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EDITORIAL

Virtual Server: Preferable Option for Promoting Stable, Fast and Secure Open Journal Access

Tesfaye Gebeyehu

The Editorial of Vol. 5, No.1 of the Ethiopian Journal of Social Sciences and Language Studies (EJSSLS) underlines the importance of moving from an email attachment to an open journal system (OJS). It lists the multifaceted advantages of OJS. Accordingly, EJSSLS started using the software to promote its publications. However, during its trial period, we came to learn that open journal system is paralyzed when the physical server dawns for various reasons. During this time, since the software (OJS) does not operate, submitting, reviewing, editing and accessing publications becomes restricted. This calls for finding an option: using a cloud or virtual server.

A cloud server is a virtual server (rather than a physical server) running in a cloud computing environment. It is built, hosted and delivered via a cloud computing platform via the internet, and can be accessed remotely. They are also known as virtual servers. Cloud servers have all the software they require to run and can function as independent units (https://www.probrand.co.uk/it-services/cloud-server).

As far as my reading is concerned, compared to physical server, cloud server is more dependable– stable, fast and secure. "It is very easy and quick to upgrade by adding memory and disk space, as well as being more affordable" (Ibid). Since virtual servers are free from dawning and other hardware failures that insecure physical servers, they are likely to be the most stable option for our journal. Therefore, EJSSLS asks the University (Jimma University) to rent cloud/virtual server to promote sable, fast and secure open journal system (OJS). If it has already rented, we ask to upload the journal's publication on the virtual server.

The editor

FULL LENGTH ARTICLE

Socio-economic Situation of the Elderly in Jimma Zone, Oromia/ Ethiopia

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Abstract

In the past, the elderly had strong social support and full respect. The traditional social matrix has, however, now changed and the elderly are one of the poorest and marginalized sections of the population. This study was conducted in Jimma zone on the socioeconomic situation of the elderly. The study employed cross-sectional design, and methodological triangulation to gather data: interviews, observations and questionnaires. Almost half of the elderly were living in disorganized family structure. The elderly had meager income, deteriorated state of health and declined social support. Informal social support from kin is weak or totally lost, and majority of the elderly were not in a position to have access to formal support. Age related physical limitations, migration, retirement, death of supporters, recklessness of children and the declining capacity of care-givers are among the factors for elderly sufferings. Farming, begging, using leftover foods and stuffs, limiting needs and seeking support from their networks were the major coping strategies adopted by the elderly. Control over resources, participation in societal activities and having renowned children were perceived as sources of elderly privilege. The elderly identified capital, free medication, job opportunity and provision of basic services as their top needs. The study concludes, if the current condition continues unchanged, the future might be a difficult time for the elderly. Government, communities, NGOs and other stakeholders have to provide seed capital and job opportunity, cover medication and basic needs of the elderly, enable elderly exercise their capabilities and strengthen the capacity of care givers.

Key terms: /Coping strategies/Elderly/Social change/Socioeconomic challenges/Social policy/

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1. Introduction

Since the mid-twentieth century, the world population has been experiencing rising proportion of older persons in the total population. Ageing had started earlier in the more developed countries(United Nations, 2013)but currently the elderly population in developing countries has outpaced those in the developed world(Darkwa, 2006). Estimates in 2013 were that about 554 million (65.9%) of the approximately 841 million older persons aged 60 and older in the world were living in the developing world (United Nations, 2013).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, older people have traditionally been viewed in a positive light, as repositories of information and wisdom. In time of need they were getting strong support and assistance from their family and community, supplemented in many cases by other informal mechanisms, such as kinship networks and mutual aid(Cohen & Menken, 2006). Ethiopia, as a part of sub Saharan Africa, shares the same history(Belay, 2005). However, the traditional social matrix has now changed and these institutions have become weak. Changes associated with development and modernization combined to weaken traditional social values and networks that stress the important role of older people in society and that reinforce traditions of intergenerational exchange and reciprocity. The process of urbanization has and still is contributing to the deteriorating situations of the elderly as it leads to family break ups due to migration in search of jobs and in pursue of education(Abdi, 2012). Some studies in other African countries indicate that the family support system and respect for the elders is now changing and people over 60 are one of the poorest and marginalized groups in the continent. As a consequence, elderly people's life is largely characterized by vulnerability to poverty and exclusion from health services (Aboderin, 2005; Nabalamba & Chikoko, 2011) and lack of viable safety nets (Nabalamba & Chikoko, 2011).

Western countries experienced breakdown of traditional support system for the elderly many decades ago. Thus, this change is not something exclusive to Sub- Saharan Africa. But in industrialized countries, old age support is coming to a great extent from large public or private pension and healthcare systems (Quadagno, 1999). By contrast, in Sub-Saharan Africa with the exceptions of Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, and South Africa, formal social welfare schemes are nearly nonexistent and, when they do exist, tend to pay minimal benefits and cover only a small fraction of the elderly population (Gillian, Turner, Clive, & Latulippe(eds.), 2000).

In Ethiopia, there is no formal institutional support system for the vast majority of the elderly. Only former government employees receive pension or survivor benefits(Belay, 2005). The public institutional care service is given only in few homes across the country. These homes have very low capacity to give care for the growing aged population(Lwanga-Ntale, Rusinow& Knox, 2010).

The absence of public pensions, and the weakening condition of family and community supports due to migration and poverty (Gebremariam & Adamek, 2015) stimulates interest to know socio-economic situation of the elderly and how they are leading their life in the face of the occurred disruptions. The socio-economic situation of

the elderly needs to be pragmatically studied to get prepared for the changes associated with the projected unprecedented increase in the number of elderly. Hence, this study is concerned with examining the socioeconomic situation of elderly in Jimma zone, a setting where published article on the issue is absent.

Such studies would have significant implications for social policy and theory development. As a result, the study of older age and older people is a burgeoning industry in all contemporary industrialized countries, due in part to increases in population aging(Alwin, 2011). In Africa, however, the research on aging is rarely available. Particularly in Ethiopia, to this date, only few studies have been published on the issue of aging, and none of them were concerned with deep investigation into the socio-economic condition of the elderly in Jimma zone. The study conducted by Kifle (2002) was exclusively concerned with elderly in Amhara of Ensaro. Two studies were also conducted on elderly in 2010 and 2011 by Help Age International. The studies were rapid assessments. Thus, it is hardly possible to say these studies can tell us enough about the wellbeing of old peoples in Jimma zone. This is the gap which served as a thrust for this study. Data for the study was collected in 2013 from Jimma zone. The general objective of the study was to investigate the socioeconomic situation of rural and urban elderly in Jimma Zone. The following research questions were formulated to address this general objective.

i.   To what extent income (wealth) of elderly can satisfy their basic needs?

ii.   What does the nature of family and community support for the aged look like?

iii.   What does the self-reported health conditions of the elderly look like?

iv.   What social roles and responsibilities do older people play?

v.   Are there formal and informal social protection systems in place to care for old people?

2. Theoretical Framework of the Study

Some influential theoretical ideas have been developed and influenced understanding of old age and aging. Some of these theories are: disengagement, activity and political economy.

Disengagement is the first explicit social theory of ageing. The theory argues that ageing involves a gradual and inevitable withdrawal of the elderly from socio-economic participation in preparation for death. Disengagement theory further posits that such withdrawal is mutually beneficial for both older persons and the society(Victor, 2004). This theory is criticized for its adverse consequence of legitimizing old age segregation, and reinforcing negative stereotypes of older people. It devalued the status and self-esteem of those people who do work with and look after older people (Stuart-Hamilton, 2011).

The inverse to disengagement is activity theory. This theory entails that social activity is the essence of life for all people of all ages, including the elderly. Activity theory postulates that 'those who are able to remain socially active will be more likely to achieve a positive self-image, social integration, and satisfaction with life' (Reed, 2015). Although activity theory is appreciable in encouraging older persons' participation in social activities, it follows one size fits all approach which may lead to forcing all elderly to participate and withholding of social support for the elderly who are not in labor force.

Political Economy of aging is used to guide the study. Political economy is drawn from Marxian insights in analyzing the capitalist complexity of modern society and how old age was socially constructed to foster the needs of the economy (Estes, 1979). This critical branch of Marxist gerontology grew as a direct response to the hegemonic dominance of structural functionalism in the form of disengagement theory and activity theory. This perspective stipulates that socioeconomic, political forces, and generally structural factors shape the experience of ageing (Bengtson, Burgess, & Parrott, 1997).

This theory argues the association of old age with disease and inevitable decline ought to be disregarded and old age shall be seen as a social rather than biological process. It further argues many experiences related to aging are not the inevitable biological process but results from the socio-economic conditions and inequalities experienced over the life courses(Estes, 2001). Disengagement and activity theories of ageing overlook the role of socio-political structural factors and support the status quo by reducing the problems at old age to older individual. Thus, this study employed political economy theory to understand the socioeconomic situation of the elderly by relating with the broader structural factors. In line with the main tenet of political economy perspective, the end goal of this study's finding is promoting social justice for the elderly.

3. **Methods**

Data were collected by using qualitative and quantitative research approaches in 2013 from Jimma zone. The qualitative approach employed in-depth interviews, observation and key informant interviews. In-depth interviews were conducted with elderly who were selected during administration of questionnaire. These elderly were selected for in-depth interview because of their more expressive character or very serious problems they suffered. In depth interviews mainly focused on information regarding type and structure of the family, pattern of social support, current needs and problems, and survival strategies. Observation of older people's routine activities and living condition on the street, in the houses and farm fields was also used to collect qualitative information. The researchers assumed *the observer as participant* role. In the *observer as participant* stance, a researcher is an observer who is not a member of the group, have access to many different people from whom he/she may obtain information, and observe and interact closely enough without participating in those activities constituting the core of group membership (Kawulich, 2005). Qualitative information collected through in-depth interviews and observations was triangulated with key informant interviews. Key informant interviews were conducted with professionals in

labor and social affair offices to get data about the condition of formal protection schemes.

To collect quantitative data, researchers used survey. The main emphasis of the survey was to collect information about the socio demographic backgrounds and socio-economic information using a pre-tested questionnaire. The research used *cross sectional* study design. Similar group of people (old people above 60) was studied over many different points (social and economic) at one point in time. Since civil registration system is very weak in Ethiopia, obtaining a sampling frame of populations above 60 is hardly possible. Given this fact, using non-probability sampling technique was mandatory. A survey of 84 elderly was made with convenience sampling in four purposively selected sites (Jimma and Sokoru towns, and two peasant villages, Tikur Balto of Kersa district and Kore of Mena district). While determining a sample size of the elderly and study sites, time, cost and geographical location were taken into account. Through employing convenience sampling, such respondents easily available and accessible within the study premises, were included.

Qualitative information was analyzed using thematic analysis. Information collected through interviews and observation was transcribed, organized and classified (re-classified) into thematic topics and then analyzed to generate meanings and implications. Quantitative data was analyzed using statistical tools. Quantitative data was organized, cleared, and coded. Descriptive statistics such as percentage and frequencies were used.

4. Results

4.1. Socio-Demographic Background of Respondents

Sex distribution of the sample elderly shows that proportionally larger number of males participated in urban areas, 53.96%, compared to those in rural (46.04%). However, the proportion of female and male elderly involved in this research was more or less balanced. Male elderly are represented with 50.78% and female elderly with 49.22%.

With regard to age, 38.09% and 57.14% of respondents from urban and rural areas respectively were found in the age group 60-64, and 61.91 % of urban and 42.86 % rural elderly participated in this study were 65 and above.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by their Socio-demographic Profile

		Frequency		Percentage	
		Urban	**Rural**	**Urban**	**Rural**
Sex	Male	34	10	53.96	47.61
	Female	29	11	46.04	52.39
Age	60-64	24	12	38.09	57.14
	65-69	22	-	34.92	-
	70-74	8	5	12.69	23.82
	75-79	5	1	7.96	4.76
	≥80	4	3	6.34	14.08
Marital status	Never married	-	1	-	4.76
	Married	31	10	49.21	47.61
	Widowed	23	6	36.51	28.57
	Divorced	9	4	14.28	19.26
Educational status	Non literate	32	14	50.79	66.66
	Adult education	7	4	11.11	19.06
	Elementary education	9	3	14.28	14.28
	High school	6	-	9.58	-
	Diploma	7	-	11.11	-
	Degree and above	2	-	3.13	-
Do you have your own house?	Yes	48	20	76.19	95.23
	No	15	1	23.81	4.77
Whom do you live with?	With spouse	31	10	49.21	47.61
	With married children	7	5	11.11	23.81
	With unmarried children	22	9	34.92	42.85
	With other relative	9	2	14.28	9.52
	With non-relative	9	-	14.28	-
	Alone	13	-	20.63	-

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The data on marital status of respondents reveal that almost half (49.21%) of urban elderly and 47.61% of rural elderly were married; 36.51% of urban and 28.57% of rural respondents' marital status was widowed. Respondents who divorced were 14.28% and 19.26% in urban and rural respectively.

Table 1 also reveals 50.79% and 66.66% of respondents from urban and rural areas respectively are non-literate. The remaining rural elderly had received adult education (19.06%) and elementary school education (14.28%). Respondents who attained high school and above were 23.8% in urban and none of rural elderly respondent had achieved this level of literacy. Hence, literacy level of elderly was very low. Especially rural elderly were less literate when compared to their urban counterpart.

Significant majority of respondents (76.19% in urban and 95.23% in rural) had their own house. With open ended question respondents who had no house were asked to give information where they live. They were living in rented house (from government and private), in church yards, on verandas and on the street. Slightly less than half of urban elderly and rural elderly (49.21% and 47.61% respectively) were living with their spouses at the time of data collection. Proportion of urban elderly who were living alone was 20.63% whereas there were no rural respondents in this category. The rest of urban respondents (about 79.4) and all of rural respondents were living either with their spouse, children, grandchildren, relatives or non-relatives.

4.2. Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents

As presented in Table 2, 33.33% of urban elderly and 90.47% of rural elderly respectively reported salary from government and agriculture as their main source of livelihood before the age of 60. The other means of livelihood for urban elderly before the age of 60 were agriculture (23.81%), salary from private organizations (7.93%), private business (19.04%), daily labor (7.93%) and other activities like renting house and support from spouse (15.87%). For the rural elderly, private business (4.76%) and daily labor (4.76%) were means of livelihood before they were 60 years old. From this data it can be understood when they were younger than 60 respondents were entirely engaged in an earning activity. However, most of them were employed in the informal sectors where formal welfare and social protection did not exist.

For some respondents, their current means of livelihood sharply deviates from their previous one. However, majority of rural elderly maintained their previous means of livelihood as 71.43% of them were still in agriculture. Among employed, new means of livelihood urban elderly took up after crossing 60 were begging (15.87%) and pension (30.15%). The major reasons urban elderly presented for shifting their means of livelihood were migration, forced retirement, incapability and sudden death of supporters. The prevalence of begging in the urban part of study areas as means of livelihood can be understood just by observation. Helpless and destitute elderly were seen sitting on the side of streets, near churches, and at taxi stops begging passing by people for money and other material help. At the time of data collection, means of livelihood for rural respondents were restricted to agriculture (71.43%) and support from relatives (28.57%) while there were more diversified means of livelihood in urban areas.

The data on average monthly income show 42.85% and 66.66% of respondents from urban and rural respectively earned less than 400 Ethiopian birr, hereafter shortly birr, per month.   Elderly whose income was about 1000 were only 21.24% in urban and 9.54% in rural. This data shows majority of elderly income was skewed to the low level one. It is not difficult to conclude from this data that elderly are in difficult situation to get command over basic stuffs to satisfy their elementary needs let alone living desired life. With this regard elderly were asked to give their own account of whether their earnings cover expenses for basic needs. The majority, 61.91%, of elderly were not in a position to have access to things which satisfies basic needs.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by their Socio-economic Profile

		Frequency		Percentage	
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Means of livelihood before crossing 60	Agriculture	15	19	23.81	90.47
	Salary from government	21	-	33.33	-
	Salary from private organization	5	-	7.93	-
	Private business	12	1	19.04	4.76
	Daily labor	5	1	7.93	4.77
	Support from relatives	7	-	11.11	-
	Other	10	-	15.87	-
Means of livelihood now	Agriculture	-	15	-	71.43
	Salary from private organization	2	-	3.17	-
	Private business	11	-	17.46	-
	Daily labor	2	-	3.17	-
	Begging	10	-	15.87	-
	Support from humanitarian organization	5	-	7.93	-
	Support from relatives	17	6	26.98	28.57
	Pension	19	-	30.15	-
	Other	11	-	17.46	-
Average monthly income in Birr	<200	17	3	26.98	14.28
	201-400	10	11	15.87	52.38
	401-600	7	3	11.11	14.28
	601-800	8	2	12.69	9.52
	801-1000	7	-	11.11	-
	1001-1200	2	2	3.12	9.54
	>1200	12	-	19.12	-
Can your monthly income cover expenses for basic needs?	Yes	24	8	38.09	38.09
	No	39	13	61.91	61.91
Is the assistance you get from kin changing over time?	Yes	25	7	39.68	33.33
	No	38	14	60.32	66.67
Are you caring for other dependents?	Yes	49	14	77.77	66.66
	No	14	7	22.23	33.34
Who are those dependents	Grandchildren	9	7	14.28	33.33
	Offspring and grand children	9	8	14.28	38.09
	Offspring	32	6	50.79	28.58
	Other	12	-	19.04	-

Source: Field Survey, 2013

In the face of hardships resulting from incapability of meeting basic needs, elderly use coping strategies like petty trading, limiting needs, humble enquiring of others for help, borrowing of money, maintaining holdings like clothes and shoes, taking up leftover foods, shoes and clothes from others, and piecemeal use of resources.

The study has also encountered elderly who were abused and deprived of their economic right. A 74 years old female from Kore, a rural area, narrates. The narration evidences the existence of economic abuse against the elderly.

> During the regime of Hailesellasie, my husband and I had been enjoying good life under one roof with the resources we used to get from our harvest on extensive land and coffee plantation. With the coming to power of *derg's* regime, our resources were confiscated by the government and my husband was migrated away. I left helpless with my children. Relatives of then took away from me one of my children, the last one. When the new government [EPRDF][4] started to give back resources for previous owners, I got only a few since I had no knowledge to claim my resources. After some time the child whom relatives of my husband brought up came back. I was happy getting back my son believing I would not be alone and suffer any more. Ironically my child suppressed and abused me through controlling and snatching my resources. I am getting nothing out of my resources (coffee and land). He drinks and smokes. To sustain my life, I traveled to Jimma town, where people do not know me, to beg for money. There is nothing I can do to benefit from my resources. I beg Allah to make my child right minded.

As shown in Table 2, 39.28% and 33.33% of respondents from urban and rural areas in that order said the assistance they get from kin groups and relatives is changing over time. Implied factors behind this include: supporters' death, marriage, involvement in education, irresponsibility, migration and declining state of life of the caregivers.

Majority of respondents, 77.77% and 66.66% from urban and rural areas correspondingly, were caring for other dependents (see Table 2). The justification behind caring for other dependents is mainly morality concern since those dependents are not matured enough and economically self-sufficient. Some dependents do not have parent(s) and therefore are completely dependent on their grandfathers or grandmothers for help and expectation of reciprocity from care takers. About 50.79% of respondents from urban areas and 33.33% of respondents from rural areas were caring for grandchildren. The respondents' help to those dependents include material support, financial support, social and psychological supports. Migration of parents to Arab countries was among the main reasons which made grandchildren to be dependent on their grandparents.

As personal interview with the elderly reveals, the coping strategies the elderly adopting are not healthy. Using dumped food and clothes, and sitting on the streets under hot sun would make elderly susceptible to numerous health problems. What was making the situation of elderly worse was many of them had someone else whom they support. The elderly were not happy about their condition of life. They were despaired and

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[4]Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front that has been ruling Ethiopia since 1991

hopeless about their future life. These feelings would have negative impact on the quality of life they lead.

4.3. Social Status and Roles of Elderly

As depicted in Table 3, about 44.4 % of respondents in urban areas believed all individuals whom they live, work and encounter with address them in a very humble and respectful manner. About 22% of respondents perceived that most individuals give them prestige. There were also respondents who reported they receive respect only from some of their contacts.

About 9% of the respondents responded that only very few individuals give them respect. Others (1.58%) imagine they were not getting reverence from anyone. The proportion of respondents in rural areas who felt they were respected by all individuals is 47.6 % whereas 14.28%, 19.02% and 19.02 % of respondents respectively felt that they were respected by most, some and few.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents Based on their Social Status and Roles

Item	Response	Frequency		Percentage	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
From how many people do you get respect for being older member of the community?	All people	28	10	44.4	47.6
	Most people	14	3	22.2	14.28
	Some people	11	4	17.46	19.04
	Few people	9	4	14.28	19.04
	None	1	-	1.58	-
Perceived reasons for not get respected	Obsolete knowledge	5	2	7.93	9.5
	Poverty	23	3	36.5	14.28
	Poor physical strength	16	3	25.39	14.28
	Poor appearance	9	3	14.28	14.28
	Diminished memory	8	-	12.69	-
	Others	2	3	3.17	14.28
Prestige-generating roles and status in the community for elderly	Advisory	21	4	33.33	19.04
	Participating in and contributing to social activities	37	3	58.73	14.28
	Control over resources to social activities	25	4	39.68	19.047
	Retention of prestige with former statuses	20	5	31.74	23.8
	Having renown children	36	2	57.14	9.52
	Others	7	9	11.11	42.85

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Respondents who believed they receive good treatment from not all people were also asked to pinpoint the perceived reasons why they were not respected. Poverty

followed by poor physical strength and poor appearance were the three most perceived factors for the decline of the prestige given to old people. The other reason was the expansion of modern education. When explaining how modern education eroded the prestige used to be given for elderly, one elderly stated: "*Old people used to be the main source of knowledge in the past. Hence, everybody was giving them respect. Today as modern education expanded youngsters started considering our knowledge as obsolete. They consider us as old fashioned and they ignore us.*"

Elderly were also asked with open ended question to compare the prestige which is given to old people in past and in the present time. Respondents unanimously replied when they were young the reverence old people used to get were impressive. They picture that time as "golden age of aging". Consequently, many of them had strong ambition to live up to old age to enjoy that special privilege. One elderly stated his experience as, "*When I was young, youngsters used to hold lamp at the dinner time when our old people eat. At that time I always used to dream to enjoy such privilege and several other honors living up to old age. Nowadays let alone holding lamp, youngsters are not leaving us path to pass.*"

Yet if elders actively participate in religious events, contribute ideas when people are gathered, take part in traditional conflict resolutions like "*jarsumma*", their prestige and respect increases proportionally. Control over income generating resources like land, houses, and other wealth were the second most widely stated reasons for older people to get respect. Those who give advice children and young, and maintain follow up are also the one most respected. Having renowned children and maintaining status related with positions occupied in early age were the other reasons which made elderly respected.

4.4. Problems, Needs and Policy Conditions

In this research an attempt was also made to know whether elderly can assume an activity which is considered normal for an adult. The significant majority of elderly in urban areas (57.14%) responded to this question in an affirmative manner. They replied that they could undertake normal activities. But in rural areas only tiny proportion (28.57%) of respondents could perform activities considered normal for an adult. The difference in proportion of elderly who can perform normal adult activities between urban and rural could be due to the fact that in the studied rural areas the dominant activity was farming, and it is obviously laborious and demands strong muscle which aged people hardly perform. In rural areas the overwhelming majority of respondents could perform some normal adult activities where as in urban areas the proportion of respondents who could perform only some normal adult activities was about 38%.

Respondents were also asked to identify the kinds of chores they couldn't perform. About 16 % of sampled elderly in urban areas and 10% in rural areas found walking around without support of people or appliances is difficult or impossible. Slight multitude of elderly in rural areas (47.6%)and 7.93 % in urban elderly couldn't perform activities which are laborious like lifting up and carrying weight, farming, and walking

long distance. In urban areas respondents who couldn't take bath (4.761%) and who couldn't get out for toilet (1.58%) were also encountered.

The sampled elderly were also asked to rate their health status on a 4-point scale ranging from excellent to poor. About one third of urban elderly and 38% of rural elderly rated their health status as either fair or poor. On the other hand, 44.4 % of urban elderly and 42.84 of rural elderly rated their health condition as good. The proportion of old people who rated their heath as excellent were 7.9% in the targeted urban areas and 4.76% in rural areas.

Table 4 Distribution of Respondents Based on Problems they Encountered and Capabilities

	Response	Frequency		Percentage	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Can you do normal activities by yourself?	Yes I can do all normal activities by my self	36	6	57.14	28.57
	I can do some normal activities	24	12	38.095	57.14
	No I can't do	3	3	4.76	14.28
What are those activities you can't perform?	Getting out for toilet	1	-	1.58	-
	Taking bath	3	-	4.761	-
	Walking around without support	10	2	15.87	9.52
	Others	5	10	7.93	47.6
How do you rate your health conditions?	Excellent	5	1	7.9	4.76
	Good	28	9	44.4	42.84
	Fair	13	7	20.6	33.33
	Poor	8	1	12.69	4.76
How often do you seek medical services?	Always	12	-	19.04	-
	Sometimes	22	13	34.9	61.9
	Rarely	18	6	28.57	28.57
Under what situation do you attend medical care?	With your own money	41	16	65.079	76.19
	With the assistance of close relatives	12	3	19.04	14.28
	Free medical services	3	1	4.76	4.76
	Others	2	-	3.17	
What deters you from seeking medical services?	Lack of money	11	8	17.46	38.09
	Don't believe in the effectiveness of modern medical services	1	1	1.58	4.76
	Use traditional medicine	3	1	4.76	4.761
	Others	1	-	1.58	-

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The elderly were further asked to tell whether they visit health care facilities when they face health problems and how often they do so. Significant majority of elderly in both urban and rural settings (93.65% and 90.47% respectively) responded that they consult physicians travelling to health centers. On the other hand, 6.35% of urban elderly and 9.52% of rural elderly responded that they never used modern medicine. With regards to the frequency with which they travel to health centers, only 19.04% of urban elderly responded that they consult physicians whenever they recognize health problems. On the other hand, 61.9 % of elderly living in rural settings and 34.9% of elderly living in urban settings use the service of health centers only sometimes; 28.57% of elders in both urban and rural areas said that they rarely used treatments by modern physicians.

In relation to health, elderly were also asked to disclose under what conditions they get access to the services of health centers and reason for not getting medical treatment. About 67% of urban respondents and about 76% of rural respondents said they get treatment with their own money. The proportions of respondents who get medical services with the assistance of relatives were 19% in urban and 14% in rural areas. Lack of money was the major reason deterring elderly from making use of modern medical services. Lack of trust in the effectiveness of modern medicine could be another reason why the old people are reluctant to seek thereof treatment. Because of these and other reasons, the old people preferred traditional medicine to modern ones when they feel symptoms of any diseases and illness.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents Based on their Needs and Institutionalized Response

	Response	Frequency		Percentage	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Do you get any support from the government?	Yes	5	-	7.93	-
	No	57	21	90.47	100
What should be done on the part of the government for the elderly in your community?	Providing cloth	26	4	41.26	19.04
	Providing food	28	7	44.44	33.33
	Providing medication	49	6	77.77	28.57
	Providing money	50	6	79.36	28.57
	Housing	24	4	38.95	19.04
	providing job	20	-	31.74	-
	Others	-	5	-	23.8
What is your future ambition?	To get cured from illness	38	11	60.3	52.3
	To get formal support	29	5	46.03	23.8
	To get informal support	7	2	11.11	9.52
	To be rich	29	7	46.03	33.33
	To die before further sufferings	8	1	12.69	4.76
	To live long	49	13	77.77	61.9
	Others	2	-	3.17	-

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 5 reports about the availability of formal support system for the elderly and needs of elderly. All of the elderly in rural areas (100%) unanimously responded saying there were no exclusive government supports for the elderly. The fraction of respondents in urban areas who replied there were no exclusive formal support for them was about nine tenth.

