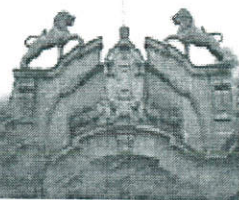


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The Inclusion of Visually Impaired and Physically Impaired Students in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions: the Case of Addis Ababa University

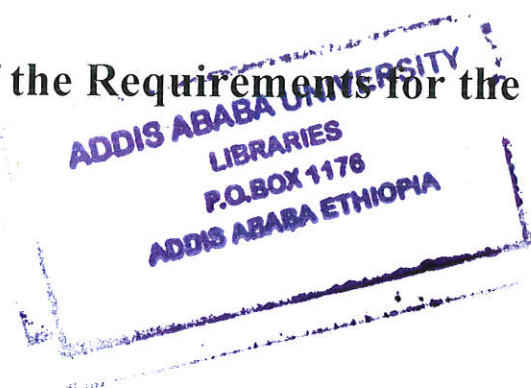
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A Thesis Submitted to

The Institute of Educational Research and Development

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Education**



Addis Ababa University

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Addis Ababa University


School of Graduate Studies

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Tewodros Habte entitled: *The Inclusion of Visually Impaired and Physically Impaired Students in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions: the Case of Addis Ababa University* and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Degree of Master of Education (Educational Research and Development) complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to the originality and quality.

Signed by the Examining Committee:

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Abstract

Inclusion in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions: the Case of Addis Ababa University

Tewodros Habte

Addis Ababa University, 2012

This study uncovered the policy environment and the practice of inclusion in Ethiopian public higher education institutions in particular focuses to Addis Ababa University. This research followed a sequential exploratory mixed design that is predominantly governed by qualitative enquiry and supported by the quantitative approach. Accordingly, this study used in-depth and semi-structured interviews, questionnaire, focus group discussion, document analysis and observation. In this study, 17 key informants (8 cases, 3 higher officials from Ministry of Education, 4 university officials and 2 chair students from visually impaired and physically impaired students' associations of the university), 59 physically impaired and visually impaired students, 63 non-disabled students and 39 teachers. The study used different instruments to support and triangulate the qualitative data which was obtained from the key informants. Similar major findings were obtained almost from all the participants. Both the qualitative data and the quantitative data unmasked the problem. Inadequate strategic and practical concerns, absence of university legislation on disability issues, serious inaccessibility problems and attitude based exclusions were the major findings of the study. Physical inaccessibility related to buildings and their respective facilities and academic inadaptability were found to be the recurring themes. Lack of awareness, negative attitude, lack of policy at the university level and insufficient commitment were some of the causes to the problem. A workable national policy environment was also discovered in the study. The need for considerable concern toward the strongest sense of inclusion both at national and institutional levels, national strategic programs, higher education quality assurance standards and a university legislation emanated from the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 were some of the major recommendations.

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List of Acronyms

AACU:	Association for American Colleges and Universities
AAU:	Addis Ababa University
ESDP:	Education Sector Development Program
ETP:	Education and Training Policy
EFA:	Education for All
FDRE:	Federal Democratic Republic Ethiopia
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
GC:	Graduating Class
GTP:	Growth and Transformation Plan
HEI:	Higher Education Institutions
HERQAA:	Higher Education Relevance and Quality Assurance Agency
HESC:	Higher Education Strategic Center
ILS:	Institute of Language Studies
MoE:	Ministry of Education
NDSs:	Non Disabled students
NBR:	New Building Rooms
NCR:	New Class Rooms
NGOs:	Non Government Organizations
OCR:	Old Class Rooms
PI:	Physically Impaired
PSIR:	Political Science and International Relations
PWDs:	Persons with Disabilities
SNE:	Special Needs Education

SWDs: Students with Disabilities

TVET: Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNESCO: United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organization

UPE: Universal Primary Education

UPEC: Universal Primary Education Completion

VI: Visually Impaired

Chapter One: The Problem and its Approach

This chapter deals with the problem and its approach. It includes background, statement of the problem, objective, significance, delimitation and limitation of the study and definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

"I was attending the lecture delivered by one of the department teachers. I found it was difficult to take the lecture note with the same pace like other fellow students. Lastly, I decided to record the lecture with a tape recorder and I got started recording. However, the teacher was embarrassingly shouted at me and snatched the tape recorder and deleted the record. I will not forget the episode as it broke my heart."

This is a voice transcribed from a visually impaired (VI) 4th Year student in Summer History Education Program of the Addis Ababa University (AAU). It is part of a shocking account extracted from a group project work entitled *"An Assessment on the Implementation of Inclusive Teaching Approach: the case of AAU 4th Year Summer History Education Students."* This project was undertaken by the students of the Educational Research Institute. It asserted the severity of the exclusion of three VI students in the above mentioned class.

Needless to say everyone has the right to education as it is firmly underpinned by universal conventions and national legal frameworks. Many people, however, think that this is exclusive to higher education. Distinctively, there are prominent conventions towards the right to higher education. The 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) Art 26 (1) particularly confirms the right to higher education: higher education should be equally accessible on the basis of merit. The 1965 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) Art 13 (2) has also strengthened this idea: higher education shall also be made equally accessible to all in particular by the progressive introduction of free education (Donders, 2007).

Countries, those of the signatories of the UDHR, have vivid legislations on the right to education. This has been manifested in their constitutions and policies. Nevertheless, there is a persistent gap between the legislations and practices. Many disadvantaged people are still marginalized from the access to higher education. In particular, People with Disabilities (PWDs)

are vulnerable to the exclusion despite an ever evolving concern toward inclusion (Donders, 2007).

Ethiopia is one of the signatories of the UDHR and other universal conventions. The country has also equivalent national legal framework that ensures the right to education. The 1995 Federal democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) Constitution recognizes a right to education and underlines the need for supportive actions to the marginalized groups. Art. 41 (3) underpins that every Ethiopian has the right to equal access to publicly funded social services. The same article (5) pays attention to the educational provision of people with physical and mental disabilities.

Admittedly, the Ethiopian constitutional framework towards the right to education has been reflected at all levels of education in the country. This is predominantly manifested with the ever evolving access to primary education. However, from 10 % of the PWDs in the total population of the country, less than 3% of them have access to primary education (MoE, 2010).

We are now in 21st century that is relatively intolerant to exclusions from the access and quality of education. Marginalization from all levels of education has been condemned in one or other way. Consequently, incredible numbers of marginalized groups have gained access to educational opportunities at all levels. But many of these students who gained access are poorly included in educational settings (UNESCO, 2009). Particularly, little or no attention is paid to inclusion in higher education (Andrea & Gosling, 2005).

To this effect, the support given at the transition to preparatory schools and to higher education placement can be taken as a major step towards inclusion. The concern shown on the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) III & IV has come up with increased entrants of SWDs to higher education despite limited concern to inclusion (MoE, 2010). However, those gained access to higher education are not well included in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (Eshetu, 2008). The case story of the VI 4th Year student could also be a vivid example of the exclusion.

Inclusion in Ethiopian education has a multi-level meaning as the country is known for ethnic, linguistic, cultural and other diversities. The estimate prevalence of 10 % of PWDs (MoE, 2010) from the total population also strengthens the prominence of duly consideration to inclusion including higher education.

The universal prevalence of inconsiderable attention toward inclusion in higher education (Andrea, 2005), theoretical assumptions that could foster the need for inclusion in education (Nind & et.al, 2005), the national policy environment on higher education (MOE, 1994; FDRE, 1995; FDRE, 2009) and the practice, and the current Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) issues (MoFED, 2010) could be major attributions to deal with the problem of inclusion in Ethiopian higher education.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Educational exclusion (from and within education) became a growing phenomena both in developed and developing countries. Poverty and marginalization are the major causes of this exclusion in most parts of the world (UNESCO, 2009). Being one of African Sub-Saharan developing countries, this is a manifested truth for Ethiopia at which huge number of PWDs are marginalized from educational opportunities and learning (MoE, 2010).

The issues and values of inclusion in education have been elaborated and developed over the last two decades. It is within this period of time that considerable attention is given and a relative change is observed (Norwich, 2008). However, inclusion in education continued to be a challenge. Despite a relative progress in general education, yet inclusion remained attractive in principle and unpractical in reality (UNESCO, 2009). This situation becomes worse in higher education and findings show that inclusion is principally overlooked in higher education institutions (Andrea & Gosling, 2005). As noted earlier, this global phenomenon is plainly reflected in Ethiopia. Right after the introduction of the 1994 Education and Training Policy (ETP), insignificant number of SWDs, who with great individual efforts passed successfully through all the barriers in general education, had been joining higher education institutions. However, these students had been encountered more serious barriers in higher education. They had been excluded from the actual learning as there was no supportive system (MoE, 2006). Gradually, a relative progress has been made to raise the number of university entrants. Yet, inclusion in Ethiopian higher education is not prioritized in its strongest sense. Both ESDP III & IV solely envisaged raising the access (MoE, 2010).

Inclusion in education is challenging and evolutionary process as it calls for an equitable learning environment to diversified learners (UNESCO, 2009). Conversely, theoretical assumptions testify that there is a window to deploy inclusion at all levels of education (Nind & et.al, 2005). The social theory of inclusion, for example, argues that inclusion can happen within diversified learning community. For this theory, diversity and disability are not problems for inclusion (Nind & et.al, 2005). This theory strongly rejects the literal concept of disability for it believes that everyone has his/her own impairment or disability in the context of learning or socialization (Adams, 2006). If this is the case, the problem can be seen within the success or failure of countries at national and institutional levels in setting their policy frameworks and undertaking actions.

Access to higher education for SWDs is insignificantly growing in both the developed and developing countries. The situation becomes double jeopardy while those gained the access are not included in the proper learning process (Andrea & Gosling, 2005). For example, SWDs in United States of America are graduating high school at a steadily increasing rate and the percentage of students choosing to enter post secondary education has significantly increased in recent decades –from 3 % in 1978 to 19 % in 1996. However, these SWDs continue to lag far behind their non disabled classmates in academic attainment and persistence. They are far less likely to complete a degree or certificate program; for those who do the process generally takes twice as long as it does for Non-disabled Students (NDSs) (Adams, 2006).

The four key elements of educational right (availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability) of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) that are vital for inclusion are less practical in higher education institutions. The necessary facilities and resources are not adequately available. Higher education is not accessible for all SWDs. The curriculum, the teaching methods and assessment are not relevant and acceptable. The system in higher education also greatly lacks adaptability (Andrea, 2005; Adams, 2006; UNESCO, 2008). Regardless of the increased number of entrants to public higher education institutions, attention is not given to the learning of the SWDs (MoE 2006, MoE, 2010). Findings have shown that the human rights of the SWDs in Ethiopian public higher education institutions are challenged by exclusionary cultures Eshetu (2008). Henceforth,

inclusion in Ethiopian higher education with respect to the learning of the SWDs is a prominent issue to be dealt with. This study intends to unmask inclusion in Ethiopian public higher education institutions in particular focus to AAU and aims to assess the gaps between the policy environment and the practice. Accordingly, the study targets to answer the following basic research questions.

- 1) How are theoretical assumptions linked to the practice of inclusion in AAU?
- 2) Do the national and the institutional (AAU) policy environment and strategies encourage inclusion toward higher education?
- 3) Does the university community have adequate knowledge on disability and inclusion?
- 4) Does the university community have positive attitude toward the VI and PI students?
- 5) How are the physical, academic and social accessibilities situated to the SWDs?
 - 5.1 Are the facilities and the resources accessible to the SWDs?
 - 5.2 Does the university have adapted curriculum, teaching method and assessment procedures for SWDs?
 - 5.3 Is there positive relationship and communication between the SWDs and the university community?
- 6) What are the major challenges and opportunities towards inclusion at AAU in particular and in Ethiopian higher education in general?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study mainly intends to explore the policy environment and practices of inclusion in Ethiopian public higher education institutions in particular focus to AAU. The study has the following specific objectives.

- I. To articulate the links between theoretical assumptions and inclusion in higher education.

- II. To examine the policy environment and strategic concerns of inclusion in higher education at national and institutional levels.
- III. To highlight the knowledge and awareness of the university community on disability and inclusion.
- IV. To examine whether the university community has positive attitude toward the VI and PI students.
- V. To discover the challenges and opportunities of inclusion at AAU in particular and in Ethiopian higher education in general.
- VI. To assess the situation of the physical, academic and social accessibilities at AAU?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study might have multiple advantages both at institutional and national levels and hoped that it will be a ground breaking work for those who are interested to deal inclusive inclusion in the broadest sense. It may help higher education community to rethink inclusionary actions that could mitigate exclusionary cultures and practices. This study may remind the need for the recognition SWDs in Ethiopian higher education curricular and pedagogical reform.

At national level, this study may influence the preparation of an elaborated sector strategy towards inclusion in higher education. Hopefully, this study can contribute its kick off toward the preparation of higher education quality standards in terms of the learning of the SWDs. Above all, this study might have a significant prominence for policy makers, researchers and others who intend to deal with different dimensions of the problem.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

This study is delimited to the VI and PI students. The VI and the PI higher education population at AAU could represent the country wide population. Nevertheless, it would have been pretty good had one or two of the public institutions been included in this research. Due you to the time constraint, this study is delimited to AAU: This study is also delimited to AAU undergraduate students. Inclusion is a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all children,

youth and adults through increased participation and reduced exclusion *within* and *from* education (UNESCO, 2009). However, this study focuses on inclusion *within* education.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

This study is limited to include concerned NGOs working on disability issues.

1.7 Definitions of Terms

1.7.1 Conceptual Definitions

Inclusive Education: a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all children, youth and adults through increased participation and reduced exclusion within and from education.

Persons with Disabilities: people those who have long term physical, mental or intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Physical Impairment: a dysfunction of the musculoskeletal and/or neurological body systems, which affects the functional ability of a student to move or coordinate movement.

Visual Impairment: refers to people with irretrievable sight loss and this simple definition covers a wide spectrum of different impairments. It does not include those whose sight problems can be corrected by spectacles or contact lenses, though it does include those whose sight might be improved by medical intervention.

Within inclusion: aspect of inclusion after the access is gained; the learning of students (particularly those marginalized) in an education system without exclusion being as a full member of the learning community.

1.7.2 Operational Definition

Attitude: the mind set, the feeling and the willingness of the university community to understand, to support and to communicate the SWDs.

Inclusion: Inclusion in terms of the SWDs or disability inclusion.

Students with disabilities: physically challenged university students particularly the VI and the PI students of the AAU.

The university community: all the members of AAU including students, academic and administrative staffs.

Within inclusion: the learning of the SWDs in public higher education institutions.

Chapter two: Review of Literature

In this chapter, related literatures were intensively discussed. All the issues discussed are directly attributed to the problem, research questions, findings and recommendations. Published local and global sources, few unpublished MA thesis papers and very few internet sources were used.

1. Inclusive Education

1.1 Conceptual Definitions

Defining inclusive education is one of the debatable issues of inclusion in the field. Hick & et.al (2009) affirms that inclusion has remained a complex and controversial issue with continuing uncertainty about its definition. The definition of inclusive education became a contested ground; the term can mean different things to people who have varied investments in how it is constructed, enacted, and hence researched (Sheehy & et.al, 2005). In consistency with the above writers. UNESCO (2009) underpinned that the term inclusion has different interpretations in various countries.

Inclusion in education has been defined in many ways however there is no universal consensus. Many writers, UN agencies, government and non government organizations commonly revolve around combating exclusion from and within education while they define inclusion.

As to Mitchell (2007), inclusive education is considered to be the most effective tool to combat discriminating attitudes, to create welcoming communities, to build an inclusive society and to achieve EFA Goals. Tefera (2006) on his part defines inclusive education as a broad concept which intended to make effective the right to education, equal opportunity and participation. Inclusion is viewed as a guiding principle for educational policies and programs so as to combat the exclusion of certain groups of students in an education system (UNESCO, 2009).

Contrary to the above definitions, Nind & et.al (2005) critically argues that the term 'inclusive education' is incapable of holding the intended conceptual meaning. For him, the term 'inclusion' refers to the physical situations to introduce a part which is outside into the whole, or is merely quantitative to introduce something smaller into something bigger; there is also a

connotation of a dominant and a subordinate group. He rather asserted the suitability of the new term or model ('interactive education') to conceptualize inclusivity in education.

Being the controversial aspects of inclusion are equally important, Nind's argument on the term 'inclusion' seems to be a continuum between the literal and the implied meaning of the word. Mitchell (2008:27) clearly defines inclusion against Nind's conception:

Inclusive education means educating learners with special educational needs. It means much more than mere placement. Rather, it means putting in place a whole suite of provisions, including adapted curriculum, adapted teaching methods, modified assessment techniques and accessibility arrangements, all of which require support for the educator at the class room level. In short, inclusive education is a multi-component strategy or, perhaps, mega-strategy.

Debates about the definition of inclusive education are important. There are many different understandings and interpretations which can affect whether or not outcomes are successful and sustainable (Howes, 2008). Lewis (2008) underscores the prominence of clear understanding of inclusion in education for at least three reasons. First, inclusive education will fail or be unsustainable when a limited definition is available as this in turn brings limited underlying principles and values that could produce very different outcomes. Second, as practice expands in more contexts and cultures, definitions of inclusive education keep evolving, and reflection on this practice deepens. Third, many people assume that inclusive education is just another version of special education, or is related only to learners with disabilities.

UNESCO (2009) relatively tries to give clear definition on inclusive education. It defines inclusion as a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all children, youth and adults through increased participation and reduced exclusion within and from education. One can possibly infer as many ideas as possible from this definition. To mention some, it is about all levels and types of education that could range from early child hood education to higher education and any mode of non-formal education (UNESCO, 2008). It is also beyond disability issues that accommodates any type of learner in any educational institution regardless of poverty,

gender, ethnic, language etc. backgrounds (MOE, 2006). Much importantly, it is against the existence of exclusion in two ways: exclusion from the access and exclusion after the access (Mitchell, 2007).

Lewis (2008:40) proposes an even broader definition of inclusive education that spans all life stages and goes beyond the school:

Inclusive education refers to a wide range of strategies, activities and processes that seek to make a reality of the universal right to quality, relevant and appropriate education. It acknowledges that learning begins at birth and continues throughout life, and includes learning in the home, the community, and in formal, informal and non-formal situations. It seeks to enable communities, systems and structures in all cultures and contexts to combat discrimination, celebrate diversity, promote participation and overcome barriers to learning and participation for all people. It is part of a wider strategy promoting inclusive development, with the goal of creating a world where there is peace, tolerance, and sustainable use of resources, social justice, and where the basic needs and rights of all are met.

1.2 Evolution of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education has been evolved in diverse origins and influences that include communities; activists and advocates; professional-based movements (quality education, school improvement, school effectiveness, and special needs); international, governmental and non-governmental agencies; and the realities of the world situation and practical experience (Lewis, 2008). While the values, principles and practices of human rights and democracy have been grown, inclusion in education has been evolved concomitantly in contemporary world (AACU, 2009). Remarkable international events and conventions have also influenced the evolution of inclusive education. Generally stating, it is possible to see the evolution within three phases on the basis of these international events and conventions.

i) Inclusion before Jomtien

Before the early 1990s, inclusive education was not practiced as it evolved latter and the term 'inclusion' was rarely used in education. It was referred 'integration' or 'mainstreaming' to indicate the placement of children with disabilities or special needs in mainstream schools (Hick & et.al, 2009).

'Integration' focuses on ensuring the right of children with disabilities to study in mainstream schools. Students enrolled in school have to adapt themselves to the existing school environment (curriculum, methods, values and rules), regardless of their backgrounds. However, the focus of inclusion is different from the focus of integration. Inclusion, contrary to integration intends to realize the right of all people to a high quality education, focusing on those who, due to differing reasons, are excluded or at risk of being marginalized. It focuses on the transformation of education systems and schools so that they can cater for the diversity of students' learning needs resulting from their social and cultural background and their individual characteristics (UNESCO, 2008).

ii) Inclusion from Jomtien to Dakar

The World Declaration on Education for All, adopted in Jomtien, Thailand (1990), that sets out an overall vision to universalize access to education for all children, youth and adult and to promote equity, was a remarkable event in evolution of inclusion in education (UNESO, 2009). After the ground breaking Jomtien Conference, the World Conference on Special Needs Education (access and quality) held in Salamanca, Spain (1994) endorsed the idea of inclusive education and committed to almost all the countries in the world to achieve the goal of *Education for All* (Hick & et.al, 2009). The Education Forum Meeting in Dakar Senegal (2000) that was held to review the progress made since 1990 declared that EFA must take account the needs of all poor and the disadvantaged in particular focus on girls and women.

iii) From Dakar till now

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (2007) are the major steps taken towards the evolution of inclusive education after the Dakar meeting (UNESCO, 2009).

Currently, inclusive education is increasingly promoted and supported by UN agencies and governments however confusion, misunderstandings and differences of opinion remain leaving many unanswered questions about theory and practice (Lewis, 2008). In this respect, the 48th Session of International Conference on Education held 23-25 November 2008 in Geneva, Switzerland was a remarkable phenomenon that asserted inclusive quality education is fundamental to achieve human, social and economic development (UNESCO, 2008). The conference was envisaged with a theme "*Inclusive Education: the way of the future*". Most of the reports from 116 countries which were disclosed during the conference declared good practices and ascertained the significance of inclusion at all levels of education.

