limits a person's activities. Contemporarily, the social model of disability conceptualizes, disability as arising from the interaction of a person's functional status with the physical, cultural, and policy environments (Shakespeare & Watson 1997) & Hughes & (Paterson 1997). So, this implies whatever effective measures taken disability restricts activities of person with disability to social participation. Disability is a set off physical and mental disorders which keep a person from an independent individual and social life (WHO 2016). Disability and human difference became culturally dominant in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century's. The impact of disability is far-reaching, extending beyond the individual to all those with whom the individual has contact. Disability may affect all facets of life, including social and family relationships, economic well-being, activities of daily living, recreational and vocational activities. Although several factors influence the extent of impact, every disability requires some modification and adjustment in daily **life** (David M. Turner & Kevin Stagg, 2002). As it is possible to understand from this, whatever modifications have been taken to reduce the effect of disability, it is impossible to avoid its pressure on social life.

Among categories of disabilities, visual impairment is the main point of this study. Visual impairment relates to an injury to the eye or a neural injury in the visual system which cannot be fixed/ repaired by glasses or regular optic aids. The legal definition of blindness (ICD, 2006) defines as blind a person who has one of these three limitations:

- ✓ Complete loss of vision;
- ✓ Acuity of not greater than 3/60 in the better eye with correction (with glasses on). This means a person who cannot count fingers presented at a distance of three meters in front of her/him.

- ✓ A field not subtending an angle greater than 20 degrees (in the better eye).

Due to this and other reasons, female with visual impairment in virtually all aspects of life are critically disadvantageous. They are deprived of equal access to education, health care, capital, and decision making powers in the political, social, and business sectors. Disability can limit social participation in daily living. Therefore, female with a visual impairment face challenges with establishing and maintaining relationships, performing group leisure and physical activities, and building successful school and work careers (Law M. 2002).

In developing countries, female with visual impairment in general are subjected to social, cultural and economic disadvantages. Historically it is seen as “a waste of resources to help female with visual impairment to become productive members of society”. As well, if they are with disabilities, their chances of overcoming their challenges are diminished, which makes it all the more difficult for them to take part in community life (World Program of Action, 1982). This indicates female with visual impairment are delayed in every aspect of life due to their impairment. Female with visual impairment were neglected and considered as weaker people, their rights as citizens are limited and non-respected. They don't participate in the equal way to the country's policies in their implementation for this reason they are affected negatively in economy, politics and social life. This resulting in isolation, stigmatization as well the poverty in their families. And it also increases the burden to their community in general. Apart from that all people with or without disabilities, female and male had the equal rights in all domains of life. While they said that all of them are considered and treated the same way, female with disabilities in general and female with visual impairment in particular contend with double kind of discrimination. Female with visual impairment is faced with oppression as it applies to her status as a female and as a person with disability. The discrimination can affect all conditions of their lives like education, employment, economic status, health, marriage, family, and rehabilitation (Rajah, 1991).

Participating in social activities Such as: wedding ceremony, birth day ceremony, Idir, visiting sick person, etc, are vital to successfully completing social developmental tasks on time. This contribution helps to health, psychological wellbeing, and quality of life. Successful social participation is important especially during adolescence when major life transitions occur such as

transitioning from school to employment, exploring romantic relations, and commencing independent living. Given the compromised social opportunities for young people with a visual impairment, effective programs aiming to improve social participation are needed (Eline, C. M. Heppe, 2019). This shows even if female with visual impairment finished their education and employed, they need effective modifications and programmes to enable them to have good social participation. They shouldn't let alone as they are matured and completed their education and considering as everything is fulfilled to them. Because vision is one of our most vital senses which no one can deny, and its loss produces very serious social, economic, physical, and psychological consequences. The researcher believes that, the effect of impairment becomes more serious when the society isolates and discriminates between person with disability and person without disability.

Social participation is participating or involving in whole social activities. However, a commonly accepted definition of social participation is still lacking. Although interest in the construct of social participation is notoriously increasing in several fields of knowledge, there is no consensus as to its definition among scholars. Social participation can be defined as “the involvement of a person in activities that favor interactions with others in society or community” (Cad SaudePublica,2014). Social participation for female with visual impairment protects them from negative effects such as, stress, anxiety, timidity, and etc. And social participation improves well-being, self-esteem and self-assurance (Heller et al., 1986). This demonstrates that if female with visual impairment actively participate in social activities, they will create good relationship and develop self-assurance. Hence, the researcher believes that, interaction is very important on human's life. When the female with visual impairment are socially interacting with the others from different social groups, it increase and build the good relationship and avoid the stigma and isolation to the people within the community in which they live. It is to mean, good social relationship reduce the negative attitude of the society towards person with disability.

Because, if person with disability ignored and isolated by the society, they could feel that he/she has nothing to offer to other persons or other persons may be afraid of the visual impairment or a social stigma could cause negative reactions towards them. As the result, predicaments like these impose substantial constraints on female with visual impairment so as not to have active social participation. At this time, the ability to maintain and to restructure within the society would become problematic for female with visual impairment in particular and person with disability in general (Lyons et al, 1995).

“Being with disability should not mean being disqualified from having access to every aspect of life”. Because, this quotation implies that visual impairment does not prevent female with visual impairment from exercising social life like their counterpart. Person with visual impairment has human dignity and respect and likes to enjoy social life as everybody gets pleasure from it. But, the Ethiopian practical situation is different. In a sense that society believes persons with disability have no sense of obligation and morality to participate in social activities. And they also think that, making persons with disability to participate in social activities is morally wrong and unacceptable as cited by (Rajathurai Nishanthi, 2015).

In non-inclusive society, each component creates certain problems for persons with visual impairment. Most of the time, Ethiopian families do not want to tell for others about their child’s impairment. They feel unhappy for having such a child. Further, when the person with visual impairment wants to go out of house for meeting and playing with other peers, family does not leave him/her to go outside, most likely because of the same reason, embarrassment. So these persons with visual impairment grow up in limited, and usually, in bitter environment. Even if these persons with visual impairment go out for playing, they are mistreated by other peers in the out-of-family environment which encourages them to stay at house (Waxman & Wolfe, 1999). This critically denotes disability is indignity and evil which cannot be tolerated by the society.

Therefore, interaction is very important on human’s life, when the people are socially interacting with the others from different social groups, it increase and build the good relationship and avoid the stigma and isolation to the people within the community in which they live. However, poor health, declined mobility and especially visual impairment limit social contact outside the home (Hanson, 2002). Physical activity improves the health-related quality of life by enhancing

psychological well-being, which, in turn, contributes to human growth and social development. Social development is considered to be an essential characteristic of self-determined behavior (Graham, Holt-Hale, & Parker, 1998). Psychological well-being and social development can be enhanced through opportunities to participate in a variety of age- appropriate physical activities (Houston-Wilson & Lieberman, 1999).

So as to diminish problem of low social participation, women with disabilities should recognize their dignity and participate as the other citizens within the society as well as in their own families as provided in the UN CRPD article 16. In advance, States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities recognize the right of persons with disabilities to social protection and to the enjoyment of that right without discrimination on the basis of disability (United Nations convention on rights of persons with disability art. 28). In this regard, this researcher believes that, the Ethiopian government who undersigned this convention absolutely forgotten the core message enshrined in this provision.

When the government signs that convention, it is obliged to protect and fulfill the rights provided within the convention. The obligation do not only emanate from the convention alone. But it also drives from the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopian Constitution (FDRE Art. 9 (4). The Article under quotation reads, “All international agreements ratified by Ethiopia are an integral part of the law of the land”. So, this provision made international conventions which Ethiopia signed as part and parcel of the domestic law. Therefore, incompliance of this duty by the government officials makes accountable and responsible Ethiopian government.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Federation of Ethiopian national Association of Person with Disabilities FENAPD is the first consortium of disability associations established in December 1996 GC to amplify the united voice of person with disability. The federation had been worked intensely on Enhancing public awareness on disability and the issues related equality and right of person with disabilities. FENAPD wishes to see an inclusive society where persons with disabilities equally participate in every aspect of life and contribute their best with no discrimination. Because, social participation for everyone is necessary for the formation of self-autonomy and development of problem solving abilities required for dealing with future problem. Further, participating in social

activities reduces the likelihood of depression and stress. In addition, participating in social activities helps someone to feel sense of equality, self-confidence, and dignity. It also helps to get information, knowledge, to create friend relationship, and to avoid isolation resulted due to the nature of disability.

In addition, there have been many initiatives advocating for inclusion and rights of people with disability for the accomplishment of empowering women with visual disability, Ethiopia National Association (ENAB) which is one of the involved member associations of ENAB works to achieve the underlined purpose. There are also different organizations have been involving to improve the life status of female with visual impairment in different schemas.

- However, organizations don't have attention on how female with visual impairment would have active social participation within the society. Even if the program is designed for these target groups.
- The practice and the framework of the concerned organization or association would not align with the expected result that should bring changes on these specific groups. Thus, female with visual impairment are more isolated; and ignored by the society; generally have lower social status.

Now we are in era of where the concept of inclusive society is advocated at large. Ethiopian social policy, education policy, legal framework policy, and etc, are exclusively promotes about spirit of inclusion.

- However, female with visual impairment have many difficulties in the social - emotional field. They are sometimes insecure and ashamed and have a hard time starting a conversation with others. As it is known, many skills which are necessary for social interaction are based on visual cues. Loss of sight influences the ability to be familiar with people or social situations if the physical environment is not accessible.
- The physical environment is not conducive for persons with disabilities generally and female with visual impairments in particular to make movement to have a good social participation.

- The existence of number of ill-customs and traditions, are being critical problems for female with visual impairment to social participation.
- Because, the society does not give greater attention for social participation of female with visual impairment. Female with visual impairment are often not respected or valued.
- In general, female with visual impairments experience isolation and dependent on partners, family members or caregivers. Because of this, female with visual impairments are passive to take part in social participation.
- Female with visual impairments are kept away from social meetings and work opportunities because of ill-custom which does not allow female to go out from houses alone. They lead dependent life because they do not know ways of living. They also do not acquire necessary skills needed to social participation. Female with visual impairments face so many challenges because of their disability and womanhood. The reasons behind all these challenges and problems which is the major theme of this study can be addressed herein below.
- As the result, female with visual impairment encounter socio-cultural barriers which limit the degree of their participation in society.