Interview with key informants has also yielded information which confirms the above presented data. According to our key informants in Jimma zone and Jimma town labor and social affair offices, so far policies and action plans have been designed by federal government and have been handed down to all layers of labor and social affair offices (regional, zonal and district offices). One of the special concerns of developmental social welfare policy, for example, was improving the wellbeing of elderly. To this end, the policy document clearly says government should guarantee the material and social wellbeing of the elderly through the provision of social security services. Making this policy springboard, National Plan of Action on older persons was developed in June 2006. This policy is aimed at improving the standard and quality of social welfare service of older persons with in a time frame from 1998 to 2007E.C. Specifically the policy had set objectives, such as expanding and strengthening services for older persons, and giving attention to the rights and needs of older persons. According to key informants, these policies and action plans were not implemented due to lack of fund from the concerned regional and federal bureaus, and absence of clearly defined and detailed plan for action.

Labor and social affair offices are directly mandated to oversee, follow up and respond to issues related to older persons in Ethiopia. Informants in these offices were asked whether there were any activities they performed for the elderly. The activities they performed include organizing some elderly into small scale groups and celebrating elderly day in partnership with these groups. The tasks of small scale elderly groups were collecting regular contribution from members and helping some elderly whose conditions were very serious. They perform activities like maintaining about to fall and dilapidated homes of helpless elderly, and provision of clothes and foods for elderly. Most of these activities were performed by these associations only on the day of elderly day celebration in October. These associations had no enough resources to perform life changing activities for mass elderly. Apart from these, there were no activities performed by this office to help old people. Ironically this office had some information about the needs and problems of old people.

Elderly were asked to identify and prioritize their needs. Significant majority of urban elderly (79.36%) wanted government to provide them with seed money where as28.57% rural elderly wanted free medication and money in cash. Next to the provision of money, urban elderly wanted free medication (77.77%), food (44.4%), cloth (41.26%), house (38.095 %) and job (31.74%). In rural areas, next to free medical services and money, elderly wanted supply of food (44.44%) especially in June, July and August (rainy season) when the availability and access to food declines, other supports like

discounting prices of fertilizer and provision of farm tools(23.8%), housing(19.04%) , and cloth(19.04%).

When asked about their future ambitions, majority of respondents, 60.3% of urban elderly and 53.3% of rural elderly had the ambition of getting cured and live long. The percentage of respondents who wished to be rich was 46.03% in urban areas and 33.33% in rural areas. The third category of need was getting formal support (46.03% in urban and 23.8% in rural). But the proportion of respondents who wished to get persistent support from kin and community was only 11.11% in urban and 9.52% in rural. There were also elderly who wished death before further sufferings (12.69 % in urban and 4.76 % in rural). This category of the elderly also replied that they wished death because death is what they perceived as an escape from suffering. What they feared more were not death but suffering, sickness, ignorance, poverty and difficulties. Since they were testing all these problems these elderly preferred death.

5. Discussions

This study shows that majority of the elderly were living in disorganized family structure: not living with their marital partner or were living alone. Khan et al. (2014) states that marital status plays high role for determining quality of life of the elderly. The elderly who have life partner are able to share their mental distress and can have more enjoyable and better wellbeing (Khan, Mondal, Hoque, Islam, & Shahiduzzaman, 2014) but many elderly participated in the study are disadvantaged in this regard. The greater part of the elderly population is non-literate and the remaining significant portion of the elderly had attained only lower school level. Observed old people's socio-demographic and socio-economic status largely have negative impact on their wellbeing since Mwanyangala et al. (2010) asserts higher quality of life is associated with being married, a high level of education and higher socio-economic status.

In developing countries, the elderly are incorrectly considered dependents and impediments to social development (Kalasa, 2001). However, this study found that the elderly give care to or support other dependents, carry out normal adult activities or have showed the need to participate in gainful activities. Participation of the elderly in social and economic activities has positive effect for prestige and quality of life of the elderly (Soumerai & Avorn, 1983; Berkman, Boersch-Supan, & Avendano, 2015). Hence, this study has an implication of facilitating elderly participation in socio-economic activities and control over income generating resources since such activities are important means of keeping away poverty and coping with unexpected outcomes (Barrientos, Gorman, & Heslop, 2003). The study found that elderly were mainly engaged in an earning activity in the informal sectors, where formal welfare and social protection does not exist, when they were younger. Majority of rural elderly maintained their previous means of livelihood as most of them were still in agriculture. However, migration, forced retirement, limited capability or passing away of supporters are the factors that led urban elderly to shift their means of livelihood. The continued need of the elderly to participate in economic activities was reflected by their need to access seed money although other

study (HelpAge International, 2013) indicated that access to credit services was significantly limited among the elderly in Ethiopia. This evidence of elderly needing participation in labor force stands in stark contrast with disengagement theory which states that normal aging involves a natural and inevitable withdrawal from activities and social interactions (Quadagno, 1999).

Elderly of the study areas are in a difficult situation to get materials that satisfies their basic needs and their judgment of their own quality of life is very low. Their coping strategies (limiting needs, begging, borrowing of money, maintenance of holdings like clothes and shoes, taking up leftover foods, shoes and clothes from others, and piecemeal use of resources) have adverse impact on their life and also morally painful. The widespread of begging as survival strategy among the urban elderly is easily noticed with observations. Consistent with findings of this study, HelpAge International (2013) found that ill health, diminishing family and community support, limited social security services, lack of education, limited employment and income generating opportunities as the challenges elderly people in Ethiopia are facing. The elderly of the study were not happy about their condition of life. They were despaired and hopeless about their future life. These feelings would have an impact on the quality of life they lead. Although majority of the elderly had ambitions of having good health and living long, there were elderly who wished death to escape from suffering, sickness, ignorance, poverty and difficulties.

Abuse against economic rights of the elderly is one of the factors disadvantaging the elderly. According to HelpAge International (2008), many older people in Africa experience deepening poverty, abuse, and are unable to access entitlements that are theirs by right. In contrast with the commonly held assumptions that elderly in developing countries benefits from extended family and community support, this study found the declining, in some case, rare informal support provided to the elderly, declining prestige and respect mainly due to poverty, weak energy and poor appearance. This changing face of the relationship between the community and the elderly needs active legal and social protection for the elderly.

This study shows that the elderly are heterogeneous in terms of their problems and needs. Majority of urban elderly can perform normal adult activities and only few of the rural elderly perform such activities. Elderly are also diverse in terms of their health status with about half of the elderly rating their health status as good. This findings challenge stereotypes of aging in contemporary societies as largely a time of ill health, dependency, and poor (Dionigi, 2015). A large number of elderly rated their health as good, and their health seeking behavior from modern health care facilities is low due to mainly shortage of money, and they requested free/subsidized medication to this end.

By and large, the status of the elderly is declining in the study areas; formal government intervention is very weak to address their challenges and there is almost no exclusive government support for the elderly. Policies and action plans designed by government and labor and social affair offices mandated to implement are scantily functioning due to lack of fund and absence of clear plan for action. Limited political

commitment of the government to implement policies and action plans to enhance wellbeing of the elderly and socio-economic factors identified by this study as affecting the elderly tantamount to structural vulnerability. In consistency with structural vulnerability approach(Schröder-Butterfill & Marianti, 2006) and political economy of aging theory, this study advocates mitigation strategies that involve long-term transformations of socio-political and economic structures, such as poverty alleviation, social security schemes, empowerment and inclusion to ensure social justice for the elderly.

6. **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study observed that the elderly have very low income which is far from enabling them to have dependable access to materials of basic needs. In face of this problems, elderly were not passive. Despite their deteriorated state of health and little capabilities, elderly are taking part in activities like farming and begging to make adjustment to their economic hardships. Using dumped foods and stuffs, limiting needs, postponing pleasure and seeking support from their networks are among coping strategies adopted by elderly. Income sources and livelihood strategies of elderly are deteriorating as age increases. There are also a number of other factors which supplement normal aging to make elderly susceptible to hardships. Migration of supporters and the elderly to other areas, retirement, death of supporter, irresponsibility of children and the declining of the standard of care givers were the major factors which were behind elderly sufferings.

Getting old has become less valued with modernization, poverty and expansion of modern formal education. Economic power derived from control over resources and social power derived from participation in social activities as well as having renowned children are major factors playing roles for elderly to be respected.

Low healthcare seeking behavior and poor health are critical problems of the elderly given lack of free or subsidized medical treatment. Living in disorganized family structures because of divorce and widowhood worsens lack of informal social support for the elderly. The support elderly are getting from their kin is declining or nonexistent. Status of informal social support is better in rural areas where as only some elderly in towns are getting pensions. This declining level or non-existence of kin support added with the declined physical endurance put elderly in a serious economic and social life. Developmental social welfare policy that was intended to positively affect life of elderly remains impractical. Nothing significant has been made by government to translate this policy into action to benefit elderly. Organizing elderly in associations alone is found insufficient to improve the wellbeing of elderly because of lack of reliable sources to support them. Generally, elderly of the study area were far from being the beneficiary of governments support.

Money is the first priority of elderly in urban areas where as food stuffs and medication services are equally wanted by rural elderly. Able bodied elderly can work if enabling environment is created for them. With regard to their future, many elderly were

hopeless and despaired; some preferred death than further sufferings. Primary relation and kin support is losing ground and government's support for the elderly is loose and not inclusive. When combined with inevitable declining of physical endurance brought with aging elderly would face serious hardships. Over all, if the current condition continues unchanged, the future would be a difficult time for the elderly.

Elderly have rich experience, wisdom, knowledge and skills gained over many years. They are asset of society and can contribute to the socio-economic development if they are provided an opportunity and given protection. They are among the one who laid a foundation for the current society. Hence they need reciprocated action. Pragmatically and morally, helping elderly and creating conducive living environment is appealing. Programs and action plans designed so far to translate policies in to action fail to reach the large segment of elderly population. To this end, the researchers recommend the following initiatives.

Government should provide financial support for needy elderly using means-test approach to enable elderly engage in business and to get access to stuffs which satisfy basic needs. Government and other responsible stakeholders should collaboratively perform capacity building activities (financial and care giving skills) for care givers. A platform is needed which enables community to give support for elderly with the active involvement of elderly in their care and in the effective utilization of their wisdom, knowledge and skills in development. Affirmative action like provision of cheap or charge free medical treatment, food and housing should be given for elderly by government and non-government bodies. Government has to make specific action plans and allocate budgets to improve the wellbeing of elderly. Actions to reunite abandoned elderly with their family or relatives have to be performed by social affairs offices in collaboration with other stakeholders.

Government, NGOs, faith based organizations and other stakeholders have to build care home at a zonal or district level and make available recreational facilities for the elderly. Elderly associations should be provided with all relevant resources so that they can improve the livelihood of elderly. Awareness about legal issues and rights of elderly should be given for elderly particularly to enable them get benefit from their properties and to avoid abuse. Younger generation should be thought the importance and other justifications behind respecting senior citizens. Revitalizing the accumulated wisdom, knowledge and skills of old people is important to pace up the speed of socio-economic development and to facilitate platforms in which these assets can be transferred to younger generation.

<div align="center">Acknowledgements</div>

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FULL LENGTH ARTICLE

Healthcare Seeking Behavior and Lifestyle Modifications among Chronic Illness Patients' in Central and Southwestern Ethiopia

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Abstract

Chronic illnesses, in particular cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancers, and chronic respiratory diseases, have become the major cause of morbidity and mortality globally. Chronic illness claimed 60% of all deaths worldwide and strikingly, 80% of these deaths occur in developing countries, making such illnesses one of the major development challenges of the global south. The main objective of this study was to investigate chronic illness patients' healthcare seeking behavior and lifestyle modifications. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed in a triangulation fashion. Accordingly, 150 chronic illness outpatients visiting health facilities in the data collection period were surveyed in the study. The informants of qualitative studies were recruited by using purposive sampling technique based on availability. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze the quantitative data, and the qualitative data were summarized and presented concurrently alongside the quantitative data by hiring thematic analysis. The study unveiled that people from all walks of life are vulnerable to chronic illnesses. Place of residence and educational attainment showcased significant association with the indicators of health seeking behavior of chronic illness patients. Lifestyle modification is in the front line treatment strategies in the process of chronic illness control and management. However, chronic illness patients reported that they are struggling to adapt and practice the desired modified lifestyles in their everyday life. Thus, the practice of healthy lifestyles should be promoted to arrest potential hazards of chronic illness on the socio-economic fabrics of the society.

Key terms: /Chronic illness/ Ethiopia/Health seeking behavior/Lifestyle modifications/

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1. Introduction

Chronic illnesses, in particular cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancers, and chronic respiratory diseases have become the major cause of morbidity and mortality globally (WHO, 2014). Chronic illness accounts for two thirds of all deaths globally, more than double the number of deaths caused by infectious diseases, maternal and prenatal conditions, and nutritional deficiencies combined. Moreover, contrary to common misperception, the burden of chronic illness is worst in low- and middle-income countries where 80% of all chronic illnesses occur. In sub-Saharan African countries such as Ethiopia, increased urbanization and changing lifestyle have contributed to the rise in chronic illness. The emergence of epidemics of chronic illness is the result of demographic and epidemiological transitions, along with increases in levels of risk factors resulting from social and economic changes (WHO, 2003).

The magnitude of prevalence of chronic illness is escalating in the developing world including Ethiopia. Chronic illnesses constitute double burden in Ethiopia, adding to the already prevailing communicable diseases and other health problems exacerbated by the underlining nutritional disorders and the limited overall health awareness among the population at large (Ahmed, 2010). The prevalence of diabetes and hypertension, both self-reported and measured, was unsurprisingly higher in urban communities of Ethiopia. The high prevalence of risk factors in this group underlines the urgent need for policies for the prevention of these conditions (Prevett, 2012). The World Health Organization chronic illness profile of 2014 attributed 30% of deaths in Ethiopia to chronic illnesses such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, chronic kidney disease and chronic respiratory disease. However, chronic illness claimed about 51% of adult mortality in Addis Ababa according to domestic studies (Awoke, Damen, & Tekebash, 2012).

Health seeking behavior has been defined as all activity undertaken by the individuals who perceive to have a health problem for the purpose of finding an appropriate remedy (MacKian, 2003). The disruption of health might lead people to look after for its remedy in medically oriented institutions. However, in the era of chronic illness absolute remedy of the illness is unthinkable. Thus, victims of chronic illness are forced to develop a peculiar health seeking behavior and lifestyle modifications to improve their ill health conditions. Socio-economic status, high cost of managing chronic illness, accessibility of health facilities and misconceptions about the illness are the most important determinants for health seeking behavior of chronic illness patients (Faronbi, Olowokere, Ayamolowo, Faronbi, & Adebiyi, 2017; Habibullah & Afsar, 2013). The treatment of chronic illnesses, which are most of the time happened due to poor lifestyle choices, is time consuming, complicated and requires specific skills. Lifestyle modifications address the poor lifestyle choices that are at the root causes of chronic illness. Lifestyle modifications embraces avoid of tobacco use, maintain a healthy weight, maintain daily physical activity, eat a healthy diet, and stress

management to correct the underlying causes of chronic illness and to avoid further complications of the illness (Hartley, 2014). Thus, chronic illness patients should be empowered with the required knowledge and skills to introduce lifestyle modifications by maintaining new habits needed to manage their chronic illness. The perceived threat of the illness plays an important role in the process of changing to a healthy lifestyle in patients with chronic illnesses (Vahedparast, Mohammadi, & Ahmadi, 2016). A study conducted in Ethiopia (Abel, Daniel, & Lemma, 2017) indicated that the rates of adherence to lifestyle changes among chronic illness patients were generally found to be low.

The problem of chronic illness has been a neglected issue in Ethiopia over the years in spite of high incidence of the condition. These days, there is a burgeoning of literature on the issue in Ethiopia. However, most of the studies conducted so far (Ahmed, 2010; Ayalew et al., 2012; Prevett, 2012; Yibeltal, Challi, & Dereje, 2011) were confined to epidemiological survey and quality of healthcare for chronic illnesses patients. Although insightful and useful, because they reveal prevalence of the illnesses and nature of the healthcare services, these studies ignore concerns central to people suffering from long-term chronic illness and do not give us the whole picture of everyday existence in the life of a chronically ill person. Other studies like (Awoke et al., 2012; Berhe et al., 2013) focused on verbal autopsies to examine the impact of chronic illnesses on the mortality rate of the community. Accordingly, mortality due to chronic illness was found to be very high in rural districts and urban areas. Such studies contributed for the mushrooming of literature on chronic illnesses in Ethiopia by disclosing the fact that chronic illnesses are becoming the major causes of death in the country. However, the health seeking behavior and lifestyle shifts in the patients need to be scrutinized by applying emic perspective.

In addition to the aforementioned endeavors, studies such as (Fikru, Byass, & Wall, 2009; Muluken et al., 2015; Nshisso et al., 2012; Solomon, Yemane, Alemayehu, & Assefa, 2015; Tesfa, Wendwesen, & Bayu, 2016; Yoseph, Etalem, Sarah, Gardiner, & Parry, 2007) were conducted with the primarily focus of identifying the magnitude of specific chronic illnesses like hypertension and diabetes in the country. These studies were confined in hospital walls or conducted in the communities to assess chronic illnesses through physical measurement of study participants. Accordingly, the subjective experience of chronically ill patients has been overlooked by these studies, which obsessed with identifying the objective aspects of chronic illness. In a nutshell, the current study aims to address the following research questions.

- ✓ What does the healthcare seeking behaviour of chronic illness victims looks like?
- ✓ What lifestyle modifications do chronic illness patients adopt to improve their ill health conditions in Central and South-western Ethiopia?

2. Theoretical Framework

This study employed the conceptual framework of 'chronic illness as biographical disruption' model. Michael Bury (Bury, 1991) distinguished three dimensions of biographical disruption process. First, he argued that 'coping' refers to the cognitive processes employed by the chronically ill to sustain a sense of self-worth and to come to terms with an altered situation and an altered body. Second, the term 'strategy' refers to the actions and processes involved in the management of the condition and its impact on interaction and life chances. Third, chronic illness involves the adoption of a particular 'style' of living, or different 'styles of adjustment.' Lifestyle for the chronically ill often means deciding how much should be disclosed or disguised about the condition, how far the person should 'come out' and in what way, in interacting with others. For some groups, withdrawal from all but essential interaction has been observed. For others 'normalization' has meant integrating the disorder into an altered and public identity. In sum, chronic illness as 'biographical disruption' framework serves us to understand the circumstances of chronically ill people in the aftermath of their chronic illness including, the health seeking behavior and the modifications in lifestyles they adopted to sustain their life.

3. Research Methods
3.1. Study Settings

This study was conducted in Central and Southwestern part of Ethiopia. Addis Ababa city from the central and Jimma Zone from Southwestern Ethiopia were the study settings. Thus, Menelik II referral Hospital, Black Lion General Specialized Hospital, and Ethiopian Diabetes Association from Addis Ababa City were selected purposively to collect relevant primary data for the study. Whereas, Sokoru woreda health center, Shenen Gibe Hospital, and Jimma University Medical Center were selected from Jimma Zone as a study site for the study.

3.2. Methods and Instruments of Data Collection

Sample Survey: Survey was conducted on selected patients about different aspects of their chronic illness. The study participants were purposively selected chronic illness outpatients attending treatment services in the selected treatment centers during the study period. The inclusion criteria were age of 18 years and older, and being a chronic patient for a minimum of one year. Moreover, the survey data was collected from victims of selected chronic illnesses. Accordingly, six chronic illnesses (hypertension, diabetes, chronic renal illness, Asthma, cancer and chronic heart illness) which are the most prevalent in the country based on previous studies (Awoke et al.,

2012; Ayalew et al., 2012; Fikru et al., 2009; WHO, 2014, 2015) were selected. Patients who are outside the respective geographical zone, severely ill, not cooperative, having difficulty in hearing, and visual impairment were excluded from the study. Apart from these criteria, patients were purposively selected to embrace a wide variation in terms of socio-demographics characteristics. Interviewer administered questionnaire was prepared and administered in local languages (Amharic and Affan Oromo) to ease the interview process. The questionnaire has three parts. The first section addresses the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of respondents. The second part of the questionnaire includes the indicators of health seeking in which the first action patients took when symptoms appeared, the length of time to take the action, adherence to prescriptions, regular attendance of their follow-up appointments, preference between indigenous and biomedicine and discontinuity of treatments are surveyed to measure health seeking behavior. The third segment of the questionnaire indicates the lifestyle dimensions of diet, exercise, alcohol, cigarette, and stress management experiences of chronic illness patients. In sum, the survey was carried on during chronic illness outpatients' visit to the treatment center, while the patients are awaiting treatment services in the waiting area of health facilities.

Illness Narratives: This method was employed to generate depth qualitative data emanated from the lived experiences of selected patients of chronic illness. Thus, how they come to manage their illness and the way they responded to illness symptoms was investigated from their lived experience. Illness narratives play powerful role in eliciting the illness accounts that patients provide in restoring their sense of empowerment, agency, and care of the self (Winkelman, 2009). Since recently, the use of illness narratives and the patient's stories became prime sociological material in the process of understanding chronic illness. The ill person was listened to and was valued while telling his lived experience of the illness. Illness narratives show how the ill person's life is changed, and 'disrupted' by the illness (Bury, 2001). In-depth interview guide was prepared and illness narrative was conducted with purposively selected patients to gather the relevant information on the various aspects of chronic illness.

3.3. Sampling Design

The necessary sample for the survey research was selected by employing availability sampling technique. Availability or accidental sampling applies the selection of sampling units out of the available target groups. Chronic illness patients availability at a given health facility and time was the main factor for opting accidental sampling. Thus, this technique was used to generate data from the patients who are visiting health facilities for treatment in the time of data collection. The sample size of the survey was decided based on the number of outpatients attending treatment in the study health facilities due to impossibility of getting the sampling frame of all chronic illness patients. Accordingly, 150 chronic illness outpatients visiting health facilities in the data collection

period and eligible to be included in the study by the inclusion/exclusion criteria were surveyed in the study. The informants of qualitative studies were recruited by using purposive sampling technique based on availability basis. The qualitative data was collected from participants until saturation of key themes were achieved. Thus, 16 illness narratives informants were participated in the qualitative studies of the project.

3.4. Methods of Data Analysis

The quantitative data, gathered through the use of questionnaire, were analyzed by using descriptive statistics which incorporates the use of frequency, percentages and mean distribution. Chi-square test was administered to make statistical test and inference of the quantitative data. The statistical analysis tool SPSS version 20.0 was employed for doing the task of analysis. On the other hand, the qualitative data, obtained through illness narratives were summarized and presented concurrently alongside with the quantitative data by hiring thematic analysis technique.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

Observance of ethical norms plays pivotal roles in assuring the credibility of the reports of the study. Thus, before the start of data collection, the proposal was submitted to college of Social Science and Humanities research and postgraduate coordinator office of Jimma University. Supportive letter was delivered to the respective treatment centers and hospitals. Oral consent was obtained from the respondents and confidentiality has been assured for any information provided. All ethical issues of conducting scientific research were maintained and observed in this study.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The collected quantitative data indicated that 54% of the survey respondents are male and the remaining 46% of them are female. The average age of the respondents is 49.16, which to some extent indicates that the popular perception and rhetoric of associating chronic illness with elderly should be challenged. More so, the majority (64%) of the respondents are married as of marital status is concerned. In terms of educational attainment, only 7.3% have got degree and above qualifications. About 52% and 43.3% of the respondents reported that Orthodox Christianity and Islam are their religions respectively. Moreover, 8% of the respondents accounted that they are currently unemployed as a result of their illness. The family size of the respondents has a computed mean of 5.41 people in their household. A fairly large number of respondents (32.7%) have earned less than or equal to 500 Birr per month. However, the calculated mean of the average monthly income of respondents is 1214.03 Birr per month. Finally,

about 60% of the survey respondents noted that their place of origin is urban and the rest 40% said that their residence area is rural. In sum, the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of respondents unearthed that people from all walks of life are vulnerable to chronic illnesses.

4.2. Health Seeking Behavior of Chronic Illness Patients

There is a considerable variation in the health seeking behavior of acute illness victims and chronic illness patients. In the first group, you know that the illness is temporary and if you adhere to the prescriptions everything would be fixed. Paradoxically, in the case of the latter groups, whatever you did is to palliate the pains and to manage the illness, but curing is unachievable. Thus, patients develop a health seeking behavior according to their illness category. The first action patients took when symptoms appeared, the length of time to take the action, adherence to prescriptions, regular attendance of their follow-up appointments, preference between indigenous and biomedicine and discontinuity of treatments are discussed below as indicators of the health seeking behavior of chronic illness patients.

Accordingly, about 64.7% of the survey respondents reported that visiting healthcare facilities was the first action they took after the onset of the illness symptoms. In the contrary, the remaining 35.3% of respondents revealed that visiting either faith based healing places, traditional medicine centers, or use over the counter drugs were the actions taken to treat chronic illness. The majority of the respondents (88%) decided to visit healthcare facilities when their chronic illness gets worse and complicated. From the qualitative study, one illness narrative informant who has been victim of diabetes for 7 years seconded this by narrating the following.

> *When the symptoms first appeared I did not take any action for a long time. The pain was on and off not demanding further action. After that I was convinced to visit health facilities by my intimates. Then I went to health center and told about the presence of diabetes in my blood (*Illness narrative, Female, 46*).*

Chronic illness patients let down symptoms for a considerable length of time without taking action. We should quote the experience of another informant as follows:

*I have had tonsillitis for a long period of time. I did not treat the pain of tonsillitis properly. Subsequently, when the situation is very painful I decided to consult a doctor. I came to hospital for the treatment of the tonsillitis, but I learned that it has transformed in to serious heart attack. Through this way I beware the presence of heart related illness on me since long ago (*Illness narrative, Male, 54*).*

Concerning the length of time to visit health centers for treatment, about 59.3% of the respondents reported that they have visited medical centers immediately after the onset of symptoms. The rest 40.3% of respondents failed to make immediate contact with healthcare providers as a result of factors like; distance of the nearby health facility, financial constraint, seeking treatment from indigenous medicine, perceptions of illness etiologies, and lesser pain of the illness. Some chronic illness patients failed to visit medical centers immediately when symptoms appeared by seeking treatment from faith based healing places. A qualitative study participant narrated the following experience in line with the above assertion.