2. Inclusion in Higher Education

In many nations of our universe, much concern has been paid to the inclusion of general education in mainstream schools. This is because inclusion in general education is profoundly recognized as a cornerstone for both UPE and EFA goals (Mitchell, 2007). Inclusion in education is highly confined to general education throughout the world. Despite the presence of universal limelight toward inclusive education, it is less considered and overlooked in higher education.

Andrea & Gosling (2005) depicts different reasons how an equal concern for inclusion in higher education exists. For one reason, it is pretty important to note that higher education is not accessible to all high school students as it is merit based provision. The interest of high school students joining into higher education institution is another reason. All high school students may not be interested to join university. For a very reason, there is inconsiderable attention both at national and institutional levels in making higher education accessible or including those who gained access in the real learning process.

There is, however, a growing concern to raise access to higher education for the disadvantaged including the SWDs. The concern of inclusion in higher education shall move forward from its weakest sense (provision of access) to its strongest sense: belonging to and being recognized as full member of the learning community (Andrea & Gosling, 2005) as inclusive education identifies, reduces and removes learning barriers at all levels of education before and after the access (UNESCO, 2009). The World Declaration on Higher Education also underlines the need for real inclusion in higher education (UNESCO, 2009).

Inclusion in higher education needs a shift from assimilationist model, '*students must fit in to what we provide*', to one that incorporates greater to the needs of students. Institutions need to be responsive to more variability in educational background and qualifications. There is no doubt many students present challenges to the traditional ways in which higher education has operated. Yet the extent to which institutions have adapted to take account of the needs of such students varies considerably (Riddle et al. (2003); Andrea & Gosling (2005). To provide a framework for creating inclusive learning community in higher education: student engagement, flexibility of provision, quality of teaching and assessment, learning development, personal support, and equity in processes and relationships is profoundly important. It needs going beyond '*fair access*' to apply inclusivity. It is better to clearly identify a weak and strong sense of inclusivity. Minority groups have to be recognized in both '*social and cultural capital*' to be included in the curriculum (Andrea & Gosling, 2005).

Inconsiderable attention could be reflected in national policy environment, curriculum and institutional efforts. In support of this, Andrea & Gosling (2005) portrays that lack of attention by different responsible entities is one of the major reasons that hinder the development of inclusion in higher education. However, few nations including United States of America, Great Britain and Australia are moving forward for the betterment of inclusion in higher education (Adams, 2006).

3. Inclusive Education in Ethiopia

In spite of the fact that the idea of inclusive education is new for the country, it has been conceptualized as a means of achieving equitable education, social justice and inclusive society

there by inclusive universe (MoE, 2008). As cited in Tefera (2006), the 1994 Education and Training Policy (ETP) clearly underlined the principles of special needs education by which all disabled and gifted children learn in accordance with their full potentials and needs however there are problems in implementing the policy. In 2006, Special Needs Education (SNE) Program Strategy is launched by the Ministry of Education. This strategy was developed in an inclusive education system (MoE, 2006).

Within the framework of the 2006 SNE strategy, the MoE in collaboration with Regional Education Bureaus and other stake holders is attempting to maintain an inclusive education system in particular focus to general education. Regional Education Bureaus have assigned one Focal Person for Special Needs and Inclusive Education. They have been undertaking awareness raising and advocacy activities. Teacher education has been expanded at some higher education institutions and teachers training colleges. Core curricula have also been modified for children with disabilities and manuals are being prepared on disability specific curriculum. At the ministry level, an organized staff is established that comprises the Finish advisors and experts. It has to be known that these activities have been mainly undertaken at a general education level (MoE, 2010).

According to MoE (2010), the first two Education Sector Development (ESDPs) did not pay much attention to the education of children with disabilities. It is in the third and fourth ESDPs that attention is given to expand educational opportunities for children with special educational needs in order to achieve the EFA goals. Nevertheless, the result remains negligible as compared to the total population of school age children with disabilities. According to WHO estimate, from 10 % of peoples with disability in the total population of the country, less than 3% of them have access to primary education (MoE, 2010).

Limited access to education, limited awareness on inclusive education, lack of multisectoral approach and inadequate support system are main challenges of inclusion in education (MoE, 2010). The policy environment and legal frameworks in support of Ethiopian inclusive education can be seen in the 1994 ETP, the 1995 Constitution of the FDRE and its enactment proclamation no. 1, 1995, the 1996 developmental social welfare policy, the third and fourth ESDPs, the 2006

SNE strategy, the Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 and International Conventions ratified by the Ethiopian Government.

Inclusion in Ethiopian Higher Education

As noted earlier, the 2006 SNE Program Strategy emphasizes inclusive general education to meet the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Education for All (EFA) Goals. It is quite possible to say that inclusion in higher education has no adequate place in this strategy. However, some important points are indicated on this document. It is mentioned that one of the objectives of the strategy is to facilitate the participation of learners with special needs in higher education. It is also mentioned that an increased enrolment rate, awareness raising and capacity building activities and proper assistance are indicators of change towards inclusion in higher education institutions.

The 1994 ETP underlined the need for equitable education. It also pays special attention for marginalized groups including the SWDs. By the same token, the 1995 Ethiopian constitution provides the right to education at all levels with a particular focus to PWDs. The support given to developing regions, women and physically challenged students into higher education placement can be taken as a major indication of the 1994 ETP and 1995 Ethiopian Constitution despite the absence of specific inclusion strategy to higher education. Consequently, the ESDP III & IV considered increased entrants of marginalized groups of students to higher education through affirmative action (MoE, 2010). As a result, the number of the SWDs who joined higher education has been raised. But those gained access to higher education are not well included.

Inclusion in Ethiopian higher education is not well considered despite the incredible growing number of girls in higher education institutions. The fourth ESDP in line with the five years GTP solely targets to raise enrolment of students with special educational needs from 389 in 2009/10 to 946 in 2014/15 (MoE, 20010).

From the broadest meaning of inclusion point of view, Ethiopian public universities are known for ethnic, linguistic and cultural inclusion. But this is not happened because of any higher education inclusion strategy. It is just because of the diversification of the peoples and the political system of the country (Amsalu (1999), EFDR (1995). Had it been supported by

inclusionary strategies and practices of higher education, it would have been a bench mark even for western countries who have been suffering for color and racial discrimination (AACU, 2009).

4. Theoretical Assumptions of Inclusive Education

It is believed that inclusion in education is a process and has its own challenges as it toils to address diversified learning needs (UNESCO, 2009). However, some theoretical assumptions insist that inclusion could likely be a reality notwithstanding the prevalence of the challenges (Nind & et.al, 2005). The social constructionist theory does not assume diversified learning community as a problem, for instance. This theory rejects distinctions among learning community members. It profoundly believes that teachers are the principal engineers to manage the educational context and environment and to provide appropriate educational practices for all learners in a diversified learning community Ibid (2005). Other theoretical frameworks like participatory and critical theories condemn any exclusionary cultures and practices that hinder access for educational opportunities and appropriate learning. These theoretical frameworks not only reject educational exclusion but also strive for emancipatory actions (Mertens, 2003).

According to Clough (2008), theories in inclusive education are emerged from 'special', 'integrative' and 'inclusive' perspectives respectively. As to him, there are five distinctive perspectives which are never wholly exclusive of each other, nor are they strictly chronologically sequential. These models interpret the development and interaction of ideologies leading to present thinking in inclusive education. They are discussed below in brief.

i) The Psycho Medical Legacy

This model emerged in 1950s which is understood as the system of broadly medicalized ideas which essentially saw the individual as being somehow 'in deficit' and in turn assumed a need for a special education for those individuals. This theory does not suit the principles of inclusion. Rather it focuses on special education. It is on this perspective that the medical model of disability established.

ii) The sociological response

This model broadly represents the critique of the psycho-medical legacy and draws attention to a social construction of special educational needs. Contrary to the psycho-medical legacy model, this model focuses on making the learning environment suitable for all learners and envisages inclusive education. The social constructionist theory is the basis of this model.

iii) Curricular approaches

Such approaches emphasize the role of the curriculum in narrowing learning difficulties. In other words, this approach focuses on addressing special learning needs of learners within an education system through the adapted curriculum that in turn permits adapted teaching methods and assessment. This model is very important for academic inclusion.

iv) School improvement strategies

This model emphasizes the importance of systemic organization in pursuit of truly comprehensive schooling. This approach targets to create a conducive learning environment by applying the common domains of school improvement strategies. School improvement strategies are very helpful to make facilities, resources and other learning materials accessible, and to maintain effective management in educational institutions.

v) Disability studies critique

These perspectives, often from '*outside*' education, elaborate an overtly political response to the exclusionary effects of the psycho-medical model. Basically, this perspective is a separate discipline from educational studies. But it has its own significance to inclusive education in terms of social inclusion.

5. Disability

5.1 Conceptual Definitions

As cited in (Bulto, 2009), Mont (2007) states that there is no single correct definition of disability as the nature and severity of disability varies greatly. Conceptual definitions of disability are very important; however, there is no universally agreed definition. Contemporary common

definitions of disability show how that particular generation perceives disability and responds to the matters related with disability.

The conceptual definitions of disability have their own impact on the life of PWDs. Eshetu (2008) depicts that ways of expressions, descriptions and definitions of disability have direct and sensitive influence on the life of PWDs. In a similar manner, Biher (2009) states that the conceptual framework applied by law and policy makers, as well as program designers influence the way they frame and address the needs of PWDs.

Adams (2006) asserts the impact of stereotypes used by the society to define and describe a PWD. As to him, these stereotypes can be expressed in different ways. At one end of the spectrum, a PWD is perceived as a 'threat' to the society; the individual is seen being 'deviant' or 'troublesome'. Often the disabled person is seen as an object of 'ridicule'. The disabled person is also seen as the 'eternal child'. Most commonly, the society understands a PWD as an object of 'pity' or 'sick'. Stereotyping is one of the major traditional, social and historical conditioning.

National legal definitions of disability, on the other hand, possibly could tell the concern and the scope of commitment of a particular country. For instance, the legal definition given by the Ethiopian Rehabilitation Agency for the 'Disabled' Order 70/1971 clearly shows the miss conception and limited commitment of the then government despite the strong side of the definition. The agency defines a person with disability as any person who, because of limitations of normal physical or mental health, is unable to earn his livelihood and does not have anyone to support him; and shall include any person who is unable to earn his livelihood because of young or old age.

The definition of disability has been evolved in the passage of time. The term has been redefined by the activists, concerned individuals and groups, and the UN. The redefinition made by the Britain's Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation in 1976 was a remarkable definition that embarked to the development of the social model of disability. The then activists

redefined disability as something imposed on top of their impairment by the way they are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from participation in the society (Sheehy & et.al, 2005).

The 2006 convention on the rights of people with disabilities defined the term a PWDs as people those who have long term physical, mental or intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Biher (2009) defines disability as any restriction or lack of ability (resulting from an impairment) to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for humans.

The term given for the PWDs also has variations in many countries. In most countries, the term 'persons with disabilities' is used while some countries use the term 'disabled people'. Lewis (2008) underlines the term '*persons with disabilities*' shall be used instead of using '*disabled people*' as it follows the language of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 also uses the term '*physically challenged students*' for the university SWDs.

5.2 Theoretical Models of Disability

Theorizing disability is much prominent to properly understand PWDs and respond to their needs. Policy frame working and awareness raising activities will be effective if they are emanated basically from the theoretical models of disability. Service providers within a particular education system have better to know theoretical models of disability so that they well understand disability and involve with proper service provision. This is profoundly important for higher education community.

Nind (2005) asserts the influence of theoretical models of disability on the practice of teaching learning process. He stressed that understanding theoretical models significantly helps educators, particularly teachers, to identify appropriate models, to deploy inclusion and to discriminate exclusionary approaches. Emphasizing the second model, he puts the first two models which are

discussed below. But before that, it is pretty important to note that there is conceptual similarity between the theoretical models of inclusion and disability.

i) Personal tragedy model

Personal tragedy model is the other name for charity model of disability. This model posits disability as a problem or deficit located within the individual that requires 'fixing'. It focuses on remediating the individual than focusing on the remediating the system. This model also excludes students both from academic and social inclusions. As many literatures depicted, it seems many of the global society and educational institutions are guided by this model.

Personal tragedy model views disability as a tragic or miserable existence and the only solution is to raise money or resources with the aim of somehow reducing the "*suffering*" of SWDs. The SWDs are expected to passively and gratefully receive help and charity providers decide what SWDs need. This model focuses solely on "*effects of impairment*" (the University of Waikato, 2004).

ii) The social constructionist model

Unlike the personal tragedy model, the social constructionist model focuses on the system than focusing on the remediating the individual. For this model, disability is so much the result of impairment. It beliefs rather, disability is a product of social factors that create barriers and limited opportunities for equal participation. By the same token, (Lewis, 2008) defined that the social model is about changing the system to fit the student, not the student to fit the system. It locates the problem of exclusion firmly within the system, not within the persons or their characteristics.

The social model of disability represents disability in terms of social barrier or social oppression. The society is disabling the PWDs not the particular impairment or condition that a person may have. This model is profoundly suitable for inclusion as it rejects exclusionary cultures in the teaching and learning process (Adams, 2006).

The social model is contrasted with the medical and charity models of disability. Teachers play a fundamental role in this model in managing the context and environment to provide appropriate educational experiences for all students including those with identified disabilities (Lewis, 2008).

iii) Twin –track model

Lewis (2008) criticizes the social theoretical model of disability because it implies that if the system were changed, then inclusion would automatically happen. He argued that there must be specific support or resources rendered by other stakeholders in order to make a particular student attend school (e.g. therapies or assistive devices, sufficient income, positive attitudes) yet even with a system changed. This in turn requires the involvement of other sectors (such as health and social welfare) and communities and families, not just the education system reform. He calls such an approach twin –track model.

iv) The Rights-Based Model

Lewis (2008) also underpins the importance of the rights-based model of disability. With regard to educational programming, this approach is gaining momentum as an overarching framework that can promote quality, inclusive education for all. A rights-based approach clarifies the role of the child or learner as a rights holder with entitlements, and the role of the government and its institutions as duty bearers. This gives a strong, legally binding framework for the development of policy and practice.

The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) defines state obligations linked to the right to education through identifying four key dimensions—**availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability**. All the four dimensions of the right to education are equally important for the creation of an inclusive education system. Each dimension has varying numbers of obligations of the state in order to fulfill, protect and promote the right to quality education for all. Education must be available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable for all in order to be truly inclusive (UNESCO, 2009).

In Ethiopian context, as noted earlier, this model can be seen in the rights of students with disabilities in the 1994 Ethiopian ETP, the 1997 FDRE Constitution, the Higher Education

Proclamation 650/2009 and University Legislations, and International Conventions ratified by the country; and the practice of this legal environment.

Many writers recently discussed the taxonomy of models of disability in a similar manner and/or with some modifications and little differences. The WHO (2002) declared the latest international model called **the biopsychosocial model** as a blend of the medical and the social models. As to this model, both the medical and social models are partially valid but not adequate; so a synthesis of both models is the most useful approach. This model is an integration of the medical and social models and provides a coherent view of different perspectives of health: biological, individual and social.

5.3 Types of Disability

Learners with disabilities are all different – disability is a very broad term. Even among people with the same sort of impairment, for example, people with visual impairments, the implications for life and learning can be very different. Some people may move around independently, others may need guides; some read braille, others use tapes; some have low vision and read large print, some benefit from good lighting and proximity to the teacher – all are different. This leads to the situation those learners with disabilities that are marginalized and excluded even within the disability context (Lewis, 2008). As this research focuses only on visual and physical impairment, a brief definition is given accordingly.

5.3.1 Visual Impairment

The term '*visual impairment*' refers to people with irretrievable sight loss and this simple definition covers a wide spectrum of different impairments. It does not include those whose sight problems can be corrected by spectacles or contact lenses, though it does include those whose sight might be improved by medical intervention (the Open University, 2006).

Visual impairments encompass people who have never had any visual function, those who had normal vision for some years before becoming gradually or suddenly partially or totally blind, those with [disabilities] in addition to the visual loss, those with selective impairments of parts of

the visual field, and those with a general degradation of acuity across the visual field (University of Virginia, 1998).

5.3.2 Physical Impairment

The Department of Education and Training (DET) of the State of Queensland (2006) defines physical impairment as a dysfunction of the musculoskeletal and/or neurological body systems, which affects the functional ability of a student to move or coordinate movement.

According to this department, physical impairment is recognised as:

- musculoskeletal conditions - involving the joints, limbs and associated muscles and/or
- neurological conditions - involving the central nervous system i.e. brain, spinal cord or peripheral nerves which affect the ability to move or to coordinate the control movement.

5.4 Disability and Inclusion

From the definition of inclusive education point of view, inclusion is about the issue of protecting students from and within educational exclusion whatever the students have any religious, ethnic, language, sex, disability, social and economic background. This is the broadest aspect of inclusion in education.

Inclusive education has historically dealt primarily with learners with disabilities. Inclusion is highly confined with disability. As a result, finding examples of inclusive education beyond disability has remained a challenge. Nevertheless, the need to focus on learners with disability continues to be crucially important, as they remain extremely vulnerable to exclusion, (Lewis, 2008). Thus, the relationship between the SWDs and inclusion continues predominantly than the relationship between other marginalized groups of students and inclusion.

5.5 Disability Inclusion across Levels of Education

There is highest positive correlation in the extent of disability inclusion along with all levels of education. The more insignificant access in early child hood and primary education, the same

will be in secondary, TVET and higher education. This is what obviously happened in Ethiopian current education (MOE 2006; 2010).

Ensuring disability inclusion at early child hood education is the best way for sustainable inclusion from the start (UNESCO, 2009). This will make inclusion easy across the rest levels of education from the access point of view. As a result, significant number of students with disability will enter general, technical and vocational and higher education institutions. Nevertheless, this does not guarantee inclusion within education. Providing access to higher education will not be enough as those ensured the access are not well included in the learning environment, for example (Andrea & Gosling, 2005). Inclusion needs both an improved access and well established system across the levels of education.

Roehrer (2004) states five major areas of transition that need to be addressed in the public education system so as to make inclusion sustainable across levels of education:

- children with disabilities from preschool to elementary school
- students with disabilities from elementary to junior/secondary school
- students with disabilities from junior to secondary school
- individuals with disabilities from the public school system to postsecondary education.

The learning environment in high school is directly and strongly related to students with disabilities in terms of their placement to higher education. The number of these disadvantaged entrants in higher education institutions will be very much limited unless there is a smooth transition through affirmative action. Supporting students with disabilities on their placement is prominent for inclusion. All education sectors must take responsibility for helping to improve access for students with disabilities to higher education Adams (2006).

There must be enabling environment at the transition from high school to higher education. This helps to clarify what the higher education courses demand of students and what they can expect to be doing. The support will not be not just at enrollment but throughout their courses. A pre-entry advice should be available for all students, either before they arrive or during the induction/orientation period. In particular, much support is needed in the first year as they have the most difficulty (Andrea & et.al, 2005).

6. Education as a Human Right Issue

Realizing Inclusive Education through applying a rights-based approach to education is crucial instrument for inclusive education. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) identified four key elements of educational right (availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability) at which all are equally important for the creation of an inclusive education system at all levels (UNESCO, 2008).

All the four elements hold varying numbers of obligations of the state in order to fulfill protect and promote the right to quality education for all (UNESCO, 2008). These elements are presented below.

- (a) Availability—functioning educational institutions and programs have to be available in sufficient quantity within the jurisdiction of the State party. What they require to function depends upon numerous factors, including the developmental context within which they operate; for example, all institutions and programs are likely to require buildings or other protection from the elements, sanitation facilities for both sexes, safe drinking water, trained teachers receiving domestically competitive salaries, teaching materials, and so on; while some will also require facilities such as a library, computer facilities and information technology;*
- (b) Accessibility—educational institutions and programs have to be accessible to everyone, without discrimination, within the jurisdiction of the State party.*
- (c) Acceptability—the form and substance of education, including curricula and teaching methods, have to be acceptable (e.g. relevant, culturally appropriate and of good quality) to students and, in appropriate cases, parents; this is subject to the educational objectives required by article 13 (1) and such minimum educational standards as may be approved by the State (see art. 13 (3) and (4));*

(d) Adaptability—education has to be flexible so it can adapt to the needs of changing societies and communities and respond to the needs of students within their diverse social and cultural settings.

Applying a right-based approach to education in order to move forward inclusion will require comprehensive education system reform including modification of constitutional guarantees and policies, curricula, teacher training systems, materials, learning environments, methodologies, resource allocation, etc. Above all, it will require a change in attitudes of all people, throughout the system, to welcome diversity and difference and see these as opportunities rather than problems (UNESCO, 2009).

A rights-based approach focuses on giving a particular focus to the root causes of discrimination, inequality and exclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups. These groups vary contextually but can include women and girls, ethnic minorities, learners with disabilities, indigenous peoples and others. Removing the barriers for participation to and in learning for all learners is at the core of the concept of inclusive education. Applying a human rights-based approach becomes fundamental for the sustainable realization of an inclusive education system (UNESCO, 2009). Moreover, a rights-based approach of inclusive education is firmly established on the principles of egalitarianism that supports equality among all people (Sands, 2000).

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – UNCRC (1989) affirms that states should encourage secondary and vocational education, “offer financial assistance in case of need”, and make higher education “accessible to all on the basis of capacity” (Article 28). The convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities also clearly stipulates the education right within the social right context. Article 24:1 states parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, states parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels (Lewis, 2008).