As it is attempted to indicate herein above, most studies revealed about socio/economic, educational challenges, causes, nature and consequences of female with visual impairment. As far as the researcher's reading goes, none of the researches mentioned herein above, attempted to examine specifically the participation of female with visual impairment within the society and the challenges which they encounter to social participation. As it is possible to say that very minor and piecemeal information, literature, and articles are available on this specific topic, how female with visual impairment have social participation and how they cope with the existing situations as they are part of society. However, the paper is too narrow in its scope and depth, the study makes the eye bird view to examine this gap by investigating the significant challenges and opportunities of women with visual impairment do have to participate in social activities in case of Ethiopian national association of the blind (ENAB). Therefore, based on the above problems and predicaments the study tries to answer the following leading basic research questions

1.3 Basic Research Questions

1. Do female with visual impairment have active social participation within the community?
2. What major challenges do female with visual impairment encounter to participate in social activities?
3. What are the existing opportunities beyond the challenges do female with visual impairment have in participating in social activities?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objectives of the Study

The over whole objectives of the study is to assess the challenges that hinder female with visual impairment to have good social participation and explore the existing opportunities in case of Ethiopian national association for the blind in Addis Ababa.

1.5 The Purpose of the Study

The study is helpful to identify the major challenges that impede the participation of female with visual impairment in the society and it helps to identify the available opportunities for female with visual impairment to participate in social activities. Identifying the challenges is important to address the needs of female with visual impairment and it is useful to show the gaps for the stakeholders and researchers.

- It may offer essential information for the organizations to undertake measures to support female with visual impairment to have good social participation;
- Furthermore, it helps for the coming generation and students as source of study in the area and so as to insight and inspires researchers to make more study to come up with better and findings for policy consideration.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The research is limited to the challenges which female with visual impairment face to participate in societal activities and it also examines the opportunities and coping mechanisms available to female with visual impairment in case of Ethiopian national association (ENAB). As the study rotate around the above mentioned major concepts, it primarily collects source qualitatively and participants of the study constitute those female with visual impairment alone.

1.7 Operational Definition

In this part, the researcher has been defined basic terms used in this study. So, in this study, the following basic terms has been defined:

Activity refers: to pertain to a range of individual deliberate actions, such as getting dressed or feeding oneself and engaging in social tasks directly related with contribution.

Discrimination refers: unjust distinction against a person with a disability compare to the way nondisabled person would be treated in the same circumstances.

Idir refers: is set of individuals or groups stand for helping each other with common goal.

Opportunity means: a time when a particular situation makes it possible to do or achieve something.

Participation refers: to activities that are integral to economic and social life, such as being able to attend school or hold a job.

Social challenge refers: the challenge that individuals face during their interaction with other people. For this study, the social challenge includes social participation of female with visual impairment that they face during their interaction in the society.

Visual impairment refers: visual impairment is defined as a functional limitation of the eye(s) or visual system and can manifest as reduced visual acuity or contrast sensitivity, visual field loss, photophobia, diplopia, visual distortion, visual perceptual difficulties, or any combination of the above.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

A large body of literature shows that social participation is associated with better mental and physical health. Every 1 point decrease on a social activity scale, there is a 33% more rapid rate of decline in motor function (e.g., grip strength, muscle strength) within an average of five years (Buchman et al., 2009). The implication of this study indicates low degree of participating in social activity has impact on muscle development. In turn it transfers a message that feeble muscle prevents someone from making active movement which in turn affects shouldering social tasks. Risk of developing a disability in activities of daily living decreased by 43% over an average of 5 years for each additional social activity engaged (James et al., 2011). Among older adults with depression, those who were highly socially active were over 2.5 times more likely to have improvements in their depressive symptoms 2 years later than those with low social activity (Isaac et al., 2009). This citation demonstrates that active social participation reduces symptoms of depression. So if one does not participate in social activity, he/she will develop depressive symptoms which in turn follow psychological problems.

The rate of cognitive decline was reduced by an average of 70% in older adults who were frequently socially active compared to those who were infrequently socially active over an average of 5 years (James, Wilson, Barnes, & Bennet, 2011). This means, if someone participates in social activities more frequently, the possibility of cognitive development is very high. Contrary, if someone doesn't actively participate in social activities, he/she will decline in cognitive development. So, if social participation has direct influence on cognitive development, everyone has to actively participate in social activities. Older adults who participated on a daily or weekly basis in social activity had a 40% reduced risk of developing dementia compared those who were not socially engaged (Wang, Karp, Winblad, & Fratiglioni, 2002). Scientific studies illustrates that active social participation obviously reduces risk of developing dementia. Hence, everyone has to participate in social undertaking whether he/she likes or not so as to avoid or reduce effect of dementia.

Indeed, as it is tried to be examine from the herein above mentioned literature participation is associated with social, mental, and physical health benefits. So, social participation has directly

associated with wellbeing of the health, cognitive development, social development, reduction risk of dementia and etc. Therefore, female with visual impairment participation at various levels such as family, community and national as well as at all stages is worth important to develop self-confidence. Because usually, interaction is very important on human's life, when the people are socially interacting with the others from different social groups, it increase and build the good relationship and avoid the stigma and isolation to the people within the community in which they live. It does not only avoid discrimination and stigma, it also develops self-confidence of female with visual impairment. This means, if female with visual impairment play great role in societal activities, they will build up self/confidence to take part responsibilities in the society without any trepidation.

According to the report of World Health Organization (WHO 2011) it is estimated that around 15 percent of the global population one billion people live with disabilities. Around 80 percent of them live in developing countries and among of this 19% are women with disabilities are domiciled in Third World countries. They are often subject to stigmatization, excluded from workplaces, and often end up depending on others in the family and community for physical, social and economic support. In order to lead an independent life, female with visual impairment have to be employed and to earn their own income in both governmental and private owned institutions without any discrimination and stigma like persons without disability. In addition, they have to take part in social activities in daily life so as to avoid or reduce risk of dementia and to maximize cognitive development.

In Ethiopia, there is high data confusion about the number and status of persons with disabilities (Tilahun Kifle, 2017). The population and housing census of Ethiopia (2007) revealed that the total number of persons with disabilities in Ethiopia is 805,535 which is only 1.1% of the then total number of population of the country (73,891, 095). However, this researcher believes that, this figure is to be very low by actors in the field and the government has to take great responsibility to come up with acceptable data which reveals the true number of persons with disability.

The researcher believes that, the number of population has great effect on national policy economically, politically, and socially. For this reason, the government has to take time and

budget to identify the true data of persons with disability. On the other hand, based on the National Survey on Blindness, Low Vision and Trachoma in Ethiopia, there are about 1.2 million blind people, and 2.8 million people with low vision (Federal Ministry of Health of Ethiopia, 2006).

Despite fact of this huge number, discrimination on basis of disability is a fact officially recognized by 2006 United Nations convention on right of persons with disability. The views from different scholars expressed that the attitude toward disability and women with visual impairment have been neglected through many years ago by negative traditional attitude of the countries. According to the researcher, until now this ill attitude towards women with visual impairment is not avoided. Let's set aside the attitude of the society, the government officials with higher rank have no positive attitude towards persons with visual impairment. Persons with visual impairment face not only problems related with their impairment, but they also encounter negative attitude from the employers of the government and private institutions to get job. For this reason, the social exclusion is a big challenge on equalization of opportunities to the persons with visual impairment especially to the women.

Lack of effective training about the equal rights in all domains of life also impacted them negatively to feeling as the productive persons like the others without disabilities, including also the external barriers prevent their full participation in the societies in which they live. Females with visual impairment have in general been silenced within society, denied their rights and equal economic and social opportunities due to prejudice, stigma and poverty; even if they have potential and capacity to contribute their share to the society. They face a pattern of discrimination that repeats itself globally, in differing forms, in rich countries as well as poor. According to (Oliver 1990 P. 27), persons with disability generally and female with visual impairment in particular encounters prejudice that holds them comparatively helpless, in need of support from others to manage their lives, their homes and their desires for the future. Globalization, industrialization, mechanization of the work place, and the shrinking of self-sufficient communities where tasks could be found appropriate to the capabilities of most of its members, have all led persons with disability being seen as less productive or as a drag upon the community.

2.2 The Social Attitude towards Female with Visual Impairment to Participate in Social Activities

Negative stereotypes relating to both gender and disability compound the exclusion of female with visual impairment from support services, social and economic opportunities and participation in community life. All of these challenges also contribute to the social isolation and marginalization of female with visual impairment (Women with Disability Association, 2011). This means that female with visual impairment are excluded from the society and denied social, economical and political participation due to their disability. We are in era of inclusive society concept is preached broadly over the world in general and Ethiopia in particular. However, female with visual impairment are rejected and relegated from having social services, economical advantages, political opportunities, and social participation etc. There is no doubt if someone is excluded from every aspect of life, he/she will have no opportunity to take part in societal activities. Meaning, if someone who is person with visual impairment has no access to suitable physical environment, negative attitude on the side of the society, get challenge to be employed, he/she will have no chance to engage in social participation.

Attitude studies in Ethiopia have confirmed that female with visual impairment continue to face negative attitudes, stigma, and discrimination (Mulatu, 1999; Rhamet et al., 2000). In Ethiopia, people with disabilities often are not participants in society because of the overall belief that disabilities are a result of a curse or are punishments from a deity. The implication of this statement is that disability is earned or acquired due to the curse or punishment from the God. It is considered that female with visual impairment become blind due to their sin and evil act. For this reason, they are excluded and isolated from social participation.

Attitudes and behavior often lead to the exclusion of female with visual impairment from social and cultural life. In addition Mulatu points out that, people tend to avoid contact and personal relationships with persons with disability. Because, they consider people with disabilities are incapable.

Despite of what Mulatu, said herein above, this researcher also supposes that members of the society consider that, persons with disability may get unhappy if one makes contact with them. What is more, Persons with disabilities generally and female with disabilities in particular have encountered prejudice that holds them comparatively helpless, in need of support from others to

manage their lives, their homes and their desires for the future (Oliver 1990 P 27). Such types of negative social attitude have all led to people with disabilities being seen as less productive or as a drag upon the community. In addition, the state of person with disability in social situation can be explained or to think of person with disability as weak, hopeless, dependent and unable to learn and the subject of charity (Rahmet, Metasebia & Selamawit, 2000).

Hence, this implies female with visual impairment are weak, dependent, and still are in need of charity for their survival. Due to this reason, persons with visual impairment lose trust on the society and do not participate within the societal activities. Even if they have potential and ability to participate in social activities, they do not like to participate in such actions. Because, prevalence of the prejudice and discrimination affect female with visual impairment and the degree to which they are excluded from normal social intercourse produces psychological and social problems for many of them. Too often, the professional and other service personnel with whom female with visual impairment come into contact fail to appreciate the potential for participation by persons with disability in normal social experiences.

Thus do not contribute to the integration of individuals with disability and other social groups (Women with Disability Association, 2011). Because of these barriers, it is often difficult or impossible for female with visual impairment to have close and intimate relationships with others. Many persons with disabilities are not only excluded from the normal social life of their communities but also confined in institutions.