*I believe that God send me this illness to teach me about his presence, power and mercy. I personally know that people who had been victims of illnesses similar to me were cured through the help of God. I came to hospital because I have been forced by my son. I know that I can get nothing from here (hospital). The solution is God. St. Eurea³l is my medicine. I want to spend much of my time in the church of St.Eurael, but my son insisted me to stop visiting church. He said that I would be tired and the illness could be worsened (*Illness narrative, Female, 53*).*

About 42% of the respondents discontinued their treatment of chronic illness in the medical setting. Some of the factors accounted for treatment discontinuation are financial constraint, resort to non-biomedical treatment, ineffectiveness of modern medicine, clash between treatment and work schedule, and inaccessibility of health centers. The qualitative studies also support this habit. A 19 year old girl, who has diabetic for more than five years narrated as follows:

*………. I was taken to the church (*she is protestant*) by my parents. Prayer was made for me. I was totally cured. However, since I have to study hard to succeed in my schooling I did not follow the church service strictly. When I stopped visiting the church, the illness relapsed. I believe that Jesus will heal me, but as of the inconveniences I am not following the faith based healing seriously. That is my weakness and I will work on that to be free from the illness.* Impediments of Health Seeking Behavior of Chronic Illness Patients

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³ Name of an Orthodox church in Addis Ababa

Table1: Cross tabulation of health seeking behavior indicators and social factors

Health seeking behavior of chronic illness patients	Social Factors					
	Place of residence			Educational attainment		
Immediate visit of health facilities	**Urban**	**Rural**	**Total**	**Non-literate**	**Literate**	**Total**
Yes	62	27	89	15	74	89
No	28	33	61	27	34	61
Total	90	60	150	42	108	150
χ^2		8.514		13.393		
P value		.004**		.000**		
Exp(B)		2.708		3.918		
	Place of residence			Educational attainment		
Regularity of visiting healthcare facilities	**Urban**	**Rural**	**Total**	**Non-literate**	**Literate**	**Total**
Yes	74	33	107	21	86	107
No	16	27	43	21	22	43
Total	90	60	150	42	108	150
χ^2		12.924		12.331		
P value		.000**		.000**		
Exp(B)		3.784		3.909		
	Place of residence			Educational attainment		
Discontinuity of started treatment	**Urban**	**Rural**	**Total**	**Non-literate**	**Literate**	**Total**
Yes	28	35	63	25	38	63
No	62	25	87	17	70	87
Total	90	60	150	42	108	150
χ^2		10.987		7.302		
P value		.001**		.007**		
Exp(B)		3.10		2.709		

*p< 0.05, **p<0.01

As the above table 1 depicted, Chi-square test was used to see the association between variables. Accordingly, highly significant association was found between place of origin and indicators of health seeking behavior of chronic illness patients. Thus, chronic illness patients residing in rural area and lack of immediate visit to health facilities when illness symptoms appeared are associated. The computed Chi-square test statistics revealed that the *p* value (.004) is significant at $\alpha =0.01$. Consequently, living in rural area is a risk factor for chronic illness patients for not visiting healthcare facilities immediately. The odds ratio is 2.708. Thus, the odds of rural area chronic illness patients' failure to make immediate visit of health facilities is 2.708 than that of chronic illness patients in urban areas.   In a nutshell, rural place of residence is a risk factor for not making immediate visit, while urban residence is a protective factor. Moreover, the data from the qualitative studies claimed that the above assertion is a valid one. A chronic illness patient informant from rural area narrated the scenario as follows:

> *We did not have such new illnesses in the past. We rural people were healthy and we did not even know health centers in the past. But now things have changed rapidly and such chronic or other types of illnesses are knocking everyone's door. Getting healthy people are becoming difficult. After the introduction of manufactured edible oils and fertilizers, rural inhabitants are contaminated with innumerable illnesses. In the good old days we did have plenty of butter and milk, which were the reasons for our stamina, but now such things are hardly available. After all, most of the rural people have the habit to wait until the illness made them bedridden. For instance, I have attempted myriads of successful and unsuccessful treatment techniques in my locality before I finally decided to visit modern healthcare facilities (*Illness narrative informant, Male, 57).

Health seeking behavior of chronic illness patients is also affected by educational attainment. The Chi-square test statistics unearthed that non-literate segments of the patients failed to visit healthcare facilities after the onset of illness symptoms., where the *P* value (.000) is significant at $\alpha =0.01$ *and* the odds ratio is 3.918. Thus, the odds of the non-literate chronic illness patients' failure to make immediate visit of health facilities is 3.918 than that of the literate counterparts.

The other indicator of health seeking behavior is regularity of visit of heath centers to treat chronic illness. In this regard, the Chi-square test indicated that chronic illness patients who are living in urban areas and those who are literate attend their follow-up appointments by making regular visit than the patients living in rural areas and non- literate. The P value (.000) is significant at $\alpha =0.01$ *and* the odds ratio is 3.784 for place of residence and regular visit. The odds of rural area chronic illness patients not to make regular visit of health facilities is 3.784 than the chronic illness patients residing in urban areas. Whereas, regular visit of health facilities for the treatment of chronic illness

and educational status has a P value (.000) is significant at $\alpha =0.01$ *and* the odds ratio is 3.909. Thus, the odds of non-literate chronic illness patients' failure to regularly visit health facilities are 3.909 than the literate chronic illness patients. The last indicator of health seeking behavior of chronic illness patients is the discontinuity of started treatment. In line with this, patients living in rural areas are vulnerable to terminate their treatment three fold times than their urban counter parts. The Chi-square test statistics has a P value (.001) which is significant at $\alpha =0.01$ *and* the odds ratio is 3.10. The odds of rural area chronic illness patients discontinuity of started treatments is 3.10 than that of the urban area chronic illness patients. The Chi-square test statistics has indicated the presence of highly significant association between educational status and discontinuity of started treatment where the P value (.001) is significant at $\alpha =0.01$ *and* the odds ratio is 2.709. The odds of non-literate chronic illness patients discontinuity of started treatment is 2.709 than the literate patients.

4.3. The Practice of Lifestyle Modification among Chronic Illness Patients

Chronic illnesses are sometimes called lifestyle disease in order to emphasis how far individuals life choices and living styles are determinant to its occurrence. By the same token, lifestyle modifications are recommended strategies in the treatment of chronic illness. In the period of chronic illness, the magic bullet of medicine is not functioning. Therefore, this section assesses how much chronic illness patients introduced and practiced a modified lifestyle in order to facilitate the treatment and management of their chronic illness.

Table 2 the practice of lifestyle modifications by chronic illness patients

		Frequency (N==150)	Percent
How often you are visiting health facilities for a medical checkup after the onset of your illness	Usually	44	29.3
	Sometimes	63	42.0
	Rarely	43	28.7
	Total	**150**	**100.0**
Do you limit the amount of fat and cholesterol in your diet after the illness	Never	47	31.3
	Rarely	28	18.7
	Sometimes	26	17.3
	Regularly	49	32.7
	Total	**150**	**100.0**
Do you try to control the amount of salt in your diet after the illness	Never	31	20.7
	Rarely	39	26.0
	Sometimes	35	23.3
	Regularly	45	30.0
	Total	**150**	**100.0**
Do you take vitamins (fruits) or minerals after the illness	Never	16	10.7
	Rarely	56	37.3
	Sometimes	67	44.7
	Regularly	11	7.3
	Total	**150**	**100.0**
Do you find ways to reduce tension after the illness	Never	50	33.3
	Rarely	26	17.3
	Sometimes	20	13.3
	Regularly	54	36.0
	Total	**150**	**100.0**
How often did you smoke after the illness	I was none smoker before the illness	126	84.0
	stopped after the illness	12	8.0
	Rarely	11	7.3
	Regularly	1	.7
	Total	**150**	**100.0**
How often did you drink alcoholic beverage after the illness	I was none drinker before the illness	96	64.0
	stopped after the illness	28	18.7
	Rarely	23	15.3
	Regularly	3	2.0
	Total	**150**	**100.0**
Did you reserve time for exercise after the illness	Never	67	44.7
	Rarely	34	22.7
	Sometimes	26	17.3
	Regularly	23	15.3
	Total	**150**	**100.0**
How much your chronic illness affected your participation in social activities (like visiting friends, relatives, attending wedding/funeral and other ceremonies	Extremely	38	25.3
	Moderately	63	42.0
	A little bit	22	14.7
	Not at all	27	18.0
	Total	**150**	**100.0**

The findings of this study indicated that chronic illness patients registered lifestyle modifications in arrays of life dimensions. In the aftermath of the illness, about 29.3% and 42% of survey respondents are visiting health facilities for general medical checkup usually and sometimes respectively. This tendency has its own advantages in identifying co-morbidities earlier and empowered patients to notice the changes in the status of their illness. Next to medical checkup, modifying nutritional habit is the required qualities among chronic illness patients. Subsequently, 69.7% patients more or less tried to avoid fat and cholesterol from their diet. Moreover, 79.3% and 89.3% of survey respondents more or less attempted to control the amount of salt and added vitamins/fruits in their meal respectively. Sedentary and monotonous working and living styles are often associated with the development of chronic illness. This type of lifestyle may lead to chronic tension, which in turn leads people to end up with different chronic illnesses. With respect to this, survey respondents were asked to specify their habits of tension reduction. Accordingly, 36% of the patients reported that they regularly search ways to reduce tension after the onset of the illness.

The other lifestyle modification areas include smoking and alcohol consumption. In this regard, a fairly large number of respondents (84% and 64%) respectively reported that they were non-smoker and non-drinker before the illness. However, about 8% and 18.7% of patients stopped smoking and drinking alcohol after the illness respectively. Thus, chronic illness patients are forced to avoid smoking and excessive alcohol consumption to facilitate the management of their illness. But 8% and 17.3% of patients preserved the habit of smoking and drinking respectively despite of their chronic illness. From the qualitative studies, A 50 year old cancer patient noted that he has made the unhealthy behavior history by saying "I used to chew *khat*[4] regularly and drink alcohol intermittently before the onset of the illness, but I stopped everything after the illness."

In terms of exercising, majority of the survey respondents (65.3%) reserve time for exercise from occasionally to regularly. The participants of the qualitative study also indicated their experiences of adapting healthy lifestyles. A 54 year old chronic heart illness patient noted his experience by saying "I avoid salt from my diet. I changed my food preference from meat to vegetables. I start my day with moderate exercise. In general, I brought paradigm shift lifestyle modification after the onset of the illness. One big motivating factor is that I have to live for my children."

Another dimension of lifestyles modifications is associated with dressing style, which is specifically a desired quality for diabetic patients. A 19 year old girl, who has been diabetic for more than three years, noted "I modified my dressing styles due to the illness. I tried my best to be very friendly with the illness. Flat shoes and soft and wide clothes are most recommended to avoid wounds on body and I am behaving accordingly." Moreover, chronic illness forced patients to modify their social life in a certain direction. Hence, 82% of patients reported that their chronic illness prevents them

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[4] Khat leaves are chewed for stimulation purpose by many people in Ethiopia

from participating in social gatherings and ceremonies either extremely, moderately, or a little bit. Chronic illness patients experienced a number of social problems partly emanating from their modified lifestyles. The data collected by the qualitative studies also consolidate what is stated above. Regarding this one patient informant stated the following:

> *.....The illness also caused problems associated with my social life and social interaction. As of the prescriptions, I avoided taking foods items which are not friendly with my illness. In my locality, it is common for people to prepare festive on the name of Righteous and Saints, besides wedding and holidays. They called their neighbors to eat and drink what they have prepared. As a member of the community, I should attend such ceremonies. However, I am not willing to eat and drink what they have prepared as a result of my condition. People started to label me that I am negligent and trifle with their festive meal, despite of they are conscious about my illness. Only few understand my situation. Salt is not added to the food I am eating. Most of the time food is cooked once for the family. My children's complain about the lack of salt in the diet. This trend is affecting the intimacy with my family (Illness narrative, Male, 59).*

Chronic illness patients also modified their spiritual life in the aftermath of the illness. An informant of a heart disease victim noted the following in relation with this:

> *The illness vastly changed my spiritual life. I became more religious after the illness. I started praying to Lord Day and night after the illness, but I was too dormant in terms of religious life before the onset of the illness. After I accomplished all prayers and rituals I become comfortable and strong psychologically. More so, I become addictive of the meditations of the praying ceremony in the church. I also became voracious reader of spiritual texts and scientific articles about my illness (*Illness narrative informant, Male, 54).

A 50 year old heart illness patient narrated the following in accordance with what is said above. "When I suddenly became dependent on others, I lost my confidence and principles immediately. I understand that people are easily breakable and defenseless, unless God maintained their health and wellbeing. I approach my God more than I was behaving before." The incidence of chronic illness helped patients to strengthen their spiritual life. Chronic illness is none curable, but manageable illness reality from the medical professionals point of view. However, some chronic illness patients challenged this assertion and seek relief from the illness by leaning to their religion and the associated rituals. Thus, chronic illness makes victims more pious in their life.

Chronic illness forced people to develop a new orientation about their life in general and their spiritual life in particular. The occurrence of chronic illness leads one's

life in to different destination. Patients of chronic illness sharply altered their life philosophy in many ways. One participant noted the following in line with this:

> *My life mentality was changed after the onset of the illness. I understood that life could take different forms with a fraction of seconds. I become more concerned about spiritual life due to the illness. Not only my life philosophy, but also other aspects of my life have been changed drastically following the incident (*Illness narrative informant, Female, 60).

The realities of chronic illness forced people to socialize themselves with death. Patients altered their understanding and attitude towards death as a result of their chronic illness. One participant of the study stated the following in line with aforementioned assertion:

> *When you are sick, the glass you adapted to look life is very different. I realized this after the illness. Besides, the severity of the pains sometimes erodes all your principles automatically. For instance, I hate myself and my life when I experienced serious pain. I wish I could die rather than suffering alive. The illness made me ready to welcome death, which I feared a lot when I was normal. I am socializing with the process of dying and the realities of death as a result of the illness (*Illness narrative informant, Female, 43*).

Chronic illness also leads patients to hate their life. Since it is lifelong health problem and the associated miseries instigated patients to wish death than suffering alive. A 50 year old adult suffering from cancer stated that "I feel happy if I died easily by car accident than experiencing the pains of this illness." Another diabetic patient informant endorsed this by saying that "I wished that Allah should have given me HIV than diabetes to die quickly." One major feature of most chronic illnesses is that it elongates the suffering time of people instead of killing them suddenly.

On the other hand, for some participants of the study the incidence of chronic illness is considered as a turning point to specify their life aspirations. A type one diabetes patient shared her experience as follows:

> *I was highly motivated to read and know more about diabetes after the illness. It was the turning point in my life. I have read numerous issues about diabetes. I also joined Ethiopian diabetes association and serving as a volunteer. The illness motivated me to join the medical profession and to search a better treatment drug. I am studying hard to be a physician and to contribute in the process of controlling and treating diabetes. I hope my dreams will come true through the help of God. Two things I have developed after the onset of the illness are; it made me hardworking student in my education and spiritual girl in my faith (*Illness narrative informant, Female, 19*).

Chronic illness serves as incite cause to reverse longstanding stances and principles of people's life. For some, it is a blessing in disguise to enhance their spiritual life and to participate in benevolent activities by joining self help and community based associations. For others, chronic illness is their destiny and is the reason behind longing death in their everyday life.

Chronic illness patients confronted serious challenges in the process of adapting modified lifestyles. The treatment of chronic illness is more associated with lifestyle change than medication. However, practicing new lifestyles overnight is not an easy task. One informant articulated his lived experience like this: "I struggled to resocialize myself with the modified lifestyles, which demands giving up one's choices for prolonging one's life." Thus, starting to practice anew lifestyles is one of the challenges facing chronic illness patients, which could play a great role in the management of the illness if successfully implemented or aggravate the status of the illness if not.

5. Discussion

Chronic illness is emerging as a serious public health issue in the contemporary society. It is becoming a headache for global south countries by putting many families at risk. Chronic illness is creating a double burden for Ethiopian health system already whomped with the problem of acute illness. Chronic illness is blemishing the lives of individuals, families and the wider socio-economic fabrics of the society.   As of the health seeking behavior of chronic illness is concerned, the current study revealed that chronic illness patients develop good health seeking behavior to treat their ill health condition. In Ethiopian reality, chronic illness patients received treatment from both biomedical and indigenous treatment centers. Chronic illness patients' health seeking behavior is influenced by social factors like education and place of residence. Thus, chronic illness patients residing in rural areas do not visit health centers immediately after the onset of illness, do not follow appointments regularly, and are more prone to discontinue the started treatment than their urban counter parts.   This study also unearthed that the non-literate chronic illness patients have low level of health seeking behavior than the literate patients. A study conducted in Malaysia (Amal, Tee, Kaur, & Chinna, 2011) confirmed the findings of the current study, where health seeking behavior of chronic illness is determined by the geographical areas and level of education of patients.

In terms of lifestyle modifications, the present study indicated that most of the chronic illness patients introduced modified lifestyles to manage their chronic condition. However, their strict practice of the modified lifestyles is challenged when they are unable to easily give up their old habits as evidenced by the qualitative studies. The family and wider social forces are indicated by the participants of the study as factors which made lifestyle modification difficult for chronic illness patients. Previous studies also confirmed the findings of the present study. A study conducted in Ethiopia (Abel et

al., 2017) noted that the respondents' adherence to lifestyle modifications was only 23%, while in this study it is 35%, exhibiting some improvement. The lifestyle adherence was found to be better in females, patients who had comorbidities, had been knowledgeable about the disease, and among young adult respondents. A study conducted on the experiences of Iranian chronic illness patients (Vahedparast et al., 2016) indicated that the perceived threat of the illness plays an important role in the process of changing to a healthy lifestyle in patients with chronic illnesses. In the present study, 79.3% and 65.3% of the respondents strived to control the amount of salt and to reserve time for exercising respectively. In previous studies (Shibiru, Bayeta, Selamu, & Eliyas, 2016) 80% and 87.8% of chronic illness patients avoided salt from their diet and performed physical exercise to manage their illness respectively. The result is almost the same with regard to avoiding salt, but in terms of exercise there is a discrepancy. However, a study conducted in Botswana (Zungu, Djumbe, & Setswe, 2013) reported the same finding with the present study in which 65.6% of chronic illness patients undertake physical to manage their chronic illness.

Chronic illness patients adopted modified lifestyles to facilitate the treatment of their chronic illness. Prescriptions of medications do not always treat the underlying cause of the chronic illnesses. Most health care practitioners would agree that the majority of chronic diseases are the result of poor lifestyle choices. Thus, unhealthy lifestyles such as smoking, lack of exercise, bad food choices and stress are the factors behind the widespread prevalence of chronic illness. In line with this, chronic illness is named as lifestyle diseases in the literature. In the previous study (Hartley, 2014) noted that successful lifestyle modification could correct numerous underlying etiologies that contribute to the triggering and progression of chronic illness. Moreover, a study conducted in Botswana (Zungu et al., 2013) discussed that chronic illness patients showed lifestyle modifications associated with diet, exercise, smoking, and alcohol attributes in the aftermath of their illness. Accordingly, 96.4% of the respondents were non-smokers from the outset and 65.2% restricted from alcohol consumption after they contracted chronic illness. In the present study, about 84.0% of the respondents were non-smokers and 51.85% of the chronic illness patients stopped drinking alcohol after the onset of the illness.

Generally, the social factors of place of residence and being non-literate are impeding the health seeking behavior of chronic illness patients. Chronic illness patients are also struggling to practice lifestyle modification to manage their ill health conditions. Thus, health literacy and expansion of health facilities should be prioritized to promote the health seeking behavior of the patients and behavioral intervention should be undertaken to improve the patients' adherence to recommended lifestyles. In sum, chronic illness patients' acceptance and integration of the illness as part of their new identity reflects the coping element of the 'chronic illness as biographical disruption' theory and improved health seeking behavior is considered as strategies of the 'chronic illness as biographical disruption' model. The practice of lifestyle modifications and the

re-socialization of chronic illness patients manifested through changes in life philosophy, spiritual life and social life indicates the adjustments accomplished by patients to sustain their lives. Thus, the patient's life course and overall life domains are highly disrupted by the illness which results a paradigm shift biographical sketch transformation as evidenced by the findings of the current study.

6. Conclusion

Chronic illness is one of the grievous challenges encountering contemporary society and becoming not a merely personal trouble. Chronic illness patients sharply altered their life philosophy in the aftermath of the illness. After the onset of the illness, patients are socializing themselves with the inevitable death and the process of dying frequently than they were behaving previously. Chronic illness patients also resorted to spiritual life and seek cure from faith based healing system. The treatment of chronic illness requires unfailing commitment from the patients in developing good health seeking behavior. Chronic illness patients dominantly relied on the biomedical treatment services, but also make a hierarchical resort to indigenous and faith based treatment alternatives intermittently. From socio-demographic factors, place of residence and educational status were found to be the determinants of health seeking behavior of chronic illness patients. Thus, chronic illness victims who live in rural area and those who are not literate have low achievements across the three indicators of health seeking behavior. Moreover, the incompetence of service providers and poor treatment equipment's, expensive treatment service, and inaccessibility of health facilities were identified as the supply side barriers influencing the health seeking behavior of chronic illness patients.

Lifestyle modification is in the front line treatment strategies in the process of chronic illness control and management. However, chronic illness patients reported that they are struggling to adapt and practice the desired modified lifestyles in their everyday life. Some of the areas in which chronic illness patients are required to bring paradigm shift modifications are nutrition, cigarettes, alcohol, exercising and medical checkups. Patients who successfully re-socialized with the modified lifestyles reported improvements in the status of their chronic illness. In the contrary, patients who dropped the new lifestyles faced relapse of pains. As a result of their chronic illness and partly due to the modified lifestyles, patients are encountering serious problems in their social life. More so, chronic illness patients modified their spiritual life and most of them became religious after the onset of the illness. Patients of chronic illness also sharply altered their life philosophy in many ways. The problem of chronic illness is not just a health problem; rather it affects the overall functioning of the society. Thus, much has to be done to create chronic illness conscious society by using mass media and indigenous institutions to disseminate the required information about practicing health promoting

lifestyles to prevent chronic illnesses and lifestyle modifications to manage the occurred illness.

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FULL LENGTH ARTICLE

The Function of Myth in Social Construction: The Waataa Communityof Chopha Village in Focus

Gemeda Hunde[1], Sussan Epple[2], Ronny Meyer[3]

Abstract

The relationship between the Waataa community inhabiting Chopha village and the neighbouring non-Waataa social groups is complex. The Waataas identify themselves as a 'gifted' people. On the one hand, the neighboring non-Waataas have a more complex perception about the Waataa people. They consider the Waataa the 'blessed' people and need their cultural services. On, the non-Waataas deprecate the Waataa'sculture. For this reason, the neighboring groups marginalize them. Nowadays some Waataas and young Waataas refute to accept their ancestors'culture. Hence, the Waataa's practices are on the verge of extinction. Thus, study of the Waataa's traditional practices needs an urgent task. Based on empirical data gathered through fieldworks, this study examined the creation myth of the Waataa people. The data were analysed based on social construction and symbolic interpretation theory. It was foundout that the non-Waataas have varying views on the Waataa's cultural practices. The Waataa's myth of origin is primarily used to support their status as the 'gifted' people. The Waataa's mythical self-perception is partially not shared by the non-Waataas. Conversely, a few interpretations of the myth, which is shared by the two groups, strengthen their relationship. Thus, the interpretation of the myth is determined by specific purpose of meaning construction. Furthermore, the myth is used to justify the Waataa's traditional practices. It is also used to empower their important role in the social construction of the neighbouring Oromo groups.

*Key words: /*Endangered culture/Extinction/Meaning/Perception/Social construction/ Symbolic interepretation/

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

This paper examined the creation myth of the Waataa people. The Waataa people are one of the Oromo social groups, who inhabit areas that stretch from Ethiopia to Kenya. In Ethiopia, they inhabit Arsi, East Shoa, and Borana Zones of Oromia Region, and the Sidama Zone of the Southern Ethiopia Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region (SENNPR). In Kenya, the Waataa people live in scattered territorial groups along the Tana and Galana rivers and in the Taru Desert in eastern Kenya, on the Kenya coast, in Isiolo and Marsabit districts in northern Kenya (Kassam & Bashuna, 2004). Moreover, Stroomer (1987) affirms that the Waataa people live in the Tana River District and Kilifi District of coast province of Kenya. They mainly reside in villages north and south of Malindi and some families of Waataa people live in Malindi town. Furthermore, Stroomer (1987) discusses that a large proportion of Waataa are living among the Borana in northern Kenya.

Regardless of the fact that the Waataa people inhabit different areas in Ethiopia and Kenya, this paper focuses on the Waataa people, who are living as a small community in Ziway Dugda *woreda,* Senberro *kebele*, Chopha village, bordering Lake Ziway. Sometimes, the neighbouring social groups identify the *Chopha* village as the *Waataa Village*. In other *Woredas* of Arsi Zone, the Waataas live in scatterd situation; i.e. not as a community in a particular village. In the past, the Waataa people were excluded from taking part in socio-economic and political activities. Currently, the above social attitudes are not applicable, but the segregation continues in some social and cultural deeds. Consequently, the segregation on the Waataa people influences the continuity of their traditional practices.

The origin of the Waataa people is mythical. Their traditional practices and spiritual power are embodied in myths, proverbs, blessings, curses, and sayings of and about the Waataa people. Nowadays, the Waataa's traditional practices are declining. They are among the endangered cultural traits of the Waataa people in particular and the Oromo people in general. Therefore, Waataa's traditional practices, wisdom, and indigenous lexical knowledge have to been studied, recorded, and documented for future use. Inlight of this, the study examined the creation of myth among the Waataa community.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The Waataa people are perceived as the 'blessed' people with the spiritual power vested in them by *Waaqaa* (God). Though they are few in numbers, their role in the neighbouring social groups' ways of life is a greater one. Nonetheless, the Waataas[4] importance in service of cultural practices is declining. Modern education and knowledge, major religions in the area, rapid socio-political changes, and urbanization are among the factors that are influencing the Waataas' culture. The Waataas' age-old cultural practices are recently taken as inferior to Islam and Christianity by most members of the younger generation of the Waataa people and other Oromo social groups. This is accounted for by the youths of the Waataa people to disregard their

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[4]In ZiwayDugdaWoredaandthe neighboring Woredas, the term Waataadenotes both, the Waataa people as the group and anindindividual member of the Waataa people. The term also denotesa person, who belongs to the Waataa people and performs the cultural practices of the Waataa people.

cultural practices.   Hence, nowadays, a few elderly members of the Waataa community practice the Waataas' traditional practices.

Even though the 'gifted' members of the Waataa community contribute to the well- being of the Oromo society in general and the Arsi Oromo in particular, their contributions are not well studied. More importantly, their traditional practices, knowledge, conventions, rules, and orders are not well studied and documented. They survive in the mouths of these elderly members of the community and they rehearse them orally. Thus, their essences and social functions are liable to misapprehensions and extinctions, when these old-aged members of the Waataa community pass away.

On the other side, although, few studies have been conducted on the Waataa people and the marginalized social groups (Cerulli, 1922); (Panhkhurst, 1999); (Kassam, 2004); (Dabala Goshu and Meyer, 2004); and (Ayehu, 2005), their focuses are different. Furthermore, their depth and limited scopes of data collections made these studies, only descriptions. These points reveal the gaps of researches, which dealt with the Waataa people of Ethiopia.

Thus, with a focus on the epistemological-ontological notion, by widening its scope and employing different methods of data collections, this research endeavoured to bridge the gaps. Thus, this study aimed to answer the following research questions.

- How do the 'gifted' members of the Waataa people perform the selected cultural practices?
- How do traditional practices of the Waataa people are perceived by the neighbouring Oromo social groups?
- How do the Waataa people are portrayed in the creation myth of the Waataa people?

Hence, by analysing the creation myth of the Waataa people, this research provides new information and captures the social construction of meanings and actions.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the use of myth in the social construction of Arsi Oromo and the neighbouring Oromo social groups. The specific objectives are:

- To examine perceptions of the Waataa community and the neighboring Oromo social groups about the traditional practices of the Waataa people.
- To elucidate the Waataa's role in conducting the selected traditional cultural practices of the Waataa community.
- show how the creation myth portrays the Waataa people.

2.   Review of Related Literature

2.1. Conceptual Framework

This study was framed in concepts drawn from both ethnography and linguistics. It focused on the endangered cultural practices that are unique to the Waataa community. Currently the cultural practicesof the Waataa people are on the verge of extinction. Different factors have been contribuiting to the extinction of the Waataa's cultural practices; among which the influence of the major religions of the area, rapid socio-political changes, modern eduction, and urbanization, are the main factors.   Thus, based on the recent application of social construction paradigm

(Gergen & Gergen, 2008), the study used anthropological approach of Geertz's (1973) concept of "thick description" (Dawson, 2002; Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle, 2010) to examine the Waataa's cultural practices. By this, the unique cultural practices of the Waataa community was interpretatively analysed, beyond mere description. Furthermore, the Waataas'unique culture and the involvement of the neighbouring Oromo social groups in the selected cultural practices were explicated from social interpretative and symbolic interactionist points of view.

