



Assessment on social stigma and discrimination of Gafat Bete-Israel minorities in Hossana town administration and surroundings, Hadiya zone, Ethiopia

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Abstract

The objective of the study was to assess on social stigma and discrimination of minority ethno group of Gafat Bete-Israel people in Hossana town administration and surroundings. Members of GafatBete Israel people living for prolonged years in Hosanna town. During their life time, they are stigmatized and discriminated by the members of the society in all aspects of their lives. The study focused on social, educational, economic, justice, political, religious and employment areas. This study utilized qualitative research design to analyze the data through thematized descriptive analysis. 8 participants of Gafat Bete-Israel people and 8 professionals from different sector offices were involved for the interview in the study. Totally, 16 participants were included in the interview. Observation is one of the tools in order to enrich the information. The findings of the study revealed that the Gafat Bete-Israel ethnic minority people stigmatized and discriminated in social, educational, political, economic, justice, religious and employment aspects. The study indicated that the social stigma and discrimination are highly affected their whole social live. This stigma and discrimination deprived of their rights in not to exercise equal rights, freedoms and dignity with others.

Key words discrimination, Gafat Bete-Israel, minority, social stigma, Hossana



INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Goffman (1963) defined stigma as an attribute that can be deeply discrediting which reduces whole to taint and discounted others. Goffman's classic definition begins with an attribute as the source of discreditation; however, more recent definitions of stigma explicitly adopt social constructivists frame. For example, Herek (2009) defines stigma as "the negative regard, inferior status, and relative powerlessness that society collectively accords to people who possess a particular characteristic, or belong to a particular group or category." This shift moves the source of stigma out of the bodies and identities of the stigmatized and places the origins of stigma at the societal (Fine and Asch, 1988). Moreover, stigma is defined as the 'holding of derogatory social attitudes or cognitive beliefs, the expression of negative effect, or display of hostile or discriminatory behavior towards members of a group on account of their membership of that group (Makasa, 2008).

Stigma may cause persons to experience rejection and to feel shame about their condition. Stigma and discrimination exert a detrimental effect on persons stigmatized by limiting their opportunities and reducing self-esteem (Link et al. 1989; Corrigan, 1998).

Link & Phelan (2001) have conceptualized stigma as involving several interrelated elements. These are identification and labeling of difference, cultural belief that link the label and the labeled person to negative stereotypes, labeled people are then categorized in a way that create a clear distinction between "us" and "them", and stigmatization is seen as contingent on social structures that provide an equal access to social, economic, and political power. Only powerful social groups have the ability to create and maintain discriminatory practices. Yet stigma originates and is perpetuated by those with power against others with less power (Link and Phelan, 2001). There are tribal stigma of race, nation and religion, these being stigma that can be transmitted through lineages and equally contaminate all members of family.

Whereas discrimination refers to instances when people or groups are denied equality and treated differently because of their stigmatized status (Allport, 1986, Major and O'Brien, 2005). According to Pankhurst (1999) in many African countries including Ethiopia descent based discrimination was seen in many parts of the country at different regimes in the past." Caste discrimination is widespread in parts of Sahelian Africa and particularly amongst certain communities in West Africa, as well as amongst the Somalia and Ethiopia." is reported by International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN).



This report states that "there is considerable evidence of forms of discrimination based on descent in the south-western area of Ethiopia, represents caste discrimination. The occupational specialization share much in common with similar caste groups in West and Central Africa with the main jobs being tanning, potting, blacksmithing and weaving (Steven K., 1992).

However, according to IDSN report "in recent years, changes have been reported in relationship with the caste group with a slight restriction on commensality and occupational specialists." Those who are categorized under the caste group such as tanners, black-smiths, and weavers' lives display progress in many ways among the members of the society without discrimination (Steven K., 1992). Even they could obtain an opportunity in marital states among the members of the society. But the potters (Gafat Bete-Israel community) at Hosanna town and the surroundings are also members of caste group who are still stigmatized and discriminated in social, educational, health services, economic, marital, political, etc. lives from the whole society. For long time the life experience of those subjected to this stigma has been largely ignored. Recently, however, it has been recognized that anti - stigma initiatives require an understanding of the needs of those affected by stigma (NYU, 2016). As Goffman's categories of stigma there are tribal stigma, race, and religion, these being stigma that can be transmitted through lineages and equally contaminated all

members of a family." This is undoubtedly a type of tribal stigma.