In light with this, negative attitude of the society can affect all conditions of their lives like employment, economic status, health, marriage, family, and rehabilitation (Daniel Mushimiyimana 2017). On the other hand, what is amazing is that, some members of the society do not value the female with visual impairment. Female with visual impairment are seen as an object of charity and are underestimated, overprotected, and their potential and ability still being unrecognized. In the family, a person with disability is a source of shame and often hidden away. Female with visual impairment find it difficult to get married and they suffer discrimination in employment and health care services. They meet also with different challenges in their daily life at home and wherever they are in various activities (Rajah, 1991). This demonstrates female with visual impairment are being cause of shame and dishonor for their family and they are made put out of sight by them. In advance, there is over protectiveness by the family and due to this

reason, female with visual impairment do not get access to different social skills, events, activities, and etc.

For example, let's take marriage which is an institution of the family. In order to create family, someone has to engage to his/her own friend with opposite sex. But, for negative attitude of society, persons with visual impairment get challenge to find their own friend. Even if they get friend, people with negative attitude judge such act as miracle and extraordinary. Therefore, stigma and discrimination touch nearly all aspects of the lives of persons with disabilities. They are present at the interpersonal and institutional levels, through laws and customs that systematically marginalize such persons and can prevent them from obtaining employment, accessing services and making friends. For example, studies in Ethiopia have demonstrated that, social norms of attitudes toward disabilities have been less favorable (Tiressew, 2005). Expectations for any field of career success by persons with disabilities are often unfairly lowered. Parents may keep children with disabilities out of school for fear of abuse (Banks & Polack, 2014). If they attend school, children with disabilities are also subject to negative attitudes and bullying (UNESCO, 2017). This negative attitude of the community emerged from the deep-rooted culture of the society.

2.3 The Negative Effect of Culture to Participate in Social Activities for Female with Visual Impairment

“Ethiopians’ attitudes toward disabilities, as is true in all cultures, are naturally embedded in their cultural and social beliefs, and hence, negative attitudes are often passed on through social-cultural interactions” (Almaz Tamen Getachew, 2011). This shows the negative attitude towards persons with disability transfers from generation to generation due to the established custom. The implication is that unless, incredible change has been made towards members of the society, such type of negative attitude which accepted as legal cannot be removed or avoided. Attitudes about disabilities in Ethiopia are often based on supernatural beliefs, which have proven to be negative (Alem, Desta, & Araya, 1995). These beliefs have affected Ethiopians in numerous ways, such as ignoring, social stigma, marginalizing individuals who are believed to be visually impaired, as well as limiting access to rehabilitation services (Weldead, 2007).

As a consequence, negative attitudes toward female with visual impairment have become socially acceptable attitudes to possess, and to have any differing opinions would be going against the norm (Katz, 1960). The method by which attitudes have been taught and learned in Ethiopia is through conditioning of what is acceptable for the cultural norm (De Houwer et al, 2001; Winkielman et al, 2003, & Newcomb, 1943), all of which have contributed to the formation of negative attitudes toward female with visual impairment. This exhibits that negative attitude about female with visual impairment has been intentionally cultivated historically whether it is knowingly or unknowingly. For this reason, there is no doubt changing such deep-rooted negative attitude will take long period of time and hard working. Indeed, professionals who are employed in the rehabilitation profession have a direct influence on an individual with a disability and members of the society.

Female with visual impairment also encounter isolation and discrimination from their family and community at large. The family members forced to hide themselves when somebody came to their house, and showed unwillingness to bring persons with visual impairment to take part on weddings, festivities and other social events. Because, in terms of the community, they were considered as beggars when they were seen around churches or taxi stations and some people tried to give coins as if they are looking for money. This kind of situation is more frustrating and irritating to get involve in social activities. Because of this, female with visual impairment be deficient in necessary skills for social participation. Since, they do not engage in social activities which help to learn necessary skills for such type of social matters.

2.4 Low social Skills to Participate in Social Activities by Female with Visual Impairment

Female with visual impairment experience overprotective care from their parents, families and service providers. Parents of persons with visual impairment hide them from being seen by their neighbor, friends, and guests and so on. Therefore they do not develop the social skills that are required for integrating into social life (McBroom, Tedder & Kang, 1991). This shows if someone doesn't engage in social tasks he/she will not acquire experiences of social skills. Similarly, if someone has no necessary social experiences and skills he/she will have low social participation. Because of this, female with visual impairment get challenge to create social relationship simply with the members of the society. Because frequency of making contact with

members of the society, creates favorable condition to know people and to learn necessary skill needed for social participation. Due to the lack of eye contact and lack of sociability with the members of the society, female with visual impairment are sometimes insecure and ashamed and have a hard time starting a conversation with others. This might lead to an uncomfortable situation when it comes to asking for help and might affect their performance of social tasks (Vancil, 1997).

Female with visual impairment have limited opportunities to participate in sports and other recreational activities which contribute to negative societal beliefs that persist toward individuals with disabilities (Korhonen, 2000). This means, due to the inaccessible physical environment, female with visual impairment do not have practice of making physical exercise and do not culture of going to recreational sights. Since, the entertaining places and facilities are not easily reachable for persons with disability. As the result, members of the society consider, female with visual impairment as weak and do not make movement. Many female who are visually impaired have been found to be socially isolated, to have few friends, and to have inadequate interpersonal skills (Huurre, Komulainen, & Aro, 1999; & Stuart, 2002). This isolation and problem of having friends do not result of the impairment rather it is due to the negative attitude of the society. In addition, the problem of inadequate and interpersonal skill results due to the members of society who distance themselves from persons with disability. Thus, a visual impairment may cause an adolescent to feel inadequate and inferior, reflecting his or her lack of social acceptance, physical incapability, and social maladjustment.

On the other hand, persons with visual impairment fear the situations of the physical environment and do not regularly exercise physical sport. As result, if persons with visual impairment do not exercise physical sport, their physical body may not be strong and they lose confidence to make movement here and there without help of others. Therefore, the influence of inaccessible physical environment has direct impact on development of muscle, cognitive development, reduction of dementia and etc as discussed in the introductory section of the study. Thus, if female with visual impairment don't exercise physical sport, their physical body remain inactive and they get dread to walk freely and do not make active social participation. Further, they did not spend time with friends, and were dependent on their parents for transportation. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that adolescents with low vision are given fewer

opportunities than are sighted adolescents to develop the competence in everyday activities that is required to become independent of their parents.

2.5 Inaccessible of Physical Environment for Female with Visual Impairment to Participate in Social Activities

Many factors contribute and promote person to participate in different activities, while other factors prevent and restrict him from participation. The most common barriers which affect participation were included attitudes, physical environment, transportation, policies and etc (Anaby D. 2013). Persons with visual impairment face physical and social barriers that hinder their access to services or employment and prevent them from enjoying their rights (Elenie Nigussie 2016, P.18). The design and construction of indoor and outdoor facilities can prevent them from going to social institutions such as, hospitals, shopping, gaining access to police services and finding or keeping a job. Footpaths, parks and public transportation may also be inaccessible, preventing persons with visual impairment from enjoying the most basic elements of participation in social life.

Many persons with visual impairment are excluded from active participation in society because of doorways that are too narrow or full of pits and obstacles, steps that cannot be mounted leading to buildings, sanitary facilities that cannot be easily used for persons with visual impairment. Such barriers are the result of ignorance and lack of concern; they exist despite the fact that most of them could be avoided at no great cost by careful planning. Although some countries have enacted legislation and launched campaign of public education to eliminate such obstacles, thimble remains a crucial one (Eleni Nigussie, socio/economic challenges of women with disabilities 2016, P. 18).

Hence, poor health, low mobility skill and mainly loss of vision may limit social contact outside the home environments (Hanson at all, 2002). Due to the above mentioned reasons, persons with visual impairment are restricted to specific geographical location. For example, most persons with visual impairment spend their free time in the institute of Ethiopian national association for the blind (ENAB). They do not go far from such area to entertain like persons without disability. Persons without disability enjoy much entertainment by going to different recreational places. But female with visual impairment are not accessible to have such type of recreational places.

Because, the physical environment do not allow them to have such kind of places for entertainment.

Even if the physical environment is accessible, the setting of equipment's in the houses, halls, events, leisure places and etc do not give comfort to move here and there without the assistance of others for female with visual impairment. Even though, female with visual impairment show there maximum ability and potential by involving in social activities, the society do not allow them to take part due to the over protection or negative attitude towards them. So, if someone doesn't have access to such type of opportunities, it is obvious to have low social experience, low social skills, low social participation, and etc. For these reasons, accessible physical environment is worth important to build up self/confidence and to enable them active participant within the society.

2.6 Low Economic Income of Female with Visual Impairment to Participate in Social Activities

Basically, an important thing to the female with visual impairment and other female with disability is to be productive and contributors to the community as the other people without disabilities. Actually, equalization of opportunities between female without disability and female with visual impairment is still unequal on the family level. While both female without visual impairment and female with visual impairment should participate together in sharing the social activities and making together the decisions related to their own community and have equal responsibilities towards their society. For example having the same chance for getting the job in private or public institutions female with visual impairment become low beneficiary due to their impairment.

Although, female with visual impairment have high potential and high merit to undertake the job, the employers do not believe the ability of the persons with disability in general and female with visual impairment in particular to work. They consider persons with disabilities as the least desirable workforce. Many employers think that they are not suitable and competent for adapting of the workplace and fulfilling necessary materials to them is too expensive and that is why they do not want to employ such persons as cited by (Ranka Perucica 2018 in Hernandez JA 2000). There is also a misconception among employers that investments in disabled-friendly facilities will incur additional and high costs.

An assessment of the challenges faced by women with visual impairment in equalization of opportunities: “the low performance of women with disabilities brought the negative perceptions in all areas of working activities” as discussed by (Asch and Fine 1989, in Daniel Mushimiyimana 2017). They were considered as unproductive person within the community and also they were ignored and discriminated regarding employment opportunities. This brought the isolation and stigma to the female with visual impairment which affecting the whole family of visually impaired persons.

Beside the above barriers like many female with disabilities, female with visual impairment face negative attitudes from the employment managers and authorities in the different public or private institutions. “This attitude varies from the lack of awareness, sensitivity and respect” (Lorraine & Win, 2006 p. 136). This implies that female with visual impairment feel socially rejected, devalued, and discriminated. The employers and authorities are not sensitive to the abilities of visually impaired female. They are also unaware of the abilities of visually impaired female and the impaired community in general.