As discovery of cultural traits is associated to mere descriptive examination, construction of meaning is linked to interpretative and interactive construction of meaning on the shared sign systems. For this purpose, the researchers' immerision to the Waataa community of *Chopha* village enabled them to examine the construction of meanings in particular among the endangered ones. This entails that the research was a combined description, interpretation, and symbolic interactionism of the selected cultural practices. The interpretative and interactive approaches helped to view the cultural traits from within, sharing the Waataas' cultural values, ideology, and purpose. This did not necessarily mean that the researchers agreed in all attitudes towards the endangered cultural traits by either the Waataas or the neighbouring Oromo groups. More importantly, the researchers believed in giving dignity to the Waataa's cultural practices, as the study was conducted from the inside. Moreover, interpretation of the creation myth from the Waataa community and the neighbouring non-Waataa social groups, predominantly the Arsi Oromo, were done from the actions taken differently.

2.1 The Waataa Community of Chopha Village

The Waataa community constitutes an isolated group in Ziway Dugda Woreda. The Waataa people live as a small community in Chopha village bordering Lake Ziway in the west. They live neighbouring different Oromo groups and the Zay people.

The exact number of the Waataa population, as a social group, is not known; since there is no reliable demographic data. As a result, researchers cite different population sizes, regarding the Waataa community living in Chopha village. For instance, Dabala and Meyer (2004) indicate that the Waataa people around Lake Ziway constitute about 100 persons, whereas Habib (2001) states the size as about 200. During the first field visit to Chopha village on 10th of December 2011, one of the researchers conducted a preliminary survey to estimate the population size. As a result, there was a significant difference in the estimation. The key informant, from the Waataa community, who was about 67 years old, informed one of the researchers that there were around fifty heads of households, which the total population is estimatedto be about 250. On the other hand, the Vice Chairperson of Senbo *kebele*, Edris Kurcha, informed that the population was not greater than 350. Hence, if we consider the latest reports, the population of Waataa communitylive in Chopha village, was in the range of 250 – 300 individuals.

The Waataa people were hunters and gatherers before the land reform proclamation of February 1975 that gave them the right to land ownership. They used to eat wild animals, which are prohibited by different religions' thoughts. This implies their marginalization from the other Oromo society.

At the present-day, the livelihood of the Waataa community of Chopha village is based on subsistence economy of small-scale agricultural activities. They mainly produce maize (corn), wheat, and barley. In addition, they rear a small number of

cattle, sheep, and goats. They also assist their lively hood by earning money for cultural services they provide to the neighboring Oromo society.

The Waataa people are viewed as 'gifted' people, who have the power to bless and lay curse. In the past, the 'gifted' Waataa people were the most important participants in any rituals of Arsi Oromo. They are respected in mediating conflicts, and practicing reconciliation. They are also needed to bless women who considered infertile and to bless cattle for greater reproduction. In addition, they pray to *Waaqaa,* when the neighboring social groups encounter difficulties. The Waataa also bless children taken by *guddifacha* 'cultural child adoption'. When a family head conducts the *'wadajaa'* ritual, he invites the Waataa to the ceremony. Furthermore, the Waataa pray for safe delivery, when the pregnant women face hard lobour. In Borana Zone of Oromia, the Waataa perform the circumcision of the Abba Gada (Harris, 1884, p. 749).

However, the Waataa people have been living as a small community in Chopha village, there exists intergroup relationship between the Waataa people and the neighbouring groups. The relationships that exist between the Waataa community and the neighbouring groups are social and economical. In these relationships, the neighbouring groups, particularly the Arsi Oromo, have been influencing the Waataa people, socially and marginalize them from Oromo groups.

In the past, marginalization of the Waataa people were manifested socially, politically, and economically. However, nowadays political and economic marginalization of the Waataa people is not overt; the social marginalization is still very strong. It prevails in strict marriage rules and restrictions on relations with the Waataa community.

The Waataa people of Ethiopia are speakers of Afan Oromo. They speak the Afan Oromo dialects poken by the neighbouring Oromo groups. However, most members of the Waataa community of Chopha Village shifted their traditional belief to Islam religon; a few members of the community are performing their traditional practices to date.

Map1:Ziway DugdaWoreda and Senberro*kebele*
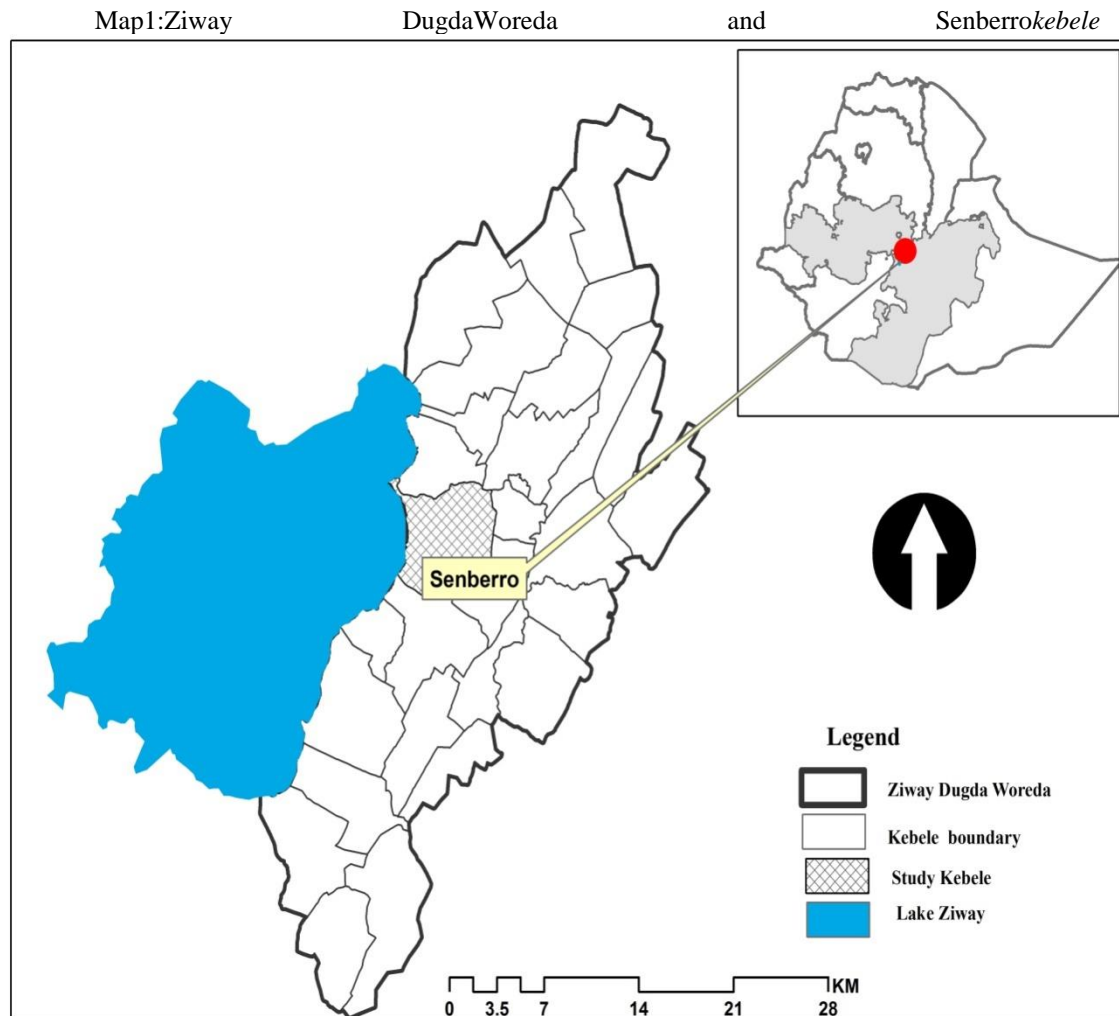
2.2 Origin and History of the Waataa People

There is no reliable information available about the original home of the Waataa community of Chopha village. A few earlier literatures attempted to show the origin of the Waataa people of Ethiopia (Harmuzd, Rassam, 1869; Cerulli, 1922; Spencer, 1952; Harris, Cornwallis, 1844, p.50). Though, the information they provide about the origin and history of the Waataa people of Ethiopia vary; they contribute to the knowledge about the Waataa people.

Harris (1844, pp. 50-51), who was a British traveller, states:

Among the Oromo sorcerers and soothsayers, the Wato[5], already mentioned as inhabiting the mountain Dalácha, towards the sources of Hawash are the most universally celebrated. Neither Pagan nor Christian will molest this tribe from the same superstitious apprehension of their malediction, and still more from a desire to obtain their blessing; whilst he who receives the protection of a Wato may travel with perfect, security over every part of the country inhabited by the Oromo.

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[5] The Author's spelling is retained.

According to Harris (1844), the Waataa people lived in the current West Shoa Zone of Oromia, on the area neighboring the source of Awash River, west of Addis Ababa. They are adherents of their traditional belief. Different Oromo social groups need their traditional service; i.e. blessing, for the Waaataa people own the spiritual power. The Waataa people also believe that Waaqaa provided them the spiritual power. Furthermore, they believe that their spiritual power safeguard them, everywhere they travel among different Oromo social groups.

Furthermore, Harris (1844, p.51) writes:

Subsisting entirely by the chase, the Wato wander from lake to lake and from river to river, destroying the hippopotamus, upon the flesh of which animal they chiefly live-whereas no other heathen will touch it. Feared and respected, and claiming to themselve to be the original stock of the Oromo nation, they deem all other clans unclean from having mixed with Mohammadans and Christians; and refusing on this account to intermarry, remain to this day a separate and distinct people.

We learn from Harris (1844) that the Waataa people are the ancestor of the Oromo people. According to this Author, different Oromo groups did not exclude the Waataa people from the mainstream Oromo society; rather it is the Waataa people, who disregarded other Oromo social groups, and the marginalization continues to the current time. They also thought the non-Waataa Oromos are the followers of either Christianity or Islam religions. Furthermore, Harris reveals that the Waataa people prefer to live near water bodies to hunt hippopotamus. On one side, different Oromo groups fear the Waataa people.On the other side, they respect theWaataa people.

During the fieldworks, the research informants from Arsi Oromo and Waataa community told us an identical story to Harris (1844) about the origin and spiritual power of the Waataa people. One of the informants, Haji Ahimed Mohammed Dhekko, about 70 years old, from Arsi Oromo, Ogolcho sub-clan, a knowledgeable person in Oromo culture in general and the Arsi Oromo culture in particular, affirms that the Waataa people are one of the ancient Oromo groups.

To conclude, the Waataa people are one of the Oromo social groups, who have been living together with different Oromo social groups. Although, theWaataa people share common culture together with other Oromo social groups, they practice their unique culture.

3. Methodology

3.1.Background of the Study Area

Ziway Dugda is one of the 25 *Woredas* of East Arsi Zone. Geographically, the *woreda* lies in the great East African Rift Valley. The population of the *Woreda* consists of different ethnic groups. According to the Central Statistics Agency (CSA) report (2007), the total population of the *Woreda* was 120,121(60, 700 males and 59,421 females). The majority of the *Woreda's* population is the Arsi Oromos, who together with other Oromo groups constitute 94.84% of the total population. The Amhara constitute 1.43% and other ethnic groups account for 3.73% of the population.

Concerning the languages, Afan Oromo is spoken as a first language by

94.35% of the *Woreda's* population, Amharic is spoken by 2.47% and the remaining 3.18% are speakers of different languages as the first language (CSA, 2007). The majority of the inhabitants of Ziway Dugda *woreda* are Muslims, with 89.56% of the total population, while 10.17% are followers of Ethiopian Orthodox Christian, and 0.27% of the total population is followers of different religions.

3.2. Participants of the Study

Chopha village was selected as the study site for the Waataa community, who live in this village, have marked identity constructions and social representations by other social groups, especially, by Arsi Oromo, which resulted in the Waataa community living isolated from the mainstream Arsi Oromo. A few Waataas, who are living in neighbouring W*oredas,* were not covered by this study. In addition, the study did not consider the whole population of the Waataa community, who inhabit the *Chopha* village. Rather the selected members from the community, who claim the 'gifted' ones and actively engage in the endangered traditional practices, were included.

Parallel to this, key informants were selected based on their recognition as knowledgeable and able to provide rich insights into the Waataa's culture and their relation to Arsi Oromos' way of life. Key informants from both the Waataa community and the Arsi Oromo were selected by purposive sampling method. Accordingly, these informants provided the necessary primary data. Some informants, from the Waataa community, who provided information includ *Waataa*[6], old aged people, women, and youths. Participation of the women and the youths reveal their insight about the Waataa's traditional culture. It also shows the women's role in the traditional culture of the Oromo society in general and the Waataa people in particular. The selection of informants from Arsi Oromo was conducted likewise the Waataa community. They also provided information on the relationship that exists between the two groups; i.e. the Waataa community and the Arsi Oromo. In general, informants provided information on the role of Waataa people in the social construction of Arsi Oromo and the neighbouring Oromo groups.

The study employed mainly three types of data collection instruments: namely, interview, focus group discussion, and observation. In the analysis of the data, it used the narratives that emerged during data collections. The ethnographic data were analysed using both symbolic interpretation and symbolic interaction approaches to gain insight into the endangered cultural practices performed by the 'gifted' Waataa. This helped to examine how people's variant interpretations in the natural settings were constructions, which were the foundations for people's involvement in cultural activities. The Waataa's cultural domains brought the constructions of subjective meanings at times, and shared interpretations for common goals with the Arsi Oromo.

The researchers acknowledged and applied the ethical consideration of Himmelmann (2002, p.16), who affirms interests and rights of contributors and speech community should take precedence over scientific interests. Thus, the data were collected upon the consent and good will of the informants, from the Waataa community of Chopha village and the neighbouring Oromo groups.

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[6]In Ziway Dugda and the neighbouring Woredas, Waataa stands for the Waataa people as a social group, each individual member of the Waataa community, and the gifted members of the Waataa community.

4. Results and Discussion

The Waataa people are generally perceived as a low caste social group by different neighboring social groups. Though in the past the Waataa people were outlawed from direct participation in social, economic, and political activities, practically they have been playing an important socio-cultural role in the neighbouring Oromo groups. They engage in unique social and economic activities of the neighbouring Oromo groups; i.e. the Arsi Oromo, the Borana Oromo, the Jille Oromo, and different Oromo groups inhabiting Ziway Dugda *Woreda*. The cultural services of the Waataa people also extended to the near by *Woredas* and zones.

The Oromo social groups need the cultural services of the Waataa people in areas such as conflict resolution, *guddifachaa* 'traditional child adoption ceremony of the Oromo people', *moggaasaa* 'naming ceremony by Oromo people, incorporating war captives and non-Oromo ethnic groups and individuals to be Oromo',and production of whip[7], shield, and pots. They are also needed in cleansing, rituals, prayer to *Waaqaa* on behalf of the Oromo people to bring the extended absence of rainfall to an end, to bring the hard labour to safe delivery, to enable cattle to reproduce in greater number, and prayer to *Waaqaa* to bring to an end, when extensive rainfall and epidemic diseases appear in the area. In general, the non-Waataa groups depend on the Waataa people for these traditional services.

The Waataa people earn money and different items for services they deliver. In other words, the Waataa people subsidize their livelihood by providing traditional services. The traditional services serve the Waataa people as a source of income. The earnings show the economic dependence of the Waataa people on the Oromo groups. Therefore, there exists a mutual interdependence between the Waataa people and the neighbouring Oromo social groups. The relationship and the interdependence that exist between the Waataa people and the neighboring groups are embodied in the myth of the Waataa people. Thus, to elucidate the relationship and interdependence of the Waataa people and the non-Waataa social groups, discussion and interpretation of the creation myth of the Waataa people are presented underneath.

The creation myth of Waataa people portrays the 'origin' of the Waataa as the people and as an occupational group. It also reveals their role in broader socio-cultural contexts. The origin of the Waataa people is mythical. The myth portrays that disobedience to the *Waaqaa* and competition with *Waaqaa* led the Waataa to poverty. Then after, *Waaqaa* offered the Waataa four things for livelihood; i.e., *botoyyaa*[8], clay soil, the power to reconcile, and hippopotamus. Hence, begging is thought as a means of livelihood by the Waataa people, which came to being, because of the curse put on them by *Waaqaa*. Thus, begging, which assumed an apprehensive practice by most societies, is acknowledged and practiced as the ascertained source of income by the Waataa people. According to the creation myth of Waataa people, after the Waataa's cattle were depleted*, Waaqaa* made the first *botoyya,* blessed it and gave it to the Waataa to let him earn the livelihood through it. *Waaqaa* ordered him to carry the *botoyyaa*, whenever he begs, performs cultural practices, and practice rituals. Hence, he needs to carry the *bottoyyaa,* whenever he goes out to maintaine order, perform rituals, practice traditional ceremonies, and begs.

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[7] Whip has vital functions in the customary rule of the Oromo society (see Gemeda, 2016).

[8]*Botoyyaa* is a short ceremonial stick carried by the 'gifted' Waataa people. It is approximately 1.00 to 1.5 meter long. The *botoyyaa* is only usable by the 'gifted' Waataa. Its head (top) adorns with different colors of pieces of cattle skins.

B*otoyyaa* signifies a man, who carries it as the Waataa. It also signifies the spiritual power and authority vested in the Waataa by *Waaqaa*. Hence, for the Waataa people and the neighbouring Oromo groups, *botoyyaa* is not a simple ritual stick; rather, an insignia carried by the 'blessed' Waataa people, when they perform rituals, carry out spiritual ceremonies, and mediate the society and *Waaqaa*. Thus, the Arsi Oromo and different neighbouring Oromo groups obey the Waataa's traditional rule, particularly when the Waataa carry the *botoyyaa*.

The pieces of the cattle skin, which set on the top of the *botoyyaa* as a dornment symbolizes the Waataa's cattle, which were killed by *Waaqaa's* cattle in the former day. The myth also portrays the Waataa as the first man, who appears on earth, andwho lived with *Waaqaa*. It also depicts the Waataa as a brother of *Waaqaa*.

According to the creation myth of the Waataa people, the Waataa's women are accursed to be a potter, which is an occupation of a group of low caste social status. The Waataa people believe that their women became potters, because of the punishment that *Waaqaa* put on them in the past old days.

The myth also presents hippopotamus as the cattle of the Waataa people that are provided to them in compensation to their cattle, which were killed by the *Waaqaa's*cattle. Thus, for the Waataa people, hippopotamus is 'clean' and eating a meat of the hippopotamus is not a sin as it is *Waaqaa's* provision to them. Yet, the followers of the major religions and different social groups of the area consider hippopotamus 'unclean'and condemned by the religions of these groups. Therefore, they abhor the Waataa people and marginalize them in social, economical, and political sectors.

Furthermore, the myth rationalizes the foundation of therelationship and interdependence that exist among the Waataa people and the neighbouring non-Waataa social groups. It also presents the established division of occupation that exists among theWaataa people and the non-Waataa social groups. The Waataa people produce pots, shields, and whips, which are needed by the non-Waataas. They also provide spiritual services to the non-Waataa social groups and in conflict resolution and restoring the peaceful co-existence of the societies. The non-Waataa social groups involve in other different occupations.

The creation myth of the Waataa people can be analyzed from ecological, political, and spiritual points of view. Ecologically, first *Waaqaa* pulled the Waataa people out of the competition from the niche by depleting their cattle and depriving them of the right to owning cattle. Thus, they would not compete with the Arsi Oromo and the neighbouring social groups to own the cattle. Therefore, the non-Waataa social groups, including the Arsi Oromo, practice mixed agriculture; while the Waataa people hunt hippopotamus in the water body. For this reason, competition could not emerge among the two groups in the niche to own the dry land. In this regard, the myth reveals the established traditional rule regarding the distribution of natural resources among the Waataa and the non-Waataa groups; i.e. the Waataa own the water body and poor land; while the non-Waataa social groups inhabit the wider fertile areas and the grassland.

The creation myth of the Waataa community proposes the origin of religion, philosophical outlook and how things around them are originated. It also describes the origin of natural phenomena and human institutions within a pre-existing world. The myth of the Waataa people seems to justify the established social rule among the two groupsby portraying that *Waaqaa* originated it.

We can observe the function of myth; i.e. how the myth is used to maintain social bonds by assigning to them different roles. The myth served to compensate the

social, political, and economic superiority of the non-Waataa groups with the spiritual superiority of the Waataa people. Therefore, the Arsi Oromo, who lead awell-established economy and inhabit the wider areas, need the cultural services of the Waataa people. Furthermore, the Arsi Oromo depends on the Waataa people for artifacts such as whips, shields, and pots. Thus, eventhough the Waataa people are assumedto be inferior to Arsi Oromo and constitute a marginalized group, they are superior in the production of cultural stuffs needed by the Arsi Oromo. The myth assigns the Waataa people the role of producer and the Arsi Oromos the consumer role. This shows that a mutual-relationshiop exists, but with a high degree of inequality, between the two groups.

Moreover, the myth has served to keep the balance of power among the Waataa people and the non-Waataa social groups. However, demographically, the Arsi Oromo constitute the greater population than the Waataa people; the myth is used to maintain the status and securityof the two groups. It is also used to empower the role of the Waataa in traditional practices. The Waataa people consider that their traditional belief safeguards their status. Therefore, the interactional function of the myth is used to maintaine the social bonds and to keep the balance of power between the Waataa people and the Arsi Oromo.

5. Conclusion

This study aimed to discuss how the myth is used in the social construction of a society. Along with this aim, how myth constructed contextual meanings was dealt with. To address these principal questions, it examined the creation myth of the Waataa people. Furtheremore, to reveal how the Waataas, who are perceived as the 'gifted' people, perform theirtr aditional practices, the Waataas' and the non-Waataas' construction of meanings are explored simultaneously.

It is found that myth has no similar interpretations along with different contexts and functions. For example, the Waataa people, who perceive themselves as the 'gifted' people, understand that the mythology related to eating hippopotamus is backed up with the claim of the supreme power of *Waaqaa.* This posits that hippopotamus meat is not a profane; rather it is a sacred one. However, for the non-Waataa social groups, hippopotamus is 'unclean'. Even the youth within the Waataa community of *Chopha* village do not show interest to their parents eating hippopotamus. More importantly, the non-Waataas who oppose the cultural practice of eating hippopotamus despise the Waataas, because of their eating habit. The non-Waataas arguments are framed in their own religious beliefs, which can be easier of the mainstream religious tenets. Both religions, i.e. Islam and Christianity support their claim with the holy books; the Holy Koran and the Holy Bible respectively, which do not allow eating of both domesticated and wild animals that do not munch and have full hoofs.

Some lexical expressions are constructed in significantly noticeable interpretations such as, begging, poverty, and conscription as soldiers. This variation of meaning suggests difference of attitude towards involvement in begging. This is to mean that the Waataas engagement in begging is because of *Waaqaa's* word. The non-Waataas do not accept begging. Poverty is also understood differently; for the Waataa people, it is acceptable, whereas for the non-Waataas it is the contrary. Similarly, the Waataa people accept their life style. This assumes that the curse by *Waaqaa* is His unalterable decision. Thus, the Waataas' way of life at the present is not improved or changed in the course of time and situation, because of the timeless

decree of *Waaqaa.* In addition, the difference between the Waataas and the non-Waataas in terms of ideological position suggests that the former considers a sin to kill any one, even at the battle field. On the contrary, the non-Waataas regard to kill and be killed in wars as a patriotic act. Equally, it seems lawful to generate income by producing and selling war instruments for non-Waataas, with an understanding that conceives killing in war front is not sinful, but not for the Waataas. Similarly, the whip made from the hippopotamus skin is used by the non-Waataa social groups, who are not permitted to produce it. Rather, it is solely produced by the Waataas. The other Oromo social groups, who conduct judgments and make new rules, necessarily hold the whip and swing it. This is analogous to some extent to the modern day court room wood hammer used by judges to signify final order. Thus, with the spiritual power vested in the Waataas in maintaining order and mediating conflicts require holding *botoyyaa,* not whip as in other Oromo social groups. This assumes how different material objects are interpreted to be used by one group, but not allowed to be used by the counterpart. In brief, whip is used by the Arsi Oromo, but not by the Waataa people. Similarly, *botoyyaa* is used only by the Waataa whereas not permitted to Arsi Oromo.

Though, the 'gifted' Waataa are actually facilitators to judgments such as by the council of elders or *Gada* leaders, their decree has the power to abolish a sense of enmity entirely, since people attribute the words of the Waataa even beyond the limit of time and space. Eventhough formal court decisions may end up with conflicts, their decree strength would not over live time and place. In brief, enmity will not be abolished in such decisions, but they can be eliminated byWaataa's decisions.

The study also presented the analysis of the creation myth of the Waataa people from ecological, economic, social, political, and spiritual points of view. The myth is used to justify the relationships and interactions that exist between the Waataa people and different social groups. Furthermore, it is used to uphold the social bonds, peace, and security of the two groups. It is also used to show the peaceful and 'fair' division of natural resources establishedbetween the Waataa people and different non-Waataa social groups in the area.

In general, the myth of the Waataa people portrays the Waataas' and the neighboring social groups' spiritual and material culture and social, political, and economic activities. Moreover, the spiritual and material culture and social, political, economic activities of the Waataa people and the neghbouring social groups are embodied in the myth. Moreover, indigenous wisdoms, proverbs, lexical knowledge, etc. of the groups are symbolized in the myth. Thus, the traditional practices and indigenous knowledge, and lexical knowledge of the Waaataa people in particular, and the neighboring societies in general need to be further studied. Their significances to the knowledge about the Waataa people and the neighboring societies, i.e. language, history, sociology, anthropology, etc. of these social groups should be acknowledged in the academic circles.

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Appendix: The Creation Myth of the Waataa People[9]

In the very old days, the Waataa owned many cattle. The exact number of his cattle was unknown to him. At that point, in time, the Waataa was living with Waaqaa on the earth. He was a brother of Waaqaa. The Waataa was such a prosperous person, whoboasted, because of his prosperity. One day the Waataa said to Waaqaa, ''myWaaqaa! Let us bring our cattle together and then compare to know who owns more cattle''. Waaqaa refused. The next morning, the Waataa requested the same again; but Waaqaa refused for the second time. Then, the Waataa continues requesting the Waaqaa repeatedly; but Waaqaa refused to accept the request. Finally, Waaqaa showed interest and made an appointment, when and where to bring their cattle together, to determine the owner of more cattle.

Then, they brought all their cattle to the big field. Waaqaa's cattle were lions, tigers, hyenas, foxes, jackals, crocodiles, snakes, and the like; while the Waataa's cattle were oxen, cows, donkeys, horses, sheep, goats, etc. When Waaqaa's and the Waataa's cattle were brought together, Waaqaa's cattle devoured all of the Waataa's cattle. The attack was conducted near big water body. While Waaqaa's cattle were killing the Waataa's cattle, the Waataa saw a calf running towards the big water body. The Waataa rushed to the calf to save it. In the meantime, Waaqaa ordered him to return back. "Do not follow the calf! Come back! It will be your cattle in the future. Come back!" The Waataa returned back. The calf sank into the water. Then the Waataa recognized the extinction of his cattle. Waaqaa said to the Waataa, "You will not get your cattle back. Your cattle will be the calf, which sank into the water. The calf will reappear as hippopotamus and will be your cattle". Thus, the Waataa had lost all his cattle.

The Waataa became a poorest man. His family starved and some of the family members died. Then, the Waataa went to Waaqaa and requested Him, "Give me a means of living".

Waaqaa said to the Waataa, "I will give you four things for living". Then Waaqaa gave botoyyaa to the Waataa. "Take this botoyyaa. Go and beg with it."Waaqaablessed the botoyya and gave it to the Waataa. Moreover, Waaqaa ordered the Waataa to obey the following rules:

1. *"Be a person who give bless and lay curse. Whenever you bless and lay curse carry the botoyya. Let your blessing and curse is fruitful!*
2. *May the blood of others be taboo for you! May the blood of Arsi be taboo for you!''*
3. *I will not give you cattle. You had enough cattle. Earn the living by begging and blessing. Let others receive what they lack through your blessings. Be a Waataa! Be the Waaqaa."*

The second thing Waaqaa gave to Waataa was the clay soil, which the Waataa women use to make pots. The Waaqaa said to the Waataa, "This clay soil helps you to support your family. The Arsi feed on the pots your women make from this clay. You are assigned to be potter. Make pots from the clay and sell it to the Arsi women and others!''