In terms of cultural aspects these minority group of people have their own indigenous culture. For example, they have unique dancing style during Ethiopian 'Meskel' day (the day of the manifestation of Jesus Christ's Cross), Epiphany day and other anniversaries by wearing traditional clothes and wild animal's skin with a cap and tailed, with traditional drum and drummer display native music in their traditional dances. During mourning with the same traditional dancing style when fame people died in a community to mobilize companion of the dead person to weep they activate telling his or her former deeds while he or she did in alive. These cultural heritages would be preserved properly as good resources for the society. However, their human rights and fundamental freedoms to learn, participate, employ, marry, religious, to work together, their cultures, values, and ways of life's are not respected in the society.

In terms of their economy, they were also discriminated from other members of the society in many ways. For example, they do not have land to produce crops or plantation for their life. Even most of them built their home with others land. They lead their life female making potter, male in carpentry and building small cottages. Therefore, the majority members of this minority ethnic



group of people suffered from extreme poverty and some of them with their children especially women were engaged in different activities by their indigenous occupational skills to overcome their extreme poverty. These and other related problems aggravated their life in order not to manage properly their daily life. Among different religious institutions, there was also discrimination that was seen on this ethno minority group of people (Penny S., 2023).

Regarding church activities, they are not able to become leaders and take responsibilities of the church, to conduct Holy Communion, baptism, conducting Lord's Supper, etc. Because of social stigma and discrimination they cannot participate in ministries even they are not allowed to seat together and follow church ceremonies. Recently, this minority ethnic group of people worship in separate denominations and buried each other when someone dies in different burial places. The 1995 World Summit for Social Development under the concept of Social Integration to create an inclusive society states under steps to promote Social Inclusion in terms of access to social interaction is that " People must be able to engage in society's activities and social networks in their daily life, including economic, social, cultural, religious and political activities." However, this doesn't work where these minority ethnic people living society.

Statement of the Problem

The reason why the researchers prefers this research topic is that members of Gafat Bete-Israel people are not benefited from political, economic, social, educational, employment, denominational, and justice areas of life as compared to other societal groups. This group of people was unable to participate fully among the members of the society in Hosanna town and surroundings because of stigma and discrimination. Moreover, they were unable to interact equally with the members of the society in their daily lives. This situation made them inferior, separate, unequal, condemn them and away from others while they were living among the society.

But the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 26 sub - article 1 declares about the right of child's education as follow " Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory." The 1994 Ethiopian constitution also declares equal education opportunities. Other conventions, policies were also seen as pillars for the rights of the child's education. However, the traditional custom and prejudice not allowed children to attend together in the same classes with other majority of the children. Even they started the school, they drop out early because they can't resist the impact of inferiority pressure. Therefore,



the results were seen up on their children in order not to learn their education properly. Ethiopians have good custom to celebrate different anniversaries and holidays by inviting one another. But members of this ethnic minority group of people were neither be invited by the members of the surrounding community to celebrate and spend together in festivals nor had confidence to invite these members in order to eat the prepared food and drink during the festivals. In terms of their rights, no one respect them and give dignity as equal as members of society at the town. In general, there is negative attitude towards this minority ethnic people.

However, according to the 1948 UDHR article 1 states that " All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." Moreover, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopian constitution (1994) article 10 says that " Human rights and freedoms are inviolable and inalienable. They are inherent in the dignity of human beings. Human and democratic rights of Ethiopian citizens shall be respected. Even some members of Gafat Bete-Israel migrated to other places because of stigma and discrimination that deprived their right freedom of equal participation at Hosanna town and surroundings.