This leads to unequal opportunities between female with visual impairment and other population without disabilities toward job and also this makes them to be isolated and stigmatized, which bring negative impact and affect them in politics, economics and social domains. Among reasons why employers avoid employing a person with disabilities, the most commonly mentioned ones were feelings of discomfort, unfamiliarity with the characteristic of disability, the belief that the nature of the job to be performed was not suitable for those persons. For this reason, people with disabilities could not be efficient, often absence from work and so on. In general, if female with visual impairment do not get job, they don't get contact to interact with the society; and if they don't get opportunity to interact with the society, they don't develop self/confidence which enable them to participate within the society. Despite this, if they do not generate their own income, they don't get means to share social life. Overall, if female with visual impairment are deprived of the right to work, they will not be able to fulfill existential security, social interactions, mental health stability, social status, development of personal identity as well as self-esteem. Thus, role of employment in life of every person being important factors in social inclusion and welfare.

Chapter Three

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Design of the Study

Phenomenology research design is intended for this study. Because, phenomenology is about the lived experiences of the individuals as a phenomenon will be described by the individuals themselves (Creswell, 2014). According to Martyn Denscombe in the good research guide book Second Edition (2003); Phenomenology is concerned, first and foremost, with human experience - something denoted by the term 'phenomenology' itself. Hence, the structure of the research is about the challenges and opportunities of female with visual impairment faced to participate in social activities in case of Ethiopian national association for the blind. A qualitative study approach is proposed for this study and design perspective proposed is phenomenology. Research method is a plan and the procedure for research that point the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. It indicates how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted as well as the data-sharing plan as appropriate. So, phenomenology qualitative research design is worth important for this research. Hence, in this study, the researcher tries to explore the experiences of female with visual impairment participation in the society.

3.2 Description of the Study Site

The association is located at Sidist Killo West of Yekatit 12 hospital, East of Belay Zeleke School, North of Afinecho Ber public library and South of Amisit Kilo University. Currently there are about 1000 blind women member. However, all these much members were registered in the association, yet the available member women are not more than 200 (two hundred). It is nonprofit making organization. Thus the researcher took the purposive sampling technique in the association compound to get the possible representative samples. The researcher involved 7 samples of interview participants and 10 participants of focus group discussion among the available 200 blind member women, through purposive sampling techniques.

3.3 Population of the Study

However, no study of global and regional trends in the prevalence of visual impairment has been carried out, there are estimate of blind population in the world. According to the survey conducted by Paul's Hospital Millennium Medical College, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on Prevalence and associated factors of low vision and blindness 2017 In the world, the number of visually impaired is estimated to be 285 million, of whom 39 million were blind. As it is mentioned herein above, Ethiopia also lacked accurate recent national estimates of blindness and low vision. In Ethiopia, the general population of total blind, based on the National Survey on Blindness, Low Vision and Trachoma in Ethiopia, there are about 1.2 million blind people, and 2.8 million people with low vision this means the total number of population blind is 4.million (Federal Ministry of Health of Ethiopia, 2006).

3.4 Sample Size Determination Procedure

The target population of this study where small sized who are about 1000 registered members of female with visual impairment of Ethiopian national association of the blind. In order to select the needed sample purposively from the number, sample size determination criteria has been used. Among these population 543 females who are active members were being included in the sample of the study. Among this number, 361 total blind females were identified and 182 partial female with visual impairment were excluded. Among this number, 238 female with visual impairment were under age of 25 were not included in this study. Only 123 females are aged from 25 up to 55 were purposively chosen.

3.5 Sampling

For this study, the researcher used purposive sampling. *Purposive sampling* the sample is intentionally selected for the research. The term is applied to those situations where the researcher already knows something about the specific people or events and purposely selects particular ones because they are seen as instances that are likely to produce the most valuable data. In effect, they are selected with a specific purpose in mind, and that purpose reflects the particular qualities of the people or events chosen and their relevance to the topic of the investigation. Purposive sampling is one of sampling techniques in qualitative research that is purposely made to select respondents based on their natural ability to give the required

information (Creswell, 2014). In light with this, 17 female with visual impairment who pass most of their time by coming to the institution of ENAB and who formed self-help Idir were selected purposively.

3.6 Criteria's to Make Eligible the Participants in this Study

1. Being female with visual impairment.
2. Being total blind.
3. Being started leading independent life
4. Age from 25-55.
5. Being active members of the institution

3.7 The Sampling Size

Researchers doing study based on phenomenology collect data from just some or a few number of populations. There are two things which can be said about the sample size in qualitative research. First, it is unlikely to be known with precision or certainty at the start of a research project. Second, the sample size will generally be relatively small. The qualitative researcher, therefore, needs to be quite explicit about the use of non-probability sampling and its roots in the work of people such as Glaser and Strauss (1967). Therefore, when someone chooses sample size he/she has to put into consideration the following criterion:

- The desired level of accuracy;
- the likely non-response rate;
- relevant for the research topic

Thus, the proposed sample to be selected that can best help us to understand these issues totally 17 in number. 7 participants for face to face interview and 10 participants for group focused discussion (FGD) are intended to gain the required information.

3.8 Data Collection Instruments

Selecting instruments or tools of data collection is based on: what kind of information is sought/required, from whom, and under what circumstances/condition, anything you propose to

do must be within the constraints of available time and resources. Among many tools are: semi structured interview guide and group focused discussion (FGD) are planned for this study.

3.8.1 Key Informant Interview

14 guiding Interview questions related with major challenges and 8 guiding opportunity related questions were developed by the researcher and provided for female with visual impairment. The questions were translated into Amharic since all participants can hear and speak it. The interview guide questions are semi structured because,

- It lets the researcher and participant to engage in exchange of ideas whereby initial questions are modified in light of the participant's responses;
- It allows a greater flexibility of coverage;

The process of interviewing is valuable for a number of reasons.

- ❖ First, it provides the possibility of exploring matters *in depth*. In phenomenological research, interviews tend to be relatively long (in the range of one hour, often more) so that there is plenty of time to delve deeply into issues as they arise.
- ❖ Second, interviews allow the interviewee to raise issues that he or she feels are important.
- ❖ Third, interviews allow the researcher the opportunity to *check* that he or she understands the interviewee correctly.

3.8.2 Focus Group Discussion

7 guiding questions related with the major challenges and opportunities were prepared by the researcher and provided for the members of the focus group discussion in order to supplement the data gathered by interview. All the guiding questions were translated into Amharic because all focus group discussion members can hear and speak it. The focus group discussion was used as supplementary instrument. The use of FGD was not meant to replace individual interviewing, but it is mainly because it can provide another level of data gathering or a perspective on the research problem not available through individual interview. Focus group discussions are advantageous when the interaction among interviewees will likely yield the best information, when interviewees are similar and cooperative with each other, when time to collect information is limited, and when individuals interviewed one-on-one may be hesitant to provide information (Krueger, 1994).

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher in the first place asked procedurally permission from the interviewee to collect data. As a result, before starting to gather the data, the researcher proposed to make informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality with her participants. Since, it is important to create close contact with the individuals proposed as sample. Thus, the researcher oriented the participants the purpose of research and the importance of her genuine response for the successful attainment of research objective and how the researcher gives response particularly for the interview. After these all made, it was easy to gather data needed. The interview guide was initially prepared in English and translated into Amharic for the purpose of easily conducting the interview assuming that interviewees will not be English speakers. The researcher used voice recorder to collect the data. Then the recorded data is transcribed into text.

3.10 Data Analysis

The collected raw data analyzed in light with basic research questions thematically. It is thematic in a sense that the collected data put in order of the basic research questions. The major themes found from the transcribed data rearranged in sequence of the basic research questions which guide the structure of chapter four.

3.11 Ethical Consideration

Any research as a profession it has its own certain ethics. Respecting these common ethics are important. The same thing is done for this research. Thus, the following ethics considered in the process of conducting this research.

- The researcher respected the agreement of the participants strictly whether they are willing to participate in this research or not.
- The researcher kept the confidentiality of the participants;
- The researcher used pseudo name to explain about the participants. Generally, the researcher applied all the above and other necessary ethical issues in doing this research.

Chapter Four

4. Presentation and Analysis of the Data

This chapter presents the major findings that have been founded from the participant's experiences. It is thematically organized according to the basic research questions. 14 interview questions related with challenges and 8 interview questions related about opportunities prepared and presented to the interview participants. In order to supplement and support data generated from the interview 7 questions prepared and presented to the focus group discussion. In addition, one case story presented to show the existing situation. The first section of this chapter presents the background information of the participants. The second section of the chapter attempts to address the basic research questions of this thesis

4.1 Description of the Background Profile of the Research Participants

Seven total visual impaired females selected and interviewed for this study according to the basic research questions guiding line. In addition to this, ten total visual impaired females also chosen and made focused grouped discussion for this study. The participants' age ranged from 25 to 55 years. Issues which have got relevance to the topic such as age composition, academic background, marital status and place of living are explained in table herein below.

Table 4.1 The profile of interviewee participants

No.	Age	Academic background	Marital status	Address
1.	26	Dropped from University	Unmarried	Ko/K/Ke/We/8
2.	32	Diploma holder	Unmarried	Gulele K/Ke/W/4
3.	37	B.A Degree holder	Unmarried	Gulele K/Ke/We/2
4.	43	Disqualified from University	Unmarried	Gulele K/Ke/We/4
5.	39	M.A degree holder	Unmarried	Arada K/Ke/We/6
6.	34	12 plus 3	Married	Gulele K/Ke/We/2 Ketena 4
7.	29	Not educated	Unmarried	Gulele K/Ke/We/1

As we can understand from the table herein above, most of the female with visual impairment are unmarried. The possibility of getting married is slightly low. Because six of the seven participants are unmarried and their age is getting rise as it is inferred from the table.

Table 4.2 The profile of focused group discussion participants

	Age	Academic background	Marital status	Address
2.	28	Studying College	Unmarried	Gulele K/Ke/We/2
3.	32	Dropped College	Unmarried	Yeka K/Ke/We/3
4.	40	Studying College	Unmarried	Bole K/Ke/We/11
5.	32	B.A Degree holder	Unmarried	Kirkos K/Ke/We/5
6.	33	B.A Degree holder	Unmarried	Gulele K/Ke/We/2
7.	37	Dropped College	Married	Gulele K/Ke/We/2
8.	29	Not educated	Unmarried	Kaliti K/Ke/We/12
9.	33	12 plus 3	Married	Kaliti K/Ke/We/12
10.	40	Not educated	Unmarried	Gulele K/Ke/We/2
	31	Not educated	Unmarried	Arada K/Ke/We/3

From the reading of table two herein above, it is easy to deduce that these female with visual impairment are unmarried. Among ten of the focused group discussion participants, only two female with visual impairment get married. This implies female with visual impairment do not engage into marriage due to the negative social attitude of the society. Not only this, it is also possible to conclude that female with visual impairment getting old to get married from the evaluation of background profile of the participants from the tables. Because most of the participants passed age of 30 which minimizes the probability of getting married in the future.