Then the Waataa asked Waaqaa, "What things else would you give me for

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[9]This Creation Myth of the Waataa people was narrated by TelilaRobi, 67, one ofthe key informantsof this research, who lives in Chopha village and Waataa himself. It was narrated in Afaan Oromo, and the researchers translated it to English.

living?" The Waaqaa replied, "Earn the living by reconciling the Arsi and other Oromo groups, when they kill each other. Cleanse the murderer from the blood. Be a person who give blessings and put curses!" Finally, Waaqaa said to the Waataa, "Hippopotamus is your cattle, make use of it. I offered you these four things for your livelihood; i.e., botoyyaa, clay soil, the power to cleanse and reconcile, and hippopotamus. Do not ask me for more things, I will not offer you more things. " And Waaqaa departed from the Waataa's sight.

FULL LENGTH ARTICLE

A Study on English as Foreign Language Writing: Instruction, Nature of Tasks and Performance of Students: A Case of North Shoa Preparatory Schools

Ebabu Tefera[1]

Abstract

The main objective of this study was to examine the nature of writing tasks, instructions and students' performance. To this end, a descriptive survey research design was employed. Specifically, a mixed approach was employed to collect qualitative and quantitative data involving the use of classroom observation, questionnaire, interview, document analysis and test. The subjects for the study were selected from North Shoa Zone Grade 11 students. Two hundred twenty five students, who were selected randomly, filled the questionnaire and sat for the writing test. Eleven students for interview and five teachers for observation were selected purposefully. Also, the writing tasks in the Grade 11 English Student Textbook were included as non-human participants for analysis purpose. Then, the qualitative data were thematically analyzed. The quantitative data were analyzed using percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Attempts were made to triangulate the qualitative and the quantitative data. The document analysis indicated that the writing tasks do not have significant gaps although they involve certain limitations. The observation and the interview data analysis results revealed that while some teachers mostly skipped the writing sections of the English language text book, most teachers completely relied on the product approach of teaching writing though the writing tasks in the English textbook promote the task-based and the process approaches to teaching writing. The writing examination data analysis result revealed that students had low performance of writing. The study concludes that the poor writing performance of students' is mainly rooted in the practice of the writing instruction. That is, teachers did not properly employ the communicative approaches to teaching writing though the writing tasks in the Student Textbook involved those approaches.

Key words: /Approach/ Communicative task/Pedagogical task/Writing performance/

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

In Ethiopia English is used for communication purposes in banks, airlines, international organizations, and so on. Newspapers such as the *Ethiopian Herald*, *The Reporter*, *The Fortune*, *The Monitor* etc. are published in English. Most importantly, the English language is used as a medium of instruction. For example*,* teaching English language starts from Grade 5 in Addis Ababa, and South Nations, Nationality and Peoples' Regional Government, from Grade 7 onwards in Amhara Regional State, and from Grade 9 and above in Oromia and Tigyay Regional States. Consequently, English has a pronounced benefit for Ethiopia to promote communication and education.

Thus, English, as an independent subject, is taught in primary, comprehensive secondary, and preparatory schools. Also, writing lessons are included in all English texts from Grades 1-12, and it is presumed that students learn writing as an independent skill in the entire grade levels. However, according to the present researcher's experience of teaching Basic Writing Skills at university level, students who completed preparatory schools and joined university demonstrated serious gapes in EFL writing. The students' low writing ability might be resulted from (a) the nature of the EFL writing tasks, (b) the approaches and methods used to teach EFL writing or (c) both the tasks and instructions.

In brief, writing activities in an EFL context is demanding. According to Freedman, Pringle and Yalden (1983), in the EFL context, the problems students encounter while writing and learning to write are twofold: learning writing strategies and learning a foreign language. In other words, there are many extra things that an EFL student faces besides what a first language learner of writing skills encounters. Similarly, Raimes (1983) notes that students who write in English, as a foreign language, come across with all the challenges (such as cognitive, psychological and linguistic and many more) in the same way as native speakers of English face as they should consciously learn the grammar, syntax, vocabulary, rhetorical structure and idiom of the English language besides learning the strategies of writing. So, most EFL writing courses might focus on teaching the systems of English language, and the teachers need to pay a due attention to help their students in grasping the grammar, syntax, vocabulary and mechanics of writing. Moreover, since writing task demands more time and effort, teachers may have very limited time coverage to promote students' writing ability so that they can express their ideas through writing.

Most importantly, in a foreign language context in which students are exposed to a target language in the classroom for a limited period of time, there is a great demand to make the EFL classroom a place where real and meaningful communications take place. In addition, such emphasis on meaning in syllabus design and the teaching learning process of EFL writing calls for contemporary approaches to language teaching including task based language teaching and a process approach to teaching writing. In this regard, a task based language teaching seeks to provide learners with a natural context for language use (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Willis (1996) maintains that task-based language is the extension of communicative language teaching as the former draws on several tenets from the latter. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), tasks are considered useful tools for applying the following communicative language teaching

principles. Firstly, activities that involve real communication are essential for language learning. Secondly, activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning. Thirdly language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process.

Based on the above, language tasks can be put in a continuum from the tasks which put emphasis on language forms up to the tasks which focus on meanings, but the present study focuses on the latter. Thus, a language task, according to Willis (1996), refers to an activity in which the target language is employed by students for a communicative purpose to meet a purpose. Specifically, a writing task in this research could be defined as a writing activity which makes students use the target language as a tool of written communication to achieve a certain objective. In short, a task-based approach to teaching writing could help students to use English language for written communication.

A task-based approach to teaching writing promotes the cognitive processes of learning which implies that the task-based approach presupposes the process approach to teaching writing. Also, according to Nunan (1991), the process approach encourages learners to go through the various stages of classroom writing practice, and it allows learners to employ a lot of time on pre-writing, writing, revising and editing and enables them to get teacher and peer supports.

In conclusion, what is significant for a textbook writer and a teacher who teaches EFL writing lessons is to design communicative tasks and use teaching methods which help students develop their writing competence. To do so, they are required to use contemporary (meaning oriented) approaches to design writing tasks as well as to teach writing skill.

1. 2. Statement of the Problem

English as a foreign language writing has several benefits for students in countries where English is used as the medium of instruction. Ethiopia is one of the counties which use English as a medium of instruction. Accordingly, preparatory school (Grade 11 and12) students need to accomplish a great number of writing tasks aiming to prepare themselves for higher education. That is, a preparatory school is the stage where students prepare to join university and it is where they are expected to do numerous EFL academic writing tasks. So, students at preparatory school level, in the context of Ethiopia, need to develop skills in EFL writing to cope with the multitude of EFL writings they are expected to produce in their university studies. Regarding this, Geremew (1999) notes that students need to develop a wide range of writing skills to successfully carry out academic writing tasks.

However, according to the present researcher's observation, many students who completed preparatory schools in Ethiopia demonstrated serious writing deficiencies. What makes the situation worse is that several first year university students who completed their preparatory school education and joined higher institutions could not write meaningful and correct sentences let alone write (continuous) texts in English. Thus, the present researcher believed that there might be curricular and/or pedagogical deficits of writing lessons at preparatory school level. Yet, there are some researches that made their focus on the area of preparatory school teaching materials and instructions of

writing in English. For example, Alamrew (2005) explored perceptions of teachers, the writing instructions, students' perceptions, and the writing performance of students; the subjects for the study were grade 12 students in Addis Ababa preparatory schools. In the same vein, Tekle, Ebabu and Endalfer (2012) conducted a study on teachers' perception of EFL writing and their practices of teaching writing. The participants of this study were Jima Zone preparatory schools teachers and students. But neither of the studies addressed the nature of writing tasks incorporated in the Grade 11 English Student Textbook. Also, both previous studies did not address the approaches/methods used in the teaching learning process of writing lessons by employing the criteria used for designing and teaching communicative tasks.

The present study is different from the above two studies in its focus and context. Thus, this study attempted to examine the writing instruction, the teachers' approach of teaching writing, and the nature of the writing tasks incorporated in Grade 11 English textbook and the students' ability of writing compositions in English in Amhara Regional State, specifically in North Shoa Zone where English is employed as a medium of instruction beginning from grade seven onwards.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the nature of writing tasks, writing instructions and students' writing performance. Specifically, it aims to:

- find out the nature of writing tasks
- explore how writing is taught at preparatory school level
- Examine the students' performance of writing in English

1.4 Research Questions

With the above objectives in mind, the following research questions are posed:

- How are the writing tasks in Grade 11 English textbook designed?
- How is EFL writing taught at preparatory school level?
- What is the students' performance of EFL writing?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The finding of this study could give pedagogical insights to teachers in that it would help them to identify the prominent weaknesses of the teaching learning process of the writing instruction which again would help them to fill the gaps when they teach; it could provide them with information that could help them evaluate and adjust their approaches of teaching writing. It would also assist syllabus designers and textbook writers to reconsider and revise the writing tasks incorporated in the English text book. Finally, it could help students to learn writing communicatively and develop their writing competently.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Writing for Communicating

Writing, like speaking mostly involves communicating. That is, according to Hedge (2005), most writings that people carry out in the real world or outside classroom are accomplished having a reader and a purpose in mind. In other words, as White (1988) highlights, EFL writing can be at sentence level or beyond sentence level, and while the former is used to develop the learners' EFL accuracy, the latter aims to promote learners' fluency of writing or their ability to express their ideas in English. That is, the discourse level writing which can be conceptualized as a piece of written language in context or stretch of language perceived to be meaningful, unified and purposive is supposed to involve communication (Crystal, 1994). Thus according to Widdowson (1983), written discourse involves an interactive process of negotiation in which the author accomplishes two tasks. That is, on the one hand, the writer interacts with an imaginary reader and write in such a way that the reader could understand the intended message of the piece of writing; on the other hand, he/she is required to use appropriate language and organize the text in the way it is easy for readers to move from one part to the other linking the ideas in it (Harmer, 2007).

Discourse level writing could have different purposes. This means, as Hedge (2005) stated, writing could be accomplished in response to a demand which can arise from academic studies or social roles. Consequently, EFL learners can write for academic or functional purposes, and the former, for Geremew (1999), relates to an institutionally required activity in which students write to meet the academic requirements of a particular educational institute, and the latter, according to KIE (2006), concerns with an authoring skill which is practiced in everyday communications such as writing friendly letters, reports, e-mails, memos, formal letters, and so on.

Thus, learners need to acquire communicative competence in writing or improve their ability to use a target language for communicative purposes. Moreover, according to Lighbown and Spada (2006), communicative competence involves linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Cook, 2003; Hyland, 2003).

Firstly, linguistic competence refers to the knowledge underlying the students' ability to produce correct sentences in English language (Cook, 2003). Weigle (2002) also explains that linguistic knowledge refers to the mastery of the fundamental building blocks of language which includes knowledge of the basic structural elements of the language.

Secondly, sociolinguistic competence implies the knowledge of how to use language to achieve certain communication goals; for communication to be successful, written messages need to be appropriate to the social context in which they are written, and thus learners need to know the appropriate social conventions (Nunan, 1989; McNamara, 2000; Hedge, 2005).

Thirdly, for Hedge (2005), discourse competence means the ability required to write coherent texts. Lastly, according to Weigle (2002), strategic competence entails different kinds of cognitive aspects, and it is a higher order executive processes which helps to manage cognitive functions while employing language for communication

purposes; it is a skill which helps a writer to employ his/her knowledge of linguistic resources appropriately so that he/she could achieve desired communicative goals.

To help students acquire the above mentioned types of communicative competences of writing, it is necessary to use communicative approaches to teaching EFL writing. Accordingly, some of the contemporary communicative approaches, such as the task-based and process approaches are discussed as follows.

2.1.1 Task-based Approach to Teaching Writing

A task-based approach uses a communicative task as a tool to teach a target language. In detail, a task can be either real world or pedagogical. According to Long (1985), a real world task is a piece of work carried out for a certain purpose, and it involves, for example, painting a fence, dressing a child, completing a form, selling or buying goods, booking a ticket, lending or borrowing a book, typing a letter, etc. This definition, according to Nunan (2004), is not methodological and language oriented, and thus a pedagogical definition of a task would be invaluable. In other words, a 'task' can be defined from the 'real-world' perspective, and it may put emphasis on what the learner will do in the real world.

In this regard, for Richards and Rodgers (2001), a pedagogical task is a type of task that is performed using a target language, for example, finding a solution to a puzzle, reading a map and giving directions, writing a letter, drawing a map listening to a tape, listening to an instruction and performing a command and so on. Furthermore, as Nunan (1989) states, a communicative task is an activity which is performed in the classroom and that engages learners in understanding, controlling, creating and negotiating meaning in the foreign language focusing on meaning rather than form.

The pedagogical tasks are classified into a pedagogical task rehearsal and pedagogical task activation where the former refers to a piece of classroom work in which learners rehearse in class a communicative act that they could accomplish outside class. The latter implies a piece of classroom work which involves a communicative interaction which learners will not perform outside class; it is designed to activate learners' language acquisition processes (Nunan, 2004).

Furthermore, different writers mention different types of components for a communicative task. For example, as Candlin (1987) suggested, a communicative task could involve input, roles, settings, actions, monitoring, outcomes, and feedback. Furthermore, Shavelson and Stern (1981) explain that a communicative task includes content, materials, activities, students, and social community. Also, as Wright (1987) suggests, tasks need to involve input data which may be provided by materials, teachers or learners and an initiating question which initiates students to do something with the data.

By integrating the components of a task mentioned by different authors, Nunan (1989) formulated four components of a communicative task which involves (implicitly or explicitly): (1) *a goal/ objective* which can promote learners' communicative competence including linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence, (2) *input* which might be verbal (e.g. a reading passage) or non-verbal (e.g. a picture), (3) *activity* which refers to tasks, not exercises, that learners can actually accomplish with the input in hand, (4*) roles* for teachers and

learners in which learners are the main actors in the communications and teachers are facilitators, organizers, and monitors, (5) *setting* which refers to arrangement of students, for instance, in a pair or a group work.

In this study, the aforementioned components of a communicative task (given by Nunan, 1989) are used to analyze the writing tasks incorporated in the Grade 11 English students Textbook. Specifically, the following conceptual framework was employed to analyze the written tasks.

Goal   ↘   ↙ Teacher role
Input   →   Tasks   ←   learner role
Activities ↗   ↖   settings
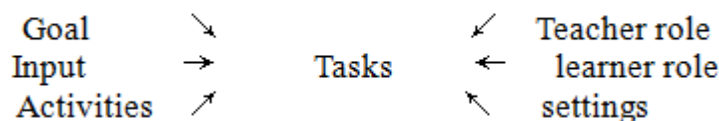
A framework for analyzing communicative tasks (Nunan, 1989)

2.3. 2. The Process Approach to Teaching Writing

For Brown (2001), writing is a thinking process in which a writer produces a written product after he/she goes through the different writing steps; it is an organic, developmental process in which one's thought grows. And a process-approach helps students to practice the true nature of a writing act. According to Kroll (1990), a process approach provides a way to think about writing in terms of what a writer does (planning, revising, and the like) instead of in terms of what the written product looks like (patterns of organization, spelling, and grammar).

In other words, for Nunan (1991), a process approach focuses on the stages of writing and helps learners to produce, reflect, discuss and rework on successive drafts of a text in a classroom writing practice; it encourages learners to feel free to convey their own thoughts or feelings in written messages by providing them with plenty of time and opportunity to reconsider and revise their writing and at each step to seek assistance from outside sources such as the teacher. Furthermore, it allows collaborative work which, as Harmer (2004) pointed out, gives students chances to learn from each other; for example, at the pre-writing phase, students in a small group can brainstorm for ideas and prepare outlines/plans through discussion. In short, a process-approach to teaching writing helps students to pass through the writing processes and make use of their potential skills to write from their repertoire by getting support from the teacher and peers.

2.3.2 Theoretical Framework

The task-based approach can be rooted in the language theory and the learning theory. For example, it takes the following assumption of language theory for granted: (a) language is mainly a means of conveying message, (b) different aspects of a target language are involved in task-based approach, (c) lexical units are essential for learning and using a target language, (d) discussion is the cornerstone of language acquisition, and

these principles could be drawn from the functional and interactional views of the language theory (Richards & Rogers 2001). In detail, the functional view sees language as a vehicle for expressing functional meaning whereas the interactional perspective considers language a means of creating and maintaining social relations (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). That means the task-based approach as a type of communicative approach presupposes its principles from the functional and interactional views.

Similarly, a task-based approach could draw its principles from the learning theories; for example, Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory of learning is citable as it gives recognition for the value of meaningful interaction for learning language, and this theory assumes that social interaction is very important for the development of cognition and it believes that learning is a social act. According to Vygotsky (1978), language serves a social purpose which can be achieved through interaction. A task-based approach can also be informed by the second/foreign language acquisition hypothesis (Krashen, 1985) and the psycholinguistic theory (Ellis, 2003). In the light of the aforementioned theories, a language teacher can provide students with meaningful and authentic language tasks and help them to accomplish the tasks through interaction using the target language as a communication tool. Thus, the task-based approach can help to apply the communicative language teaching principles by using activities which promote real communication and involve meaningful and authentic writing tasks.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was employed in the study aiming to describe events that occur naturally. The researcher used pragmatism as a theoretical framework for the research design, for it allows the researcher to use quantitative and qualitative approaches.

3.2 Participants of the Study

Participants for the study were selected from North Shoa Zone Grade 11 students and teachers. Two hundred twenty five students and five teachers were participants of the study. Also, 11 students participated in the interview.

3.3 Sampling Techniques

The researcher, firstly, selected 5 teachers (sections) using purposive sampling technique for the observation. However, because two of them were not voluntary, only three teachers were observed. Purposive sampling method was again used to choose 11 students for interview. In addition, 225 students who have completed filling the copies of the questionnaire and sat for the exam were selected randomly. To make it clear, out of the 20 schools of the Zone, five of them (25%) were selected using random sampling method first. Then, one section from each of the five selected schools was taken for observation although observations were made on the three sections only because of the teachers' reluctance to be observed in the two sections. But, all students of the five sections completed the questionnaire and sat for the exam.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

In this study, content analysis, observation, and interview were employed. Furthermore, questionnaire and test were used.

Document Analysis: Grade 11 English for Ethiopia Student Textbook was taken as a document for analysis. This student textbook incorporates a total of 19 writing sections. All the 19 writing parts of the textbook were employed for the analysis purpose. Checklist which is adapted from Nunan (1989) was used to analyze the writing lessons.

Observation: As it is mentioned above, out of the 5 selected teachers, only 3 teachers were willing for the observation, and they were observed using a checklist. Each of them was observed 3 times and totally 9 observations were conducted. Since most teachers rarely taught the writing sections, the current researcher could not get sufficient classes for observation. As a result, an attempt was made to substantiate the observation data using interview and questionnaire, and adequate data were gathered regarding what teachers actually did in the writing lessons. The observation was used as the main data gathering instrument.

Interview: A semi-structured interview was employed, for it could allow the researcher to enquire opinions from interviewees and encourage respondents to express their views freely. The interview helped the present researcher to obtain data which could substantiate the observation data. Accordingly, 11 students were interviewed, and the data were recorded using a tape recorder. The interviews were conducted in Amharic language, for it is the first language for most students' and to allow them express their ideas without difficulty. This helped the researcher to get data in depth and breadth.

Questionnaire: A questionnaire with two parts had been administered to 225 sample students. The first part of the questionnaire was about the extent to which teachers gave attention to writing parts. The second section was concerned with the teaching methods teachers employed. The questionnaire was used to substantiate the observation data.

*Writing Test***:** A discourse level writing test was administered to 225 students. These participants were provided with one topic for writing so that evaluators of compositions could compare students' writing abilities on the same ground. Heaton (1988) suggested that in a composition test, students should write on the same topic; students' compositions written on one topic give markers a common ground for evaluation. The other point for not allowing a choice of task for test takers is that different topics do not have the same difficulty levels; for example, a topic for an argumentative essay and a topic for an expository essay require different cognitive demands (Weigle, 2002).

In addition, participants wrote a letter because letter writing is predominantly appeared in the Grade 11 English textbook in use, and students could practice it. The evaluation criteria were adapted from TOFL Writing Scoring Guide as it is quoted in Weigle (2002 p.113). Each student's piece of writing was rated by two experienced experts in TEFL, and an average score for each was taken for the report of this research.

3.1 Data Collection Procedures

Firstly, areas of writing tasks from grade 11 textbook are identified for content analysis. Then, out of 20 preparatory schools of North Shoa Zone, five schools were selected randomly. Next, one teacher from each school was selected using purposive sampling technique. Then, the observations were conducted. After the completion of the observations, the test was administered, and copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the sample students at the same time. Finally, interviews were held with 11 selected students.

3.2 Data Analysis

The qualitative data were categorized based on common themes, for analysis and then interpretation. To analyze the quantitative data, descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Document Analysis

The contents used for analysis were the writing tasks of Grade 11 English for Ethiopia Student Textbook which is currently used as a teaching material in the country. This textbook has about 12 units, and each unit again incorporates 9 sections (introduction, listening, language focus, study skills, speaking, reading, word power, writing and assessment). Also, every unit has two main divisions: part A and part B. Specifically, there are about 19 writing sections which are distributed to each of the 12 units. The writing tasks which appear in the assessment and the revision parts of the textbook were not selected for analysis to avoid repetition. The writing tasks were analyzed based on components of a task formulated by Nunan (1989); they are input, objective, setting, roles, activity, and implementation. Based on the above, the analysis part is presented under here.

4.1.1 *Objectives (Goals)*

Each of the 12 units of the Grade 11 English text book has two parts: part A and part B, and in each part, there are lists of objectives, and most of them incorporate objectives for the writing tasks along with the objectives of other language skills and aspects. According to Graves (2000), an objective should stipulate performance, condition and criterion. Hyland (2003) also stated that an objective must specify three crucial dimensions such as performance, conditions and measures. In the target textbook of this study, there are about 18 objectives of writing, and each of them was evaluated based on the parameters mentioned above, that is, performance, condition, and criterion.

Table 1: Components of the Objectives of Communicative Writing Tasks

Unit	Objectives: You will	Performance	Conditions	Criterion
1	Write a report on the African Union.	1	1	0
2	write an informal letter to a friend write a magazine article	2	0	0
3	write a for and against essay write a health leaflet	2	0	0
4	write a reply to a formal letter write a report on HIV/AIDS in an African country	2	2	0
5	write an extract from a tourist brochure write a formal letter	2	1	0
6	write a narrative	1	0	0
7	write a summary write an information leaflet	2	0	0
8	write some paragraphs about how we can save water in Ethiopia	1	1	1
9	write a survey report	1	0	0
10	write an essay	1	0	0
11	create an NGO and write a brochure about it write some interview questions	2	1	1
12	write an opinion essay	1	0	0
Total	18	18	6	2
%	100	100	33.33	11.11

A learning objective is a statement which describes performance capability to be developed by the learner. As it is indicated in Table 1, the entire (100%) objectives stated at the beginnings of the units were found to include component of performance. That is, all the objectives precisely indicated what students would write at the end of each writing lesson. Of the total objectives, only 6 (33.33%) and 2 (11.11%) of them involved components such as condition and criterion, respectively. Thus, the objectives which were found at the beginning of the units did not adequately reflect the two components (conditions and criteria).

In other words, most of the objectives of the writing tasks, which were found to be mixed with the other lesson objectives of the textbook at hand, did not incorporate the conditions or circumstances in which students were supposed to accomplish during the writing tasks. More specifically, Most of the objectives did not state the context, quantity and quality of the pieces of writings they would be expected to produce after learning the particular writing lessons.

Table 2: Writing Tasks Based on Real World Rehearsals versus Pedagogical Activation

Unit	Writing tasks on real world rehearsal rationale	Writing tasks on pedagogical rationale
1	Write a report on the African Union.	
2	…write a letter about your school and the education system in Ethiopia. …write an article for a point of view arguing that Ethiopia needs more educated women…	True or false(how to write an informal letter) Match languages to their function Read this magazine and answer the questions Complete this outline plane notes …
3	write an essay in response to this statement: "*You should not ignore traditional medicine because of modern developments*" …write a government health leaflet …	Read this essay and answer the questions below. Complete the notes about the article in this outline plan
4	Imagine you are Mrs. Rowda and write a reply to Mr. Bona's letter. Write a report on HIV/AIDS in an African country	Read this letter and answer the questions below. Identify the layout of a letter. Identify the structure of Mr. Bona's letter. The language of formal letters
5	Imagine that your town or village is not included in the brochure. write one or two paragraphs about it to include in the brochure Write a letter to the tourist agency	Language practice
6	Write a story of 250 to 300 words.	
7	Write a summary using the information in your notes. Write an information leaflet on one of the topics (mentioned above).	Make note on the text on why weather forecasts are important in this way.
8	Write 2-3 paragraphs about the best conservation method(s) for your region/town.	
9	Write a survey report.	Study and discuss this information about writing a survey report.
10	Write an essay on an aspect of development	
11	Write a one-paragraph report on the data about NGO projects given in the table. Write a brochure about your NGO. Write some interview questions	Look at the mind map and complete it with relevant data from the table. Identify these question types.
12	Write an opinion essay in support of digital technology	Make an outline.
Tot.	19	16
%	54.3	45.7

In addition, comparisons were made between real world rehearsals and pedagogical justifications of the writing tasks (Table 2). Accordingly, while 19 (54.3%) of the tasks were found to reflect real world rehearsal rationale, 16 (45.7%) of them reflected pedagogical rationale; that is, most of the writing tasks in the textbook at hand encourage learners to rehearse a behavior they are expected to display outside the classroom. According to Nunan (2004), classroom tasks are classified as rehearsal rationale and pedagogic rationale. While the former is concerned with pieces of classroom tasks in which learners rehearse (in class) a communicative act they can accomplish outside the classroom, the latter involves classroom activities in which learners are unlikely to accomplish them outside the classroom (Nunan, 2004). Thus, the data analysis revealed that most of the writing tasks were designed aiming at helping students to practice writing tasks that they could apply outside classroom.

Table 3: Academic Writing and Functional Writing Skills

N	Tasks on formal/academic writing skills	Tasks on basic functional writing skills
1	Writing: A report on the African Union	Writing: A letter to a friend
2	Writing: A magazine article	Writing: A government health leaflet
3	Writing: An essay-modern versus traditional medicine	Writing: Reply to a formal letter
4	Writing: Report on HIV/AIDS	Writing: Extract from a tourist brochure
5	Writing: A summary	Writing: A formal letter
6	Writing: (2-3 paragraphs on) saving water in Ethiopia	Writing: A narrative
7	Writing: A survey report	Writing: An information leaflet
8	Writing: An essay	Writing: A brochure about your NGO
9	Writing: A report on some data Writing: Interview questions	
10	Writing: An opinion essay	
Tot.	11	8
%	57.9	42.1

The tasks in the grade 11 English textbook were also examined in terms of basic functional writing skills vis-a-vis academic/formal writing skills (Table 3). In line with this, out of the 19 objectives, 11 (57.9%) objectives were designed aiming at developing students' academic or formal writing skills whereas 8 (42.1%) of the tasks were written having the purpose of promoting learners' functional writing skills. This means, more focus is given to academic writing skills because Grade 11 is the stage at which students get preparation for university where they are expected to accomplish several academic writing tasks.