7. Barriers of Inclusion in Education

UNESCO (2009) identified that lack of positive attitude; awareness, sufficient knowledge, inclusive curricula and pedagogy are major barriers of inclusion in education. Lack of knowledge about diversity, rigid and poor teaching method, inconvenient learning environment, lack of identification process and inadequate assessment procedures are the main barriers to Ethiopian inclusive education (MoE, 2010).

Understanding how to combat the barriers to inclusion in education is essentially important. In a move to combat all the barriers, policy and resources can be seen as the 'bones and the flesh' of inclusive education. Creating ownership and changing attitudes is also the life-blood of an inclusive education program (Lewis, 2008).

National policies on inclusion, local support systems, appropriate forms of curriculum and assessment are prominent to create the necessary context for the development of inclusion. Participatory methodology is also extremely useful in promoting sustainable inclusive education. Being the issues of facilities and resources are equally important, barriers of inclusion in education are mainly related to curricular issues (teaching method and assessment) on one hand, and knowledge, attitude and awareness on the other hand (UNESCO, 2009).

7.1 Curriculum and Pedagogy

The importance of pedagogy and curriculum is well articulated in an inclusive education system. Inclusive curriculum and pedagogy can extremely narrow the margin of exclusion in an educational institution (Bryant, 2008). National curriculum and institutional practices must be considered for inclusion. Failure in inclusion means tantamount to failure in the curriculum and the teaching method. If the curriculum and the pedagogy are situated for more diverse learners from their starting place, there will be a better inclusion at all levels of education (Nind & et.al, 2005).

There is no doubt on the significance of inclusive pedagogy and curriculum. But the quest is what an inclusive curriculum and pedagogy is. A curriculum that calls for interactive pedagogy

is the best one for inclusion. However, interactive curriculum and pedagogy remains impractical unless it deserves qualified and interested teachers (Nind & et.al, 2005).

Traditional pedagogical and curricular models are the most common challenges that hinder inclusion in higher education. These challenges have been prevailed even in developed countries. Higher education in the United States, for example, is facing a challenge by its traditional pedagogical and curricular models as student populations become increasingly diverse and these challenges called the country for a swift change (AA&CU, 2009). It would be easily understandable how much higher education in developing countries especially in sub-Saharan countries like Ethiopia is suffering with traditional pedagogical and curricular models if the barrier challenged developed countries.

Curriculum and pedagogy shall consider the principles of non discrimination, human rights, appreciation of diversity, adapted and relevant teaching methodology in order to ensure inclusivity (UNESCO, 2009). The Roeher Institute (2004) explains goals, materials, teaching methods and evaluations must be adapted as part of curriculum adaptations for inclusive education. National policies must address the status of teachers, their welfare and professional development. Teacher training in preparation for inclusion is a critical aspect of supporting the inclusive paradigm. Newly qualified teachers cannot be expected to embrace such a philosophy without at least a minimal understanding of diversity and most importantly a positive attitude toward and belief in inclusion. However, the severe teacher shortage and lack of trained teachers, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, and South and West Asia, has highly unfortunate consequences for the quality of learning (Rose 2010, the Roeher Institute 2004).

7.2 Assessment

Appropriate assessment is one of the major principles of teaching in higher education that every teacher shall utilize it (Ramsden, 2003). In practice, teachers those who follow traditional model of teaching used to deploy the same assessment procedures in higher education institutions however they teach diversified learners including SWDs. At the practical end of the teaching spectrum, academic teaching staff needs to consider how to develop and disseminate

assignments and examinations in order to implement inclusive assessment procedures (Adams, 2010).

Adams (2010) explores the efficacy of inclusive assessment with in higher education to develop assessment tool kit which focuses on the needs of disabled students. As to him, there are diverse and inspiring methods of appraising students in terms of their knowledge, skills and ability in developing and designing examinations. He also underpins the importance of inclusive assessment considering the applicability, possibility and equity issues.

Inclusion in higher education with respect to effective assessment will be practical if the following questions are properly answered (Adams, 2010).

- 1) How can we change assessment policies and current academic practice to remove discrimination and exclusion?
- 2) How can we assess ability and not the effects of disability?
- 3) How can we accommodate the learning styles of a range of learners at assessment?

Higher education institutions have a responsibility of developing adaptive assessment arrangements for the students with disabilities. The Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 declares that higher education institutions have to provide alternative ways of assessment for the students with disabilities to the level of their best.

7.3 Attitude, Knowledge and Awareness

Inclusion in education must not be taken the mere task of educational institutions. On the other hand, educational institutions should not see themselves as the only experts on inclusive education (UNESCO, 2009). The government and every member of the society has its part to make inclusive education a reality. Among other elements, positive or a changed attitude is the first and the most important element that could drive inclusion forward and this changed attitude depends upon ones attitude on disability. One who has positive attitude on disability will have the same attitude on inclusion in education and the vice versa.

Noticeably, there are wrong conceptions and uncertain judgments on peoples with disability in a given society. It is the society that disables PWDs not the impairment (Adams, 2006). This is also true in an education community. Negative attitudes of head-teachers, inspectors of education, teachers, and parents and other family members are major barriers to inclusion in general education (UNESCO, 2009). Similarly, teachers, administrators, other service providers do not have proper understanding and perception towards the SWDs in a university community (Adams, 2006).

It is believed that one of the causes for such prevalence is lack of appropriate knowledge and awareness on disability. Limited awareness on disability leads to negative attitude and resistance to change towards disability and this will be a problem for inclusion. Limited understandings of the concept of disability, negative attitude towards PWDs and hardened resistances to change are the major barriers in Ethiopian inclusive education (MoE, 2010).

Inclusion often requires a shift in people's attitudes and values. Such change takes time and involves significant reassessment of conceptions and role behavior. The lack of understanding, awareness and support in society about inclusive education needs to be addressed through awareness rising, advocacy and dialogue. This can be done by educators, governmental and non-governmental organizations, policy-makers, and educational institutions, social and other relevant actors (UNESCO, 2009).

Teachers' attitude is an important factor in determining the success of inclusion. A changed attitude is of crucial importance for teachers amongst the education community (winter & O'Raw, 2010). Their positive attitudes towards inclusion depend strongly on their experience with learners who are perceived as 'challenging'. Lewis (2008) identifies teacher education, the availability of support within the classroom; class size and overall workload are all factors which influence their attitudes. Introducing inclusion as a guiding principle has implications for teachers' practices and attitudes – be it towards girls, slow learners, children with special needs or those from diverse backgrounds (cognitive, ethnic and socio-economic). Thus, empowering all of these individuals, equipping them with new confidence and skills in the process of introducing

inclusion as a guiding principle, will have implications for teachers' attitudes and performances (UNESCO, 2009).

8. The need for Accessibility

Earlier it is discussed that one of the two aspects of inclusion in education is access that combats exclusion from education. But accessibility in this section represents the other dimension of inclusion that combats exclusion within education. In other words, inaccessibility is the feature of exclusion that marginalizes the disadvantaged students from actual learning.

Facilities, resources, curriculum, programs, information etc... have to be accessible for the students with disabilities in an educational system. The Ireland National Disability Authority (2008) discusses three major aspects of accessibility: physical accessibility, academic accessibility and social accessibility.

8.1 Physical Accessibility

This is mainly related to the accessibility of buildings and their respective facilities such as dormitories, class rooms, libraries, laboratories, cafeterias, and materials and other equipment. As cited in the (Roehrer Institute, 2004) the UK Department of Education and Employment (2001) discusses seven major dimensions related with physical accessibility. Three of these dimensions are taken and adapted for the purpose of this study.

8.1.1. Accessibility of buildings (with adequate Space)

All the buildings and the premises of the educational institution have to be accessible for the students with disabilities. Students with disabilities have to easily access the dormitories, toilets, washrooms, cafeterias, class rooms, libraries, laboratories, cafeterias etc ... in the existing buildings. The buildings must have supportive arrangements such as ramps and lifts where necessary.

There must be also enough space to accommodate all students in general areas of the educational institution and surrounding grounds (classrooms, hallways, exits, washrooms, etc.). This can include the provision of quiet space where students with sensory disabilities can exercise and study away from noisy and distracting areas (the Roeher Institute, 2004).

Inaccessible buildings and their premises severely affect the learning of the students with disabilities especially physically impaired students. These students face difficulties when they get around in bigger buildings and move from place to place for different social and academic activities. Supports such as ramps and handrails are not always available for those who found stairs difficult (The Ireland National Disability Authority, 2008).

They also face problems while they move around between different classrooms in order to meet the strict requirements of the timetable which requires rapid movement from one classroom to another. This is quite impossible as there is often limited time allowed between lessons to arrive in the next classroom on time. In particular, this is a big challenge for the students who use wheelchairs. This situation in turn has consequences for other aspects of their learning. Some of them have to rely on their friends to help them get from one place to another and this would have negative implication on the students. They most likely feel dependency and inability (the Ireland National Disability Authority, 2008).

8.1.2. Accessibility of Facilities and Services

Making the buildings and its premises will not be enough. The facilities in that particular building also have to be accessible for the students with disabilities. Making the buildings of toilets and washrooms accessible for the students with disabilities is fundamentally right. But, it will be meaningless if the toilets and washrooms are not accessible with adaptive facilities to the students with disabilities. For example, a student who uses wheelchair reached the toilet as the building has a ramp. What is the importance of this if the student is troubled to enter the toilet because of narrow door or to sit inside due to the absence of adapted seat?

Having buildings and their facilities accessible to the SWDs, it is pretty important to make the service accessible all the time. A library at which its building is easily accessible and in which the learning materials such as brail books, adapted computers, audio materials, etc... are available might be a good one for the students with disabilities. But it will not be fully functional unless it provides proper and adequate service by the librarians or the system established.

3. Accessibility of Equipments and Furniture

Both the VI and the PI students have their own equipments which are the most recognized need for them (the Roeher Institute, 2004). These equipments have to be accessible for them. Some of these equipments include brail, cassette, tape (voice) recorder, cane, crutch and wheelchair. Furniture such as simple and wide enough doors, adjustable tables and desks and aids to way finding has to be accessible for students with disabilities.

8.2 Academic accessibility

Academic accessibility ranges from the placement of students with disabilities in higher education institutions to the adaptability of the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.

Research findings ascertained that students with disabilities have problems to choose their areas of studies while they join higher education Adams (2006). The choice is made by their teachers not by themselves. The Ireland National Disability Authority (2008) explains the situation as taking away the rights of the students to choose their subjects. Deciding on behalf of the SWDs will have a devastating effect on their future learning. Some of them possibly can stop their learning since they are placed at certain area of study without their interest and background learning. Leaving this choice for the students themselves is essentially important to make fields of studies accessible so that the students enjoy the right of choosing their subjects.

Academic exclusion of the SWDs in higher education mainly and visibly goes to pedagogic and assessment issues and this problem basically emanates from the exclusionary curriculum. In most countries of higher education national curriculum frameworks the issue of academic inclusion has been overlooked particularly from the disability and generally from the diversified needs of learning perspectives Adams (2006).

Teachers as holders of the professional expertise at least have to know the how of addressing varieties of learning needs of their students. And at most, they have to be aware of disability and inclusive methodology through trainings. This in turn makes them teachers who have positive attitude towards disability. However, most teachers have negative attitude and low expectation towards the SWDs. This can happen in two ways. One might be the problem of stereotyping of the society as teachers are part of the society. The other reason can be lack of awareness on disability and inclusion in education (UNESCO, 2009; Adams, 2006). Horgan (2003) as cited in the Ireland National Disability Authority (2008) reported that low expectations by teachers are deemed to be the most serious challenge facing students with disabilities. This has a negative impact on the students' actual academic progress, for example, they may be placed in a stream which is lower than their actual ability.

Another potential danger of teachers' expectations that are too low is that it can result in a self-fulfilling prophecy, especially where teachers may not expect students with disabilities to perform well at exams. In some cases, students expressed anger and feelings of frustration at how some teachers assumed that because they had a disability, they were not able to study certain subjects and exams (Educable, 2000) as cited in the Ireland National Disability Authority (2008).

To the extent, apart from co curricular activities, students with disabilities have to be included in extracurricular activities, such as sports, trips, etc... If they are not included, they will feel exclusion and difference (the Ireland National Disability Authority, 2008).

8.3 Social accessibility

Academic learning is an essential part of young people's schooling as it enhances intellectual development. However, the social development of young people is also a vitally important aspect of young people's education. Noble (2003) as cited in the Ireland National Disability authority (2008) argues that based on her own educational experiences as a young person with a physical disability, inclusion means social acceptance rather than academic success. It is clear that young people want to be '*one of the crowd*' at school.

One of the biggest issues of the social accessibility related to the SWDs is their relationships with their teachers and, academic and administrative staff. Teachers must be accessible for the SWDs as they are accessible and supportive for the NDSs both in classrooms and outside classrooms. But the fact is teachers those who follow traditional methodology and attitudinally unchanged often have embarrassing communication with the SWDs. Most administrative staffs also treat the students in charity and medical models of disability (UNESCO, 2009; Adams, 2006).

Contrary to this, most NDSs are found to be positive about having SWDs in their classes. However, sometimes, the nature of the disability that a student has can be a factor in relation to bullying (the Ireland National Disability authority, 2008).

9. Quality and Inclusive Education

A high quality education is inclusive that welcomes the learning needs of all students regardless of sex, religion, ethnicity, disability etc....What is learned is equally important as access to education. Learning must benefit all learners without exclusion (Rose & Genovis, 2006).

As noted earlier, providing access to education merely does not mean inclusion. Inclusion from its realistic definition point of view means being included both in the provision of access and equal opportunities in a particular learning context. On the other hand, inclusion stands against both from and within educational exclusions. If an education system fails to address diverse needs of learners, the central issue of that particular education goes to the failure of the provision of quality education. Therefore, in conclusion, inclusion and quality are reciprocal (UNESCO, 2009).

Higher education quality agenda shall profoundly consider marginalized students in particular SWDs and this has to be one of the major responsibilities of higher education quality assurance agencies (Adams, 2006).

10. Higher Education Inclusion as a Development Issue

The issue of inclusion in higher education is not a matter of option for countries in general and for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in particular (Adams, 2006). It is a development issue attributed to diversified, egalitarian, trained and skilled human capital that could transform a country (AAUC, 2009).

Inclusion in any level of education is obviously coined with development issues. The idea by itself holds and/or attributes to fundamental pillars or aspects of comprehensive development such as equality and democracy. Inclusion has democratic and egalitarian values for a country (Norwich 2008, Mitcheli, 2008).

Linking inclusion to broader national goals contributes to the development and reform of education systems, to poverty alleviation and to the achievement of all MDG Goals (UNESCO, 2009). Inclusion for higher education is profoundly important to consolidate the issues of development and democracy. Human dignity, opportunity, justice, equality, fairness and freedom are fundamental entities of democratic principles that call for a set of obligations to address the need for diverse communities of higher education (AACU, 2009). Indeed, the pros and cons of inclusion at all levels of education could influence the status of comprehensive development of a country (Schultz, 2003).

Educational inclusion plays a pivotal role toward social inclusion there by building inclusive society. It is vital for development and transformation. Inclusion in higher education is significantly prominent development issue (AAUC, 2009).

11. Strategies to Higher Education Inclusion

Adams (2006) ascertains that effective inclusion could be a reality through a particular strategy what he calls *Universal Design for Learning*. This is a framework to guide educators in maximizing learning opportunities for increasingly diverse student populations. As to him, improving access to higher education for SWDs is not enough. We also need to ensure that such students –indeed, all students–have the support they need to make genuine progress in their studies and to continue on to graduation. Universally design learning environments and

experiences can help achieve this by providing all learners with equal opportunities to succeed. The development of equitable and effective instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments using the framework of *Universal Design for Learning* is profoundly important for inclusion in higher education.

This design seems a learning design established on the basis of *the social constructionist model* as it focuses on remediating the system than the individual. Apart from the provision of adapted teaching method and assessment, it is possible to make resources and facilities accessible for the SWDs through this design. It also helps to maintain sufficient service and support provision.

As noted earlier, *the Right Based Approach* to higher education is paramount if the legal environment ranging from international conventions to institutional legislations adequately enough and dully implemented. In Ethiopian public higher education institutions, for instance, students with disabilities will be well included if the institutions legislations are emanated from the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 and come to their practical effect.

The success of creating inclusive education as a key to establishing inclusive societies depends on agreement among all relevant partners on a common vision supported by a number of specific steps to be taken to put this vision into practice. The move toward inclusion is a gradual one that should be based on clearly articulated principles that address system-wide development and multi-sectoral approaches involving all levels of society (UNESCO, 2009).

The barriers to inclusion can be reduced through active collaboration between policy-makers, education personnel and other stakeholders, including the active involvement of members of the local community, such as political and religious leaders, local education officials and the media (UNESCO, 2009). A multi-level approach is also good strategy as inclusion by its nature calls for multi actors. According to Hick (2009), inclusion needs the involvement of multi actors. It is a process in which schools, communities, local authorities and governments strive to reduce barriers to participation and learning for all citizens. The education community at national level and the university community in particular can make effective inclusion through collaborative effort. Here comes the application of *the twin-track model*.

The Need for Listening to the SWDs

As one of the biggest inclusionary dynamics, SWDs have to be acknowledged and listened by the university community particularly by their teachers (Cooper & et.al, 2000). The voice of SWDs in higher education is less likely heard despite various constant barriers they face in their learning. Listening to the experience of SWDs has the advantage of letting individuals express their 'lived experience' of being a student in higher education and enables the physical barriers that they encounter to be highlighted. Identifying the barriers faced by disabled students within the social model of disability as against the medical model is paramount (Adams, 2006).

Research findings show higher education students with disabilities can illustrate variety of barriers that they are challenging with if their voices are going to be listened. Barriers related to mode of assessment and teaching method are the most common problems. Of course, as Adams (2006) identified difficulties with assignments and different modes of teaching are not only barriers of the SWDs; NDSs are also victims. It is true that the notion behind this finding clarifies how the problem is severe to the SWDs.

It is imperative to seek out, listen to and act upon the views of SWDs in our attempt to make higher education thoroughly inclusive. However, more radically, given the overlap identified here in the learning experiences of students labeled as '*disabled*' and '*non-disabled*', would be to start from the basis that everyone is impaired with major implications for medical and social intervention in twenty-first century. By listening to the voices of the higher education SWDs, it is possible to draw an effective inclusive education system (Adams, 2006). Global findings have also affirmed that the SWDs can perform better than the NDSs where they are learning in a real inclusive system of education (Sachs & Schreuer, 2012).

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

This chapter deals with the research design, site, sampling, instruments, data collection and analysis procedures. All these issues are discussed below.

3.1 The Research Design

In this study, a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative research design was used. The intention behind the selection of this design was to enhance triangulation, complementarities and development through qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell, 2009). The other reason is to better understand and unmask the research problem with open-ended qualitative and close-ended quantitative data. Furthermore, this design is selected due to the virtual reason of recognizing mixed approach as an effective and popular design. Qualitative design was predominantly deployed and assisted by quantitative design. Henceforth, the design was governed by a mixed approach known as Sequential Exploratory Design (**QULT + quant**) (Creswell, 2009). The purpose of this particular mixed design is to use quantitative data and results to assist in the interpretation of qualitative findings. The primary focus of this design is initially to explore a phenomenon (Creswell, 2009). Here comes the consistency between the major objective of this study and the purpose of this design. It is to be noted that the main intention of this research is exploring the policy environment and practices of inclusion in Ethiopian public higher education institutions in particular focus to AAU.

3.2 The Research Site

AAU at large and its main campus in particular was selected as a research site of this study for at least two reasons. The first and the most reason is to have a representative sample population. It is known that many of the SWDs are assigned in AAU. For instance, from 154 VI students who are placed in this academic year to different universities, 45 of them were assigned at AAU and all of these students are in the main campus. From the current total VI and PI students of the university (286), all the 192 VI students are learning in the main campus where as from the total

94 PI students 37 of them are placed in the main campus (**source:** the National Examination Agency and the Center for Disability of the AAU).

The second reason is the long history and experience of the university in accommodating the SWDs. AAU is famous to accept the SWDs in particular the VI students since the last three decades.

3.3 Research Participants and Sampling

In this study, 8 VI and PI case informants, 7 officials, 2 chair students from the SWDs association and 5 FGD discussants were purposefully selected for the qualitative inquiry. For the quantitative inquiry, 59 SWDs, 63 NDSs and 39 teachers were participated.

The 8 VI and PI key informants were purposely selected in consultation with the chair students of the VI and the PI associations. Four of these case informants were VI students and of which two of them were girls. The same was done for the rest four PI students. Except one of the VI students, the rest seven were all graduating classes. This is done intentionally understanding that graduating students have rich experience than other batches. The officials were also purposely selected from the MoE of the FDRE and the university management. These officials were considered as one of the groups of the key informants for this study. The officials from the MoE were expected to give information on the policy environment, strategy and practice of inclusion in public higher education at national level while the university officials, concomitantly, were expected at institutional level. The 2 chair students from the SWDs association and the 5 FGD discussants were also taken to consolidate the qualitative data.