Despite the low marriage status of the respondents, it is also possible to understand that relatively half of the female with visual impairment do not completed their education from the preceding survey of the tables. This denotes that most of the respondents are economically dependent on their families or support of others. If person with visual impairment do not educated, the likelihood of being dependent on other is high. As it is obvious to conclude from the reading of the tables herein above, among seventeen respondents three are B.A Degree and one is M.A Degree and one participant is diploma. The remaining ten respondents are not finished their

education and leading their life by different ways. The left two respondents are College students. So it is possible to conclude that more than 60% of the respondents are whether not educated or dropped from academic institution.

4.2 Results of the Data

In this section the results of the data is going to be presented according to the basic research questions. The three basic research questions analyzed thematically one by one.

4.2.1 Results from Interview Participants

4.2.1.1 The Social Participation of Female with Visual Impairment in the Community

The researcher forwarded a question regarding social participation by saying, “Do female with visual impairment participate in social activities?” Most of the respondents replied that, “female with visual impairment can participate in social activities.” One of the participants said, “I don’t think that, disability prohibits female with visual impairment from social participation.” She continued that, “if the society has awareness, physical environment is accessible, opportunity to learn is available, and if there is good economical status, there is nothing which prevents us from undertaking social activities.” The other participant followed that, “participating in some social activities may require vision but such activities do not exclude us from social undertaking.” Three of the respondents tried to justify how they can undertake such difficult activities which need vision. They said, “It is possible to cover the gap created by the impairment by employing another person.” Thus, they told that, “There is nothing which prevents persons with disability from undertaking social activities.”

The respondents of this study elaborated about their ability to social participation. They have an ability to undertake social activities. But the community do not encourage female with visual impairment to participate in social issues. One of the participants said, “I don’t think that, disability prohibits female with visual impairment from undertaking social participation. I personally be present at both heartbreaking or grief social events and happy social events if I got and herd information. Even if I get information by chance about certain social event and if I be present at the events, members of the society consider my attendance as unnecessary or not required to be present.” In addition to this, the respondents forwarded their idea the ability of social participation is build up gradually. The implication of the data result demonstrates that,

female with visual impairment can discharge their social obligation if favorable situations are created to them. If encouraging and conducive conditions are available, they can undertake social activities without any difficulty. On the other hand, if there is no accessible physical environment, opportunity to learn, and good economic status, the chance to participate in social activities will reduce.

Then the researcher continued, “do you think that, female with visual impairment have necessary skill to social participation?” Five of the interview participants frankly described, “Female with visual impairment has low social skill to social activities. They reasoned out, their families don’t allow going out or joining with others. In addition, their parents also hide them from being seen by their neighbor, friends, and guests and so on. Because the families of female with visual impairment don’t want to be discriminated and ashamed by their children. Even if they want to do activities in the house, their families don’t allow them to do activities.” This data result reveals that, discrimination and exclusion against female with visual impairment start at the household level by their family. If family’s of persons with disability ashamed and humiliated by their impairment, it is an extraordinary to wait positive acceptance from the large society. Likewise, if female with visual impairment have no access to everyday activities in their home and exposure to the outside world, it is difficult to learn and develop necessary skill required for social participation.

The respondents of interview described, overprotection and exclusion restricted them not to learn and not to involve in different social activities. They said, “If female with visual impairment do not join with the members of the community, we get challenge to be active participant.” They added, social skill is worth important to participate in social activities. They said, “If we excluded or prevented by our family not to join with our neighbors, friends, and other social members, it would be difficult to easily approach these members of the society so as to learn and acquire necessary social skills”.

In addition, one of the interviewee criticized female with visual impairment themselves. She reflected that, “low self-confidence, initiation and interest on the side of female with visual impairment are great problem to work with the members of the society and other associations.” She said that, “We are not ready to approach the members of the society to know our ability.” Finally, she concluded that, “female with visual impairment have no necessary social skills

owned by women without disability.” So, this has a great impact on female with visual impairment to participate in social activities”. This outcome of the data discloses that, female with visual impairment have low social skill as the result of exclusion from daily activities by their family and due to the discrimination by their family. As the consequence of discrimination and exclusion from daily activities, female with visual impairment enable to learn and acquire necessary skill to social participation.

4.2.1.2. The Major Challenges Female with Visual Impairment Encounter to Participate in Social Activities

The other question delivered to the respondents was focused on the major challenges which female with visual impairment encounter to participate in social activities. The researcher asked, “What major challenges do female with visual impairment encounter to social participation?” Most of respondents answered; there are lots of challenges which prevent female with visual impairment keenly participating in social activity. They said, “Negative attitude of the society for example sucking lips, lo economic income, inaccessible physical environment, etc are the major problems.” According to participant one, instead of making female with visual impairment to participate in social activity members of the society like to suck their lips under the guise of empathy. She said, let set aside making female with visual impairment to participate in social activity, they amazed by see what female with visual impairment do at their home. This means, even when female with visual impairment do activity at their own home they get be amazed about their activity.

In addition to this, the researcher rose the question, “do you think that, female with visual impairment have ability to social participation?” Most respondents described that, female with visual impairment have ability to do every social activities if members of the society encourage them. But, the society do not considered their interest to involve in Idir, celebrating events, and attending other situations. One of the respondents added that, “even the society know our potential and capacity, they don’t trust in our ability and want to make us participant in social activities.” Most participants have the same opinion that, “there is established a negative backward attitude towards persons with disability as a whole and female with visual impairment in particular.” When female with visual impairment go to participate in social activities, members of the community discourage their social activity under the guise of covering their part among persons without disability instead of giving task to them. In addition, the participants

said, “Members of the society say, there is no one to blame you for your nonattendance.” Members of the society do not understand the feelings of female with visual impairments’ to have social participation like their counterparts. But, female with visual impairment want to go to events where social affairs takes place or would like to be there and want to know and learn skills necessary to make social activity. Even, some members of society who are considered well educated and qualified persons don’t make female with visual impairment in social activities. According to the understanding of the participants, an educated person should have better understanding than not educated persons by showing behavioral change. This shows that, members of the society do not understand the need of social participation for female with visual impairment. The data tells us that members of the society believe making female with visual impairment in social activities is unattainable and as the result they prefer giving their share to other members of the society.

In related with the physical environment, the researcher presented the question, “do the physical environment is challenging for female with visual impairment to participate in social activities?” The participants explained, “Inaccessible physical environment is challenging for them to participate in social activities. Because, if they want to go to funeral, Idir, Ikub, birth day ceremony, Kirstina they need guiding man due to the inaccessibility of the physical environment.” Hence, they told to the researcher, “instead of going to such social events they remain at their home.” They continued, , “despite the unsuitable set up of the physical environment, the settling of the chairs, tables, and house utensils within the house and the feedback of the society is not encouraging and inviting female with visual impairment to involve freely and independently in social events.” The data gathered from the respondents demonstrates, inaccessibility of physical environment led female with visual impairment to look for guiding man who by itself is challenging and it leads female with visual impairment dependent on others. For this reason, the social participation of female with visual impairment is very restricted and limited.

To know whether good economic income has an impact on social participation of female with visual impairment or not, the researcher inquired the question, “Does economic status has an impact on social participation for female with visual impairment?” As it is possible to say all of the interview participants said, “Economical challenge has its own problem to social

participation.” They said, no one denies the influence of economy upon human social life.” They held that, “economic influence is not only the problem of female with visual impairment to social participation, but also it has great impact on person with disabilities. Because in order to ask sick persons, attending celebration of birth day, wedding ceremony, to ask sad men, they have to hold or take something according to the culture of the society they live in. They said, let us leave these routine issues, joining Idir requires money.” So low economic income is a headache to all people.

Two of the participants said, “But above all, it isn’t denied that it has great impact on female with visual impairment to social participation. Because, persons with visual impairment lose opportunity to have good economic power.” They reasoned out, “When you have impairment, it is difficult to get educational opportunity; and even if you got educational opportunity by chance, it would be difficult to get job.” Because economic influence has great effect on opportunity of education”. For this and other reasons, low economic income has its own impact on their social participation. As they stated, if female with visual impairment have good economic status, they can cover many gaps created due to their impairment in social activity by hiring person. For example, if female with visual impairment have Idir, she has to discharge her social task when her turn arrives. Because, , some tasks may need vision to be accomplished.

The researcher followed the question, “what relationship exists between economic status and having good social participation for female with visual impairment?” One of the interview participant said, “Visual impairment and low economical status has direct linkage.” If one is visually impaired, the chance to be economically powerfulness decreases. Because visual impairment makes acquiring things worse and complicated than person without disability. From the very beginning person with visual impairment has low chance to access educational opportunity than person without disability. Despite, if person without disability is uneducated he/she can lead his/her life by washing clothes, baking Enjera, cleaning, and etc. This means, person without disability can engage in any type of economic activities to earn once own income. She said, “But this scenario does not applicable for person with disability. Because, it is not possible for person with visual impairment to do so due to the backward attitude of the society. Even if we have ability to do, the societies do not give the chance to the person with visual impairment to do so.” for example, female with visual impairment can wash clothes as person

without disability. But the members of the society do not give such chance for them. Because, they think, female with visual impairment cannot tidily wash cloth. As the result, female with visual impairment become economically low and as the same they get challenge to social participation. In short it is feasible to understand the impact of economic income on social participation. Because the data collected from the interview participants proves, economic income has great influence on social participation. These shows that female with visual impairment have to be empowered economically in order to have good social participation.

4.2.1.3. The Available Opportunities for Female with Visual Impairment to Social Participation

Having understood the problems discussed by participants, the researcher requested despite all those challenges, “what opportunities are available for female with visual impairment to social participation?” Most respondents of the interview participants doubted about the available opportunities for female with visual impairment to engage in social participation. They said, “It is difficult to say there is promising opportunity for female with visual impairment to social participation.” But they explained that, “it is not normal to deny some opportunities available for female with visual impairment to engage in social participation as a whole.” “They added, a huge number of societies have good awareness about disability.” For example, two of the interview participants said, “when any means of new opportunity is available which comes to the society, the society gives priority for female with visual impairment.” They stated, “This is one of the opportunities which promotes female with visual impairment to have active social participation.” According to their understanding, if the members of the society begin giving priority for female with visual impairment in particular and person with disability as whole, it is big opportunity for them. Because they believe that, it paves a way to create public consciousness. If the members of the society have such type of understanding, it would be easy to change their attitude by creating awareness.

The other opportunity suggested by the interview participants is that, some members of the society by their own initiation and willingness aid female with visual impairment to have good social participation. They said that, “some members of the society call and take female with visual impairment with them in every social event which should not undermined. Though female with visual impairment have no means of payment to make contribution to buy things to support

sick people, wedding ceremony, birth day ceremony, to ask sad person, and etc they cover your share and encourage you to go with them instead of being absent due to the lack of payment.” The interview participants added, even though female with visual impairment have no means to pay for social contribution, they go to social events without any payment. As it is possible to deduce from the gathered data, female with visual impairment require support and attention by their family and the members of the society. This encourages and prop up female with visual impairment to have good social participation enthusiastically and rigorously with great effort.” Because, it helps female with visual impairment to feel that they have social acceptance to be within the society.