4.1.2 *Inputs*

A communicative writing task entails authentic or inauthentic inputs which can be presented in form of a text or a graph. The different forms and types of inputs provided for the writing tasks of the grade 11 English textbook are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4: Forms and Types of Inputs of the Grade 11 English Textbook Writing Tasks

Units	Writing Tasks	Description of inputs	Forms		Types	
			verbal	Nonverbal	Authentic	Inauthentic
1	A report on A U.	Listening/reading texts, a picture & a photograph	3	2	2	1
2	A letter to a friend	Listening text, some ideas& language expressions	2	0	0	2
	A magazine article	Reading/listening text, magazine article& photo	4	1	3	1
3	An essay	Listening texts, a model text), speaking &photos	4	2	0	4
	A health leaflet	Reading texts & speaking	3	0	1	2
4	Reply to a letter	Listening/reading text & a sample letter	4	0	0	4
	A report on HIV/AIDS	Reading text & articles about HIV/AIDS	1	0	1	0
5	Extract	Listening/reading & Language focus	3	0	2	1
	A formal letter	Listening & reading texts	2	0	0	2
6	A narrative	A story read by a teacher &language focus	2	1	1	1
7	A summary	Reading text	1	0	0	1
	An information leaflet	Reading/listening texts & pictures	5	2	2	3
8	Writing paragraphs	Listening/reading texts, speaking &photographs	4	2	2	2
9	A survey report	Reading text, speaking, survey reports& photos.	3	1	2	1
10	An essay	Reading/listening texts, speaking & picture.	4	1	2	2
11	A report on some data	Listening , data, bar graph, & pie chart	2	2	1	1
	A brochure	Reading text, speaking & pictures.	2	2	1	1
	Interview questions	Reading text	1	0	0	1
12	write an opinion essay	Reading text	2	2	1	1
Total	19		52	18	20	32
%	100		74	26	38	62

As it is shown in Table 4, verbal inputs are 74% whereas nonverbal inputs are found to be 26%. Specifically, the reading and listening texts were the parts which were mainly employed as inputs of writing tasks in Grade 11 English textbook. Texts such as formal and informal letters, magazine and newspaper articles, brochures, reports, statistical data, and etc. were found to be the main inputs for students to use as bases for

their writing activities. Also, listening texts about African Union, education, traditional and modern medicine, climate change etc., and stories were among the inputs used for the writing tasks. The inputs which were presented in nonverbal forms include photographs, pictures, and fewer charts and graphs.

Also, the issues indicated in the above table are types of inputs used in the writing tasks of the English Textbook for Grade 11. Most of the inputs (62%) were found to be inauthentic types whereas the remaining (38%) were authentic. This implies that the textbook did not include adequate authentic writing tasks which help learners to practice writing that they could use it in the real world.

4.1.3 Activities

An activity can be defined as what learners do with an input to accomplish a given writing task, and it should specify how the inputs will be employed (Hyland, 2003) as well as harmonized with the inputs. The following table indicates if the writing activities of Grade 11 English textbook involve the phases of writing and are relevant to the inputs given.

Table 5: The Phases of Writing and Relevance of Inputs to the Activities

Unit	Activities	entails writing stages		Relevant	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Write a report about the African Union	1	0	1	0
2	Write a letter to a friend Complete this outline plan with notes about the article Write an article arguing that Ethiopia needs more educated women.	2	1	2	1
3	Discuss the arguments for and against this statement: "Most people live in the countryside. Many are moving to cities as think life is better there" Write an essay in response to this statement: "We should not ignore traditional medicine because of modern developments." Write a government health leaflet about disease or illness.	2	1	2	1
4	Read this letter and answer the questions below. Write your answers … in your exercise book. Look at the layout of the letter and identify the features …. What is the structure of Mr. Bona's letter? Study the information in this box. Write a replay to Mr. Bona's letter Write a report on HIV/AIDS ….	2	4	2	4
5	Write 1 or 2 paragraphs about your town/village …. Write a letter to the tourist agency ….	0	2	2	0
6	Write a story of 250 to 300 words (1 or 2 pages).	1	0	1	0
7	Make notes on the text on why weather forecasts are important …. Write your own text using the information in your notes. Write an information leaflet on one of the topics mentioned above.	1	2	3	0
8	Write 2-3 paragraphs about the best water conservation method(s).	1	0	1	0
9	Write a survey report.	1	0	1	0
10	Write an essay on an aspect of development.	1	0	1	0
11	Write a one paragraph report on the data about NGO projects …. Create your own NGO, then plan and write your brochure. Write a list of questions to be used for interview.	3	0	2	1
12	Write an opinion essay.	1	0	1	0
Tot	26	16	10	19	7
%	100	62	38	73	27

An attempt was also made to investigate if the activities made students pass through the writing phases such as pre-writing, writing, revising, editing and proofreading (Table 5). Accordingly, 62% of them were found to stimulate students to pass through the writing stages although many tasks (38%) did not help students practice the writing processes. Lastly, the associations between the writing activities and the inputs provided for them were examined, and 73% of the inputs were found to be relevant to the writing activities.

4.1.4. *Learners' Roles*

Role refers to a part which an individual plays to accomplish learning activities. Students play an active role while accomplishing a writing task, and they could act as collaborative partners or individuals for the given writing tasks. The types of grade 11 English textbook writing tasks which encourage students to write either collaboratively or individually are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Types of Writing

Unit	Activities	Type of writing task	
		Collaborative	Personal
1	Work with a partner & divide up the work between you. With your partner, present the information you have found to each other. Show your first draft to your partner; check each other's work. Write up the final version of your report and proofread it before you submit it.	1	0
2	Think about the information, organization & format & then write your letter Complete an outline, brainstorm ideas, make a plan, write, check &edit your article	0	2
3	Complete an outline, brainstorm ideas, make a plan, write, check &edit your article Work with a partner… Write the final version of your leaflet	1	1
4	Identify features and structure of the letter; write a replay to Mr. Bona's letter Write a report on HIV/AIDS in one of the countries mentioned above Work with your partner; with your partner, research the information you need	1	1
5	Imagine your town/ village is not included in a brochure. Write 1 or 2 paragraphs about it to include in the brochure. Include these information: Write a letter to a tourist agency… Write a first draft and check it		2
6	Write a story of 250 to 300 words (1 or 2 pages)	0	1
7	Write your own text using the information in your notes Write an information leaflet on one topics mentioned above	0	2
8	Write 2 to 3 paragraphs about the best water conservation method(s)	0	1
9	Write a survey report	1	0
10	Write an essay on an aspect of development	0	1
11	Write a one paragraph report on the data about NGO projects in the table Create your own NGO, then plan and write your brochure Write a list of questions to be used for interview	3	0
12	Write an opinion essay	0	1
Tot.	19	7	12
%	100	37	63

As Table 6 indicates, most of the tasks (63%) could be done individually. Only 37% of the tasks might be accomplished cooperatively. It seems that inadequate focus

has been given to cooperative writing although collaborative writing has a paramount significance for learners. For example, Reid (1993) explains that collaborative writing helps students to employ each other's resources and work toward mutual objectives, and it, thus, results in a favorable classroom climate. In addition, Hedge (2005) suggests that learners can benefit from collaborative writing because it can help them share ideas and feedbacks on their pieces of writings.

4.1.5. *Teacher's Roles*

An attempt was also made to examine teachers' role as facilitators, controllers or monitors as indicated in Table 7.

Table 7: Teacher's Role

Unit	Activities	Teacher's role	
		Facilitator	Monitor
1	Write a report of about 350 to 400 on the AU. Follow these steps.	1	0
2	Think about the information, organization, and format and then write a letter. Complete an outline, brainstorm, plan, write, and edit your article.	0	2
3	Complete an outline, brainstorm ideas, make a plan, write, and edit your article. Work with a partner… Write the final version of your leaflet	0	2
4	Identify features and structure of the letter; write a replay to a Write a report on HIV/AIDS in one of the countries mentioned above	1	1
5	Write 1-2 paragraphs about your town/ village …. Write a letter to a tourist agency. Write a first draft and check it	0	2
6	Write a story of 250 to 300 words (1 or 2 pages)	0	1
7	Write your own text using the information in your notes. Write an information leaflet on one of the topics mentioned.	0	2
8	Write 2-3 paragraphs about the best water conservation method(s).	0	1
9	Write a survey report.	0	1
10	Write an essay on an aspect of development.	1	0
11	Write a one paragraph report on the data about NGO projects…. Create your own NGO, then plan and write your brochure. Write a list of questions to be used for interview.	0	3
12	Write an opinion essay.	0	1
Tot.	19	3	16
%	100	16	84

According to Table 7, the role of the teacher is insignificant; his/her role is not stated in the tasks. But, the tasks seem to imply that the teacher might act as either as a facilitator or a monitor. Accordingly, in the 16% of the tasks, the teacher is a facilitator, and in the 84% of them, he/she is a monitor. A teacher acts as a monitor when he/she simply observes students doing the activities indicated in a particular writing task

whereas a teacher acts as a facilitator when he/she participates in the tasks as a supporter or guider. So, the analysis indicated that in most of the writing tasks, the teacher was passive or non-participant observer which implies that students were active participants who monitored their own writing skills development. In addition, none of the tasks allowed the teacher to be dominant or controller. All of the tasks did not permit the teacher to be active participant of the writing lessons. He/she mostly acts as a monitor, as he/she remains passive observer and to a limited extent acts as a facilitator.

4.1.6. Settings

Setting refers to the surrounding environment where the writing task is carried out, and/or it is the mode in which the task is done. The settings designed for the writing tasks of grade 11 English textbook are presented in the following table.

Table 8: Settings for the Writing Tasks

Unit	Some examples of activities for each unit	Tasks set for		
		Individual work	Pair work	Group work
1	You should work as a partner and divide up the work between you.	0	1	0
2	Write a letter about your school and the education system in Ethiopia. Complete an outline. With your partner pick out expressions…	2	1	0
3	Complete an outline plan, brainstorm for ideas, and write an article. Work with a partner… Write the final version of your leaflet	1	1	0
4	Write a replay to Mr. Bona's letter Write a report on HIV/AIDS. Work with a partner ….	1	1	0
5	Write 1 or 2 paragraphs about your town/ village …. Write a letter to a tourist agency… Write a first draft and check it	2	0	0
6	Write a story of 250 to 300 words (1 or 2 pages)	1	0	0
7	Make notes and write a summary using your notes Write an information leaflet on one topics mentioned above	2	0	0
8	Write 2 to 3 paragraphs about the best water conservation method(s)	1	0	0
9	Discuss (in a group) and write a survey report.	1	0	1
10	Write an essay on an aspect of development	1	0	0
11	Write a report by discussing the data with a partner or in a group Write a brochure. Work in a group or with a partner. Write a list of questions for interview. Work with a partner.	1	3	2
12	Write an opinion essay	1	0	0
Tot.	23	13	7	3
%	100	56.5	30.4	13.1

Most of the activities, that is, 56.5% of the writing activities of Grade 11 English textbook were set to be done individually. But, 30.4% of the activities were designed as pair works whereas 13.1% of them were group works. According to Hyland (2003), although individual writing tasks can develop students' reflective thinking skills, most of the professional and work place writing activities are actually done cooperatively. In line with this, pair and group works can provide students with real-life practice in negotiation and collaborative writing skills. Besides, it encourages the sharing of ideas and interaction in planning, revising and editing pieces of writings. Thus, even if pair and groups have paramount benefits in these regards, they were not adequately included in the Grade 11 English text book (Table 8).

4.2. Observation Data

One of the objectives of this study was to examine how writing was taught, and one of the instruments used for this purpose was observation. To conduct the observation, although the researcher selected five teachers, only three teachers were willing. The reason for their reluctance might be their lack of interest to teach the writing lessons. As a result, observations were conducted on three teachers only. Each of the three teachers was observed three times. On top of that, although the researcher aimed to observe each of the teacher six times in a semester, he could make only three observations for each of them because they mostly skipped the writing lessons, and he could not get more writing lessons. Therefore, he could observe a total of nine writing lessons within the whole semester. But fill this gap, he tried to collect adequate data using other tools such as interview and questionnaire.

The data gathered via observation were analyzed based on themes such as the teachers' attention of the writing lessons, and the types of approaches used for teaching writing skills, which were emerged from the data itself.

To start from the first theme, the observation revealed that teachers gave less attention to writing sections. The evidence for this is that the researcher could get a few lessons of writing (three lessons of writing from each teacher in a semester) for observation, as the teachers observed skipped most of the writing sections of the Grade 11 English Textbook.

In addition, all the nine observations demonstrated that the teachers employed lecture method for the writing lessons. That is to say, out of the three observed teachers, only one teacher sometimes employed a process approach of teaching writing. The remaining two observed teachers gave home works and assignments after giving explanations on a given writing lesson. These teachers used most of their class time for giving clarification, and they relegate the writing practices to provide home tasks.

As mentioned above, of the three observed teachers, only one teacher occasionally employed a process approach to teaching writing although he/she did not help students to practice all the writing steps adequately. For example, in all the three observation sessions, the teacher did not [inform] the learners the learning purpose and create a sense of audience for writing. Moreover, he/she did not make learners write outlines before they wrote their first draft. But he/she rarely attempted to provide students with contextualized writing tasks, encourage them to work in pairs and groups, make them to generate ideas using, for example, brainstorming, and help them to make use of the information in the tables, pictures, graphs and short notes to carry out their writing activities. Lastly, this same teacher did not use either peer or teacher feedback.

The most important issue is that the writing tasks in the English textbook are designed in the way they promote the development of the writing processes and help students communicate in writing. But, all the observed teachers did not give attention to the writing steps such as revising and editing for fear that they would face shortage of time to cover all the portions of the text book provided that they invested more time on each phase of writing tasks at hand.

In conclusion, participant teachers employed mainly the lecture methods to teach writing. By contrast, they rarely use the process approach to teaching writing although, as Nunan (1991) pointed out, this approach tend to make a teacher spend time

with learners on brainstorming, drafting, revising and editing and helps students to acquire various skills in a manner that most experienced writers employ.

Also, the researcher checked whether or not participant teachers support and supervise their students by encouraging them (students) to write in the class, and the data showed that all of the three teachers did not accomplish this task; rather, they made their students write at home. Even the occasionally observed teacher was employing the process approach as he/she orders his/her students to do the writing tasks at home after giving them input for writing. He/she did not help them, for example, to revise and edit their first drafts in class under his/her support.

4.3 Interview Data

A total of 11 students, who were selected by classroom teachers, participated in the interview. Teachers selected students for interview, for they could know the students' performance levels, and they would choose participants based on their mid exam results and participations in class. The teachers were informed to include low, average and high achievers. Finally, explaining the purpose of the interview, the researcher asked each of the participants the following questions:

1. *To what extent did your English language teachers give attention to EFL writing?*
2. *To what extent did the writing instructions help you to develop your writing skills?*
3. *What is your general comment about the teaching learning process of EFL writing?*

In response to the first question, most of them (9 out of 11 participants) explained that their teachers gave more focus to grammar, vocabulary, speaking and reading, and they put a limited emphasis on writing tasks. For example, S1 reported that while more focus has been given to speaking and grammar, writing has been given a very limited attention for the following reasons: (1) some teachers thought that students would learn writing at university; (2) writing is not included in the national examinations, and (3) teaching writing requires more time. Likewise, S3 states that their English teacher has given more emphasis to grammar and speaking, and he has been frequently skipping the writing lessons. In addition, S10 forwarded the following ideas:

> *We have been taught grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension. But we have not learnt writing. In every unit of the Grade 11 English textbook, there are writing tasks. However, teachers have been skipping them …. They might believe that we do not have interest to learn writing and do writing tasks.*

In summary, Grade 11 English language teachers gave less attention to the writing sections of the English textbook, mainly for students are not asked to produce pieces of writings when they sit for final examinations given at school or national level, and teaching writing requires more time which uses up the time that teachers can employ to teach other sections of the textbook which appear in the final examinations.

The other important point is that different writing genres did not get equal attention. Some students explained that while letter writing has got a very limited attention, other types of writings were totally ignored. For example, S2 reported that "Teachers rarely asked us to write formal letters, but they have never asked us to write

essays, brochures and reports". This means, of the different writing genres, letter writing has got inadequate attention while essay, report, summary, etc. writing were completely ignored.

In response to the second question, almost all of the respondents reported that writing instructions helped them insignificantly to develop their writing ability. For example, S2's response can be read as "The writing instructions have not helped us to develop our writing skills; we have never made writing practices in class…" S4 also said that the writing instruction is not effective, and it did not help them to develop their ability to write in English. That is, even if several writing lessons were incorporated in the Grade 11 English textbook, teachers did not give adequate focus to them, and as such students did not show significant progresses in their writing skills.

Finally, students were asked to give their comments on the teaching-learning process of the EFL writing at grade 11, and 5 out of 11 respondents (S2, S3, S4, S7 and S8) suggested that the time allocated to the Grade 11 English Textbook was not sufficient. Example,

- *I think there is shortage of time. The Grade 11 English textbook is too broad and incorporated several portions which could not be covered in a year. The portions of the text book and the time allotted to it are not proportional (S3).*
- *…teachers did not help us practice the writing processes, for they worry about shortage of time (S4).*
- *Due to inadequacy of time the English language teacher has been skipping, especially, the writing tasks (S7).*
-

In short, due to lack of time, writing was not taught as expected by the English textbook writers and syllabus designers. It is obvious that students can develop their EFL writing skills if they make continuous and several practices which require adequate time. Squire (1983) suggests that time on the writing task is important if students are to learn writing well. In other words, if one wants students' performance of writing skills to show improvement, providing enough learning and practicing time for them is crucial.

Also, many of the respondents (S1, S5, S6, S9, S10 and S11) explained that there were a few teachers who lacked the capability and confidence to teach English in general and EFL writing in particular. S5 forwarded that teachers themselves lacked knowledge of English language and the skills of EFL writing. According to S5, some teachers who were teaching English for grade 11 students came from elementary schools through transfer and they lacked the necessary knowledge, experience, and skills of writing and teaching writing. S9added the following comments:

I have not shown any progress in my EFL writing ability. When I was in Grade 7 and Grade 8, I regularly wrote paragraphs as class works and assignments, and so my writing ability as well as my interest and confidence to write were boosting. But, when I joined preparatory school, the situation changed. Let alone practicing writing paragraphs and essays, I did not get the chance to exercise sentence writing; the English language teacher did not give more attention to the writing tasks. Hence, my writing skill has been declining, and currently I have low capability and confidence to write in English.

Likewise, S9, S10 and S11 noted that their English language teachers did not teach them writing; for they lacked proper expertise and experience to teach English for the grade level they are assigned. That is, it seems that because some schools (especially in rural areas) got difficulty to employ qualified and experienced teachers appropriate for the grade level at hand, they might assign teachers who are trained for Elementary and Junior secondary schools to teach English at the preparatory school levels, and hence these teachers might get it challenging to teach English in general and EFL writing in particular at the grade level at hand, for it was beyond their level. Thus, as the respondents explained, these teachers were not confident and capable enough to teach EFL writing, and this might be one of the reasons for teachers to skip the writing lessons.

Some participants also suggested that teachers did not use appropriate teaching methods of writing. For example, S5 commented that their English language teacher (when he/she taught them letter writing) used lecture method and did not attempt to help them practice writing letters; he/she did not give them class works and assignments on writing. According to Hedge (2005), a writing classroom where writing is relegated to homework exercise has a limited benefit for students; learners would be benefited from a classroom writing exercise, for which the English language teacher can design activities with judiciously planned phases of panning, writing, and revising.

Lastly, all the 11 respondents explained that the Grade 11 English textbook was too bulky which could not be covered in a single academic year, and because of that, they skipped some of the sections of the textbook and mainly the writing tasks. To put it in other words, the teachers gave priority to those portions of the textbook which would appear in the national examination or final examinations of the schools, and they gave a very limited attention to the writing tasks as they were thought not part of these examinations. To cite an example, S2said:

The English language textbook is bulky, and it contains several portions which cannot be covered in a year. Unless teachers become selective, they cannot address even half of its portions. This might be the reason for teachers to skip the writing sections. In addition, the book is not handy, or it is not comfortable for students to carry it when they come to school; as a result, some of the students might leave it in their homes.

In summary, the analyzed data revealed that the time fixed to the current Grade 11 English Textbook was not adequate for English language teachers to address properly all of its portions, and of the different portions of the textbook, the writing sections were

the ones that get the least attention, for writing is not part of the School Leaving and the final examinations of the particular preparatory schools.

4.4 Questionnaire Data

Copies of a questionnaire on writing instruction and teaching methods were administered to 225 students, and all of them were completed.

Table 9: The Amount of Attention Given to Writing Skills in English Language Classes

Item	Response											
Which language skills/aspects does your teacher give more focus	Speaking		Listening		Reading		Grammar		Vocabulary		Writing	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	72	32	26	11.56	27	12	70	31	19	8.44	11	4.89

The Grade 11 English textbook has about 12 units, and each unit has two parts: part A and part B. Each part again includes speaking, listening, reading, vocabulary, grammar and writing sections. Of these sections, as it is indicated in Table 9, 32% and 31% respondents reported that their teachers gave more emphasis to speaking and grammar parts, respectively whereas only 4.89% of the sample students responded that their teachers taught writing lessons. That is, very few respondents described that their teachers gave focus to writing. This implies that writing sections were the least focused parts of the textbook at hand, and this is consistent with the observation and the interview data.

Table 10: The Chances Students Get to Practice Writing

Item	Response									
How often did your teacher give you chances to practice writing?	Very often		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Not at all	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	15	6.67	41	18.22	71	31.56	18	8	80	35.56

Students were asked if their teachers made them practice writing, and 80 respondents (35.56%), that is, most of them, replied negatively (Table 10). In other words, students did not get sufficient chances of practicing writing in English classes. But according to Belcher (2009), a good writing experience can be achieved through writing a lot which implies the outcomes of practicing with writing. Furthermore, Hedge (2005) notes that to become a competent writer, a learner is required to make a lot of writing practices; indeed, they remain poor in writing in English because they rarely make writing practices.

Table11: Frequency of Negligence of the Writing Lessons

Item	Response								
Does your teacher skip the writing tasks?	Yes				No				
	N		%		N		%		
	211		93.78		14		6.22		
If 'Yes' how often?	Very often		Often		Someti mes		Rarely		Never	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	45	20	55	24.44	81	36	30	13.33	14	6.22

Students were also asked whether their Grade 11 English language teachers skipped the writing tasks of the English text book or not, and 211 respondents (93.78%), most of them, replied that their teachers skipped the writing tasks. They were also asked about the extent to which teachers skipped the tasks, and 81 (36%) of them replied that their teachers **sometimes** skipped the writing lessons whereas 45 (20%) and 55 (24.44%), a significant number of respondents, reported that their teachers skipped the writing lessons **very often** and **often**, respectively (Table 11). This is also consistent with the observation and the interview data analysis results which demonstrated that teachers skipped the writing lessons, for they encountered shortage of time to cover all the portions of the textbook, and as the summative evaluations (final examinations at school and national level) did not include writing examinations.

Teachers can also play a significant role in helping students to practice the writing processes by structuring writing tasks and giving the necessary support. In line with this, students were asked if their teachers accomplished these tasks in the writing classes. See the following table.

Table 12: Frequencies of Teaching Processes (pre, while, and post) of writing)

Item The teacher makes us:	Response									
	Very often		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
generate ideas	41	18.22	71	31.56	73	32.44	28	12.44	12	5.33
write an outline	54	24	54	24	62	27.56	42	18.67	13	5.78
organize ideas	67	29.78	69	30.67	53	23.56	29	12.89	7	3.11
write the first draft	37	16.44	78	34.67	62	27.56	33	14.67	15	6.67
revise the draft for organization	43	19.11	66	29.33	81	36	27	12	8	3.56
revise the first draft for ideas	52	23.11	51	22.67	72	32	36	16	14	6.22
edit the draft for language	89	39.56	48	21.33	65	28.89	16	7.11	7	3.11
get comment exchanging our pieces of writings	34	15.11	66	29.33	69	30.67	40	17.78	16	7.11
write the final draft incorporating comments given	35	15.56	63	28	71	31.55	37	16.44	19	8.44

As is indicated in Table 12, 32.44% and 27.56 % of the participant students reported that teachers **sometimes** helped them to generate ideas and write outlines, respectively, before writing the first draft. This result is slightly consistent with the observation data analysis result; that is, of the three observed teachers, while two teachers used lecture method for teaching writing, only one teacher was found to help his/her students to

generate ideas, although he/she did it occasionally, in his/her writing classes. In general, both data analysis results revealed that students did not get adequate support from their teacher or peers to generate ideas and then write outlines at the planning stage of writing.

Table 12 also shows that 30.67% and 34.67% respondents replied that teachers **often** helped them to organize and write their first draft, respectively. As Table 12 indicates, 36% and 32% of the respondents reported that teachers **sometimes** helped them to revise their first draft for organization and ideas, respectively, but, 39.56% of respondents explained that their teachers **very often** made them edit their pieces of writings for language. The data in the table reveals that teachers gave more priority to editing than revising their pieces of writings. They made students worry more about accuracy (grammar, vocabulary, syntax, capitalization and spelling) than the development and organization of their ideas. This leads learners to be concerned with local encoding at the expense of larger discourse units. For example, Nunan (1991) states that bad writers spend a little time reviewing what they have written, and they are concerned mainly with vocabulary and sentence formation at the expense of ideas; accordingly, the type of teaching method that the teachers employ to teach writing could lead students to becoming poor writers.

In addition, Table 12 depicts that most of the respondents (30.67%) reported that their teachers **sometimes** made them exchange their pieces of writings and get comments from each other. Helping students to get comments and feedbacks from each other using peer feedback helps to produce quality pieces of writings. Nation (2009) explains that feedback (whether it is peer or teacher feedback) shapes learners' progress in writing by diagnosing problems and providing encouragement so that they keep writing continuously. Indeed, if students did not get feedbacks and comments on their written products, their progress would be limited. In other words, doing writing tasks collaboratively has a paramount significance to share ideas, especially, at the revising and editing stages, and   peer feedback is one of the techniques that help students share ideas.

The next step of the writing processes is rewriting the final draft incorporating comments, and regarding this, the majority of respondents (31.55**%)** explained that teachers **sometimes** helped them to do so. According to Reid (1993), helping students get comments and feedbacks on their pieces of writings should be part of the writing instruction (Table 12). Feedbacks on written works could help learners develop the habit and ability of using techniques of revising. And teachers can promote students to improve their pieces of writings by helping them to incorporate comments and feedbacks they have received from other individuals. But, triangulated evidences indicate that teachers gave little concern to encourage their students to rewrite their first drafts incorporating the comments they have received from others.

4.5. The Writing Examination Data

One of the purposes of this study was to assess the writing performances of students. In line with this objective, the following research question was posed.

What is the students' performance of writing?

To answer this research question, students were asked to write a formal letter on a given thesis statement.   From 255 students sat for the exam, only 159 wrote the letter in accordance with the instructions given to them. The students' pieces of writings were marked by experienced teachers who had PhD degrees in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and had long teaching experiences of writing courses at university level. The teachers employed a six-point scale scoring guide. As it is mentioned in Weigle (2002), this scale is a standardized instrument which is commonly used to mark compositions written for the purpose of decision makings.   To analyze the data, descriptive statistics were employed as follows.

Table 13: Students' Writing Performance Mean and Standard Deviation

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Writing performance	159	1.69	.954

As it is indicated above (Table 13), the mean value of the students' writing performance is 1.69 which is below average (3). That means most of the participant students scored below three out of six. Therefore, the students' writing examination scores indicate that the majority of students are low achievers in writing in English. In addition, the standard deviation is .954 which is very law, and it shows that there is no difference among students in their performance of students which implies that almost students had nearly the same writing performances which could be categorized as low.

Here it is necessary to note that the students' interview and questionnaire data revealed that teachers either skipped the writing lessons or do not teach them effectively. Likewise, the writing examination data analysis discovered that students' performance is very low. Thus, the students' low performance of writing could be rooted in the teachers' ineffective ways of teaching writing. In fact, the participant teachers did not give enough attention to the writing lessons, and they did not employ the teaching methods which could promote learners' communicative competence in writing. As a result, students could not acquire good experiences and competences of writing.

5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

This part entails the summary results which are presented as follows.