For the quantitative enquiry, departments that accommodate VI and PI students were first identified. Then, the SWDs, the NDSs and the teachers were selected purposively from the respective departments in order to get senior students in particular graduating students. First year students were not participated in this enquiry as it is believed that they have immature experience in the university. From 25 PI students (above first year), 4 were deliberately omitted as they were case informants. The same was done from 147 VI students. After having the list of these informants (21 PI students and 143 VI students), 11 PI (more than 50%) students and 48 VI students were purposively selected. The number of the VI students was intentionally done 48 to

make the graduating students participate in the study. The majority of the VI students were taken from the school of Law, ILS and Social Work departments respectively. All the departments in which the minority VI and PI students are learning were also included. 39 teachers and 61 graduating NDSs were participated from the selected departments. As much as possible, it was tried to keep the gender parity among the participants.

Table One: Summary of the Population, Sample and Sampling Technique of the SWDs

	VI	PI	Total
Population	143	21	164
Sample	48	11	59
Sampling technique	Purposive	Purposive	Purposive

3.4Data Collection Instruments

Taking the mixed method approach with a major focus to qualitative design, in-depth and semi-structured interviews, FGD, observation, document review and questionnaire were used.

Interview

In-depth interview was made with the SWDs while semi-structured interviews were used with the rest of the interviewees. The in-depth interview was done with 8 case informants. From the officials of the Ministry of Education of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the State Minster (concerned with higher education), the general directors of the HESC and HERQAA were interviewed. The Academic President, the Students’ Dean, the Students’ Service Director and the Coordinator of the Center for Disability of the university were interviewed. As noted earlier, the heads of the VI and the PI associations of the university were also interviewed.

Before the interview was made with the 8 key (case) informants, major thematic issues were identified and further categorized in to a whole framework of inclusion with respect to their learning in the university. Based on this framework, they were oriented to narrate their feelings

and stories in the course of their stay in the university. They were advised to narrate in an informal way without worrying to talk with the order of the issues they have been oriented. Having the interview guide with selected thematic issues, the officials were also interviewed with their consent.

The FGD

One FGD was made in particular focus to a selected sub topic (attitudinal and communication issues). Three SWDs (two VI and one PI) and two NDSs (one is the deputy chair of the students union) totally five discussants were participated. The expected girl from the students union could not make it.

Observation

Observation was made at selective facilities and services of the compound. The toilets and washrooms situated on two male students' building (building no 504 & 505) were observed. This was intentionally done because the renovation project is underway on these buildings. Some of the classrooms located on OCR and NBR were observed to see whether they are accessible or not in particular the PI students. The services of the main library including the VI library, the center for disability and the cafeteria were also observed.

Document Review

Documents such as the 1994 ETP, ESDP III & IV, the 2006 SNE Strategy, the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 and the university strategic plan (2008-2013) were reviewed.

Questionnaire

Questionnaires with brief and focused items were prepared and disseminated for the selected SWDs, the NDSs and teachers. Accordingly, 44 SWDs, 46 NDSs and 35 teachers returned the questionnaires.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

Except the FGD, a qualitative data collection procedure was first take place. Then, a quantitative data collection procedure was followed. This was done as the principles of the sequential exploratory mixed design strategy. All the informants were requested for their consent and they were told the objective of the study.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

Qualitative data analysis procedure was first take place and quantitative data analysis procedure was followed to support/build the first procedure. As per the Sequential Exploratory Data Analysis Strategy, data obtained from the qualitative instruments, except the FGD, were first analyzed. This is because the major intent of the research is to uncover/explore the place of inclusion in Ethiopian public higher education institutions particularly at AAU.

Chapter four: Data Presentation and Discussion

4.1 Data presentation

In this chapter, both the qualitative and quantitative data were presented. As the design of this research is sequential exploratory mixed design, first qualitative data was presented and then quantitative data followed. In the first section of this chapter, data obtained from the case informants was presented. Data gathered from the MoE and the university officials was presented in the second section. In the third section of this chapter, the quantitative data found from the participant (SWDs, NDSs and teachers) was presented.

4.1.1 Presentation of the Cases

The lived experience of the case informants was presented under this section. They narrated their experience from the first date of reception to their graduating year. Their narration is given topics based on the thematic issues already identified.

Case 1

Reception and Registration

Things with regard to reception and registration were terrible for this VI informant however he had greatest expectation. He did not see special reception but senior students carry his luggage and entered the campus as usual for all students. He couldn't find any assisting focal person or coordinating group as he expected. No one provided him the necessary information. He did not know what cost sharing is. He needed somebody who fills the form and the slips on behalf of him. How difficult is to ask someone to fill lengthy forms and slips for him? He says, *"That time was terrible for me and other VI students. The registration procedure was quite unfavorable and challenging for VI students."* This informant remembers some VI students who were crying for they could not get someone who helps them in their registration.

This informant had strong interest to study Journalism and Communication. But he was told that it is difficult for him and he was also told that no VI student was joined journalism before. He

sadly says, *"I was told I can't. The fact was, however, I can as I had been involved in my high school mini-media"*. Is there a visually impaired journalist or reporter in our country? Why?

Teachers' Attitude

Amongst the challenges he faced in this university, this informant narrated about his broken heart due to the negative attitude and bad deeds of some teachers. Once he was obliged to drop a course because of this problem. He narrated how the incident was happened in a desperate manner. "X" teacher (a PhD holder), who often degrades and considers this informant as a weakling, tries to make his class "interactive". He used to give topics to be discussed by the students. On the other hand, this informant has greatest interest to participate in such activities. It was not only due to his interest but also because of his elementary and high school background in that his teachers were giving him a chance for participation. In spite of the fact that the informant wants to take his part in the classroom interaction, the teacher does not allow him. The teacher often expresses his perception and expectation in different words.

One day, the informant tried to interact with the class but the teacher as usual marginalized the informant showing his ignorance. The informant politely requested the teacher for participation. The teacher said to the class *"ከዝንብ ማር ይጠበቃል?"* meaning, *"is honey expected from a fly?"* The informant narrates, *"That teacher broke my heart. I was so upset and told him his PhD is meaningless. I told him also that he needs awareness and attitudinal change. At that moment, my classmates seriously told me that he will give me 'F'. Consequently, I obliged to drop the course."* To his dismay, however, he was forced to take that course by the same teacher after two years. *"Despite my hard work in the course, the teacher gave me C. I could not get justice however I complained"* the informant says.

According to this informant, the number of expired VI students every year is shocking. *"In our batch, we VI students were 74 while we join this campus before three years. But now we are 33"* the informant reports. He concluded that this was not happened due the problem of the VI students. He says, *"This does not happen due to the potential of the students but because of the university in particular because of teachers"*. He also mentioned that many of the remaining

students are in problem. Among these students, some dropped courses by frustration. Some are challenged to get the courses they dropped. Some are begging the university officials to be assigned in summer or extension programs as usual.

"I cannot say all teachers have negative attitude towards us or I cannot say all are bad teachers. I can say at least 25% of them are bad teachers. I remember a teacher who restrained me to record his lecture. I was panic while he aggressively took my recorder" the informant continued his narration. Contrary to this, the informant said that there are few good teachers. He knows a teacher who records her voice and gives a cassette for him. If she cannot do this, she will give him a short hand out with modest approach (she apologizes for that).

Accessibility of Assignments

With regard to the assignments, the informant told the researcher astonishing incident. He presented in the following way.

The teacher gave us an assignment on the course called 'novel'. It was a literary critic on a novel which has 270 pages. The deadline to submit this assignment was 3 weeks. Who is going to read 270 pages of a book for me? I went to the teacher to ask if he has a recorded version of the book. He told me that he has not and insisted that I have to do it like others. He also warned me to give 'F' if I fail to do it. I had no choice. I had to go to Sebeta Teachers Training College to get my sister. She is a trainee in the college. She read the book and recorded her voice with 9 tape cassettes devoting her for 14 hours. She had to devote her time to me and has to forget her education. I listened to the cassettes; 3 per a day and finished all. It influenced my other assignments. After I listened to it, I painfully write on brail which was 460 pages. It was tiresome. Then I read my brail to my sister and she wrote with ink. I remember how much it hurt her fingers. I know even the teacher himself cannot accomplish this assignment within three weeks. It was a detailed literary critic and the grade was A. That teacher, of course, was very surprised with my job and he still respects me. Recently, I gave this teacher a draft of fiction for his feedback which I wrote in this compound.

Can teachers find such a commitment and devotion from most of their NDSs? Had things been accessible for this informant, wouldn't have he been beyond a journalist and an author? The teacher respected this informant later. This is good. But, if this teacher continues to give such an inaccessible assignment, he will remain unchanged.

The informant also indicated that some teachers are worse in testing VI students. As to him, such teachers often order the students to write the word 'blind' on the exam papers so that they can easily give the most common predetermined grade that is 'C' or 'C'.

Exam Procedures

Exam weeks are the most challenging seasons for this informant. All VI students have to get readers and writers for their exams. But in the case of this informant, for instance, he has to get a student who writes and reads "X" language. He has to search this reader from other departments. He shall not have a reader from his department. Finding such a reader needs time. The payment they (readers) request is too high. They request 100 birr for one exam. The university allocates 339 birr for exams. The readers request 30 birr per hour while the university allocates 15 birr per hour. They are forced to spend extra costs. A friend of this informant, as he mentioned, recently paid 640 birr for six exams. He added extra 301 birr. As instance of this, a student who is unable to afford will miss his/her exam. *"I know one who missed his exam due to lack of money for readers"* says the informant. The problem is not only confined with the amount of money. The university does not give the money in time. *"Even the university gives the money after the exam and other things are passed"* the informant complains.

"The place which we take exams is another big problem" the informant continued to narrate problems attributed to testing procedures. Except law school students as they are many in number, VI students used to take exams at the corridor of the exam classes. They used to suffer with noise, sometimes cold and rain. Sometimes teachers chase off readers while they think the readers are doing the exam for the VI students. At that moment, VI students will remain alone and their result will be affected.

Students' Attitude

This informant is not happy with few of the students who have negative attitude and commit bad things toward the VI students. As one of the manifestation of this he says, *"Some NDSs are not volunteer to include us in group works. They say: 'we do not want you. You cannot search and read books. You cannot help us unless being a burden for us.' They think these problems are ours. They do not take these as accessibility problems"*.

Once a group of visual students came to the informant's dorm and knocked meanwhile few weeks after registration. They called the informant and his dorm mates (three VI students) in their names reading from the paper pasted on the door. For the visual students, it is easy to call the informant and his dorm mates by their names as they can read. But the informant and his dorm mates were not aware of this as they can't read any material written with ink. The informant and his dorm mates were eager to listen to the visual students and trusted them as they called their names. The visual students told the informant and his dorm mates that the proctor is going to give their dorm for others unless each of them pay 30 birr. The visual students also told the informant and his dorm mates that this is common cost for all fresh students. Accordingly, the informant and his dorm mates paid 120 birr for the visual students. The informant believes that this was happened because the visual students have negative attitude toward VI students.

To the researcher's view, these visual students may not have a different attitude on the SWDs. Tricks are commonly done on fresh students by some trickery senior students. The very prominent issue in this incident is, however, a quest of accessibility. For whom was written the notice with ink?

Communication

This informant distinctively put the communication of the VI students with the university community. He explained that those who came from boarding schools like him have good communication since they were academically and socially interacting in their respective school communities. But he does not expect this from students who came from ordinary schools. As to this informant, the value most SWDs give for themselves is not good. They are in desperate life.

They concluded that no one listens to them. Some of them are also careless or they are not committed to meet their rights. This informant takes all these as barriers of communication.

Problems related to Awareness and Accessibility

This informant expresses some of the problems related to awareness and accessibility, and suggests in the following way.

The university did not make awareness raising activities on our responsibilities and rights. In this regard, the center for disability has to do this as it is established for us. I think almost all the SWDs do not know the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009. The university implements little or no of this proclamation in terms of the SWDs. Most of the buildings and the facilities are not accessible. I suggest awareness rising is crucially important to know ourselves and to know our rights. Dialogue among university community is also prominent.

Case 2

Previously, this PI informant read the billboard near Kennedy library (“*Disability is a reality for me but a possibility for everyone*”) before this happened to her. But now she practically knows that this is true since disability possibly became a reality for her. This informant was first jointed AAU in 2005 and her freshman life was quite interesting, as she narrated. However, she could not stay more than two years and she left the university due to the severe pain on her two legs. She stayed two years at home and returned back to the university in 2009. She left the university on foot and came back on a wheelchair. At that time, she taught that suicide is better than her situation as she felt she was needy and dependent; “*I was desperate and intended to commit suicide.*” But later, she recognized that there are many strong PI people including wheelchair users. She realized that she can survive. While she returned back to the university, she came alone and then her brother came to support her. Now she lives with him.

Registration and Building Accessibility

This informant's grievance on the registration procedures is very high. She was extremely disappointed with some of the registration staff members. As she explained, they were not supportive and behaved rudely. Conversely to the VI students, she has no problem in reading and filling the forms. She can read and understand what cost sharing is. But the registration was on the 4th floor of the OCR. How can she reach it even with a manual support since the building is not accessible? It is difficult to carry her on a wheelchair throughout the stairs of this building.

Among the bad seasons she passed, the first two weeks were the worst for her. She will not forget those weeks which restrained her from sunshine and fresh air. She could not out from the dormitory as there was no one to support her. The building and its facilities were also severe challenges. She couldn't use the toilet and the washroom. She was too much dependent on her dorm mates. They were supporting her in providing sanitary materials and taking cares while they are available in the dormitory. This informant was in a desperate situation. She cut her hair. She decided to leave the university. Before she leaves the compound, she reported her problems to the university management. Gradually, however, the university gave her a new dormitory from the building in which foreign students live. This building is relatively good and accessible for her.

Nevertheless, she suffered a lot to access her classrooms as the schedules do not consider SWDs. The university does not consider the PI students in classroom allocation. Most of her classes were in the stories of OCR and NBR. She was at risk. She does not want to see bad faces and discouraging words while she asks help. If she got volunteers, some are found to have poor experience to push her wheelchair. She is afraid of pushing her wheelchair as it is new experience for her. If her class is in OCR and the next in NBR, one can imagine how it is difficult. Sometimes she reaches after the class is started. Some teachers do not allow her enter the class. Telling all her challenges, she asked the department for class relocation. Surprisingly, the department told her that they do not receive order from the university management or higher officials. However, the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 states that higher education institutions have to relocate classes in accordance with the interest of the SWDs (FDRE, 2009).

At that time, she decided again to leave the compound. But it is true that many students without mobility problem are assigned on ground classes. She lost many classes because of this problem. Some teachers teach for more than three hours. She is the only wheel-chaired student in her class but she is also graded equally with others. Few of her teachers fix their schedules on the ground classes and support her with hand outs. She further narrated the problems in the following way.

I am not using the library but it is not acceptable for SWDs in particular for wheel-chair users. There is no suitable space or seating arrangement. I cannot access books and reference materials. Due to this problem, I can't do my paper. When I joined the university first, I used to use the cafe but after I returned back with wheelchair, I became non cafe as I cannot wash my hands before and after my meals. The hand washing facility is not accessible. As I said earlier, all the buildings are not accessible for SWDs. It goes worst for me. The problem is lesser for crutch users than us.

After she brought her brother, she tried to pass through the challenges and became stronger. He supports with all her problems. Had her brother not been with her, she would have not been stayed in this compound. While he was expecting his grade ten exam result, her legs were seriously sick. He left his education for her. He gave her his life.

Attitude, Awareness and Suggestion

This informant concluded that there is no positive attitude among the university community toward the SWDs however she tried to show there are exceptional individuals from all the members. She indicated that the university has lack of awareness on disability and further recommended that awareness has to be raised for the university community. She also suggests:

First, awareness shall be raised by relevant stakeholders for the university community. Second, the proclamation has to be implemented. Third, there must be serious intensive discussion among the SWDs, NDSs, teachers and the university management.

Case 3

The self esteem

The researcher was unable to detach from his amazement for a couple of days while he listened the interview he made with this informant. This informant, who uses a walker (a pair of crutch), was assigned in the "X" department according to his first choice. Before his assignment to the department, the same was done for him on his university placement. AAU was his first choice. Previously, the researcher observed that some of the informants interviewed before this case had no information on the university's affirmative action that considers the first choice of the SWDs. These informants were expecting their second choice as their entire interest. They had been wrongly oriented as they have been told that they could not get their first choice. But this informant put his choice first and was assigned accordingly. This was not because he was well informed. He was confident enough while he was saying *"I have been assigned in this university and in this department according to my interest. But this was not done for me due to the affirmative action. It was done due to my result. My result was the highest from the social science students."*

The need to be included (feeling of exclusion)

In a dorm, this informant was assigned with other PI students. The ground dormitories were reserved for PI students. He was too much disappointed with his dorm assignment. The situation was disgusting for him. He expressed his feeling in the following way.

I did not accept to live with SWDs in special case. We are equal as others. We can do what they can. We can live together with them participating in all aspects of life. I grow in an inclusive way of life. Starting from grade two to ten, I was helping myself shining shoes. I remember one of my friend's word to me: 'you are not a person with disability because you can take your part in what the society does'. At least few NDSs have to be assigned with us."

This informant was out of the main campus for a while. After he came back to the main campus, he decided to be with his non disabled friends in a dorm which was on the third floor. The

proctor told him that he cannot live with them in the up stair and told him he has to be assigned in one of the ground dormitories which were reserved for the PI students. He said to the proctor, *"This is none of your business. I can decide for myself. I can climb the storey like other students. For me, this is simpler than missing my friend"*. He knows the proctor was to help him but the proctor has to understand the informant if he says *"I can."* Later, the proctor let this informant to be with his friends on the third floor.

In all aspects of campus life, this informant wants to be included. He often criticizes and disregards discriminatory actions including those procedures and cultures that are believed to be supportive for the SWDs. While he was getting into the cafeteria for the first time, he saw the VI and the PI students having their meals in a separate area. He felt that he was marginalized from the majority of the students in the cafe. He says, *"As I said before, I do not like unnecessary special treatment. I grew in an inclusive community. I take the special service in the cafeteria as exclusion."* At first, he joined the group and tried to have his food with the group. But later, he started to bring his meal and joined the majority. That time onwards, he keeps his turn, serves himself and has his meal with the NDSs. He knows he needs help with what he cannot do. His friends bring a cup of water since he cannot use his two hands. *"It will be good to let a window for the actions for what we can do ourselves"* he says.

He was not also comfortable with regard to the guards. *"Guards do not check us but they have to. I know this is to support us. But the psychological impact has to be considered. We are equal as others. We can do what others are expected to do. We can break rules and regulations like others"*. Apart from this, the informant sees the situation politically. He says, *"Who knows; some people may want to use SWDs. It is also not good for security reasons. We can bring damage."* Consequently, he often enters in to the university through the gate NDSs are using. He often wants to be checked at the gate.

While this informant had been informed that the university provides 120 birr per month for the SWDs, he refused to be registered to get the money. He knows he has disability problem. He knows he needs some help with what he can't do. But he believes that this does not mean his life

is dependent on others. He does not like to live life with special treatment. Of course, he cannot work now. But his brothers are helping him. He was psychologically hurt with this support. Gradually, however, his friend convinced him to accept it.

Sometimes this informant confronts with service providers who disrespect him. He cannot tolerate people who consider him as a weakling. He used to teach some subjects in preparatory school while the respective subject teacher was absent. He is the GC (graduating class) committee chairperson in his department. He also has no patience for his rights.

Teachers' Attitude and Practice

This informant blames teachers on behalf of the VI students. He said that most of them are not supportive for VI students. *"Most of them refuse to be recorded. The assignment they are giving to the VI students is amazing. It needs at least intensive reading. There is no a single book written with brail for all the courses. How can they make it?"* he says. As a result, he narrates, *"We often make assignments for them. But bear in your mind that this is not because they are weak students. It is because they cannot access books. Had the assignment is to be done simply by reading hand outs; I can help them in reading. How can I read a book for them and they could record my voice'.* He also recommends a kind of alternative assignment that possibly could done by teachers. *"Teachers can make the assignments suitable for them. They can ask them conceptual questions, for example."* Is there a teacher in this compound who used to give alternative assignments for VI students?

This informant is also too much astonished with the grading habit of most teachers. As to him, stereotyping is big problem and grades are predetermined for SWDs in particular for VI students. He explains this with typical example that happened in his class.

We have been given a project in groups. It was field work. The group work comprises 80%. One of the groups scored 80 out of 80. There was a VI student in that group. Except this student, all the group members scored 'A' and 'A+'. But this VI student scored 'C'. How on an earth this happen? 'A' was given for those who scored 90 and above. I am confident

enough that this student is quite capable at least to get 10 out of 20. It was presenting the recorded data. I know this student can write what he recorded and present it. Now you can blindly guess what his result will be. Bear in your mind the predetermination is even without facilitating the environment.