Furthermore, the other opportunity which is mentioned by the interview participants is that, instead of supporting female with visual impairment by giving money considering as beggar, it is worth important to buy or purchase the materials which female with visual impairment made as handcraft to survive. Now day, instead of buying from person without disability, they prefer buying from person with disability so as to support and build his/her confidence. This in turn develops self/confidence of female with visual impairment to have active social participation. They disclosed that, “This is good opportunity that female with visual impairment acquire from the conscious society. Because, once they believe in our capacity and potential in whatever field of work, they start to create work opportunity for us. They start to advertize or promote our skill or field of work to enable us to generate sufficient income. Whatever handcraft or work you do, the conscious society paves a way to you to get income by advertizing your job. Hence, this should not be neglected and undermined, because this little type of opportunity at the end of day in turn opens a way to upgrade public conscious towards female with visual impairment.”

4.2.2. Results Gained from Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussion is not to replace the data found from interview participants, rather it is to strengthen and supplement the information found by interview participants. So as to know and get ample information from focus group discussion, the researcher presented some questions for the members of focus group discussion participants. The first question solicited, “what kind of challenges do repeatedly face female with visual impairment concerning to social participation?” Respondents of focus group discussion held that, “the society has no awareness about how to make female with visual impairment to have good social participation. The attitude of the society

is not inviting person with disability to have good social participation.” They added, “Although, female with visual impairment have ability and potential to undertake social activities, the society ignore what and don’t accept what female with visual impairment do. The society don’t believe that female with visual impairment can do things neatly and cleanly on the ground of their impairment. So the member of the society don’t allow female with visual impairment to play their role like, pilling onion, potato, washing plates of the Idir in which they are members even if it is their turn.

The researcher asked another question, “What is the feedback of your community when you participate in social activities?” Almost all respondents of focus group discussion described, “The feedback of the society do not invite female with visual impairment to social participation.” The participants of group focus discussion seriously disconcerted that, “be neglected or disregarded within the society is painful and shocking.” They said, “such type of feeling develop to hatred of social participation.” In order to clarify the feedback of the society, one participant of the focus group discussion by the code name Adanech Feleke told her story. She was born in 1980 in Ethiopian calendar in Adama Oromia region. She lost her vision when she was child. After she faced many challenges, she joined school of special needs in “Sebeta MerhaIwran Timirt Bet”. The former challenges which she encountered before school did not separated from messing her life. She finished her education with many obstacles. As soon as she completed her education and acquired Diploma certificate from Kotebe Metropolitan University, she started looking for job. Looking for job by itself was become very tiresome and boring to her. Because getting information and reading job vacancy and applying was difficult for her. However, after encountered many challenges, with the help of her visual impaired friends, she employed as teacher in Belay Zeleke School.

Despite all the challenges, she won Condominium chance and acquired Condominium house in Kuye Feche in Kaliti sub-city. As she is the dweller of Koye Feche, she wanted to join Idir established by members of the residents. To be member of the Idir, she applied and she requested like other individuals to be their Idir member. When she repeatedly asks to join the chairman of the Idir, chairman responded that, “the number of quota to join Idir was up and we do not accept new member.” But, as she said, they accepted many new applicants come after her application. Losing hope to join male Idir, she tried to join females’ Idir. However, they haven’t accepted her

application. Because, the Idir members' do not trust in her undertaking. They don't believe that, she can perform tasks as other members of the Idir. The chairman of females' Idir told to her, "you can't perform your obligation according to the rules and regulations of our Idir." Therefore, they refused indirectly to accept her as their member believing that, she can't fulfill to undertake tasks of the Idir. Still the time she made this interview with the researcher, she has no Idir. Adanech was told for the researcher angrily and sadly by the chairman's systematic avoidance her from Idir.

This scenario tells us that female with visual impairment face different challenges. Despite the impairment, getting educational opportunity to learn as persons without disability by itself is very difficult. Even if they get educational opportunity by chance, attending education with all available problems and completing education by itself has different tricky. Beside, after completing education, getting information about vacancies and applying for the job is another problem. Completing education is not the end of life rather it is the starting point. Because, it is after self-autonomy that someone gets into different social life such as, holding fiancé, concluding marriage, joining Idir, etc. In this regard, Adanech Feleke has coped with all the challenges, but above all her joining Idir being unavoidable to her. Because, having social life is inevitable for everyone on the earth.

Two participants of focus group discussion demonstrated, "some members of the society approach female with visual impairment to create friendly relationship. They establish such friendly relationship to get blessing from their God; not to build true friendly relationship with person with visual impairment. It is to get forgiveness from the God by doing helping persons with visual impairment." This data result shows that even if female with visual impairment create friendly relationship with persons without disability, their friendly relationship cannot emanate from their heart and last forever. Since, the one who approached them as friend is not from his/her heart. Rather it is by fearing and getting blessing from God. Thus, based on the outcome of data, it is possible to conclude attitude of the society do not invite and encourage female with visual impairment to social participation. It is also feasible to say, members of the community create friendly relationship with female with visual impairment for excuse from God or to get blessing.

One of the participants of focus group discussion told her story to this study. She said, “The members of the society make difference between persons with disability and persons without disability. In one day, our neighbor was give birth in hospital. And there is one female without disability who come let to our village; and when they go to visit her in hospital, they skipped me and called the newly comer female.” She said, “I have lived for long period with birth giver but the new comer neighbor has no longer neighborhood relation.” The participants of focus group discussion added, “the families of the person with visual impairment themselves do not want to be seen with their family members fearing social isolation or discrimination. When female with visual impairment get to hotel, cinema, or recreation places, the community amused by the appearance of the person with visual impairment there.” The participants concluded that, “the members of the society don’t understand that female with visual impairment can enjoy or relax like others. First it is potential to say, members of the society discriminate persons with disability. Secondly, it is possible to conclude that members of the society do not understand the feelings and needs of female with visual impairment to social participation.

Majority of the focus group discussion respondents added, “Most members of the community have negative approach towards marital status of female with visual impairment. When they see the couples together with their children they laugh at them. Especially, when their husband is person without disability, the community wondered how he was being married to her and lived together.” One of the participants told her true life history to this study. She said that, “I was in a relationship for more than three years with my friend who is person without disability. When my boyfriend and I want to meet, we wait for each other on a street before we go to a cafeteria. One day we were going to a cafeteria together and at that time most persons on the street were staring and laughing at us. Though we did not know the reason why they laughed at, from that day on wards we stopped going together and decided to meet only inside the cafeteria. Eventually, my husband divorced ashamed by the negative attitude of the society.” She said that, “she thinks, the main reason for their divorce was being women with disability itself and its related issues like influence of others that came from the family, relatives, friends, colleague and the society at large.” And she said that, “her boyfriend took her son who she up brought and he does not make her to visit her son. Now they are in litigation in Court of law.” Generally, the respondents concluded, negative attitude of the community influences life of female with visual impairments’.

For example, participants of focus group discussion respondents said, “most of the time, members of the society do not call person with visual impairment to wedding. The community ashamed by the disability so that they do not invite female with visual impairment to attend their wedding ceremony. Probably if the member of the community by chance invites them, they do not remember their appearance in the ceremony. They fail or forget to remember them about their attendance. They celebrate their wedding by taking picture with different people. When people celebrate the event by enjoying, person with visual impairment who called to the wedding ceremony would remain alone if he/she do not bring guiding man.”

According to the question posed related with the challenge of physical environment, the respondents of focus group discussion presented one example, “let’s take female with visual impairment that is pregnant. She fears to make movement due to the inaccessibility of the physical environment. Honestly speaking, it is advised to make movement for pregnant woman for her health and conceived child. But due to the inaccessibility of the physical environment and social institutions, she fears to make movement. Besides, it is difficult to follow the pregnancy medical treatment by her due to the inaccessibility of physical environment of health institutions.” So, inaccessibility of physical environment make female with visual impairment dependent on the aid of others.” The respondents said, “This situation sends a message to the members of the society that female with visual impairment cannot aid themselves and enable to do social activities.”

They also demonstrated that, economical challenge has its own problem to social participation. They said, “Economical challenge is not only the problem of female with visual impairment to make social participation, but also it has great impact on people without disability.” They said, “in order to ask sick people, celebration of birth day, wedding ceremony, to ask sad men, and etc you have to hold or take something according to the culture of the society you live in. So economical challenge is a headache to all people whether you are person without disability or not.” Participants of focus group discussion concurred that it shouldn’t deny that economic problem specially has great impact on female with visual impairment to social participation. They said, “Economic power has direct impact on social participation of female with visual impairment. Above all, the respondents of the focus group discussion made hot argument by disappointed, “employers do not trust on capacity or ability of people with disability to perform

well; Due to this reason, public or private employers don't like employing female with visual impairment as people without disability even though they have potential and capability to be productive. From this transcribed data, it is possible to realize that Visual impairment and low economic status has direct relationship. When one is visually impaired, she similarly lose opportunity to have good economic power; since, if you are impaired, it is difficult to get educational opportunity; and even if you got educational opportunity by chance, it would be difficult to get job. If female with visual impairment have low opportunity to get job, as well they have low economic status and do not actively or energetically participate in social activity. For this reason, female with visual impairment have to be educated well and empowered economically in order to have good social participation.

Chapter Five

Discussion

In this chapter, the major findings of the study and the outlook of the authors of the study joined with the appropriate literatures reviewed in the cores of the study are briefly presented. Three research questions were used as guiding issues to address the thematic areas. The questions focused on: the social participation of female with visual impairment in the community, the major challenges do female with visual impairment encounter to participate in social activities, and the available opportunities for female with visual impairment do have to participate in social activities.

5.1 The social Participation of Female with Visual Impairment in the Community

If the society has understanding about impairment, physical environment is accessible, opportunity to learn is available, and if there is good economical status, there is nothing which prevents female with visual impairment from undertaking social activities. But for the insufficiency of such matters, female with visual impairment do not actively undertake social activities. Female with visual impairment have low social skill to participate in social activities. Because, most respondents of this study disclosed that, parents of people with disability do not allow their family member to go out or join with others. Parents of person with visual impairment hide from being seen by their neighbor, friends, and guests and so on. Because they don't want to be discriminated and ashamed. Due to this reason, individuals who are blind or have low-vision will face continuous challenge of psychology and social to regulate their disability (Rosa, 1993).