The first objective of the study was to investigate the nature of the writing tasks of Grade 11 English textbook. And the tasks were analyzed based on parameters such as goal (objective), input, activity, role and setting. To begin with the first component of the writing tasks, the entire objectives stated at the beginnings of the units are found to include the component of **performance.**   In contrast, out of the 18 objectives, only the 6 objectives (33.33%) entail the component of condition. Similarly, only 3 (11.117%) of the objectives involve criterion. More specifically, most of the objectives did not clearly state the context, the quantity, and quality of the pieces of writings they would be expected to produce after learning the particular writing lessons.

In addition, the writing objectives were interpreted in terms of rationale. And while 19 (54.3%) of the tasks were found to reflect real world rehearsal rationale, 16 (45.7%) of them reflected pedagogical rationale. That is, the majority of them were designed based on real world situations and they could encourage learners to rehearse a behavior needed outside the classroom.

These same objectives were also examined in terms of   basic functional writing skills and formal or academic writing skills. Out of 19 objectives, while the 8 were designed based on basic functional writing skills, 11 were designed aiming at developing students' academic or formal writing skills. Thus, focus is given to academic writing skills which are appropriate for preparatory school level where students are getting ready to join university.

The second component of a writing task is input. The data analysis result revealed that verbal inputs were74% whereas nonverbal inputs were found to be 26%. Specifically, the reading and listening texts were the parts which were mainly employed as inputs of writing tasks in Grade 11 English textbook. Texts such as formal and informal letters, magazines and newspaper articles, brochures, reports, statistical data, and etc. were found to be the main inputs for students to use as bases for their writing activities.   The inputs which were presented in non-verbal forms hardly included photographs, pictures, charts and graphs. The data analysis also showed that most of the inputs (62%) were found to be inauthentic types whereas the remaining (38%) were authentic.

Thirdly, an attempt was made to investigate if the activities encouraged students to pass through the writing phases such as generating ideas, writing a first draft, revising, editing and proofreading, and 62% of the activities could stimulate students to pass through the writing stages although many tasks (38%) would not encourage them to go through the writing stages. Also, 73% of the inputs were found to be relevant to the writing activities.

Fourthly, an investigation was made on the roles of learners during accomplishing the writing tasks, and in most of the tasks (63%) students were individual writers. Only 37% of the tasks could make students participants in a collaborative writing. It seems

that inadequate focus has been given to cooperative writing although collaborative writing has a paramount significant for learners.

Also, the roles of teachers in the 19 writing tasks were found to be insignificant; their roles were not stated in the tasks. But, the tasks seem to imply that the teachers might act as either as facilitators or monitors. Accordingly, in the 16% of the tasks, the teachers could act as facilitators, and in the 84% of them, they could act as monitors. None of the tasks allowed the teachers to be dominant in the classroom.

Lastly, the settings designed for the writing tasks of grade 11 English were examined, and while56.5% of the activities were set in the way students could do them individually, 30.4% and 13.1% of them could be accomplished in pairs and in groups, respectively. Thus, even if both pair and group works have paramount benefits, they are not adequately incorporated in the text book.

The second objective of the study was to investigate the writing instruction. To achieve this objective, observation, interview, and questionnaire were employed as data gathering tools. Accordingly, all the observation, the interview, and the questionnaire data analysis results showed that the writing instruction had a serious flaw.

In brief, according to the observation data analysis result, all the 9 observations conducted demonstrated that the observed teachers employed mainly lecture methods of teaching writing, and they rarely used the process approach. This shows that although the writing tasks in the Grade 11 English Text Book were written in the way they could promote the development of writing processes and real communication, teachers mostly did not base their teaching of writing on the approaches reflected in the writing tasks. Moreover, the same data showed that teachers did not employ the time allocated to the writing tasks for the purpose it was meant to serve teaching writing. These same teachers were also observed to give students take home writing tasks instead of giving writing activities to be done inside the classroom under their support where the students can get the teachers' direct support.

To come to the interview data analysis, the result showed that students at preparatory school level did not get writing instructions which could help them to develop their writing competence. That is, teachers either skipped the writing lessons or used the ineffective teaching methods of writing.   To put it in detail, firstly, most teachers were observed skipping the writing lessons. Secondly, although some teachers occasionally tried to teach writing, they focused on formal letter writing only, and even those teachers who focused on letter writing used lecture methods, and they did not give their students opportunities to practice writing. In fact, they did not give the required focus to essay writing, report writing, and writing leaflets.

Also, the questionnaire data analysis result revealed that the writing section was the most ignored part of the Grade 11 English textbook compared to the speaking, reading, listening, and grammar and vocabulary parts of the same textbook. In other words, the data analysis result demonstrated that teachers gave less attention to the writing tasks, and they did not give students opportunities to practice writing. Similarly, the questionnaire data analysis result showed that most teachers skipped the writing lessons. Regarding this, even if the majority of respondents assured that teachers sometimes skipped the writing tasks, many students also reported that their teachers very often and often skipped the writing lessons. Regarding the writing processes, most respondents reported that their teachers sometimes helped them to generate ideas, write

outlines (at the pre-writing stage), revise their first draft, get comments from each other exchanging their pieces of writings and write their final draft incorporating comments they had received form their friends.

The third purpose of the study was to examine students' performance of writing, and in this case the writing examination data analysis results indicated that the mean value of the students' writing exam score was 1.69 (out of 6). This shows that most students' writing performance is by far below average. And a score below half is obviously considered a low or a failing. That is, most students did fail in the exam. In other words, the majority of the respondent students have low writing performances. Thus, the ineffective teaching methods that teachers employed might take the lion's share for the students' low performance of writing. That is, the interview and the questionnaire data analysis revealed that writing was hardly taught or not taught effectively, and the students' writing performance was by far below the standard. In short, the writing instruction could be the main factor for the students' low scores of the writing test.

5.2 Conclusions

` Based on the data analysis and summary presented above, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Most of objective for the writing tasks did not clearly state the context, quantity and quality of pieces of writings that students are expected to produce after learning the writing sections; similarly, most of the writing tasks did not encourage collaborative writing.
2. The amount of non-verbal inputs (Pictures, photos, graphs etc.) incorporated in the text is inadequate.
3. Most teachers gave a very limited attention to the writing sections of the textbook. In addition, even those teachers who occasionally taught writing letters employed mainly lecture method of teaching writing although the writing tasks in text book could promote the phases as well as the real communications of writing.
4. Most teachers worked to cover the portions of the Grade 11 English Textbook, not to promote students' writing skills. And some teachers were incapable to teach EFL writing.
5. Most students had low writing performances.
6. Thus, it is possible to conclude that the writing instructions had serious deficits; the writing tasks involved certain flaws, and students' writing performance was also very low. These suggest that the learners' low performance of writing could be resulted mainly from the ineffective teaching of writing. In other words, the preparatory school students' lack of skills in EFL writing could be rooted mainly in the implementation of the writing tasks.

5.3 Recommendations

1. Educational Bureaus should prepare and give trainings on contemporary teaching approaches or methods of teaching writing for preparatory school English language teachers. They should also create awareness among preparatory school English language teachers and students about the benefit of EFL writing.
2. School principals should make follow ups on English Language teachers and check if they give equal focus to all portions of the English Language Textbook including writing sections.
3. Teachers should give equal focus to all skills and language aspects of English language.

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FULL LENGTH ARTICLE

Evaluation of Land Capability for Agriculture Using Geo-Spatial Technologies in the Upper Dhidhessaa Watershed, Blue Nile Basin, Ethiopia

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Abstract

Land is a limited resource characterized by complex competitions over its use. Land capability evaluation is an important tool for identifying the capability of land for agricultural and other uses. This study, therefore, aimed at evaluating land capability for agriculture in the Upper Dhidhessaa watershed of the Blue Nile basin of Ethiopia. The main sources of data of the study were secondary data obtained from Ministries and Agencies of the Federal Government of Ethiopia. Multi criteria evaluation technique was used to identify the land use capability classes and subclasses in the watershed. Data on land characteristics were weighted based on specific agricultural land classes using Storie Index rating. The principal limiting parameters such as texture, drainage, slope and stoniness were identified. These factors were used with the consideration that their effect on land is relatively permanent. Land use capability classification was carried out by matching the land characteristics and thus, five LU classes represent the watershed and GIS platform was used to produce land capability maps for both classes and units. Almost all or 99.9 percent of the watershed lies within capability class 1 to 4. This indicates that the study watershed is suitable for arable cropping, pastoral grazing or forestry. Specifically, 42.6 % of the watershed is categorized as class 1 land (i.e., excellent capability with none to least limitations). The study concludes that the land use capability classification provides information about both the degree of limitation and kind of problems involved for broad planning and conservation studies

Keywords: **/**Land capability/Land class/ Land unit/Land evaluation/Dhidhessaa Watershed/Ethiopia/

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1. Introduction

The function of land use planning is to guide the decisions on land use in such a way that the resources of the environment are put to the most beneficial use for human being, whilst at the same time conserving those resources for future (FAO, 1976). Land use planning thus requires land evaluation, i.e., a comparison of the benefits obtained or potentially obtainable and inputs required for different potential uses of land. Therefore, land evaluation has several components; it includes assessment of both the natural resources - physical land evaluation and socioeconomic aspects of the use of land. The whole process of land evaluation provides explanations as to how the land is sustainably used (Young, 1998). The explanations provided by land evaluation are considered as interpretations by Klingebiel & Montgomery (1961) quite long time ago and that notion still holds true. that interpretative actions by land use planners is the most significant contribution to land use planning.

The capability classification is one of a number of interpretive groupings made primarily for agricultural purposes. Capability is the inherent capacity of land to perform at a given level for a general use (FAO, 1976). Land capability classification evaluates the potential of land for general agricultural use involving current technology and agronomic management practices. On the other hand, land suitability evaluates specific land use system in which detailed statement about land use and management is carried out. Capability evaluation practice of land grew out of the agricultural land capability classification system adopted by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) (FAO, 1976). The method of land evaluation has helped in translating environmental data into terms of land use potential. The essence of land evaluation is to match land use with types of land. It basically answers two questions:

- We have an area of land; what is the best use to which it can be put?

- We wish to expand a kind of land use; where are the best areas on which to do it?

The evaluation process involved in this study aims to answer the first question – the best uses to which the land can be put. The planning objective in this case could be improving the living standard of an area and identifying priority areas for different kinds of development of a country (Young, 1998).

In this study, the capability units were identified based on similar soil types. Soils that were nearly alike in their suitability for plant growth and responses to management considered as one mapping unit. Thus, the assumption is that soils in the same unit are sufficiently uniform to produce similar kinds of cultivated crops and pasture plants; require similar management practices, conservation treatment and management under the same kind and condition of plant cover. Then principal limiting parameters were identified - texture, drainage, slope, stoniness and soil depth being the significant ones. These factors were identified and used with the consideration that their effect on land is relatively permanent.

In this classification, lands are grouped into seven classes according to their potentialities and limitations for agricultural use depending on inherent soil physical characteristics (Dumanski, et al., 2010). The first three classes are considered capable of sustaining production of a wide range of common cultivated crops. Range of crops

decreases from Class 1 to 3. The fourth class is marginal for sustained arable cultivation and is capable of producing only a narrow range of crops, while the fifth class can be used only for permanent pasture and/or hay (or a single specialty crop) - extremely narrow range of cropping possibilities. Whereas the sixth can only be used for natural sustained grazing, while the seventh class is considered incapable of using for cultivated crops or grazing.

Land use capability (LUC) classification is carried out by matching the land characteristics with the requirements of the envisaged land utilization types. Then, land indices were produced to classify the land characteristics into classes and units. The functioning of these approaches is effectively possible using GIS platform. Using GIS, the evaluation process is run to produce land capability maps for both classes and units. The output maps could play major role for possible land use change to the land's best potentials displayed by the classes and tackle management problems outlined in the subclasses. However, further social and economic evaluations are quite essential.

2. Review Literature

2.1. Concepts and Definitions

2.1.1. Land Capability and Land Suitability

Land capability and land suitability are mistakenly taken as synonymous, but these are terms conceptually and practically different in land evaluation studies. Land capability refers to the ability of the land to sustain a type of land use permanently without causing damage (Beek, 1978). That is, it refers to the inherent ability of the land, based on soil and terrain attributes, to produce common crops. Land suitability, on the other hand, denotes the ability of a portion of land to tolerate the production of specific crops in a sustainable way, based on land attributes in conjunction with other social and economic attributes or factors (FAO, 1976; Rabia, 2012).

2.1.2. Land Capability Evaluation and Land Capability Assessment

Effectively addressing the land's ability to produce is very important for maximum utilization of the potential of the land. For agrarian country like Ethiopia, it is of paramount importance as the country's food production and food security requires spatial analytical and optimization methods that can accurately assess the capability and suitability of available lands for current and future food production.

Land capability evaluation is a process of evaluating a given land's quality according to its capability for sustainable land use (Rossiter, 1996). The process characterizes and appraises land development units from general point of view without taking the kind of its use or specific crops into consideration.

Land capability assessment, which follows a similar approach to land capability evaluation, is a method of determining if a parcel land can sustain a specific use without being degraded over long period of time (Van Gool, Tille, & Moore, 2005). It takes into account the physical attributes of the land (geology, soil, slope, etc.) and other factors such as climate, erosion hazard, and land management practices which determine how that land can be used, without being destroyed, for sustainable agricultural activities. It also takes

into account limitations that may affect agricultural use, for example, stoniness, salinity, drainage, and etc. Therefore, land capability assessment is based on the permanent biophysical feature of land and does not consider the economics of agricultural production such as – distance from markets, social or political factors.

2.2. Approaches to Land Capability Classification

There are various approaches to land capability classification used by scholars and institutions in different countries since 1930s. The first land capability classification was developed by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Soil Conservation Service (SCS) (presently known as Natural Resource Conservation Service) in the late 1930s and early 1940s whose objective was evaluating appropriate uses of farmland and making recommendations on soil conservation practices (Dumanski, et al., 2010). A three-level classification consisting of capability class, subclass, and unit have been started to be used during that time.

Another significant land capability classification approach was the Canada Land Inventory which was one of the most successful adaptations of the land capability classification system of the US. It was a major program designed to provide a comprehensive, standardized assessment of land capability to support defined land-based activities in the country (Rees, 1977).

In the 1960s another notable land capability classification system was developed by USDA and it was known as the US Department of Agriculture method. Most of the land capability classification systems and mapping are an adaptation of this method. Therefore, it is indisputably the most commonly used land classification system in the world (Atalay, 2016).

The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) Framework for Land Evaluation, through widespread adoption and adaptation, has emerged as an international standard for land evaluation. The approach consists four recognized categories, namely *orders*, *classes*, *subclasses* and *units*. Each category retains its meaning with respect to any classification, whether of 'present' suitability, 'potential' suitability, the classification of 'provisionally-irrigable' land, or of 'irrigable' land (FAO, 1976; FAO, 1984).

Recently, another approach to land capability classification was introduced by Atalay (2016) , who asserted that up to now the criteria that are taken into consideration in the land capability classification are topography especially slope and soil properties that may not suit to every environment. Therefore, the new system suggests, particularly in mountainous countries or regions, topographic or geomorphic units, climate and parent material to be taken into consideration to establish land capability classification. The result of the study conducted in Turkey found seven land capability classes whereas, the subclasses were determined according the parent material properties that mostly outcropped on the mountainous areas (Atalay, 2016).

As empirical evidences in literature show, land basically has different abilities to support a specific use that can be determined by conducting land capability classification (Montgomery, Dragićević, Dujmović, & Schmidt, 2016). Hence, land capability classification involves land valuation with the systematic components and grouping into

categories based on the nature of potentials and constraints in its use (Klingebiel & Montgomery, 1961). In other words, determination of land capability classes depends on the nature of limiting factors.

In capability system soils are generally grouped at three levels namely: capability class, sub-class and unit. Capability class is the broadest category in the land capability classification system defined and grouped from class 1 to 8, with increasing limitations on land use and the need for conservation measures and careful management. Only information concerning general agricultural limitations in soil use is obtained at the capability class level. Capability subclasses, on the other hand, refer to soil groups within one class. A capability unit is a grouping of one or more individual soil units having similar potentials and continuing limitations or hazards.

The Storie rating system is an index for numerical rating of soils and is used to express numerically the relative degree of suitability, or value of a soil for general agriculture. The rating is based on soil characteristics only and is obtained by evaluating specific soil factors (Maw, 2016). In the Storie Index rating method, two major approaches can be differentiated: *parametric* systems based on a numerical correlation between crop performance and key land attributes and *categorical* systems which classify the land into units with different use potentials according to the number and extent of physical limitations to crop growth (Li, Messina, Peter, & Snapp, 2017).

2.3. The Role of GIS and Remote Sensing in Land Capability Evaluation

Studies show that with increasing pressure on natural resources due to the rising human population, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and remote sensing technologies have been providing newer dimensions to monitor and manage land and soil resources for their effective utilization (Rabia, 2012; Atalay, 2016; and Montgomery, Dragićević, Dujmović, & Schmidt, 2016). Remote sensing technology, specifically, has become a viable tool for characterization and monitoring of soil resources due to the fact that the synoptic and repetitive coverage of satellites over large areas particularly inaccessible terrains makes fieldwork easier and data acquisition faster. Remote sensing technology also greatly assists in resource monitoring to the extent of precisely delineating soil boundaries (Kasthuri & Sivasamy, 2013).

GIS technologies are very important to analyze the share of factors that influence land use or limitations, as well as to produce thematic maps in digital formats as databases in land capability studies. In this manner integrated use of GIS and remote sensing technologies support decision making in identification and prioritization of land's potential for agriculture (Selamyihun, Mengistie, & Tezera, 2009; Girma & Kenate, 2017).

2.4. Previous Studies in Ethiopia

There are various studies conducted on land suitability assessment in various parts of the world. Land capacity assessment on the other hand has been scarcely studied both at the local and global scales. The lion's share of works done so far on this issue goes to USDA and FAO.

Land suitability for agriculture is a very important piece of information for agricultural development and future planning. Based on that, a land suitability assessment for agricultural purpose has been conducted in Kilte Awulalo, Ethiopia to help decision makers and agriculture development planners. The results showed variations in land suitability for different crops in the study area. The study found that only 7% of the study area showed no limitations for agricultural crops while a total of 67% of the study area was suitable for rain fed, irrigated agriculture and open vegetation growth (Rabia, 2012).

In a study conducted by Mengistie, Selamyihun and Tezera (2009) on a GIS based agricultural land suitability study for Target Crops in Ethiopia, it was indicated that GIS techniques have become very useful approach which can offer various opportunities to manage the land and care more efficiently. The study also underlines the fact that, GIS techniques can offer range of possibilities to assist land use in a sustainable way. A GIS based land capability classification for agriculture conducted in Gumay district of in Jimma Zone, Southwest Ethiopia indicated that 33.77% of the land in the district fall under class I; 39.67% categorized under class II; 7.65% fall under class III; 18.86% fall under class IV and only 0.05% of the land classified under class VI, which is not suitable for annual crop cultivation, and hence, should be under pasture, bush or tree cover (Girma & Kenate, 2017). Recognizing several land evaluation studies and the contributions of GIS platform in such studies would necessitate carrying out research at watershed level for thorough evaluation of the land and efficient planning. Therefore, the present study would provide a significant contribution for planners and development agents involved in land resources management to properly utilize the available land resources.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. The Study Area

The study area is located in Dhidhessaa Watershed - Blue Nile Basin of Ethiopia. Dhidhessaa watershed drains three administrative zones of Oromia National Regional State of Ethiopia –Jimma Zone (in the most upper and middle part), Illubabor Zone (in the middle part) and East Wollega (in the lower part down to its confluence to the Abay River). Since the watershed covers large expanse of land, about 5.4 percent of Blue Nile basin, and crisscrosses several administrative units, this study focused on the upper part of the watershed (Regional Atlas of Oromiya , 1997; Oromia BoFED, 2012). Hence, Upper Dhidhessaa watershed (here after the watershed) is located between 7°42'8" to 8°15'27"N and 36°2'3" to 36°53'39"E (Fig.1). The watershed covers an area of 3770 km². Yebu, Urgessa, Temssa, Dabana, Indris, Anger and Tato rivers are some of the dozen tributaries of the Dhidhessaa River system.

The mean annual rainfall of the watershed is 1800mm, and its mean annual temperature is 20°C. The bimodal *belg/kremt* (short rains/long rains) pattern is most noticeable in the watershed, giving more rainy months of the year.

The watershed is characterized by the production of maize, sorghum and oil crops. Therefore, agriculture - crop and livestock production provides a major source of livelihood in the study area. Cereal crop sales and cash crop production and sales almost

equally dissect the watershed, where northern and western part of the watershed is dominant cash crop producing area, whereas the eastern part is dominated by cereal crop production. In terms of geology, the tertiary volcanic series (dominantly basalt deposit) dominates the western half of the area and lower complex (Precambrian) granite dominates the land form of the study watershed (Oromia BoFED, 2012).

There are fourteen *Woredas* in the watershed out of which about 55 percent of the area of the watershed is made up of Dedesa, Gomma and Setema *Woredas*. These *Woredas* comprise 20%, 19% and 16% of the area respectively. Only Gumay *Woreda* has its entire area in the watershed (Oromia BoFED, 2012).
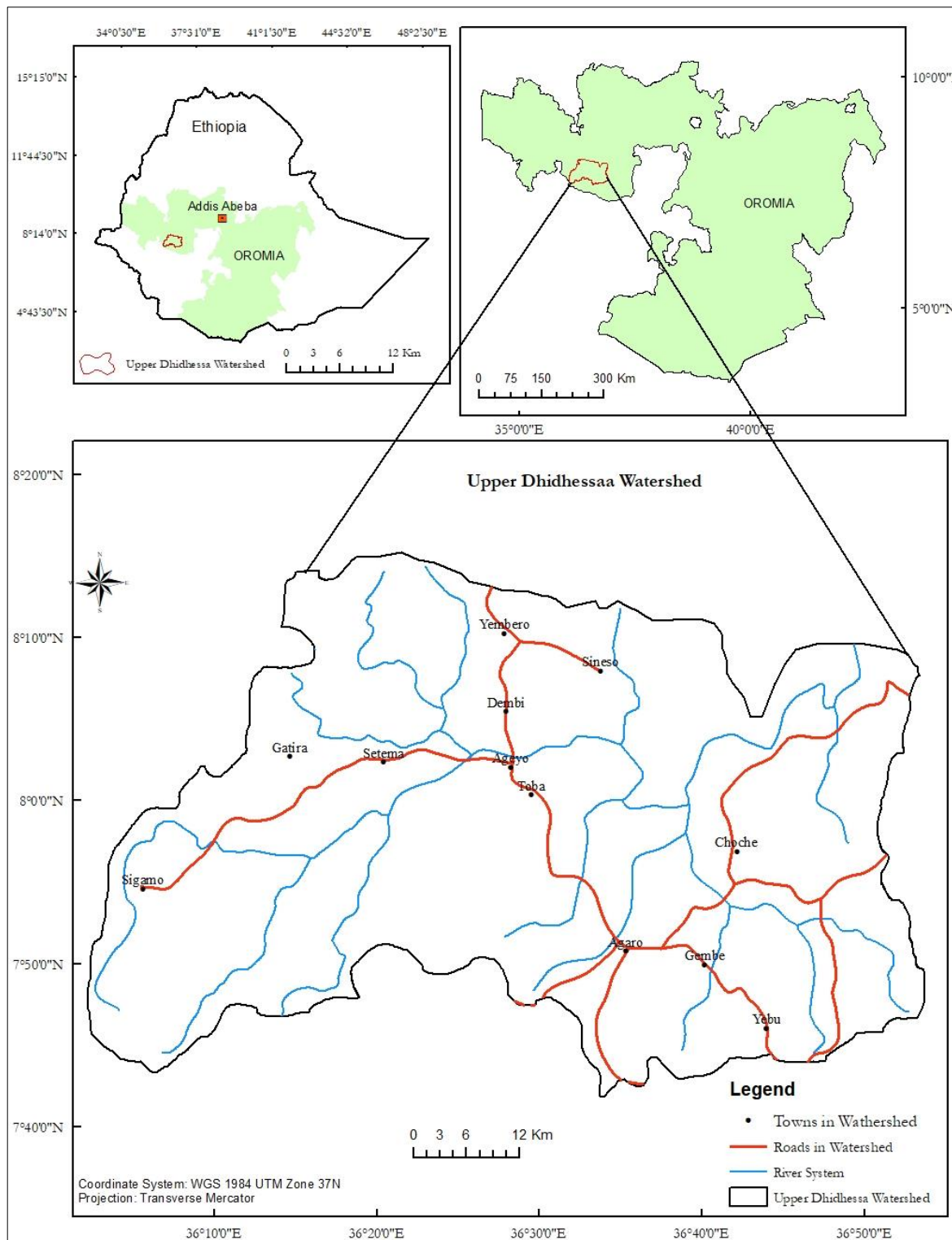
Figure 1: Location Map of the Study Area (Source: Compiled from EthioGIS)

In terms of land use, the watershed is dominated by disturbed high forest that accounts about 45 percent of the watershed, and followed by dense mixed high forest and grassland which each covers 25 percent and 17 percent respectively (Fig. 2).
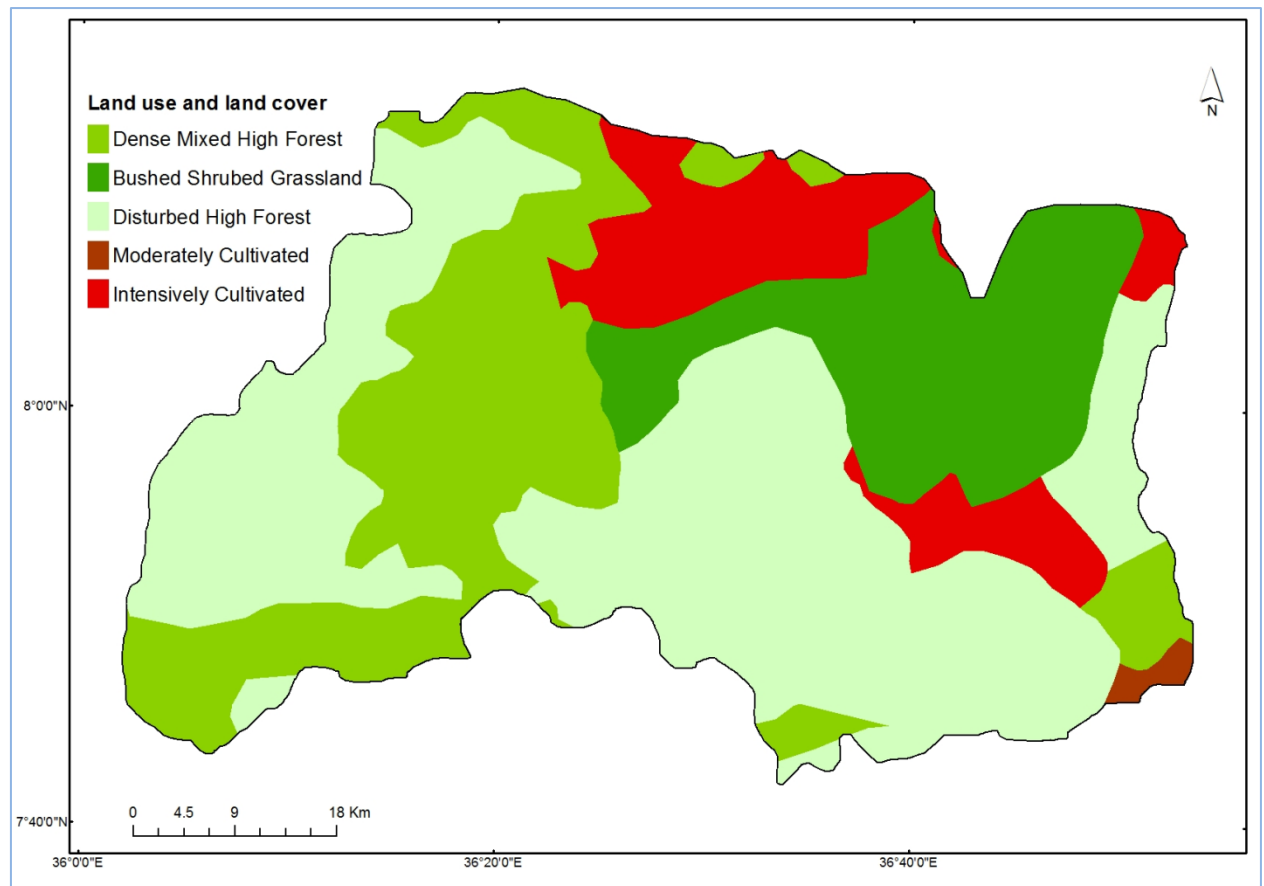
Figure 2: Land Use and Land Cover of the Watershed

3.2. Data Types and Sources

The intention of this study was to forward suggestions on the current methodological gap in land use planning in the study area and beyond. Hence, this study can assist rural land use planning by identifying areas with similar sets of potentials and limitations for land use through basic environmental parameters. These essential parameters in defining land evaluation classes are physical properties of the land and its limitations. Therefore, data for the land evaluation, particularly on edaphic properties of the land was obtained from Ministry of Agriculture of Ethiopia. Whereas climatic data for temperature class of the watershed was obtained from National Meteorological Agency of Ethiopia, and drainage class derived from data obtained from Ministry of Water Resources of Ethiopia. Additional sources of data used in the display of spatial boundaries of Ethiopia and the study watershed were obtained from EthioGIS database from the Ethiopian Mapping Agency.