The need for Affirmative Action and Suggestion

This informant underlined that the VI students who are entering university by affirmative action shall have continuous support. He says, *"But affirmative action stops here. Stopping affirmative action at this stage means breaking what previously repaired. You can imagine how much it will be terrible if a student withdraw or leave this compound after he/she reached this stage".*

He suggested that SWDs shall choose their field of study themselves. As to him, most of them are advised or obliged to be assigned in language departments. Making the environment suitable is good rather than saying *"this department is difficult for you"*. He says, *"It shall be known they can learn in all departments where NDSs are learning."*

Case 4

Registration Procedures

This informant thinks that filling the registration forms was the biggest challenge. Of course, this is not easy even for some NDSs. She did not know what she fills. She had to have readers and writers. But who fills for her? Nobody was there to help her unless she begs visual students to do so. No one oriented her about department choice. Her preference was law school but she could not join as it was her second choice. She was told that studying law at AAU is tough however she does not think that was true. She believes because she is assumed to be disabled, rather. She will not forget what one of the registration staff said to her: *"Do you know thatis hard? Can you learn it?"* And she replied: *"Yes I can; I will graduate with God's help in good marks."*

Recording Procedures, Teachers' Response and Pre-determined Grading

This informant, before she enters class, has to prepare herself and has to know what her teachers expect from her. She has to know recording her instructors' voice for it is the known way out to cope up with visual students. She has to know the procedure, too. She says, "*We as a visually impaired student often have to say 'Sir (Madam), can I record?'*". She mentioned this is a well established procedure. Otherwise, that teacher probably will take her tape recorder and throw it with anger. If she is lucky enough, she may hear a voice of a teacher saying '*of course*' or '*do not worry. I will give you a handout*'.

Once, as she narrated, one of her teachers said firmly '*No!*' while she said '*Sir, can I record?*' She followed the teacher after the class and begged him but he said again '*No!*' She told him that her presence in his class is nothing unless she is able to record his lecture. He told her that she can take notes. He knows that this is difficult even for some of the visual students. This teacher finally told her that she had not to ask favor without helping first herself. He said to her, "*It is your business. I do not care as you do not want to help yourself. You cannot ask others favor if you do not help yourself.*" This teacher considered this as a favor. Had he been allowed her to record his lecture, he might have been thought he made favor for her. But this is not *favor*. Whatever the teacher has a reason for his refusal, his conception seems to be the reflection of both the charity and the medical model of disability.

This informant compares what she had been told from the students' dean office with what she practically experienced. She said,

According to the students' dean office, there is a policy that allows the VI students to record lectures and teachers' responsibility to facilitate varieties of teaching methods. Practically, however, what I know is that instructor continued to be so and I stopped to ask him throughout all the four courses. To your surprise, he was evaluating me like other students and gave me C in all four courses.

Shall this informant deserve "C" with all the four courses? She said, "*No, I shouldn't*". Horgan (2003) as cited in the Ireland National Disability Authority (2008) underpinned that potential

danger of teachers' expectations that are too low is that it can result in a self-fulfilling prophecy, especially where teachers may not expect SWDs to perform well at exams. Similarly, the informant on her part says, *"I think some teachers determine our grades by our names as identified as disabled. I was quite sure that I had to get A or B at least in one of the courses."* What about at least C or at most C⁺ in one of the four courses?

Inaccessibility of Reading Materials and Assessment Procedures

The most difficulty this informant faced was absence of reading materials. She could not find any brail book or reading material however she knew she has to take five courses in her first semester of the first year. *"If we have to be evaluated with all students, they have to provide accessible materials. The only way out what I had was recording my good classmates' voice. And again I have to write it on a brail."* she says. Now, as a graduating student, she has to do her research paper. One can imagine how much terrible it is. In the first place, who is going to collect reference books and materials for her and who is going to read the references? She did not expect a student who is going to do this for her in this compound. She also mentioned that finding readers out of this compound and covering their cost is too hard. The university gives 500 birr which is inadequate for her.

She has no idea whether the university has a policy with regard to assessment and its procedures. She remembers her teacher whom fierce was for her. His handouts were notorious even for visual students. He gave her two large volume inc print books to read before two weeks ahead of the final exam. On the other hand, she did not expect to take her first semester's exam outside the class in a noisy and uncomfortable situation. She remembers that her reader, whom she found after ups and downs, how sometimes tried to stop the noise made by passers and surrounding students. Finding good reader is also another problem for her. She remembers that last year she found a university student who was counting spellings while reading the exam paper. Furthermore, she feels that some teachers are humiliating them (VI students) while they are taking exams. In relation to this, she stated that copying and cheating are not equally taken as mistakes between the SWDs and NDSs. Without any change and material provision, she reached second semester. Things come worse to her. After that time onwards, the final semester exam

comes before she finishes organizing her notes. This informant does not believe cheating or copying exams is moral. She wants to say there are NDSs who can access the reading materials and at the same time who used to cheat or copy exams.

The informant said that the assignments that her teachers give for her were very surprising. She also remembers a teacher who gave her a 140 pages text to criticize. "*Who is going to read for me 140 pages?*" she asks. She noted that even NDSs cannot make such kind of assignments with in short period of time. She asked her teacher alternative assignment that suits her. He said '*you can do it*'. And finally, she received "F" on that course. The informant also expects her teachers to assign her in certain group assignments. But they do not do this and NDSs do not like to include her. She cannot participate in group works. Gradually, a certain group which she begged to be with asks her ID number without making her participate.

Physical Inaccessibility

The informant expressed problems related to the physical accessibility at which she suffered with. As she reported, the university gives her 120 birr pocket money per month which is expected to be paid for readers. Apart from its smallness, the university gives it after a month without any genuine reasons. The university even does not give cassettes timely. This year, VI students did not receive cassettes for more than 6 months. It is just recently the university released the cassettes while they were ready for strike. The university promised to by digital recorders for them. But nothing is done. This informant could not get a single adapted book in the VI students' library. There are around 9 computers, few tape recorders and few uncomfortable reading rooms. The clinic is not accessible for them while they are sick. If they are sick during the night time, they have to call information desk not to the clinic for ambulance. But the information desk workers insult and order them not to call. Sometimes the information desk workers give the ambulance driver's cell phone number in order not to speak with the VI students.

Implementation of the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 and Suggestion

This informant also blames the university with regard to the 2009/650 Higher Education Proclamation. She is not certain whether the university knows the proclamation. She said, "*If the*

2009/650 Higher Education Proclamation is in to effect, it must not be reached this university. This is because none of our rights are implemented. I advise you to copy and give it to the university." For instance, she said that the VI students always ask the university to make them able to take exams in classes and to have invigilators; but nothing was done. She also says, "Late alone for them the teachers methodology is not suitable for the NDSs. We are totally excluded. There is a great problem in relation with accessibility of information. We lost different information due to the absence of accessibility. We often request visual students for all the necessary information."

The informant suggests:

Let materials be prepared and accessible. Let the service be improved. Let the university evaluate is self. Let higher officials ask about us. Let the university call and talk with us. Let everything be started from A. The university has to adapt the learning materials and shall undertake awareness rising activities for the university community in particular for teachers. It also has to change weak managers. It has to start from the scratch. Please you good ones thank you. You the opposite we need change. Of course I did not say we all are good. We also have weaknesses.

Case 5

Lack of Proper Information and Unwanted Placement

This case informant was advised by his high school teachers to choose AAU. He made three choices to get his preference. AAU was his first choice and he got his first choice accordingly to the existing affirmative action for the disadvantaged students. He said that he cannot forget his pleasure while he comes to know his placement at AAU. But the way he said this seems to be regret as his pleasure was no longer with him. He was not lucky to get the department he wanted. Entirely, his interest was to study law but he could not get it as he had been wrongly oriented by senior students. They (senior students) told him that he most probably could get his second choice. He did not know that the university could consider his first choice. He lost his interest due to lack of proper information. Here comes the prominence of special reception and orientation for the SWDs (Adams, 2006). This situation, within the context of the university,

indicates that a system which benefits certain groups (the affirmative action on department placement) will be meaningless unless the system makes the beneficiaries know their benefits.

Inaccessibility of Reading Materials

This VI informant often seeks information not written with ink prints. This year, he surprisingly read a certain department head's name and his office number written on brail. Otherwise, he has never read any piece of accessible information. However, seeking information written on a brail seems greatest expectation for brail books and other reading materials are profoundly inaccessible. He can't find a single book written on brail for his courses except the old "...". He often searches brail books after he received list of courses to be taken in a particular semester but nothing except time waste. Consequently, he became strictly dependent on NDSs. This in turn exposes him for a great deal of expenses & other challenges. Sometimes he has to follow and beg volunteer students who read books and other materials for him so that he can record them. He has also to take short notes on a brail from the recorded materials. He explained this is critical problem that hindered his academic performance.

Teachers' Attitude

This informant carefully tried to view the teachers' attitude towards the SWDs. For him, some of the teachers have negative attitude but there are also few teachers whom he admire for their support and positive attitude. He mentioned that the hate speech uttered by some teachers is extremely painful. *"What we only lost is our vision. Teachers have to know this. Otherwise our inside is full of light. Even we are greater than many in our insides"* the informant narrates sadly. It seems this informant is nearer to the view of the social model of disability than the aforementioned teachers.

Once he had to take the course called 'statistics' which is difficult for their situation even to write on a brail as it is fully numerical. But he had to take this course in other class (groups). He received a letter from the dean office and went to the teacher. He greeted the teacher (a doctor) modestly and timidly. He explained his case to the teacher. The teacher replied rudely: *'I do not care about this.'* The informant tried to beg the teacher. *'Get out of my office!'* the teacher shouted. Patiently and sadly the informant said to him *"Please Dr. at least advice me what to do".*

'You can drop the course' the teacher nervously replied. The informant said to the teacher that he will stay one extra year at this campus if he does this. *"Why not you stay nine years; I do not care"* this was the teacher's crudest sentence for the informant. The informant said that he did not utter a word and slept that night however his friends asked about his situation.

A week later, the informant heard some one's voice behind him *'you come in; you listen'*. He knows that the voice was the head of the department. He pretended as if he did not listen as his heart had already broken. He could guess the head has something to tell him. He could not escape from the call and said *'Is it for me?'* And the head replied *'yes this is for you; your teacher allowed to accept you and go there and attend the course.'* He was slightly happy despite his unrepaired heart.

Obviously, in this university, some teachers strictly do not allow to be recorded. Once he was so shocked while a lady instructor said to him *"ፈግጼን እንዳትሸጠው"* meaning *'do not sell my voice'*. This teacher seems not be comfortable with VI students. She might guess they can abuse the record. The other day, another teacher insulted this informant while he was recording the teacher's lecture. The informant recorded the teacher's lecture including the insult. It appears to be that some of the teachers might be reluctant to be recorded because of their hate speech and weaknesses.

The Implementation of the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009

With regard to the implementation of the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009, this informant said:

There is no exam time and dead line extensions provided for the SWDs in this university. You cannot imagine special academic support such as tutorials. As I said before, information is not accessible for us. I appreciate the presence of the library for VI students. But it has only 10 computers and we are 192. Many latest books (written with ink) are coming to the university. But for us nothing has come. I can assure you that most of the brails are written during Hilesselassie regiem.

Lack of Proper Concern, Inaccessibility and Suggestion

This informant mentions that disability issues in this university are seen after all other issues and activities are exhaustively considered and undertaken. *"This is like our families culture. After they clothe, feed and care their non disabled child or children, they will start to think about their disabled child carelessly."* he says. The university gives 120 birr per month as a pocket money. The informant criticized that this is not enough to buy learning materials and to pay for readers.

This informant said, *"Many of the university community in particular teachers & administrators are unchanged in their attitude. Accessibility from the university side and poor academic background among some of the VI students are main challenges."* This informant also suggested improving accessibility at university level and making SWDs efficient at general education is profoundly important. He also mentioned that the university has to provide academic support than expel the SWDs. Many SWDs have been expired, as he mentioned.

Case 6

The researcher was surprised while this informant came to him walking as ordinary people without any supporting material, a walker or a wheelchair as he expected. He was eager to know the reason behind.

Reception and Registration

While she joined this university in 2009, this informant said that senior students from her region welcomed and supported her to take dorm and to be registered. The difficulty for her was language as her Amharic was not good. At first, she was challenged and confused but later acquainted with the campus life. Her interest was another field of study. However, she chose her current department first and the other second as she has been informed she could not get her first choice. Later, she regretted while she knew that she could get her first choice.

The Intervention (from a blended leg to...)

This informant had a bended leg which is painful for her. Unexpectedly, the pain in her leg became severe after she came to this university however she did not know the reason. She has no friend or someone here to discuss with and to ask help. Her parents are in one of distant regions of the country. Once, she met a senior student who came from her region and told her problem. This student advised the informant that her case is curable if she gets a chance to be treated in a certain German based health institution. The student told the informant that she needs a supporting letter to go there. The informant requested the center for disability to write a supporting letter. She had no patience to go to that hospital as soon as she received the letter. At the middle of her narration, she said, *"Thanks God; the hospital made surgery and my leg get cured. As you can see me now, I look normally walking person."* Now, the researcher comes to know the reason behind a walk of this informant.

Attitude in Comparison

The informant compares her society's attitude in her region with the attitude of the university community toward the SWDs. She narrated:

In my region, I was excluded from the society. It has negative attitude toward us and we are extremely marginalized. As part of the society, students in elementary and high schools are highly dominated by this exclusionary culture. They do not want to go to school with me. I was excluded in my elementary and high school education by the students. Of course the problem starts from my parent. Even they did not care about my sufferings with the pair of plastic shoes. It was terrible for me. In my society, no one calls us with our names. They call us 'አንካሳ' "ankassa" meaning (one who limps or limping). But here, every one respects us. I found all the university community supportive. They give priority and first place for us. We interact with the university community as all are literate.

One might be surprised if this informant tells him/her that her disability is an opportunity for her to pursue her education and join university. Had this informant been non disabled, she would have not been joined this university. She has two sisters whose schooling is not gone far from elementary education. A decade ago, her family decided to make her sisters stop their education

as they were getting adolescent and get married before they become 'delinquent'. But for this informant, it was decided to continue her education as she is considered weak, disabled and helpless for them and as she has no chance for marriage. "Thanks to her disability"; now she is a fourth year student in this university.

It seems to be that the members of the university community are "saints" and the compound "Aden" for this informant. She says, *"Of course, I have to love this university as it is a place to change my life, my name too. My society including my family is no more saying 'ankassa'. Now they call me ... in my name"* This informant takes the day she gets medication for her leg as her rebirth day. She says, *"I do not forget this throughout my life. Now I am a changed person. As you can see me now, I can wear normal shoes. No more limping."*

Accessibility and Suggestion

It seems also that this informant has not faced accessibility problems. She expressed that she did not face academic problem. She has no complains with the cafe, library and clinic. She appreciates the service provided by the center for disabilities. After her leg has cured, she got acquainted with the compound. She is afraid of leaving this compound. *"My second year was better than the first year. I improved my language and communication with others. My third year is so much interesting. I loved the compound and the university community. I knew and found myself in this university"* she says. Her story attested that how any possible intervention could change the life of the SWDs.

This informant however, reminds that the buildings are not suitable for the SWDs. *"In particular for the wheel-chaired students it is not accessible. The main cafe's corridor is also not suitable for VI students. I remember one girl while she was felling and rolling down"* she says. She also suggests that the buildings shall be as much as accessible and everyone has to know that they are equal. Moreover, she noted that people shall know disability is not only a matter of possibility but they should also know that disability to its extent is curable.

Case 7

Reception Registration and Orientation

This informant, however he expected, there was no special reception for him when he came first to this university. He and other SWDs were welcomed as other ordinary students. This informant remembers that students were pushing his wheelchair and supporting him. With regard to registration, nothing special was done for him. He was waiting his turn as other students were doing so. His registration was at NCR third floor. It was difficult for him as the building was not accessible. His friends were accomplishing the registration on behalf of him. He was waiting for his friends on the ground after he filled the forms and gave to them.

This informant said that he had no problem with his choice. He got the department he chose. After the registration, as he said, there was a special orientation for them. The informant seems not much interested with the orientation. He politely criticizes, *"The main focus of the orientation was on the nature of the university not awareness rising on policies or our rights. I can say most of us have no awareness on policies and our rights"*.

The Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009

This informant was too much astonished while he comes to know the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009. He believes that the practice is the reverse whether the university knows the proclamation or not. He declares *"The Higher Education Proclamation 2009/650 remained written. I can say it is absolutely unimplemented"*. He explained this in simple example. Some PI students were sent for sport competition by the university. The students were late for exam when they returned back. While the students ask to take the exam, the university said "no". Gradually, with a bitter struggle, the university allowed them to take the exam. Nevertheless, the students had no time to prepare themselves as the schedule was too short. They had no choice. They took it and their result was too bad. To the researcher's view, this case after all does not need the act of the proclamation. This did not happen due to the students' personal reason. The proclamation considers exam time extension when the need arises from the SWDs due to their problems and inconveniences.

The informant narrated the incident which he does not forget however he had not passed through severe challenges like some SWDs. Very recently, he was a little bit late for registration due to this year Public Higher Education Institutions Sport Competition. He could not get his grade report as one of his teachers did not submit his result. The registrar officers told him that he failed to meet the dead line that could result devastating effect on his education. He was shocked. He needs the teacher to have his grade report. He repeatedly went to the teacher's office with the help of his friends. But he could not get him. Telling his problem, he asked the secretaries for the teacher's cell phone number. They refused to do it saying '*giving teachers' cell phone is forbidden.*' He cried while he recognizes the secretaries are not supportive and considerate. For them, the teacher's personality was bigger than his problem however they repeatedly saw him on his wheelchair stepping up and down handed by four of his friends. These secretaries may not be strict even for some NDSs if they are willing to give the teachers' phone number. The informant was too much disappointed with them. He does not forget their saying. "*With God's help, finally, I found the teacher's cell phone number and I called him. I got my grade report and registered*" he says.

This informant mentioned that the SWDs on their part have lack of awareness on their rights written on the proclamation. He believes that all most all the SWDs do not know the proclamation. But, as to this informant, knowing the proclamation is nothing for the SWDs. "*Had we all know it, I do not think we would ask for our rights. This is because we are timid and hence frightened to request what we want. We know that the response will be 'who are you?' or 'you are considered like other students'*" he says firmly.

Inaccessibility of Buildings and Facilities

Building and their respective facilities are not accessible for this informant. He says, "*Building inaccessibility is one of the most challenging problems for us. Class rooms, toilets, washrooms, library and most of the teachers' and departments' offices in their respective buildings are not accessible*". In conformity with this informant and notwithstanding the university's growing effort to make ramps, the observation affirmed that the classrooms are not accessible for the PI students in particular for wheelchair users. The class rooms in NCR building are comparatively

better than the class rooms in OCR and NBR. This informant is grateful for his friends as they used to carry him on his wheelchair at all the stairs that the classes are situated. Conversely, this informant appreciates the accessibility of his dormitories. *"The dormitory for male students is accessible for wheelchair users. I want to express my admiration if this was done intentionally to help us"* he says. However, the toilets and bath rooms are terribly inaccessible. Wheelchair users are suffering much to use these facilities. After all, the doors of these facilities are too narrow to let their wheelchairs inside. After they hardly entered inside, the toilet is not suitable and accessible. So does the bath rooms. Due to this problem, this informant used to take shower out of the compound. Sometimes he brings chairs inside wash rooms and makes layers of chairs and stands on them to take shower. Beyond this terrible scene, the researcher admires the strength of this informant to bring the chairs from his dormitory to the washroom.

If the first floor of the main library is full, this informant has to return back to his dormitory as he cannot go down or climb up in the library. There is no special service in the library for the SWDs. For him, the presence of the center for disability by itself is good but insufficiently resourced and less organized. He mentioned that there are only 16 computers in the center for around 300 SWDs. *"The university management shall reorganize this and develop the service of the center"* he reminds. According to this informant, one needs two legs to go to the clinic. The landscape and the building are not accessible particularly for wheelchair users. The informant further indicated that the hand washing facility of the cafeteria is not accessible for wheelchair users and VI students however the service rendered is good. *"I cannot reach the washing tap. VI students also may touch somebody's cloth with their hands in their struggle to find the hand washing tap."*

Attitude

For this informant, NDSs, administrative staff and service providers have positive attitude and are supportive for the SWDs. Contrary to this, he puts teachers in the opposite replica of the attitude of the above university community members. *"They are not supportive. We rarely communicate with them. They are very far for us. They consider us as ordinary students on one hand and as weak students on the other hand. I have not seen an individual teacher who wants to*

help, understand and motivate SWDs” he says. He also indicated that the current university president has good relationship with the SWDs as the former president who was profoundly important person for the SWDs passed his consideration to him.

This informant was sad with few students who have negative attitude and commit bad things on the SWDs. In relation to this, he also mentioned the attitude of a particular VI student who has an extreme hatred towards the NDSs and the university community. He narrated this in the following way.

I know a sad story happened to a VI student. He was fresh student assigned in one of the building. He was stepping down looking for the proctor's office. On his way, he found a group of NDSs and requested help. They took him replying that they will show the proctors office. But unfortunately, they were taking him to a class and finally they took his cell phone and money. I do know also a VI classmate whose cell phone was snatched by such a student while he was speaking. Such stupid deeds sometimes happen in this compound. In this regard, there is a first year VI student who is famous for his serious pessimistic response to be supported by others particularly by NDSs. 'Do not touch me'; 'far away from me' and 'I do not need help' are his common commands. He often walks dangerously. Sometimes he falls down. He crashes with buildings and students. He trusts no one. He insults students who want to help him or provide information. I think he might be one of the victims of the above deeds. He might be also negatively oriented about the university students.

Nevertheless, the researcher is uncertain that this VI student has developed this attitude in this compound. This is because he knows some VI people outside the university who show the same character. It seems these people rather do not trust the society as a whole. The case of this VI student might have been the same.