Similarly the literature of this thesis disclosed that, many female with visual impairment experience overprotective care from their parents, families and service providers. Parents of persons with visual impairment hide them from being seen by their neighbor, friends, guests, and so on. Therefore they do not develop the social skills that are required for integrating into social life according to (McBroom, Tedder & Kang, 1991). They are sometimes insecure and ashamed and have a hard time starting a conversation with others. This might lead to a painful situation when it comes to asking for help and might affect their performance of social tasks as cited by (Vancil, 1997). Many female who are visually impaired have been found to be socially isolated, to have few friends, and to have inadequate interpersonal skills (Huurre, Komulainen, & Aro,

1999; & Stuart, 2002). This low social skill to participate in social activities also approved by data collected from the respondents of the study.

5.2. The Major Challenges Female with Visual Impairment Encounter to Participate in Social Activities

There are lots of challenges which prevent female with visual impairment keenly participating in social activities. Negative attitude of the society, over protectiveness by parents, low economic income, inaccessible physical environment, and etc are the major problems. In this regard, the findings of the data of this study shown that, inaccessible physical environment is challenging to make social participation for female with visual impairment. If female with visual impairment want to go to funeral, they should have to look for persons who guide them. Hence, instead of going to mourning, funeral, condolences, wedding, celebration of birth day and Idir etc. female with visual impairment remain at their home instead of going to such social participations. Because, looking for guiding person by itself is challenging which in turn leads to dependency.

The respondents of group focus discussion presented one example, “let’s take female with visual impairment that is pregnant. She fears to make movement due to the inaccessibility of the physical environment. It is advised to make movement for pregnant woman for her health and conceived child. However, due to the inaccessibility of the physical environment and social institutions, they fear to make movement. Correspondingly, as it is clearly assessed in the literature review, according to, (Elena Nigussie 2016, P.18) Persons with visual impairment face physical and social barriers that hinder their access to services or employment and prevent them from enjoying their rights. The design and construction of indoor and outdoor facilities can prevent them from going to social institutions such as, hospitals, shopping, gaining access to police services and finding or keeping a job. Footpaths, parks and public transportation may also be inaccessible, preventing persons with visual impairment from enjoying the most basic elements of participation in social life.

5.3. The Available Opportunities for Female with Visual Impairment to Do Social Participation in the Community

The findings of the study revealed that, some members of the society by their own initiation and willingness support female with visual impairment to have good social participation. They said that, some members of the society call and take female with visual impairment with them in every social event without undermining. When female with visual impairment have no means of income to make contribution to buy things to support sick people, wedding, birth day ceremony, etc members of the community cover their part and encourage them to go with them instead of being absent due to the lack of low-income. According to Heiman and Margalit (1998), GOOD social skills allow persons to be cooperative, controlled in behavior and understanding of other people's needs and desires.

In addition, the outcome of the data discovered that, person with visual impairment started to get recognition by the society. Participants of group focus discussion discussed that, currently, some members of the society begin giving recognition for the achievement of female with visual impairment. This by itself is a great opportunity according to their understanding. They began giving recognition to the work done by female with visual impairment. They said, "Members of the society talk about our strength and potential beside our disability". In the same way, when the women had group activity which needed their involvement like *Idir*, the community covers their responsibility. Even when these women were moving from place to place, their neighbors gave them priority in transportation by leaving seats for them as it is mentioned by Eleni Nigussie (2016).

5.4. Summary of the Major Findings

The study surveys, participation of female with visual impairment in social activities, challenges they encounter to participate in social activities, and available opportunities. The findings of the study reveals, participation of female with visual impairment in the social activities is very low and their relationship with person without disability is also very weak. Since, the outcome of the findings demonstrates that female with visual impairment encounter the above mentioned challenges and as the result had weak social activities. Due to this reason, female with visual impairment experienced prejudice, bias, isolation, and negative discrimination from the

community due to their impairment. As the finding of the data indicated, female with visual impairment face painful exclusion and community members consider female with visual impairment as dependent on others in every aspect of life and they consider them as weak. Generally, female with visual impairment encounter major challenges such as, negative attitude of the society, over protectiveness by parents, low economic income, inaccessible physical environment, and etc. as the result, they have low social skill.

On the other hand, there are good opportunities that encourage female with visual impairment to do active social participation in the community. As the participants explained, some members of the community encourage female with visual impairment when female with visual impairments create self-supporting jobs. For instance, female with visual impairments make handcrafts and sell to gain income and they support their life. Not only this, some members of the community attempts to participate female with visual impairments in social activities by covering their economical problem. Based on the respondent's idea, the available opportunities were not adequate to make female with visual impairments active participant in the society.

Chapter Six

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

6.1. Conclusion

The basic attention of this research is to investigate the challenges and opportunities which female with visual impairment have to social participation in case of ENAB. Accordingly, the following conclusions have been drawn from this study.

Due to the negative attitude of the society, female with visual impairment were prejudiced, biased, isolated, and discriminated from social participation. They segregated from having social life by staying at their home. For this reason, they are psychologically affected. In addition, female with visual impairment feel discomfort when join with members of society in some social activities.

Families, friends, communities do not easily get touch with person with visual impairment. Specially, families of person with visual impairment do not allow them to exercise social activities and make them to mix with their friends to learn and acquire skills. Thus, female with visual impairment have low social skill to social participation.

Female with visual impairment in particular and person with disability in general are not easily sociable with the large members of the society. Especially, female with visual impairment do not simply communicate with the society. Since, eye contact is very important to share facial message which has big role to make friends. Due to this reason, they don't get access to the social experience which helps to social participation.

The physical environment is not accessible for person with visual impairment. So when female with visual impairment want to go to social events they need guiding person. This make female with visual impairment dependent on others and decline their self-confidence.

However, female with visual impairment isolated and discriminated by members of the society, they used this as an opportunity to create their own self-help Idir which in turn helped them to create good friendly relationship with each other. This strong friendly relationship reduced the effect of psychological problems resulted by the negative social attitude.

Low economic income is an obstacle to have good social participation. When female with visual impairment have an income, they cover their social task by hiring another person to fulfill the gap created due to their impairment. But if they are economically weak, they cannot be able to pay for such matters.

6.2. Recommendations

Before terminating the study on the basis of conclusion drawn from the findings it would be worth important to recommend possible solutions.

1. By understanding the inaccessible physical environment which affects the mobility, social participation, and employment situation, of female with visual impairment, concerned stakeholders should design intervention strategies such as, leveling of the topography, covering ditches, providing smart white-cane, training the person with disability to move freely from place to place in his/her surrounding, orienting the person with disability about his/her surrounding using all possible senses, that is, listening, touching, smelling and even tasting, etc so that the female with visual impairment could have better psychosocial well-being, good social participation, and secure jobs to have good economic status. In addition, putting pressure on the government so as it gradually upgrade the accessibility of buildings and facilities for female with visual impairment so as to enable female with visual impairment to participate in the society.
2. As it is possible to understand from the findings of the data, physical environment get challenge for female with visual impairment to social participation. Female with visual impairment have numerous responsibilities as being women. These female's responsibility is to do household tasks like cooking, washing and rearing children. Moreover, they have another duty to undertake outside home activities like paying electricity, water and telephone bill; bringing their sick children to health center, attending medical pregnancy test, and participating in some social events. When they were doing these outside activities, they had faced a lot of challenges in terms of their impairment. They do not fully exercise their human rights endowed by domestic and international laws. Therefore, the government, non-governmental organizations,

social service providers, medical centers, families, and other stakeholders who concern about person with visual impairment must consider the above mentioned problems and make the working environment more convenient and friendly for persons with disability.

3. The participation of female with visual impairment in social activities has to get point of emphasis. We are in era where concept of inclusion is advocated. So, interest of female with visual impairment to have social participation has to be considered. Because the role of female in social activities is very important. So in order to get their social role, we have to empower female with visual impairment economically. They should have got different job opportunities and trainings in addition they equally get with person without disability.
4. Parents who have family member with disability should provide the opportunity to get counseling service about social skill of disabilities. Therefore families will let their family member to perform tasks within the home. And they also let to go outside environment and it also helps the family to change the long established negative attitude towards disability. Families should also avoid over-protectiveness and encouraging the person with disability to develop self-confidence and self-reliance.
5. As the findings of the study shown that negative cultural attitude hold back female with visual impairment from having good social participation, female with visual impairment, self-aid associations, civil society organizations, professionals, special need educators, and other stakeholders should use different awareness creation program can be provided at least in such social activities like *Equb, Idir, funeral, birth day ceremony, and wedding ceremony* etc to create social awareness about social participation of visual impairment so that the community could support and embrace persons with visual impairment. The second probable device so called, community sensitization in a radio program, to inform and educate both the community and female with visual impairment. As a result stigmatization and discrimination will be alleviated.

6. Disability Organizations, Women's Organizations and their partners should have continuously pressing for progress to be made in confronting discrimination and violence against women and girls with disabilities. They shouldn't always make awareness creation alone. They have to go further practically rather than wordings. They have to work hard to bring actual change in realization of social, economical, political and other social issues.

7. *Persons with* disability should have the *opportunity to* be actively involved in decision-making processes about policies and programme, *including those* directly concerning them. "Families, communities, local decision-makers, police, violence response actors, and members of the judiciary need to ensure that female with visual impairment can make their own decisions and have the choices and services they need to carry out supported decision-making." In order to ensure self-determination, female with visual impairment must be supported to make their own decisions over their lives, their bodies and how they choose to seek justice. If a woman with disabilities needs support in order to make a decision, services should be in place to accommodate supported decision-making in line with CRPD Article 12 (Equal recognition before the law).

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Annexes

Semi-Structured Interview Guide Line In English

Semi-Structured Interview Guide Participant Consent Form

My name is Banchigize Amogne. I am a post graduate student of special need education in College of Education and Behavioral Studies at Addis Ababa University. Currently, I am assessing the Challenges and opportunities of female with visual impairment to make social participation in Ethiopia National Association for the Blind for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Special Needs. For this purpose, I need to gather information from female with visual impairment who is totally blind, living independent life, age from 25/50.

I therefore, kindly request your willingness to respond some questions. The participation with this research is purely voluntary and you might not have any immediate benefit. However your response to each question is very essential for the study purpose. If you are willing, I will contact you at a convenient place and conduct the interview. The session of the interview will take a maximum of 1 hour. If it is appropriate, I will use the IC/recorder to record the conversation and will be deleted up on the completion of the study. In doing so, any of your personal profile and name will not be indicated rather it will remain confidential.

This research has been provided by Addis Ababa University, in accordance with its ethics review and approval procedures. Any person considering participation in this research, or agreeing to participate, may raise any questions or issues with the researcher at any time. In addition, any person not satisfied with the response of the researcher may raise ethics issues or concerns, and may make any complaints about this research by contacting the Addis Ababa University, College of Education and Behavioral Studies.