3.3. Method of the Study

The objective of this study was to evaluate land capability by mapping areas that are best to use for agriculture vis-à-vis the present land use in the Upper Dhidhessaa Watershed. Whenever such study is carried out, two major approaches can be differentiated: **parametric** systems based on a numerical correlation between crop performance and key land attributes, and **categorical** systems which classify the land into units with different use potentials according to the number and extent of physical limitations to crop growth (FAO, 1984). Therefore, to attain the objective of the study the choice of method and tool is very essential. To this end, the latter method was chosen for its appropriateness for the researchers' context and availability and access to data, i.e., multi-criteria evaluation methods in the GIS workstation were used (Fig. 3).
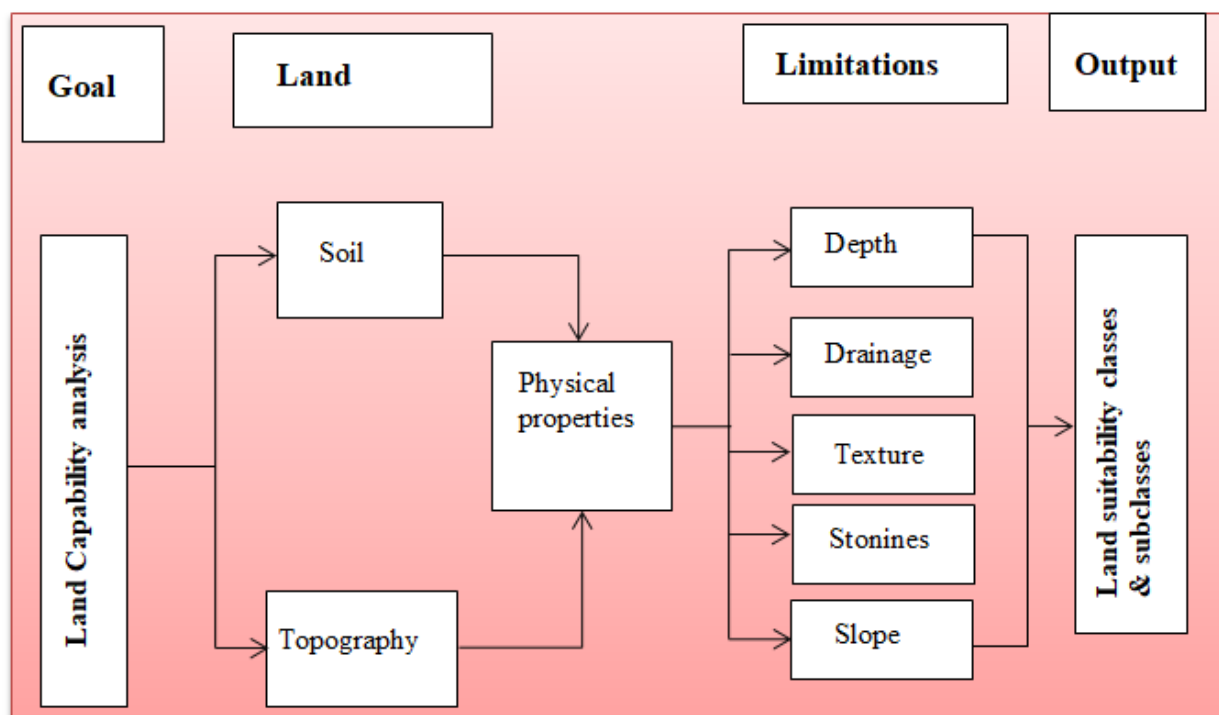
Figure 3: Methodological Flowchart

Accordingly, the final goal was first set to identify land use capability classes and subclasses for the entire watershed where maps that show LUC were produced.

Data on land characteristics were weighted based on specific agricultural land classes using the rating table obtained from (WME, 2012) using **Storie Index** (Storie, 1978). The index is based on soil characteristics that govern the land's potential utilization and productive capacity. Then the weighted values were used in Storie Index (Storie,1978) in (UCANR, 2008) for the computation of capability units by the formula:

$$SI = \left[\frac{A}{100} \, x \, \frac{B}{100} \, x \, \frac{C}{100} \, x \, \frac{D}{100} \, x \, \frac{E}{100} \right] x \, 100$$

Where; **SI** is **Storie index**

A = rating of soil texture

B = rating of soil depth

C = rating of slope

D = rating of drainage

E = rating of stoniness

Table 1: Storie Rating Table

Final Grading	Capability Class	Rate	Limitations
80 – 100	Class 1	Excellent	None to slight
60 – 80	Class 2	Good	Slight
40 – 60	Class 3	Fair	Moderate
20 – 40	Class 4	Poor	Severe
10 – 20	Class 5	Very poor	Very severe
<10	Class 6	Non-agricultural	Extremely severe

Source: (UCANR, 2008)

Based on the final grade shown in Table 1, the capability classes and units were identified from the index and mapped using the GIS platform (Fig. 5 and 6; Appendix 1). The LUC Class is the broadest grouping of the capability classification. It is an assessment of the land's capability for use, while taking into account its physical limitations and its versatility for sustained production. The LUC displays different degree of limitation and versatility of land use (Table 2); as the classes increase the limitation to use the land increases, hence this makes the management of higher classes more difficult. Similarly, the general use of the land for multiple purposes, that is the versatility of the land, decreases with increasing land utilization classes. This indicates that classes found within the range of 1 to 4 are multiple use land.

Table 2: LUC and Degree of Limitation and Versatility of Use

	LUC Class	Arable cropping suitability	Pastoral grazing suitability	Production forestry suitability	General suitability	
Increasing limitation to use ↓	1	High ↓ Low	High ↓ Low	High ↓ Low	Multiple use land	Decreasing versatility of use ↓
	2					
	3					
	4					
	5	Unsuitable				
	6					
	7					
	8		Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Conservation land	

4. Identification of Land Mapping Units

Land mapping units (LMU) used for mapping purpose in this study was based on major soils of the study area (Fig. 4). As Ann and Erik (2014) state, land units are generally taken from soil survey maps since they characterize homogenous and more or less stable land use of the area. Therefore, thirty-eight mapping units were identified in the study area on which other overlays were made to produce the final land capability classes and units map.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Capability Classes of the Watershed

According to Table 3, six LUC classes represent the watershed. Almost all or 99.9 percent of the watershed lies within capability class 1 to 4. This indicates that the study watershed is suitable for arable cropping, pastoral grazing, or production forestry. Specifically, 42.6 percent the watershed is categorized as class 1 land. In the meantime, Fig.5 shows the spatial distributions of these capability areas. Accordingly, large western part and patches of central part of the watershed lie under this category of land.

Table 3: Area and Capability Classes of the Watershed

Capability Classes		
LUC Class	Area [Ha]	Percent of total area
Class 1	165295	42.6
Class 2	55168	14.2
Class 3	141820	36.6
Class 4	25089	6.5
Class 6	398	0.1
Total	**387770**	**100.00**

Figure 4: Land Mapping Units (LMU)
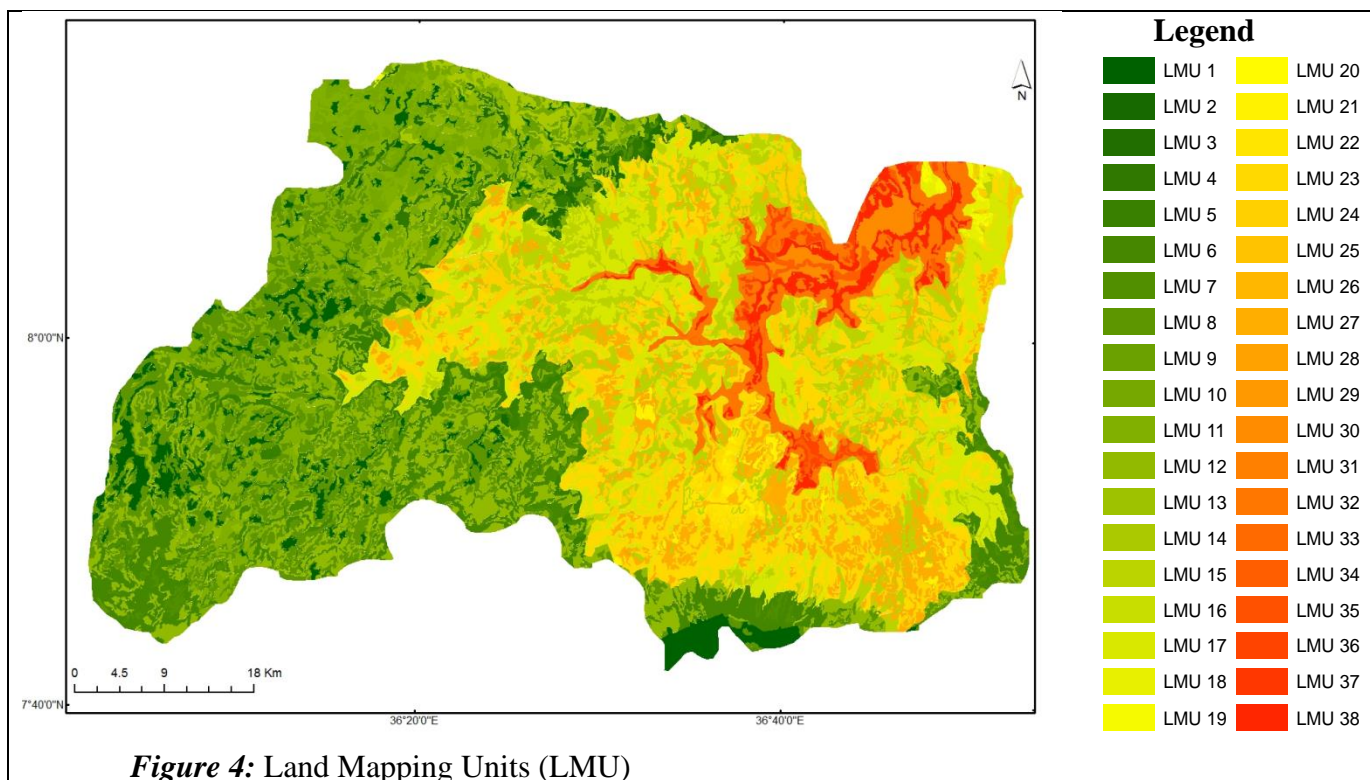
Soils in **Class 1** have about the same responses to systems of management of common cultivated crops and pasture plants. They might have been adapted to the same kinds of common cultivated crops and pastures plants, and require similar alternative systems of management for crops.

Soils in this class (**Class 1**) are suited to a wide range of plants and may be used safely for cultivated crops, pasture, range, woodland, and wildlife. The soils are nearly level and erosion hazard (wind or water) is low. They are deep, generally well drained, and easily worked. They hold water well and are either fairly well supplied with plant nutrients or highly responsive to inputs of fertilizer. They are productive and suited to intensive cropping.

Soils in class 1 that are used for crops need ordinary management practices to maintain productivity - both soil fertility and soil structure. Such practices may include the use of one or more of the following: fertilizers and lime, green-manure crops, conservation of crop residues and animal manures, and sequences of adapted crops.

As shown in Table 3, LUC **class 2** covers about 14 percent of the watershed. As also depicted on the map on Fig.5, it is located in the western half of the watershed. Soils in class 2 require careful soil management, including conservation practices, to prevent deterioration or to improve air and water relations when the soils are cultivated. The limitations are few and the practices are easy to apply. The soils may be used for cultivated crops, pasture, range, woodland, or wildlife food and cover.

Soils in class 2 may also require special soil conserving cropping systems, soil conservation practices, water control devices, or tillage methods when used for cultivated crops. For example, deep soils of this class with gentle slopes subject to moderate erosion when cultivated may need one of the following practices or some combination of two or more: **terracing**, **strip cropping**, **contour tillage**, **crop rotations** that include grasses and legumes, vegetated water disposal areas, cover or green-manure crops, stubble mulching, fertilizers, manure, and lime. The exact combinations of practices vary from place to place, depending on the characteristics of the soil, the local climate, and the farming system.

LUC class 3 is the second largest in the watershed; it covers about 37 percent of the total area (Table 3). As shown on map in Fig. 5, it covers large areas of the central and eastern part of the watershed. Soils in this class (class 3) have more restrictions than those in class 2 and when used for cultivated crops, the conservation practices are usually more difficult to apply and to maintain. They may be used for cultivated crops, pasture, woodland, range, or wildlife. Limitations of soils in class 3 restrict the amount of clean cultivation; timing of planting, tillage, and harvesting, choice of crops, or some combination of these limitations.

LUC class 4 covers small portion of the watershed; that is about seven percent of the watershed. It is located in the upper part of the river in southern fringes of the watershed. The restrictions in use for soils in class 4 are greater than those in class 3, and the choice of plants is more limited. When these soils are cultivated, more careful management is required and conservation practices are more difficult to apply and maintain. Soils in class 4 may be used for crops, pasture, woodland, range, or wildlife

food and cover. Soils in this class may be well suited to only two or three of the common crops.
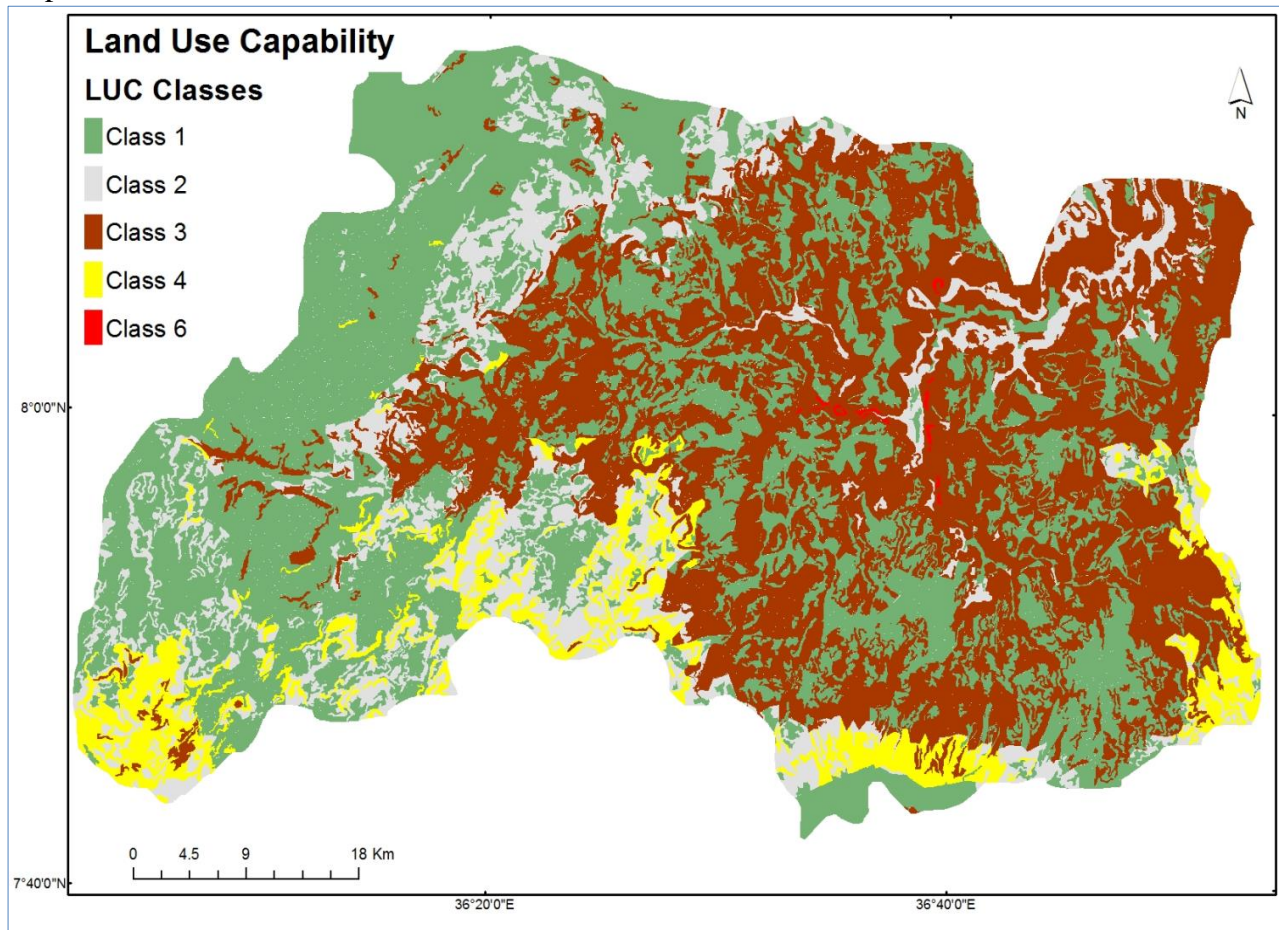
Figure 5: Land Use Capability Classes in the Watershed

LUC class 6 covers very small portion of the watershed or only 0.01 percent of the total area. It is found in part of the watershed where shallow soil depth in a rugged part of the watershed was the main limitation. Soils in class 6 have severe limitations that make them generally unsuited to cultivation and limit their use largely to pasture or range, woodland, or wildlife food and cover. Physical conditions of soils placed in class 6 are such that it is practical to apply range or pasture improvements, if needed, such as seeding, liming, fertilizing, and water control with contour furrows, drainage ditches, diversions, or water spreaders.

5.2. Capability Subclasses in the Watershed

Land use capability subclass provide useful information about the degree of **limitation** and kind of **problem** involved for broad program planning, conservation need studies, and similar purposes. Furthermore, the information is useful for land use planning and for determining conservation and management requirements. The limitations appear to be significant after LUC class 2, and hence Table 4 excludes both class 1 and class 2, which cover 56.8 percent of the watershed. However, for the purpose of comparison LUC class 1 is depicted on Fig. 6 below.

In the study watershed, the most serious limitation is posed by soil **texture** (T). That is, the limitation by texture accounted about 18 percent of the area (Table 4). The effect of texture indicates that the land areas are adversely affected by lack of water due to inherent soil characteristics.

Table 4: Capability Subclasses in the Watershed

Capability Subclasses		
LUC Subclass	**Area [Ha]**	**Percent of Total Area**
3D	3497	0.90
3LD	42343	11.00
4L	44223	11.40
4LT	45127	11.60
5L	8180	2.11
5T	2590	0.67
5W	5428	1.40
6T	474	0.12
7T	70613	18.20
Total	**222475**	**57.40**

The second largest single limitation in the watershed is **slope** (L); it constitutes 11 percent of the limitations in the area. This subclass indicates landscapes with slopes steep enough to incur a risk of water erosion or to limit cultivation. **Depth of topsoil** (D) and **drainage** (W) pose little limitation, 0.9 percent and 1.4 percent respectively, in the watershed indicating that the area has deep soil and no significant water logging problem. Meanwhile, no serious management problem can be posed by **stoniness** (S) in the watershed as all the land mapping units are less than 15 percent slope class.
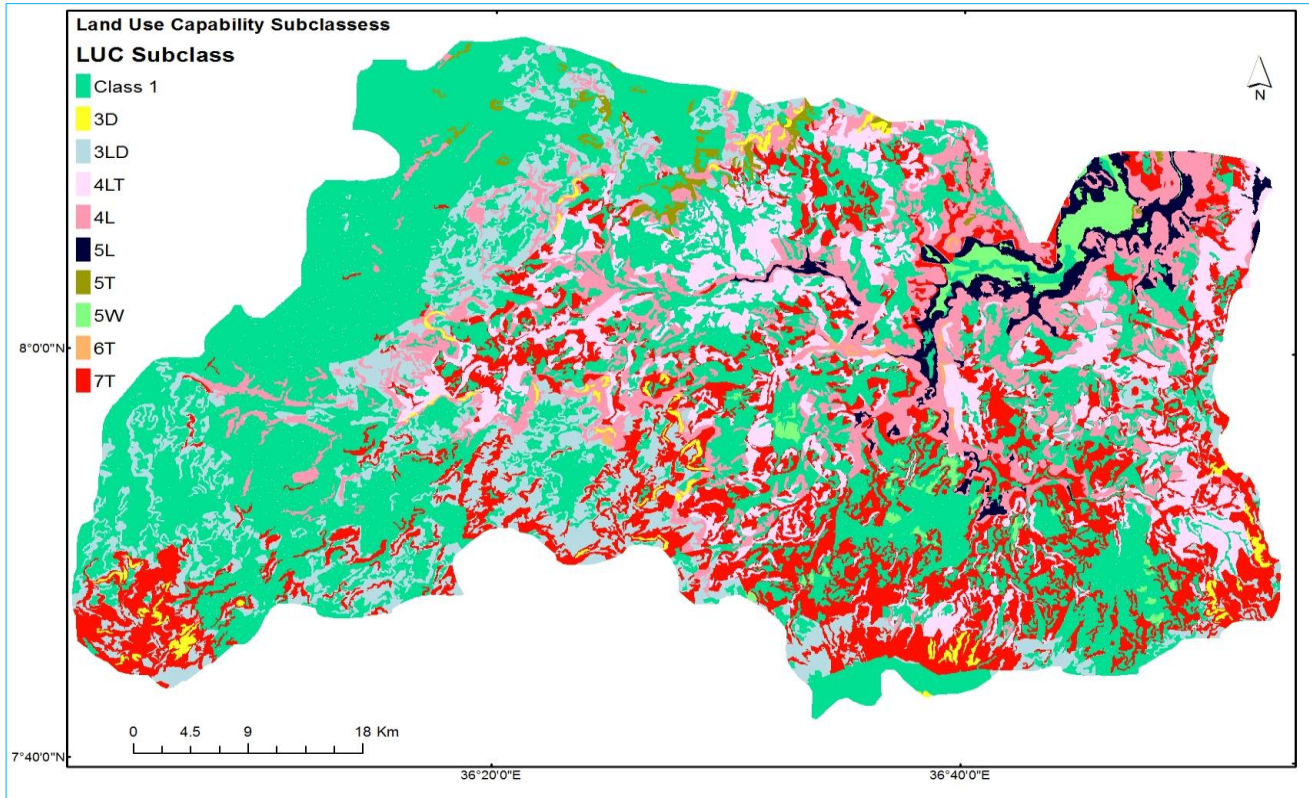
Figure 6: Land Use Capability Subclasses in the Watershed

5.3. LUC Classes vis-à-vis Land Use Land Cover in the Watershed

Land capability classification carried out in the watershed reveals that 99.9 percent of the watershed is capable of arable cropping. However, the current practice of land use in the watershed is dominated by disturbed high forest that accounts about 45 percent of the area followed by dense mixed high forest with 25 percent of the watershed (Fig. 2). Cultivated land accounts 12 percent of the watershed (Table 5). This indicates that forestry has dominated the area. The dominance of forest as major land use in the study watershed could be because of coffee production of the area.

Table 5: Land Use and Land Cover of the Watershed

Land Use Land Cover		
LULC Type	**Area [Ha]**	**Percent of Total Area**
Bushed shrub grassland	65795	16.97
Dense mixed high forest	97867	25.23
Disturbed high forest	176308	45.47
Intensively cultivated	45763	11.80
Moderately cultivated	2037	0.53
Total	**387770**	**100.00**

6.Conclusion and the Way Forward

Land use capability classification provides useful information about both the degree of limitation and kind of problem involved for broad program planning, conservation need studies, and similar purposes. Furthermore, the information is useful for land use planning and for determining conservation and management requirements. Therefore, the comparison of land use and land utilization capability classes of upper Dhidhessaa watershed gives indication that the area has huge potential for arable agriculture. Given the 42.6 percent of the watershed lies within class 1 land, implication for management and tackling limitations is not going to be difficult task.

However, certain limitations were also identified in the study watershed. The most serious limitation is soil texture (T) and it accounted about 18 percent of the area. Basic management practices such as: terracing, strip cropping, contour tillage, crop rotations that include grasses and legumes, vegetated water disposal areas, cover or green-manure crops, stubble mulching, fertilizers, manure, and lime could reduce the limitations and large area of the watershed can be used for sustained arable cropping. The study also shows that to make wise and rational land use decision making, further social and economic evaluations as well as conservation considerations are required.

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Appendix 1: Limitations and Capability Classes

Slope Class	Texture Class	Depth Class	Ston. Class	Drainage Class	Capability Class	Subclass
L1	T2	D1	S1	W2	Class_1	2TW
L1	T4	D1	S1	W5	Class_3	5W
L1	T5	D1	S1	W2	Class_1	5T
L1	T3	D1	S1	W1	Class_1	3T
L4	T6	D3	S1	W1	Class_3	6T
L4	T5	D3	S1	W1	Class_3	5T
L4	T3	D2	S1	W1	Class_2	4L
L4	T7	D2	S1	W1	Class_4	7T
L4	T4	D2	S1	W1	Class_3	4LT
L4	T4	D2	S1	W1	Class_2	4LT
L4	T2	D3	S1	W1	Class_3	4L
L4	T2	D3	S1	W1	Class_3	4L
L2	T5	D2	S1	W1	Class_1	5T
L2	T3	D1	S1	W2	Class_1	3T
L2	T3	D1	S1	W2	Class_1	3T
L2	T3	D2	S1	W2	Class_1	3T
L2	T5	D1	S1	W2	Class_1	5T
L2	T2	D2	S1	W1	Class_1	2LT
L2	T3	D1	S1	W2	Class_1	3T
L2	T5	D1	S1	W2	Class_1	5T
L2	T4	D1	S1	W3	Class_3	4T
L2	T5	D1	S1	W4	Class_2	5T
L2	T7	D1	S1	W2	Class_3	7T
L2	T2	D1	S1	W2	Class_1	2LTD
L2	T5	D2	S1	W3	Class_2	5T
C5	T2	D3	S1	W1	Class_3	3D
C5	T2	D2	S1	W1	Class_3	5L
C5	T6	D5	S1	W5	Class_6	6T
L1	T4	D1	S1	W5	Class_3	5W
L2	T2	D1	S1	W1	Class_1	3L
L2	T2	D3	S1	W1	Class_2	3LD
L2	T7	D1	S1	W1	Class_3	7T
L2	T5	D1	S1	W1	Class_1	5T
L2	T3	D2	S1	W1	Class_1	3LT
L2	T7	D1	S1	W2	Class_3	7T
L2	T7	D2	S1	W1	Class_3	7T
L2	T7	D1	S1	W2	Class_3	7T
L4	T3	D3	S1	W1	Class_3	4L

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Recommendation: Recommend based on major findings. This part also may be presented in Recommendation section that may stand alone or form a sub section of the Conclusion section. But EJSSLS prefers the former.

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