The need for Awareness Raising

SWDs are represented in the executive body of the students' union. This informant values this. But he criticizes the inadequate concern of the university management. Among other actions the

university has to do, this informant seems quite serious on the need for awareness rising activities and he suggests, *"I know the university gathers its community twice a year. Such occasions could be an opportunity to raise awareness about disability and inclusion. Finally, I want to underline the importance of research undertakings on disability issues in higher education institutions."*

Case 8

Registration and Experience in Socialization

This VI informant expressed that they (she and her friends) were registered and got dormitories after they passed through different challenges. She was interested with her choice and she is grateful for this; *"I got my choice and I would like to thank the university for this"*. They were five in their dormitory and all were VI students. She was very much surprised while some non disabled girls requested them to live together. However, the request was not fully accepted from the VI students' side. Some of them agreed to live with and some of them refused. According to this informant, life was inclusive for those who grow in boarding schools. But for those who grow in a marginalized environment it was difficult. She views the refusal of her friends to live with the non disabled girls in this respect.

This informant said that she and her friends were walking to the cafe and to the class making chain in group as they were fresh and new. This was not only because they were fresh but also as a shared defensive mechanism while they confront accessibility and social problems. She could not hide this while she was narrating how the partials (who are partially visually impaired) were supporting them. *"The partials' were very supportive for us. They were with us throughout the first semester"* she says.

Teachers' Unwillingness to be Recorded

This informant indicated that teachers those who refuse to allow students record their lectures may not be judged guilty however she agreed on the prevalence of such teachers. *"I know there are some teachers who do not allow us to record their lectures. Of course sometimes it is difficult to judge them as some students might abuse the record"* she says. At this moment, the researcher

recalled an informant teacher who participated in a certain project work. That teacher had reported that there was a teacher whose hate speech was presented to a court by one of the VI students. Nevertheless, this informant does not believe that these teachers are in the right position. Rather, she advises them to keep their slips of tongues and allow the VI students to record their lectures. She says, *“Many VI students are suffering with such teachers. These teachers have to keep their tongue and permit for the record”*. Teachers to the extent can provide a recorded lecture as one of the teachers is doing. This informant said that she did not suffer with the teachers who refuse to be recorded for she is very fast and experienced to take notes. If she misses some points, she will fill the missing points from her classmates. But she noted that for many of VI students even for the NDSs note taking is too much difficult. She also underlined the most serious problem in this respect; *“We will be more challenged while teachers are writing some notes on the white board and remain silent.”*

Problems Related with Exam Procedures

This informant can't forget two incidents related to her exams. She narrated the incidents in the following way.

As you may know, we have to look for readers ahead of the exam time with a modest payment. That day, my reader was late and my classmates had already started the exam. I tried to call other readers but I could not find one. I was too much tensioned. Fifteen minutes had gone. Finally, the reader come and told me that he was late due his personal problem. Thanks; my grade was not bad however I started the exam after fifteen minutes. The other day, I faced the same problem and wept bitterly. Surprisingly, however, two of my teachers came to me unexpectedly and helped me to find a reader. The subject teacher also added extra time for me. I do not forget those days.

Gender Related Problems

Once, in the middle of that night, this informant asked a NDS to help on her way to the dorm and he was volunteer. Meanwhile, he started to touch her breast and behave sexually. She begged him to leave her while he started to forcefully kiss her. However, he could not stop his sexual violence. Finally, he left her after she warned him. She also faced the same problem in the VI

students' library. She was reading and transcribing a recorded lecture in one of the reading rooms. A visual student unexpectedly knocked at the door being as a peaceful person and entered the room. Calling her name, he said '*I love you*' and kissed her. He told this informant that her friend told him about her. After he expressed his feeling to make her his girl friend, he sexually harassed her and she was about to cry. She can expose him but she thought that this student may revenge her. This student left the informant while her crying burst in the class. Some male VI students also used to harass female VI students. She faced such a problem many times.

Attitude and Communication

The informant thinks that most of the university community, except some teachers, are supportive and have good attitude towards the SWDs. She mentioned that service providers are the most supportive. As a communication barrier, this informant expressed the existence of fear between the SWDs and the NDSs. "*We worry not to be burden for them. On their part, the NDSs do not feel confident on the way they supported us. They frightened us as some are not volunteer to be supported. Few may insult you if you ask them to help. Of course these things have their own backgrounds and reason*" she says.

Inaccessibility and Suggestion

With respect to accessibility and support provision of the university, the informant stated that there is a kind of inadequate and inconsistent support. She says, "*Building accessibility is the most severe problem for wheelchair users in this compound. The classes, the toilets and the washrooms are not accessible for them. There is also big problem to make information accessible. We lost exam schedules. We missed a lot of opportunities due to inaccessibility of information.*"

The informant suggested that awareness must be raised. She also said that the services and the facilities must be improved. "*When I was in high school, I have never been taken my exams outside classrooms in a noisy and bad situation. My examiners (readers) were our teachers. But here we used to take our exams in an open air with unfavorable condition and we have to search*

readers. *While I see it, there are good practices which the university shares from high schools*" she suggests.

4.1.2 Presentation of Data from the Officials' Interview

4.1.2.1 Data from the MoE Officials

As noted in chapter three, officials from the MoE of the FDRE are one of the key informants of this study. The main intention of this interview was to see the policy, strategic and quality issues at national level however the data obtained goes beyond that. This data is presented below in brief.

i) The Policy Environment and Implementation

There was no significant difference on the views of the officials. Three of them explained that the policy environment is flattering which is challenged by implementation. One of the officials indicated that the policy environment and the move towards higher education inclusion are promising but not satisfactory. This official takes the 1994 ETP as one action forward towards inclusion however there is no specific inclusion policy on the document. He said, *"But the policy included sex, ethnicity, disability, religion and other elements of inclusion. The policy also included all marginalized groups of the society such as girls, PWDs and other disadvantaged or minority groups."* This official articulated how the policy tried to include all students who have different learning needs. He concluded that there is a workable policy environment despite poor implementation. The other officials by the same token underscored that the biggest challenge is implementing the policy and legal environment.

The officials articulated how the policy environment is challenged. They emphasized that the practice is jeopardized at institutional level. One of them mentioned that, based on the 1994 ETP and the constitution, the government is showing its concern for the SWDs and it is providing affirmative action on their placement exam and university assignment. Extending the same view, the other official asked critical question. As to him, the government provides affirmative action to higher education for those who deserve. He also indicated that the government encourages higher education institutions to continue this affirmative action. Then he asked and responded,

"From this point afterward whose responsibility is do you think to do accordingly? It is the universities' part".

The other official, in consistency with his colleagues, says, *"Of course, we know that the practice at grass root level is challenging. It exists like other challenges in the higher education institutions. We reportedly hear that there is accessibility problem. But the ETP and the higher education Proclamation permit all the necessary supports."*

Two of these officials also raised curricular and pedagogic issues. *"In particular, universities who accommodate SWDs have to revise their curriculum frameworks"* says one of them. The other official thinks that adapted curriculum is very important in particular for the VI and PI students. For him, PI students relatively do not need adapted curriculum. This official also strongly underlined that most of the things practiced in the institutions are the reflections of personal attitude which can be easily changed particularly by the teachers themselves.

ii) Strategic issues

One of the officials stated that in all the strategies, the government (MoE) is trying to include all learners. One can see some vivid activities in lower levels with regard to inclusive education but there are no as such explicit concerns in higher education, as he expressed. He further mentioned that there is a move at least to maximize the number of the SWDs. However, the findings from the document analysis revealed that the national strategic programs are far to consider the learning of the SWDs in higher education.

iii) Quality issues

According to one of the officials, quality by definition means *'fit for the purpose'*. This official honestly said that there are no specific quality standards with regard to the learning of the SWDs. He mentions, *"To be honest, we have not taken the issues of the SWDs in our standards. But it has to be and this is a good opportunity and we will include in our criteria or we will develop specific quality standards in this regard."*

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iv) Challenges, opportunities and suggestions

A very important expression was made by one of the officials to underscore the challenges, opportunities and suggestions. This official expresses:

I take the increased number of entrants in the universities as an achievement. I see the policy and legal environment as an opportunity. The self esteem among SWDs is also another opportunity. Attitude is the most barrier for inclusion at individual, institutional and national level. A changed attitude is quite challenging. Adequate resource and accessibility of buildings are other challenges. I would like to suggest few points to improve inclusion in higher education. First, listening to the voice of the SWDs is quite crucial. Deciding for the SWDs shall also be stopped. Let them decide on their selves. Supports to be provided shall be first identified. Lastly the society has to be attitudinally changed at individual, institutional and national level. We do not have focal person, team, desk or office that works on inclusion in higher education. But in the future, we may have at least a focal person.

4.1.2.2 Data obtained from the university officials

Four university officials and the VI and the PI students' associations' chairs were interviewed. In this section, only selective issues are presented in brief.

i) Policy and strategic issues

Variation was observed in the officials saying. With the regard to the university's disability policy, contradicting expressions were given by the two of the official. One said that there is a workable disability and equity policies in the university while the other official concluded the university has only a draft policy. "*The national and international policy environment is good. But the university has no policy on the students with disabilities*", says the latter official. However, the third official's explanation tries to mediate the above two. He says, "*Considering the university's documents as a policy or as a guideline might be questionable but by implication the university has a policy. I think AAU is unique for its center for disability. This implies that it has its own policy and system.*" As it will be seen in the discussion section, the university has no

policy on the learning of the SWDs. One of the officials also said that a strategy is prepared based on the policy however the problem is implementation.

ii) Accessibility issues

One of the university officials explained that priority is given to the SWDs in terms of the dormitory, cafeteria and clinic services. As to him, the SWDs must not follow normal procedures while they go to the cafeteria and clinic. They do not have to wait their turns, for instance. He also mentioned that the SWDs have special service in the cafeteria. With regard to the accessibility of buildings, the official said that first floors are reserved for PI students. This official also expressed the underway project to make toilets and wash rooms accessible for PI students in selected two buildings. Similarly, one of the chair persons of the associations appreciated this project.

As mentioned by one of the university official, the center gives special orientation for fresh SWDs every academic year. It provides learning materials such as brail, tape recorder, crutch, wheel chair etc. It also gives trainings to build the capacity of the students. During 'kiremit', it makes the necessary facilities for those who do not want leave the compound. This official further explains, *"Sometimes the center involves with awareness raising and advocacy activities. Some of the SWDs have awareness on their right some have no. Even those who know are frustrated to exercise their rights"*. However, the official mentioned that the SWDs are not satisfied with the service of the center as it is inadequate. He expresses the challenges and gives suggestions, *"Management and procurement procedures are challenging. As a beginning, it is good. But the service gradually has to be developed and digitalized"*.

It will be wise assessing the implementation of the aspects of the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 in the university as it constitutes prominent accessibility issues. Having in mind this, the researcher picked out these points from the proclamation and interviewed the officials not mentioning that these are derived from the proclamation. The following extract is taken from one of the officials.

We do not have a support to make exam time extension and deadline extension as we are planned, scheduled and programmed. I think at the department level there might be

flexibility. But generally, we do not have such rules and we do not have such provisions. We do not have specific plan and practice towards providing tutorials for the SWDs. But we do this for females and low achievers. Departments are providing technical assistance not academic support. We do have rather academic support for all students in terms of retaking courses, readmission etc. I do not think the SWDs can easily access necessary information. This is because we need suitable information dissemination mechanisms for each kind of the SWDs. We have to use assistive and adaptive technologies. Nevertheless, I know that they used to access information from their friends. All in all, the support which the university provides has its own cost implication however it is not adequate and it has to be strengthened.

In relation to the implementation of the proclamation, one of the officials even was not aware of the higher education institutions' responsibility toward the learning of the SWDs in the proclamation. This official appeared to be surprised while the interviewer asked him whether the university extends exam time and deadlines, and provides alternative assessing and testing procedures. With regard to the teachers' methodology, one of the chairs of the VI and the PI students' association said:

I do not know how I can explain teachers' method of teaching. Some of them even do not know who are learning in their classes. I know a professor who teaches with an overhead projector throughout his course. But there were four VI students in his class. My astonishment goes beyond his poor methodology. I was too much surprised with his frequent question he asks the class. He often says to the class 'Is it visible for you? Are you taking the note?' He has already forgotten those VI students.

iii) Attitude

One official believes that the university community in general has positive attitude toward the SWDs however he indicated how negative attitude damages all the students apart from SWDs. He also said that the attitude we took from the society is harmful for the SWDs. Contrary to this official, the other official believes that it is possible to conclude that the university community has negative attitude as it is bounded by medical and charity models of conception.

Consequently, he further mentioned that the SWDs are full of grievance and have strong negative attitude since the university is resistant for change. *“Many SWDs often condemn the university community. In particular, teachers are the most hated members of the university community by the SWDs”* he says.

4.1.3 Presentation of Quantitative Data

This section of data presentation includes questionnaires distributed to the SWDs, NDSs and teachers.

4.1.3.1 Data obtained from the questionnaire distributed to the SWDs

SWDs were requested to rate their satisfaction on the service or support they got from the service providers and the university community. So as to triangulate major findings, only selected part of the data is presented.

Table: 2 SWDs Satisfaction on the Service or Support Provision

	Highly satisfactory	Satisfactory	I have no idea	Unsatisfactory	Highly unsatisfactory
Cafeteria	8(17.39)	28(60.86)	2(4.34)	6(13.04)	2(4.34)
Library	2(4.34)	8(17.39)	2(4.34)	26(56.52)	7(15.21)
Department	4(8.69)	15(32.60)	1(2.17)	20(43.47)	6(13.04)
Students dean office	1(2.17)	8(17.39)	18(39.13)	14 (30.43)	5 (10.86)
Center for disability	5(10.6)	19(41.30)	2(4.34)	9(19.56)	10(21.73)
Students with disabilities	19(41.30)	21 (41.65)	3(6.56)	3(6.56)	–
Non disabled students	23(50)	15(32.60)	1(2.17)	7(15.21)	–
Teachers	3(6.53)	9(19.56)	2(4.34)	19(41.30)	13(28.26)
Administrators	1(2.17)	13(28.26)	7(15.21)	18(39.13)	7(15.21)
Proctors	14(30.43)	20(43.47)	5(10.86)	7(15.21)	–

As depicted in this table, 50 % the participants are highly satisfied and 32% of them are satisfied by the support of the NDSs. It is possible to say that more than 82% of the participants are satisfied with the extent of their satisfaction. Similarly, with insignificant difference, more than 82% of the participants are satisfied by the support of the SWDs. Contrary to this, it is also possible to say almost 70% of the participants are unsatisfied by the support of their teachers.

Next to the teachers, 54% of the participants are unsatisfied by the service or the support of administrators. Furthermore, the least satisfaction is observed by the library service.

Students were asked dichotomous questions with regard to their placement, their rights, and their knowledge on inclusive education and the provision of academic support that the university shall provide as per the higher education proclamation 650/2009. The questions were prepared dichotomously as the researcher has prior data on the variables from the qualitative enquiry.

Table 3: SWDs Placement and their Knowledge on their Right and Inclusive Education

	Yes (%)	No (%)
Have you been assigned to this university according to your interest?	71.73	28.26
Have you been assigned to your department according to your interest?	67.39	32.60
Do you know your rights written on the 2009/650 Higher Education Proclamation?	4.34	95.65
Do you have some knowledge about inclusive education?	36.95	63.04
Does the university provide tutorials for SWDs?	8.69	91.30
Does the university extend exam time and program deadlines for students with disabilities when the need arises?	10.86	89.13
Does the university relocate classes for students with disabilities?	13.04	86.95
Does the university develop alternative testing procedures for students with disabilities?	4.34	95.65

As noted from the above table, 71.7 % of the participants are assigned to the university based on their interest while 67% of the participants are assigned to their department according to their interest. It is also shown that 95.6 % of the participants do not know their rights written on the

Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009. On the other hand, 63 % of the participants do not have knowledge about inclusive education. Much importantly, this table visibly showed the status of the implementation of the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009. Henceforth, as the participants responded, it remained impractical.

4.1.3.2 Data obtained from the NDSs

NDSs informants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with four important statements. Two of these statements and the students’ response are presented below on table 3. NDSs were also asked three questions with regard to the facilities and service provision. Two of these questions and the students’ response are presented on table 4.

Table: 4 NDSs Perception on the SWDs

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
University students with disabilities are dependent on non-disabled students.	1(2.27)	9(20.45)	10(22.72)	20(45.45)	4(9.09)
University students with disabilities have positive attitude towards NDSs.	10(22.72)	23(52.27)	9(20.45)	2(4.54)	—

This table shows that 54.5% of the participants do not believe that SWDs are dependent on NDSs where as 22. 7% of them remained neutral. On the other hand, 75% of these participants believe that SWDs have positive attitude toward the NDS.

Table: 5 NDSs view on the Service and Facilities

	Highly satisfactory	Satisfactory	I have no idea	Unsatisfactory	Highly unsatisfactory
How do you explain the university’s facilities for the students with disabilities?	2(4.54)	9(20.45)	6(13.63)	23(50%)	5(11.36)
How do you explain the university’s service and support provision to the students with disabilities?	2(4.54)	14(31.81)	6(13.63)	19(43.18)	3(6.81)

From this table it is quite easy to understand that 61.3% of the participants, with their extent, believe that the university’s facilities for the SWDs are unsatisfactory while 50% of the participants believe that the university’s service and support provision to the SWDs are unsatisfactory.

The participants were also asked to explain their communication with the SWDs. Accordingly, 70.4% of them expressed that they have good relationships with the SWDs.

4.1.3.3 Data obtained from the teachers

Teachers were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement on the following statements.

Table 6: Teachers’ Perception on Disability

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Everyone has learning difficulties like students with disabilities.	14(40)	8(22.85)	3(8.57)	5(14.28)	5(14.28)
University students with disabilities are dependent on the university community.	11(31.42)	8(22.85)	4(11.42)	7(20)	5(14.28)

As seen from the above table, almost 63% of the participants agreed that everyone has learning difficulties like the SWDs however their agreement varies with the extent. The table also shows that 54.2% of the participants agreed that the SWDs are dependent on the university community with their extent to agree.

Teachers were also asked to indicate to what extent the following activities are practical by them. Some of these activities are derived from the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009.

Table 7: Teachers Academic Support Provision for the SWDs

	Always	Mostly	Often	Seldom	Not at all
If there is a VI student in my class I will permit him/her to record my lectures.	19(54.28)	5(14.28)	–	–	11(31.42)
If there is PI student in my class, I will facilitate to make the class at the ground floor.	8(22.85)	4(11.42)	–	20(57.14)	2(5.71)
I used to give alternative assignments to SWDs.	5(14.28)	1(2.85)	3(8.57)	2(5.71)	24(68.57)
I used to provide alternative testing procedures for SWDs.	5(14.28)	2(5.71)	1(2.85)	2(5.71)	25(71.42)
I used to encourage SWDs participate in class room activities.	13(37.14)	8(22.85)	4(11.42)	5(14.28)	5(14.28)

As depicted on the above table, more than half of the participants allow their students to record their lectures and encourage the SWDs to participate in their classes. Otherwise, from this table it is possible to understand that 70% of the participants do not provide alternative assignments and testing procedures to the SWDs. Consequently, this response ascertained that the proclamation is not applied by majority of teachers

Teachers were asked whether they had taken the pedagogy course or not during their post graduate training. Accordingly, 60% of them said “yes” whereas 40% of them replied “no”. Those who said “yes” were asked whether they got a sort of exposure or an insight from the course to implement inclusive way of teaching. Accordingly, 11.4% said “yes” whereas 48.5 of them replied “no”.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 The Policy Environment

The result from the officials' interview indicated that the policy environment toward inclusion in higher education at national level is good but not sufficient. At institutional level, the case interviewees and some officials mentioned the policy environment differently. Some of the case interviewees have no idea whether the university has a policy or legislation that recognizes inclusion. Some said that there is a policy but inadequate and not ratified while others said that the university has no disability policy. Quite differently, one of the officials mentioned that the university has a workable equity and disability policies in spite of the fact that the other official declared the presence of a draft policy on disability service. In an attempt to triangulate the above controversy through document analysis, it is true that the "policy" remained a draft document. Nor does the university have the mentioned equity policy.

The policy and legal frameworks in support of inclusive education mainly ranges from the 1994 ETP to the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009. The 1994 ETP under its specific objective 2.2.3 aims to enable both the handicapped and the gifted learn in accordance with their potential and needs. This specific objective can be taken as a major ground to promote inclusion at all levels of education however it lacks clarity in inclusion (MoE, 2006).

The 1995 constitution of the FDRE Article 41(5) emphasizes the state's responsibility to allocate resources, to provide rehabilitation and assistance to the PWDs considering education as one of the social services on the same article (3). On the basis of these two frameworks, it is paramount to proclaim or to issue specific policies on inclusive education. Henceforth, the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 can be taken as a legal frame work for inclusion in higher education. This proclamation recognizes some of the major aspects of higher education inclusion in terms of the rights of the SWDs. Part One Section Three Sub Article 40 of this document comprises some of the basic physical and academic accessibility issues.

However, inclusion will not be effective unless disability legislation or policy is emanated and issued from the proclamation at institutional level. Notwithstanding the effects of other local and international frameworks, thus, the concern of the 1994 ETP and the 1995 Ethiopian Constitution in general, and the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 in particular can be taken as the strong side of the policy environment at national level where as the absence of disability policy or legislation remains the weakness of the policy environment at institution level.