1 Personal Information

Age_____

Level of visual impairment_____

Living place_____

Educational background_____

Marital status_____

Questions for participants

1. Challenge focused questions

- 1.1. What challenges hinder female with visual impairment to social participation?
- 1.2. Do you think that, female with visual impairment have necessary skill and ability to social participation?
- 1.3. If your answer for question No. 1 is yes, why? If not why not?
- 1.4. Do you think that, the attitude of the society makes female with visual impairment to participate in social activities?
- 1.5. If your answer for question No. yes, why? If not why not?
- 1.6. Do you think that the society has backward attitude towards female with visual impairment?
- 1.7. If your answer is yes, why? If not why not?
- 1.8. Is physical environment is challenge to social participation for female with visual impairment?
- 1.9. What cultural challenges hold back female with visual impairment to social participation?
- 1.10. Do you think female with visual impairment have basic skills to social participation?
- 1.11. What social skills are required to social participation for female with visual impairment?
- 1.12. Does economic status has an impact on social participation for female with visual impairment?

1.13. What relationship exists between economic status and having good social participation for female with visual impairment?

1.14. How female with visual impairment interact with the society to social participation?

2. Opportunity related questions

2.1. Despite all those challenges, what opportunities are exist for female with visual impairment to social participation?

2.2. Can the opportunities listed in the above question improve the participation of female with visual impairment to social participation?

2.3. If your answer is yes, how? If no, why not?

2.4. What encouraging opportunities are coming soon for female with visual impairment to social participation?

2.5. Do you think that, female with visual impairment can change those opportunities into effective and meaningful participation to social activity?

2.6. In what way your living society motivates you to participate in social activities?

2.7. How your society creates good opportunities for you to involve in social activities?

2.8. How you collaborate with the society on creating good opportunities for female with visual impairment?

2.9. Focused group discussion guide.

Personal information

Age _____

Educational background _____

Living place _____

Marital status _____

- 1.1. What kinds of challenges do repeatedly face you concerning to social participation?
- 1.2. What is the feedback of your community when you participate in societal activities?
- 1.3. What is your opinion about the occurrences of those challenges to participate in social activities?
- 1.4. What are good opportunities for you to participate in social activities? Can you explain in depth the available opportunities please?
- 1.5. Does visual impairment have direct negative impact on social participation of female with visual impairment?
- 1.6. Who supports you to participate in societal activities? Your family or your friends?

Semi-Structured Interview Guide Line in Amharic

የመጠይቅ መምሪያ

የመጠይቁ ስምምነት ቅጽ

እኔ ባንቺጊዜ አሞኝ በአዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርሲቲ የትምህርት እና የባህሪ ጥናት ትምህርት ክፍል ውስጥ 2ኛ ዲግሪዬን በመከታተል ላይ እገኛለሁ። ስለሆነም የመመረቂያ ጽሁፌን በመስራት ላይ ስላለሁ የ2ኛ ድግሪ መመረቂያ ጥናታዊ ጽሁፌ የሚዳስሰው ሴት አይነስውራን ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ የሚገጥማቸው ችግሮች እና መልካም እድሎች በኢትዮጵያ አይነስውራን ብሄራዊ ማህበር የሚል ነው። ለዚህ ጥናታዊ ጽሁፍ አላማ የሚሆን የመረጃ ግብአት ለመሰብሰብ እንደ መረጃ ምንጭ የምጠቀመው ሙሉ በሙሉ ማየት የማይችሉ፣ እራሳቸውን ችለው የራሳቸውን ሕይወት በሚመሩና ከ25 እስከ 50 እድሜ ክልል ውስጥ ባሉ ሴት አይነስውራን ዙሪያ ነው። ስለሆነም ለዚህ ጥናታዊ ጽሁፍ የሚሆን የመረጃ ግብአት ስለሚትሰጡኝ በቅድሚያ ክልብ የመነጨ ምስጋናዬን ማቅረብ እፈልጋለሁ። ለጥናቱ የሚሆን ግብአት የሚትሰጡት በፍጹም ፍቃደኝነት ላይ የተመሠረተ እና ምንም አይነት ጊዚያዊ ጥቅም የማታገኙ ሲሆን ተሳትፏችሁ ለጥናቱ መሳካት እጅግ አስፈላጊ ስለሆነ ለሚቀርቡላችሁ ጥያቄዎች በአግባቡ እና በትክክል ያመናችሁበትን ምላሽ እንድትሰጡኝ በትህትና እጠይቃለሁ። አስፈላጊ ሆኖ ከተገኘ ለእናንተ የሚመች ቦታ ድረስ መጥቼ መጠይቁን ማድረግ እንደምችል መግለጽ እወዳለሁ። መጠይቁ ቢበዛ አንድ ሰዓት የሚወስድ ሲሆን የመጠይቁን መረጃ ግብአት ለመውሰድ መቅረጸ ድምጽ እንደምጠቀምና ከጥናቱ በኋላ ወዲያውኑ የማጠፋ እና የእናንተን ማንነትና ግላዊ ሃሳብ በምስጢር የሚጠበቅ ሙኖኑን መግለጽ እወዳለሁ። ይህ ጥናት በአዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርሲቲ ትምህርትና የባህሪ ጥናት የትምህርት ክፍል የጸደቀና የዩንቨርሲቲውን ሥነሥርዓት፣ ግብረገብና ስነምግባር የተከተለ ሲሆን የዚህ ጥናት ተሳታፊ በየተኛውም ጊዜ የመሰለውን ጥያቄ ወይም ጉዳይ የማንሳት እንዲሁም በጥናቱ ውጤት ላይ የተሰማውን ቅሬታ ለአዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርሲቲ የትምህርትና የባህሪ ጥናት ትምህርት ክፍል ማቅረብ እንደሚቻል መግለጽ እወዳለሁ።

ግላዊ ጥያቄዎች

- 1. እድሜ
- 2. የእይታ ደረጃ
- 3. የመኖሪያ አድራሻ
- 4. የትምህርት ደረጃ
- 5. የጋብቻ ሁኔታ

ለተሳታፊዎች የቀረቡ ጥያቄዎች

- 1.1. ሴት አይነስውራን ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ እንዳያደርጉ የሚያግዱ ችግሮች ምንድናቸው?
- 1.2. ሴት አይነስውራን የማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ ችሎታ አላቸው ብላችሁ ታስባላችሁ?
- 1.3. ለጥያቄ ቁጥር.1.2. መልሳችሁ አውን ከሆነ ለምን? አይደለም ከሆነ ለምን?
- 1.4. የማህበረሰቡ አመለካከት ሴት አይነስውራን ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ እንዳያደርጉ ይጋብዛል ብላችሁ ታስባላችሁ?
- 1.5. ለጥያቄ ቁጥር.1.4 መልሳችሁ አውን ከሆነ ለምን? አይደለም ከሆነ ለምን?
- 1.6. ማህበረሰቡ በሴት አይነስውራን ዙሪያ ኋላቀር አመለካከት አለው ብላችሁ ታስባላችሁ?
- 1.7. ለጥያቄ ቁጥር.1.6 መልሳችሁ አውን ከሆነ ለምን? አይደለም ከሆነ ለምን?
- 1.8. የመልክኣ ምድር አቀማመጥ ለሴት አይነስውራን ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ አስቸጋሪ ነው ብላችሁ ታስባላችሁ?
- 1.9. ምን አይነት ባህላዊ ችግሮች ሴት አይነስውራን ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ እንዳያደርጉ ያግዳሉ?
- 1.10. ሴት አይነስውራን ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ መሠረታዊ ክህሎት አላቸው ብላችሁ ታስባላችሁ?
- 1.11. ምን አይነት መሠረታዊ ክህሎት ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ ለሴት አይነስውራን ሊኖር ያስፈልጋል?
- 1.12. የኢኮኖሚ አቅም ማነስ ለሴት አይነስውራን ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ ተጽእኖ ካለው እንዴት ይገለጻል?
- 1.13. ለጥያቄ ቁጥር.1.2 መልሳችሁ አውን ከሆነ፤ የሴት አይነስውራን የኢኮኖሚ አቅምና ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ምን አይነት ግንኙነት አላቸው?
- 1.14. እናንተ የማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ ምን አይነት ማህበራዊ ግንኙነት ታደርጋላችሁ?

መልካም እድሎችን በተመለከተ የቀረቡ ጥያቄዎች

2.1 ከሚያጋጥሙ ችግሮች ባሻገር ለአይነስውራን ሴቶች ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ እንዲያደርጉ ምን አይነት መልካም እድሎች አሉ?

2.2. በጥያቄ ቁጥር 2.1 ላይ የዘረዘራችኋቸው መልካም እድሎች የሴት አይነስውራንን ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ያሻሽላል ብላችሁ ታስባላችሁ?

2.3 በጥያቄ ቁጥር 2.2 መልሳችሁ አውን ከሆነ ለምን? አይደለም ከሆነ ለምን?

2.4 ምን አይነት መልካም እድሎች የሴት አይነስውራን ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ በቅርብ ጊዜ ይመጣሉ ብላችሁ ታስባላችሁ?

2.5. እነዚህን መልካም እድሎች ሴት አይነስውራን ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ ውጤታማ በሆነ መንገድ እና ትርጉም ባለው መልኩ ይጠቀማሉ ብላችሁ ታስባላችሁ?

2.6 የምትኖሩበት ማህበረሰብ ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ እንድታደርጉ በምን አይነት መንገድ ያበረታታችኋል?

2.7 የምትኖሩበት ማህበረሰብ ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ እንድታደርጉ ምን አይነት መልካም እድሎችን ይፈጥሩላችኋል?

የቡድን ጥያቄ መምሪያ

- 4.1 ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ በተደጋጋሚ የሚገጥሟችሁ ችግሮች ምን ምን ናቸው?
- 4.2 ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ስታደርጉ ማህበረሰቡ የሚሰጣችሁ ምላሽ ምን ይመስላል?
- 4.3 እነዚህ ችግሮች ለመከሰታቸው ምክንያቱ ምን ይሆናል ብላችሁ ታስባላችሁ?
- 4.4 የማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ ምን አይነት መልካም እድሎች አሉ? እነዚህን መልካም እድሎች በስፋት ልትዘረዝሩልኝ ትችላላችሁ?
- 4.5 አይነስውርነት ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ ቀጥተኛ የሆነ አሉታዊ ተጽእኖ በሴት አይነስውራን ላይ አለው?
- 4.6 ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ ለማድረግ የሚያግዛችሁ ማን ነው?
- 4.7 በቀጣይነት ሴት አይነስውራን ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ እንዲያደርጉና እንዲሁም ችግሮችን ለመቀነስ ወይም ሙሉ በሙሉ ለማስወገድ ምን ቢደረግ ጥሩ ነው ትችላላችሁ?