4.2.2 The national and institutional strategies

Two ESDPs (III & IV) and the 2006 SNE strategic documents are analyzed at national level. The first two ESDPs have no attention to inclusion in higher education. In comparison, the third and the fourth ESDPs considered inclusion in higher education in terms of provision of access. Consequently, the number of SWDs who enter public higher education institutions has been raised. Nevertheless, these strategic programs do not have concerns to inclusion within education. The current ESDP IV in line with the GTP anticipates the outcome of SNE with a special focus to general education. Except raising the access (from 389 in 2009/10 to 946 in 2014/15), this strategic document planned nothing on higher education inclusion (MoE, 2010).

If the concern of inclusion in higher education is confined to the provision of access, this is the weakest sense of inclusion (Andrea & Gosling, 2005). Of course, this weakest sense of inclusion (the provision of access) is crucially important for the country as there are many PWDs who are denied from the access to higher education. But the quest here is the strongest sense of inclusion that is recognizing the SWDs as full member of learning community. While this strategic document identifies the main challenges of higher education, it did not consider problems related to the SWDs learning. It also intends to improve the quality of higher education without inclusion while inclusion and quality remain reciprocal (UNESCO, 2009). The document did not plan to improve the learning of the SWDs. All in all, it appears to be inclusion in higher education is not the concern of the sector GTP. Rather, gender inclusion has got a limelight in the document.

The SNE strategy was launched in 2006 in particular emphasis to UPEC and EFA. This strategic document does not totally exclude the issues of higher education inclusion. Nonetheless, it has its

own limitations and complications. This strategy has prominent aspects however it has no single strategic priorities and activities on higher education inclusion. This strategy sets division of duties and responsibilities in the education system. Except at the federal level, all the duties and responsibilities are designed to suit the structural organization of general education. The strategy envisages increased awareness at all levels of education. It also sets regular supports that should be given for higher education. Much importantly, this document puts some indicators of change toward inclusion in higher education. However, it is observed that this document is not considered as a strategic framework to higher education inclusion both at the ministry and the university levels.

At institutional level, the university's 2008-2013 strategic plan tried to include some of the elements of inclusion however one of the officials said that the university does not have a concern on its strategic plan towards the SWDs. The finding from the document analysis revealed that the strategy planned to strengthen the center for disability, ensure convenient facilities, extend special supports and conduct comprehensive university wide study.

4.2.3 Reception and registration related problems

The findings depicted that the university considers the first choices of the fields of studies made by the SWDs. The university also provides special orientation for the SWDs after the reception and registration are completed. The essential point what the university missed here is that the need for information and support provision at the reception and admission procedures as SWDs who are supposed to be university entrants profoundly need sufficient information and support before, while and after admission (Adams, 2006).

Almost all the case informants were expecting proper information and support when they reached the university. Nonetheless, the findings visibly unmasked serious problems in relation to the reception and the registration procedures. Half of the case informants could not get their first choice due to wrong information in their field selection. As noted above, the university deploys affirmative action on the field selection of the SWDs. But how can the SWDs access this information? The university had to consider the need for orientation on its affirmative action. Had the university's special orientation was done before the registration, this might not happen.

They had to be also oriented how they can fill the forms, what cost sharing is etc...and supporting mechanisms had been put in place.

The findings also revealed with specific accessibility problems in the course of registration procedures. For the VI students, accessing the right information, finding readers and writers to fill the lengthy formats is a big challenge while registration building accessibility is a major problem for the PI students particularly wheelchair users.

4.2.4 Knowledge and awareness

Limited understanding of the concept of disability is identified as one of the major barriers in Ethiopian inclusive education (MoE, 2010) which is believed to be the major cause for the prevalence of negative attitude (UNESCO, 2009). The knowledge and awareness of the university community on disability and inclusion appeared to be poor. The majority of the informants themselves have no adequate knowledge on inclusion. Some teachers found to have limited awareness on disability. These teachers view the SWDs as individuals being somehow 'in deficit' (Clough, 2008). For these teachers, SWDs are weaklings that are unable to perform by themselves. Making the academic sphere accessible for the SWDs is considered as a favor by some of these teachers. Inadequate knowledge attributed to the conception of medical and charity models of disability is seen among the university community.

The FDG discussants boldly underlined the need for knowledge and awareness rising to the university community. These discussants expressed that the mode of support provided to the SWDs itself implies how the university community articulates disability within the charity model of disability. One of the discussants also indicated that some have unchanged mind however they have some knowledge on inclusion and disability.

From the participant teachers, 54.27% of them believed that the SWDs are dependent on the university community where as 34.28% of the participants do not. It seems that more than half of the teachers perceive that the SWDs are unable to do by themselves. This again appeared to support the conception of some teachers mentioned by the case informants that says '*they can't*'. If this conception is true, the SWDs predominantly must be dependent on the NDSs from the university community. However, 54.44% the SWDs disagreed against the conception while

22.72% of them remain neutral. From the findings of the questionnaire, it is possible to draw that half of the participant teachers are confined to the medical model of disability.

The need for awareness raising activities, therefore, was a recurrent and strong suggestion made by most of the participants. The participants also underlined the significance of awareness rising on the rights and responsibilities of the SWDs.

4.2.5 Attitude

Attitude in the context of this research comprises three major dimensions: cognitive, affective and behavioral dimensions (Devin (2001) as cited in Eleni, 2010). The cognitive dimension goes to the knowledge of the university community towards SWDs, the affective aspect refers to the feeling of the university community to communicate or to make a relationship with the SWDs and the behavioral perspective means the willingness of the university community to support the SWDs.

Inclusive education is considered to be the most effective tool to combat discriminating attitudes...(Mitchell, 2007) and attitudinal related problems are the most serious ones that hinder inclusion in education (UNESCO, 2009). Consistently, most of the informant officials underlined that attitude is the highest barrier for inclusion. In this respect, one of the officials strongly reminded that the society at all levels and within any context shall be attitudinally changed if meaningful inclusion in higher education is anticipated. By the same token, some of the cases and other informants underscored the prominence of a changed attitude among the university community, particularly among teachers so as to see a better inclusion in higher education.

The FDG discussants who made a focused discussion on communication and attitude, depicted that the university community has no a newly established attitude towards the SWDs. They said it is rather acquired from the society as part of it. They further indicated that the university community is not expected to have positive attitude as the society's attitude is negative which basis the medical and charity models of disability. They also underpinned that the SWDs do not have positive attitude to the university community. Some of the discussants made the university community accountable for this. Conversely, one of the other discussant appeared to blame the SWDs for this while the third discussant underlined the two way accountability. After a while

debate, the FDG discussants come to a consensus that the university community is a cause for the negative attitude of the SWDs. Similar finding was also obtained from one of the chairs of the association of the SWDs.

As opposed to one of the university officials, the FDG discussants believe that the majority of the university community in particular teachers, have negative attitude toward the SWDs. On the other hand, the findings asserted that there are few teachers who are supportive and have positive mind toward the SWDs. While there are teachers found to be rude, unsupportive and unethical, the findings also revealed the presence of few teachers who are considerate, supportive and changed.

The incidents told by the case participants visibly showed that there are some teachers who have negative attitude toward the SWDs. The hate speech these teachers utter, the way they behave in the class (including their method of teaching), irresponsiveness they show, astonishing assignments they give, their predetermined grades, their mind set that says "*they can't*" etc all these ascertained these teachers' bad attitude.

In comparison, majority of the NDSs are believed to have positive attitude towards the SWDs. Most of the case informants confirmed this and in consistency with this finding 74.99% of the NDSs participants believe that the SWDs have positive attitude for them. Nevertheless, it will not be forgotten that some of the case informants are disappointed by the attitude and deeds of few NDSs. Furthermore, it should be noted that unwillingness of some of the NDSs to include the SWDs in group assignments is the reflection of their attitude.

One of the major prominent issue appeared in the research finding with respect to attitude is the difficulty of having a changed mind set at all levels of the society. Plainly, every member of the university community is part of the society. Articulating the attitude of the university community toward the SWDs without the context of the society may seem an abortive attempt for the society is confined with persistent discriminatory cultures. To the extent, the society sometimes does not know how it marginalizes the non disabled people from their social rights in the process of its discriminatory practices on the PWDs. As a part of the society, the family of one of the case informants was not aware of its exclusionary deed on its two non disabled female children while

it excluded its female disabled child from marital opportunities. The family did not know how it denied the educational right of its two non disabled female children when it decided a pursuance of further education for its disabled child. It is due to this conception that the case informant (case 6) considered her disability as an opportunity to be a university student. On the other hand, it is to be noted that the majority of the university community has a wider opportunities to have a changed attitude toward the SWDs.

4.2.6 Accessibility

As indicate in chapter two, accessibility issues can be seen in three major issues: physical accessibility, academic accessibility and social accessibility (the Ireland National Disability Authority, 2008). The findings have shown the status of these accessibilities in relation to the learning of the SWDs.

4.2.6.1 Physical Accessibility

Building accessibility is one of the biggest challenges expressed by many of the research participants. The observation checklist also consolidates this finding. PI students are the most vulnerable to this problem. The class rooms, toilets, washrooms, library, clinic and most of the offices are not accessible for them. As a result, these students are exposed for different complications.

PI students often face problems while they move around between different classrooms in order to meet the strict requirements of the timetable which requires rapid movement from one classroom to another. This is quite impossible as there is often limited time allowed between lessons to arrive in the next classroom on time (the Ireland National Disability Authority, 2008). Nonetheless, the findings affirmed that some of teachers do not consider the inaccessibility of the classes and the landscape of the compound while the SWDs come late to the classes; they do not allow the SWDs to enter. As instance of this, PI students, in particular who have severe mobility problems and wheelchair users are forced to miss their classes and seat for exams with poor preparations. Gradually, some of them will be exposed for academic complications including complete dismissal.

The findings attested that VI students are more challenged by the service of the library than PI students. All the VI students were narrating the problem in a very desperate manner. These students every semester used to go to the library (VI Students' library) to find brail written course materials and books soon after they received the lists of references for the courses to be taken in that particular semester. They try to search the references or related reading materials. Mostly, they will get nothing but waste of time. The same is true while they are given assignments. The library has 9 old computers for 192 VI students. The reading and recording rooms are also inadequate, under resourced and look untidy. This problem remained serious academic inaccessibility of the VI students. The findings from the observation revealed that fields such as Law, Ethiopian Language and Sociology have some related books and reading materials. No single reading material is available for some of the studies like PSIR, Social Work and Special Needs Education.

PI students particularly the wheel chair users have problems to access the building and the service system. Only the first floor of the main library is accessible for most them. They hardly step down and up the library. The reading rooms have no enough and suitable space for movement. As a result, they cannot move around and search reference books. There is no disability specific service, too. Furthermore, the finding from the questionnaire attested that 71.73% the SWDs are not satisfied in the library service.

Serious problem is not observed on the service of the cafeteria and only 17.38 % of the SWDs expressed their dissatisfaction on the service. The hand washing facility is not accessible for both the VI and the PI students. The cafeteria has special service for the SWDs. They used to be served by the cafeteria workers in separate dining table. One of the case informants seriously criticized this service. He considers this as exclusion. He dislikes a special treatment in every aspect of the services and supports for he has grown in an inclusive way of life. By now, he is having his dish together with NDSs. From the point of the concept of inclusion, this informant has raised important issue to be considered. His central argument is that the services and the supports toward the SWDs must consider their interests and their abilities. Similarly, one of the higher officials of the MoE suggested that the services and supports have been properly

identified. Notwithstanding the importance of the special service in the cafeteria, it may need also revision in terms of inclusivity.

The presence of the center for disability is viewed as an opportunity by some of the case informants, as a unique feature of the university by one of the university officials and as inadequate technical support providing center by many of the informants. One of the university officials frankly mentioned that the students are unsatisfied with the service of the center as it is under resourced and not well established. The official also indicated that the center is trying to improve its service however lack of proper attention from the university management and procurement related problems are challenging. Similarly, some of the case informants believe that the service is inadequate while 41.29 % of the SWDs expressed their dissatisfaction.

The university provides financial support, very limited learning materials and other equipments to the VI and the PI students through the center for disability and other offices. Learning materials include white paper, pens, brail paper, voice recorder and cassettes, white cane, hub, and pair of shoes (for those who have mobility problems on their legs) and other equipments. There is a problem of procurement of these materials and equipments. Many of the case informants indicated that the financial support and the provision of materials are not done timely.

4.2.6.2 Academic Accessibility

The concept of adaptability, on the basis of both the curricular model and the human right model of inclusion (Nind, 2005; Lewis, 2008; UNESCO, 2009) is found to be impractical in the teaching and learning process of the university. All the participants, except few teachers, boldly indicated that the university is too far from adapted curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. Likewise, the university officials indicated the absence of adapted curriculum framework, pedagogy and assessment that considers the SWDs. Particularly, the teachers' method of teaching and assessment procedures are seriously criticized by the research participants. Most teachers had not been trained in an inclusive way of teaching methodology and assessment procedures however they took the pedagogy course during their post graduate training.

At the practical end of the teaching spectrum, academic teaching staff needs to consider how to develop and disseminate assignments and examinations in order to implement inclusive assessment procedures (Adams, 2010). This is also one of the issues indicated in the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009. Nevertheless, teachers were found to be very far from this. The findings profoundly showed that problems related to assessment and grading procedures are the most severe academic exclusions particularly for VI students. Among others, irrelevant tests and assignments, unfavorable testing conditions, inaccessibility of readers and writers, and predetermined grading are principal problems in which the cases asserted with sad incidents.

It appears to be professionally unfit if a university teacher gives a literary critic assignment on a 270 pages novel for a VI student in the absence of adapted material. This teacher may not represent the university teachers. But the fact from the finding is that there are still some teachers who are strangers for the concept of adapted assessment. As indicated by the majority of case informants, these teachers are not only far from adaptability. They are also too far from the concepts of diversity, disability, human right and professional ethics.

The culture of predetermined grading originally comes from the negative attitude (UNESCO, 2009) and low expectation of the teachers. Potential danger of teachers' expectations that are too low is that it can result in a self-fulfilling prophecy, especially where teachers may not expect SWDs to perform well at exams (the Ireland National Disability Authority, 2008). In the same way, the research findings asserted that some teachers are highly affected by the conception of the medical model of disability in that they give prejudgment on the academic ability of the SWDs. They do not recognize the SWD's performance. Some of them easily identify VI students by their names and give the predetermined grade. Others also order the students to write a word '*blind*' on their exam paper so that these teachers pick out them and give the predetermined grade. As many of the informant students said, the most common predetermined grade is "C".

Except VI students in Law School, all the VI students used to take their exams outside the class with unfavorable situation. Apart from the noisy, sometimes cold and rainy situation, the SWDs are too much suffering with readers' and financial related problems. As mentioned by one of the cases, the testing procedure appeared to be less favorable than her high school.

Other academic and related supports such as tutorials, deadline extension and exam time extension, alternative testing procedures, accessibility of information and class room relocation etc are also indicated in the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009. As underpinned by most of the research participants, however, the proclamation remained impractical. In the first place, these informants are uncertain whether the university knows the proclamation in terms of the rights of the SWDs. As indicated by one of the officials and one of the cases, the affirmative action provided at national level discontinued at the university level. But this is exclusive of the university's concern on the SWDs department placement.

It is profoundly important how the academic background of the VI students affect their higher education as depicted by one of the case informants. Most probably, the poor academic background implies nothing but the status of inclusion in general education. That is why this informant suggested the need for proper inclusion in general education.

4.2.6.3 Social accessibility

Under this sub topic, the communication between the SWDs and the university community is discussed. The FDG discussants were discussing this issue in focus. Teacher and the NDSs who participated in the questionnaire were asked what their communication looks like with the SWDs. Accordingly, the majority of the NDSs were appeared to have good communication with the SWDs than the teachers. The majority (more than 82%) of the SWDs were also expressed their satisfaction by the support of the NDSs.

The level of the knowledge and awareness of the university community on disability and inclusion can be a basis for the attitude they have towards the SWDs. This attitude in turn decides the communication between the university community and the SWDs. The finding from the FGD clearly affirmed this fact. All the discussants underlined the relationship between awareness, attitude and communication. One of the discussant also indicated that the attitude of the university community depends upon the society's attitude. Contrary to this, one of the case informants differentiates the society's attitude from the university community's attitude in that the latter has positive attitude as all its members are literate.

The FGD discussants generally asserted the prevalence of poor communication between the SWDs and the university community because of lack of awareness and knowledge, and negative attitude. Particularly, they agreed on teachers' weak communication with the SWDs while they indicated a better communication between the SWDs and NDSs. This finding is strengthened by the majority of the case informants and the NDSs participants. The findings also showed that building inaccessibility has its own impact on communication. This is particularly confined to the PI students. The more the buildings are inaccessible for them, the more they are detached from the university community. Furthermore, findings also uncovered how some case informants are grown in an inclusive way of schooling. Those who came from boarding school are expected to have good relationships with the university community. Apart from this, an informant is found to be well grown in an inclusive manner that used to live with the nondisabled group of the society however he is a VI student with a pair of walker. Conversely, it is also found that there are few VI students who have extreme hatred to communicate with the university community.

Apprehension is taken as a communication barrier by one of the case informants. This informant believes that SWDs have a worry not to be burden for the NDSs while the NDSs in turn feel uncertainty whether they fulfilled the needs of the SWDs. Due to this fear, the communication between the SWDs and the NDSs will be paralyzed, as the informant pointed.

As depicted by one of the officials and some case informants, the voice of the VI and PI students is not listened however listening to the voice of the SWDs is the first and the most prominent issue in higher education inclusion (Adams, 2010). This official also put that one of the best solution to have a real inclusion in higher education is listening to the voice of the SWDs. It was easy to understand that this situation forced the SWDs to think "*nobody listens us*" and how this in turn made them socially excluded.

4.2.7 Major Disability Specific Problems

Up to now the findings have shown that knowledge, attitude and accessibility related problems and exclusionary practices within the VI and the PI students. Both the VI and the PI students are challenged with all the problems mentioned so far. But there are VI and PI specific issues since

the extent and the type of the problems have variations. The following table briefly highlights major specific VI and PI problems.

Figure: 1 the VI and the PI Students' Specific Problems

VI related Problems	PI related Problems
Accessibility of adapted reading material is serious academic problem for most of the VI students. Some of the fields even do not have a single reading material. Throughout the courses, assignments and their thesis papers, they are extremely vulnerable to the problem. Consequently, many of them are unsuccessful.	Accessibility of buildings and their respective facilities such as dormitories, classrooms, library, toilets and washrooms are serious problems. Due to inaccessibility of the classrooms, some of them used to miss their classes which this in turn have devastating effect in their academic achievement.
They used to take their exams in unfavorable situation outside the classrooms. However, they have to pass financial and readers' related challenges to take their exams in this situation.	They might be late to reach on time and there is no suitable seating arrangement. Some of them are also challenged to finish the exams on time due to their mobility problems.
Alternative assignments are big problems. This problem creates multiple problems like dependency, exclusion and poor performances.	To cope up with their counter parts in assignments, the library and its service is not accessible.
Because of low expectations of most of their teachers, they are suffering with predetermined grading.	Few teachers have low expectations for them.

It seems that the VI students are more challenged by academic accessibility where as the PI students are more challenged by physical accessibility. However, social accessibility seems a challenge which they commonly share.

4.2.8 Major Challenges and Opportunities

All the MoE officials strongly underlined that implementing the national policy environment at institutional level is the biggest challenge. They also indicated that attitude and lack of resource are other challenges. The policy environment, the increased number of entrants and the self esteem of the students are amongst the opportunities stated by these officials.

Including some of the university officials, the majority informants have mentioned that attitude is chronic challenge. They also strongly suggested that awareness rising is crucially important to create attitudinally changed university community. These informants indicated that the establishment of the center for disability is an opportunity for the betterment of inclusion in the university. Some of them also expressed that the ever evolving confidence within the SWDs is another opportunity.

Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

The major objective of this study was to uncover the policy environment and the practices of inclusion in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions in particular focus to AAU. This research followed a sequential exploratory mixed design that is predominantly governed by qualitative enquiry and supported by the quantitative approach. In this study, 17 key informants (8 cases, 3 higher officials from MoE, 4 university officials and 2 chair students from SWDs Associations of the AAU), 59 PI and VI students, 63 NDSs and 39 teachers. In depth and semi structured interviews, questionnaire, FGD, document analysis and observation were used. The qualitative data which was obtained from the key informants was supported and triangulated by other instruments.

Where there is no a university legislation or policy at institutional level, the finding from the document analysis and the officials interview affirmed the prevalence of encouraging but not adequate policy environment at national level. The 1994 ETP and the 1995 Ethiopian Constitution in collaboration with the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 created a workable platform towards inclusion in terms of disability. As both the 1994 ETP and the 1995 Ethiopian Constitution enhance the right based model of education, the policy environment in general appeared to be favorable to combat educational exclusion at all levels.

The reflection of the policy environment in the national strategic programs, however, remained negligible. ESDP III and ESDP IV merely attempted to raise the number of SWDs in public higher education institutions. While priorities and challenges of higher education are well articulated in these two strategic documents, any concern is not shown towards the inclusion of the SWDs within higher education. Despite its confinement to general education, the 2006 SNE Strategy set some important aspects of higher education inclusion. Nevertheless, it is not considered as a strategic document that contributes to higher education inclusion.

The university strategic plan (2008-2013) on its part has put some concerns with regard to the learning of the SWDs. It envisaged strengthening the center for disability, ensure convenient

facilities, extend special supports and conduct comprehensive university wide study. Yet failure on implementation, the strategic document showed a promising concern towards the learning of the SWDs. As a strategic document, however, it failed to clearly harmonize the aspects of the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009.

Problems related with reception and registration seems overlooked despite their severity. No single participant appeared to be happy with the reception and registration procedures. Conversely, all were too much disappointed and explained their grievance with anger. Except lack of concern or proper understanding of the problem, this was not something that needs extraordinary action for the university. To the extent, the university did not recognize how its affirmative action jeopardized due to lack of timely orientation.

Inadequate knowledge and awareness on disability and inclusion is observed among the university community. Consequently, the conception and the support provision of the university community are highly attributed to the medical and charity models of disability.

Among the problems the findings uncovered in this study, problems related to attitude remained to be serious. Almost all the participants in the qualitative enquiry indicated the need for attitudinal change within the university community. Some of these informants underpinned in most cases that other problems are the results of negative attitude. They also articulated the relationship of attitude to knowledge and awareness. The participants, especially the cases, asserted some teachers' negative attitude toward the SWDs which are reflected with varieties of incidents and utterances. Some of the hate speeches like *"ከዝንብ ማር ይጠበቃል?"* (*Is honey expected from a fly?*) found to be dehumanization that had a devastating psychological effect on the individual informant.

Furthermore, some informants underlined that the existing negative attitude is not a new culture established in the university. They said that all the conceptions and deeds of the university community is the reflection of the society however one of the case informant believes that the university community has positive attitude as the majority of its members are literate. Some of the participants also believe that many of the SWDs developed hatred and negative attitude toward the university community in general and to the teachers in particular.

This study has come up with thick qualitative and supportive quantitative data. The lion share coverage of the data goes to the issues related with accessibility. In view of that, the physical, academic and social accessibilities of the university are uncovered in terms of the learning of the SWDs. Amongst these problems, inaccessibility of buildings and their facilities like class rooms, toilets, wash rooms, library etc... from the physical accessibility and inadaptability from the academic accessibility remained the severe challenges. Exclusion and poor communication with the university community was also discovered as a problem related to social accessibility.

Major VI and PI specific problems were also identified. Accordingly, accessibility of adapted reading material (materials written in brail) was found to be serious academic problem for the VI students. Many of the courses that the VI students are taking have no adapted reference materials. Some of the fields even do not have any reading material. Fields such as Political Science and International Relations, Social Work and Special Needs Education have no a single reading material prepared with brail. The problem of the inaccessibility of the reading materials comes to be the worst while the VI students need to do their assignments as almost all teachers are not giving alternative assignments. Consequently, some of the students will be exposed for dependency. Some NDSs may work the assignments for them. But this is not because they are not capable enough. It is due to the inaccessibility problem of the reading materials as one of the case informants strongly underlined. On the other hand, some of the students showed their patience and strength through their challenges to make the inaccessible assignments accessible. The bitter struggle to do a literary critic assignment on 270 pages novel by one of the VI student can be a manifest truth for this. Because of low expectations from most of their teachers, the VI students are also suffering with predetermined grading.

Accessibility of buildings and their respective facilities such as dormitories, classrooms, library, toilets, hand washing facilities and washrooms are serious problems of the VI students. Due to the inaccessibility of the classrooms, some of them used to miss their classes which this in turn have devastating effect in their achievement. Some teachers do not allow them if they are unable to reach on time for the class. These teachers do not consider the inaccessibility of the buildings and the landscape of the compound. If the first floor of the main library is fully engaged, most of the PI students will return back to their dormitories. They are unable to find books moving

around as there is no enough space and suitable seating arrangement and this inaccessibility influenced their academic performance. Inaccessibility of toilets and washrooms are terribly affecting their life in the university. As most of the offices and lounges are not accessible, their communication to the university community is also affected.

As underpinned by the MoE officials, this research unmasked that implementing the existing national policy environment is a fundamental challenge. This is vividly shown on the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009. Being other issues of the proclamation with respect to the SWDs are equally important, the issues stated on Part One Section Three Sub Article 40 remained paper tiger in the university. On the basis of the findings, the situation is under presented.

Figure: 2 Issues of the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 and Implementation

Issues of the proclamation	Implementation
1/ Institutions shall make, to the extent possible, their facilities and programs amenable to use with relative ease by physically challenged students.	In most cases, the facilities and the programs of the university are not amenable to use relative ease by the SWDs.
2/ Institutions shall, to the extent that situations and resources permit, relocate classes, develop alternative testing procedures, and provide different educational auxiliary aids in the interest of students with physical challenges.	The university does not relocate class rooms; provide alternative testing procedures and educational auxiliary aids. One of the university official frankly mentioned that the university does not provide such a support.
3/ Building designs, campus physical landscape, computers and other infrastructures of institutions shall take into account the interests of physically challenged students.	Building inaccessibility is severe challenge however efforts are observed to make ramps; the center has 16 computers for around 300 SWDs and the VI library has 9 old computers for 192 VI students.
4/ Institutions shall ensure that students with physical challenges get to the extent necessary and feasible academic assistance, including tutorial sessions, exam time extensions and deadline extensions.	The university does not give tutorials for the SWDs and extend exam time and deadlines. To the extent, the university officials were not aware of such issues as some of the case informants expected.

With regard to the major challenges and opportunities, implementing the policy environment at institutional level, attitude and lack of resource were found to be the biggest challenges of inclusion in the public higher education institutions. The policy environment, the increased number of entrants and the self esteem of the students are amongst the opportunities stated by the higher officials. At the university level, the majority informants have mentioned that attitude is chronic challenge. These informants considered the establishment of the center for disability as an opportunity for the betterment of inclusion in the university. Some of them also expressed that the ever evolving of the confidence of the SWDs is another opportunity.

5.2 Conclusion

This research has deployed varieties of instruments to uncover inclusion in public higher education institutions in particular focus to AAU and has come up with prominent results. Based on the major findings of the study, the following conclusion is made.

Both the 1994 ETP and the 1995 Ethiopian constitution can be considered as forerunners for the subsequent Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 and the prospect other policy frameworks toward inclusion in higher education. Henceforth, at the moment, there is promising but not adequate policy environment at national level. Conversely, the policy environment at the institution level yet could not be reality. From the strategic planning point of view, however, the university strategic plan (2008-2013) envisaged for a betterment of the learning of the SWDs where as the national strategic move remained inconsistent with the policy environment. But this does not mean the university has been accomplishing as it planned in its strategy. Notwithstanding its effort towards the support provision for the SWDs, the university is too far behind inclusion in higher education.

A kind of strong causal relationships has been observed from the findings of this study. Lack of strategic concern and absence of quality standards in higher education inclusion at national level has a profound impact on the status of inclusion at institution level. Had inclusion been one of the strategic priorities of the country in higher education and there was a quality standard in terms of the learning of the SWDs, inclusion would have been better in higher education institutions including AAU.

Attitude found to be the most serious problem in the institution. This attitude is also appeared to be the result of the society at one hand, and the outcome of poor knowledge and awareness on the other hand. Consequently, the university management lacked adequate concern and this is manifested in the absence of policy or legislation. Without further attention in this respect, the university would have a better inclusion had it solely implemented the very clear and the most easily applicable issues of the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009. In this vicious circle, accessibility with its dimension (physical, academic and social) became a well known problem in

the university. Among others, building accessibility, adaptability and social exclusions are the major ones.

AAU has long recognized inclusive education; at least it has started to include VI students since the last three decades. In the passage of the time, it is good also to have other physically challenged students, more fields of studies and the center for disability. But it should not be forgotten that many of the courses in the fields of studies have no a single adapted reading material. Even some of the fields have no any reference material. In this respect, the researcher believes that adapting reading materials is not beyond the responsibility of the subject teachers and departments at large as he knows some senior law school students have prepared few brail books with their initiation having understood the problem. It should be noted also that the current center for disability was established by the struggle of group of students and the dedication of the then president; it is not the outcome of the university's effort or the result of its research undertakings. This is history. The immediate question now is; *"does the university have proper concern to embed the center for disability with technical and professional services?"* The answer is yet not. The findings have shown that there is a highest attribution between the existing problems and the poor service of the center.

To wind up, there is a workable policy environment at national level however further strategic and quality related concerns are needed. Absence of university disability legislation or policy is the major cause for the prevalence of poor inclusion next to the unchanged attitude and inadequate concern. The university's effort to improve its service and support remained to be improper and inadequate. To reiterate, the SWDs have been suffering with reception and registration problems, inaccessible buildings and their facilities, inaccessible information, inadaptable curriculum, pedagogy and assessment (manifested with terrible assessment procedures, inaccessible assignments, inadaptable reading materials and teaching methods etc...) and negative attitude of some of the university community members in particular with that of some teachers.

5.3 Recommendations

Inclusive education by definition means a tool to combat exclusion from and within education (UNESCO, 2009). This is the central essence of inclusion in education. Based on this conception, an enhanced concern both at national and institutional levels is uncompromising if a meaningful inclusion in higher education is anticipated.

Notwithstanding the need for an increased concern of the weakest sense of inclusion (access) for the country, the strongest sense of inclusion (inclusion within education) must get its right place in national strategic programs including in the forthcoming ESDP. The national higher education quality assurance shall consider inclusion in its standard so that it can easily audit the physical, academic and social accessibilities of the higher education institutions in terms the learning of the SWDs. It will be better if the structural organization of the higher education considers the need for at least a focal person to higher education inclusion (inclusion in a wider concept, basically for disability and gender inclusion).

At the institutional level, the university is expected to make an informed decision put its due concern on the learning of the SWDs. Next, it has to revise and to issue the draft policy on disability service in accordance with the issues stipulated in the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009. Having this policy at hand, the university management and the academic staff in particular teachers and departments shall engage with collaborative prompt actions for the betterment of inclusion in the institution. Proper support has to be provided during the reception and registration of the SWDs. Buildings and their facilities have to be accessible; adapted curriculum frame work, pedagogy and assessment shall be deployed (assessment procedures shall be changed; assignments and information shall be accessible; reading materials and teaching methods shall be adaptable). Identifying attitude related problems as a principal barrier to inclusion, the university often has to toil for change.

The services and the support to be provided for the SWDs have to be well identified and rendered regardless of the charity model of disability perspective. This has to be done before, while and after the admission of the SWDs. University wide intensive and continuous awareness raising activities could substantially fill the knowledge gap of the university community and this

in turn potentially contributes to have a changed member of the university community. The university has to make the SWDs know more about disability, their rights and their responsibilities, too.

Teacher training in preparation for inclusion is a critical aspect of supporting the inclusive paradigm (Rose, 2010; the Roeher Institute, 2004). Attention has to be given for inclusive way of teaching methodology. Accordingly, the existing pedagogy course for undergraduate training shall be revised and teachers have to get in service trainings on inclusion. This is paramount to mitigate the existing bad attitude toward the SWDs among some teachers. The SWDs as a vulnerable group also have to be listened properly.

The center for disability can have a central role to galvanize the university community if it is situated and reorganized as a professional and technical support providing center.

Taking the VI and the PI students associations as an opportunity, the university students union has to be strengthened to make it contribute to the level of its best.

All in all, applying varieties of strategies is paramount. Applying the universal design for learning on the basis of the social constructionist view (Adams, 2006), the right based approach (UNESCO,2008) grounded on legal and policy frame works and the twin-track approach that calls for multi actors (Hick & et.al, 2009) in to higher education inclusion is crucially important.

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Appendix I

Major thematic guidelines or issues for the in-depth interview

- Reception, Information and Registration
- Placement issues
- Their relationships and communications
- Accessibility problems they faced implemented (physical, academic and social)
- How the Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 is
- Attitudinal issues
- Remarkable incidents they passed through (good or bad)
- Their Knowledge and Awareness on disability, their rights and the policy environment



Appendix II

Major thematic issues for the officials' interview

- The policy environment
- Strategic issues
- Knowledge and awareness
- Practices
- Attitude related issues
- Accessibility issues
- Challenges, opportunities and suggestions

Appendix III
Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Institute of Educational Research and Development
A Questionnaire to be filled by the Students with
Disabilities

Introduction

Dear students

I am a graduate student at the Institute of Educational Research and Development. I am conducting a study on disability inclusion in higher education for the partial fulfillment of the degree of masters.

The main objectives of the study are:

- To assess the policy environment and the legal instruments that enable disability inclusion in higher education and the practice to what extent students with disabilities (visually impaired and physically impaired students) in higher education institution are included.
- To identify factors that affect disability inclusion in higher education and to propose strategies that might narrow/fill the gap.

This questionnaire is prepared as complementary instrument for the qualitative data. Henceforth, this questionnaire contains few, simple but very useful items. As you are the subjects to the problem under investigation, you are expected to share your knowledge and practice on the issue. Therefore, your heartiest cooperation in providing genuine information is highly appreciated.

Thank you.

Direction: Listen to the following items and provide your answer to the person who assists you in reading.

Section A: Personal Details

1. Department.....
2. Year of study.....
3. Sex.....
4. Age.....
5. Region you come from
6. Physical challenge (Impairment) you have.....
7. Year when you took university placement exam.....
8. The result you scored on your university placement exam.....
9. Say **yes** or **no** to the following questions.

	Yes	No
Have you been assigned to this university according to your interest?		
Have you been assigned to your department according to your interest?		
Do you know your rights written on the 2009/650 Higher Education Proclamation?		
Do you have some knowledge about inclusive education?		
Does the university provide tutorials for students with disabilities?		
Does the university extend exam time and program deadlines for students with disabilities when the need arises?		
Does the university relocate classes for students with disabilities?		
Does the university develop alternative testing procedures for students with disabilities?		

Section C: Satisfaction

10. Rate your satisfaction on the service or support you got from the following service providers and the university community.

Rating: 5=Highly satisfactory 4=Satisfactory 3=I have no idea 2=Unsatisfactory 1=Highly unsatisfactory

	5	4	3	2	1
Cafeteria					
Library					
Lounge					
Department					
Students dean office					
Center for disability					
Students union office					
President office					
Academic dean office					
Students with disabilities					
Non disabled students					
Teachers					
Administrators					
Proctor					
Guards					
Janitors					

Appendix IV

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

Institute of Educational Research and Development

A Questionnaire to be filled by Non-Disabled Students

Introduction

Dear students

I am a graduate student at the Institute of Educational Research and Development. I am conducting a study on disability inclusion in higher education for the partial fulfillment of the degree of masters.

The main objectives of the study are:

- To assess the policy environment and the legal instruments that enable disability inclusion in higher education and the practice to what extent students with disabilities (visually impaired and physically impaired students) in higher education institution are included.
- To identify factors that affect disability inclusion in higher education and to propose strategies that might narrow/fill the gap.

This questionnaire is prepared as complementary instrument for the qualitative data. Henceforth, this questionnaire contains few, simple but very useful items. As you are believed to be the closest to the students with disabilities from the university community, you have been selected to be one of the informants. Therefore, your heartiest cooperation in providing genuine information is highly appreciated.

Thank you

Section A: Student's Profile

1. Department.....
2. Year.....
3. Sex.....
4. Age.....
5. Region you come from.....

Section B: Knowledge and Attitude

6. University students with disabilities are dependent on non-disabled students.
A. Strongly agree ☐ B. Agree ☐ C. Neutral ☐ D. Disagree ☐ E. Strongly disagree ☐
7. University students with disabilities have positive attitude towards non disabled students.
A. Strongly agree ☐ B. Agree ☐ C. Neutral ☐ D. Disagree ☐ E. Strongly disagree ☐

Section C: Resource, Facilities, Service and Support

8. How do you explain the university's resource provision to the students with disabilities?
A. Highly satisfactory ☐ B. Satisfactory ☐ C. I have no idea ☐
D. Unsatisfactory ☐ E. Highly unsatisfactory ☐
9. How do you explain the university's facilities for the students with disabilities?
A. Highly satisfactory ☐ B. Satisfactory ☐ C. I have no idea ☐
D. Unsatisfactory ☐ E. Highly unsatisfactory ☐
10. How do you explain the university's service and support provision to the students with disabilities?
A. Highly satisfactory ☐ B. Satisfactory ☐ C. I have no idea ☐
D. Unsatisfactory ☐ E. Highly unsatisfactory ☐

Section D: Communication

11. How do you explain the communication between you and the students with disabilities?
A. Very good ☐ B. Good ☐ C. Moderate ☐ D. Bad ☐ E. Worse ☐

12. Shortly specify the reason for your answer to question number 9.

.....
.....
.....

Section E: Opportunities, Challenges and Suggestions

13. Would you please specify the opportunities to improve the learning of students with disabilities in this campus?

.....
.....

14. Please specify major challenges of the students with disabilities in this campus.

.....
.....
.....

15. Would you please suggest some points that could potentially help to improve the learning of students with disabilities in this campus? Please specify

.....
.....
.....

Appendix V

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

Institute of Educational Research and Development

A Questionnaire to be filled by the Teachers

Introduction

Dear teachers

I am a graduate student at the Institute of Educational Research and Development. I am conducting a study on disability inclusion in higher education for the partial fulfillment of the degree of masters.

The main objectives of the study are:

- To assess the policy environment and the legal instruments that enable disability inclusion in higher education and the practice to what extent students with disabilities (visually impaired and physically impaired students) in higher education institutions are included.
- To identify factors that affect disability inclusion in higher education and to propose strategies that might narrow/fill the gap.

This questionnaire is prepared as complementary instrument for the qualitative data. Henceforth, this questionnaire contains few, simple but very useful items. As you are believed to be close to the students with disabilities from the university community, you have been selected to be one of the informants. Therefore, your heartiest cooperation in providing genuine information is highly appreciated.

Thank you.

Section 1: Knowledge and Attitude

1. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement on the following statements.

Rating: 5=Strongly agree 4= Agree 3= Neutral 2= Disagree 1= Strongly disagree

	5	4	3	2	1
Inclusive education is about the inclusion of students with disabilities at all level of education.					
Inclusive education is about equal access to educational opportunities, learning, participation, resources and facilities regardless of any background.					
Everyone has learning difficulties like students with disabilities.					
University students with disabilities are dependent on the university community.					
The university has its own policy on the rights and duties of the students with disabilities.					

2. Have you read or heard about legal and policy documents which state that people with disabilities have a right to education with possible affirmative action?

A. Yes ☐

B. No ☐

3. If your response for question 2 is ‘Yes’, mention the legal document (s) you read or heard about?

.....

Section 2: Trainings

4. Did you take the pedagogy course during your post graduate training?

A. Yes ☐ B. No ☐

5. If you say ‘yes’, have you got exposure or an insight from the course to implement inclusive way of teaching?

A. Yes ☐ B. No ☐

6. Have you taken on job training on inclusive way of teaching?

A. Yes ☐ B. No ☐

Section 3: Pedagogic and Academic Support

7. Indicate to what extent the following activities are/will be practical by you.

	Always	Mostly	Often	Seldom	Not at all
As much as possible, I use inclusive way of teaching to help students with disabilities.					
If there is a visually impaired student in my class I will permit him/her to record my lectures.					
If there is physically impaired student in my class, I will facilitate to make the class at the ground floor.					
I used to give alternative assignments to students with disabilities.					
I used to provide special academic support for students with disabilities.					
I used to provide alternative testing procedures for students with disabilities.					
In collaboration with the department, I will facilitate exam time extension for students with disabilities if the need arises.					
I used to encourage students with disabilities participate in class room activities.					

Section4: Service and Support Provision

8. How do you explain the university's service and support provision to the students with disabilities?

A. Highly satisfactory ☐ B. Satisfactory ☐ C. I have no idea ☐

D. Unsatisfactory ☐ E. Highly unsatisfactory ☐

Section 5: Communication

9. How do you explain the communication between you and the students with disabilities?

A. Very good ☐ B. Good ☐ C. Moderate ☐ D. Bad ☐ E. Worse ☐

10. Shortly specify the reason for your answer to question number 9.

.....

.....

.....

Section 6: Challenges and Opportunities

13. What challenges do you mention to improve disability inclusion in this campus?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

14. What opportunities would you explain to implement disability inclusion in this campus?

.....

.....

.....

Section 7: Suggestions

15. Would you please suggest some points that could potentially help to implement disability inclusion in this campus?

.....

.....

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.....

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Appendix VI

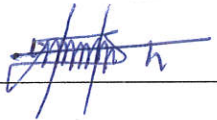
Observation Check list

	Yes	No
Students with disabilities have to make a row and wait their turn to have the service		
Some or many of them do not need support to use the cafeteria.		
They used to go to separate dining table which is equipped with food and drink.		
They used to have their dish together with NDSs.		
The library building is easily accessible for the VI students		
The library building is easily accessible for the PI students		
The stairs are easily accessible for the VI students		
The stairs are easily accessible for the PI students		
There are adequate reading materials and computers in the VI library		
There is enough space for movement		
The library provides special service for the VI and PI students		
The classrooms are easily accessible for the VI students		
The classrooms are easily accessible for the PI students		
The toilets are suitable for the PI students		
The toilets are suitable for the VI students		
The washrooms are suitable for the PI students		
The washrooms are suitable for the PI students		

DECLARATION

I declare that “the Inclusion of Visually Impaired and Physically Impaired Students in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions: the Case of Addis Ababa University” is my own work and that all the sources I have used /quoted in this thesis have been accordingly acknowledged.

Name of the student: Tewodros Habte Weldeloul

Signature: 

Date: July 02/2012