In one way or another, such as culturally, economically and religiously all human beings are

equally benefited from these values. But this group of people was not treated in dignity and equality with other members of the surrounding community in the study area. All of the above evidences were some of the description of social stigma and discrimination in Hosanna town administration. The researchers observed the conditions of these people and the society attitudes towards people who are stigmatized have not improved and in some cases have even deteriorating from time to time..Thus based on above evidences this study will strive to:

1. Identify types of social stigma that Gafat Bete - Israel people experienced in Hosanna town and surroundings
2. Describe social, educational, political, economic, justice, religious and employment stigma and discrimination of Gafat Bete-Israel tribe at Hosanna town administration.
3. Explore the common challenges of Gafat Bete-Israel community in social interaction with others
4. Suggest possible solution to improve social stigma and discrimination of this group of people

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

In this study, the researcher used qualitative research method in which the researcher utilized ethnographic research design to analyze the data through thematic and descriptive



analysis respectively. Qualitative research is a research methodology that places primary importance on studying small samples of purposively chosen individuals; not attempting to control contextual factors, but rather seeking, through a variety of methods to understand things from the informants' point of view; and creating a rich and in-depth picture of context under investigation. The ultimate goal of qualitative research is to discover the existing social context such as patterns of behavior not previously described and to understand them from the perspectives of participants in the activity at a site. This study enabled to design realistic/naturalistic inquiry of ethnography and conversation. Its data collection methods are observation and interview items and verbal reports.

Sample Size and Sample Technique

To get potential information in interview 8 participants of Gafat Bete-Israel people, 5 social affairs office workers and 3 professionals from cultural and tourism sector office were selected purposively. Participants from ethno minority group of people were selected to obtain relevant, comprehensive and rich data of the study. A purposive sampling technique was utilized to select the participants of the study.

Data Collection Instruments

Utilizing multiple data collection instruments were favored in a study to improve the quality of data obtained (Patton, 2002). Hence, in this study two types of data collection instruments were utilized. The data was collected through interview and observation. This enabled to provide authentic data based on evidence of the social reality of discrimination and stigma which are seen up in Hossana town administration and surroundings.

Interviews

Semi-structured interview was prepared for the in-depth investigation of the study by the researchers. Data was collected from 8 elders of Gafat Bete Israel, 5 social affairs office and 3 professionals from cultural and tourism sector office. The prepared interviews were revolved on various areas of social stigma and discrimination. Their responses were used as an input for data analysis.

Observation

Observation can be begun by choosing a site that helps to explore gaps in theory after the researchers had better understand and capture the context with in which people interact. The researcher had an access to observe in their settings of social stigma and discrimination of



this ethno minority group. This was done at different settings and times in order to see how they were stigmatized and discriminated in their daily lives in different social, religious, educational, political, economic, justice and employment aspects. It enabled the researchers to confirm the observed reality of stigma and discrimination of this ethno minority group of people at different settings.

Methods of Data Analysis

In this study qualitative method of research which incorporates both thematic and ethnographic descriptive analysis. This was done by starting analysis to understand the data, the researchers read and re-read to transcribe, collect and document as raw data which were gathered from interviews and observation at the conditions and occurrences in order to describe in the study. In ethnographic approach, stigma and discrimination that covered all aspects lives of the people of Gafat Bete- Israel were investigated by the researchers respectively.

Data gathered were analyzed in all aspects of their lives and these data were organized, classified and managed to represent the categories of themes. Similar data were grouped together as summary for analysis to be headings and be explained step by step. Data were interpreted and findings were reported.

RESULTS

In this section, social stigma and discrimination of Gafat Bete- Israel people were investigated in various aspects of their daily lives. The results obtained from data on social discrimination and stigma the people exercised were gathered from key informants of Gafat Bete-Israel, Workers and Social Affairs office and professionals were analyzed and interpreted. To supplement and enrich the information that was drawn using interview and observation were analyzed and described qualitatively.

Table 1

Back ground characteristics of Key Informants by sex, age, marital status and work experience



Gafat Bete-Israel Elders
District Social Affairs
Office
Culture and
Tourism
Office
Total

Interview Responses of Participants Social Stigma and Discrimination in

Neighborhood

The respondents asked whether they exercised or not the social stigma and discrimination in neighborhood in private and public levels, one of the respondents reported that members of Gafat Bete- Israel and their descendants had been living for several years in Hossana town and the surroundings. When they are living with others they are facing a number of social stigma and discrimination problems in their daily live interaction with others. Among these interactions some are: interacting with neighbors throughout coffee ceremonies, anniversary festivals, wedding ceremonies, mourning, worships and other types of social interactions with each other in community members. In all these interactions members of GafatBete-Israel people were little or no participation with others in individual and groups.

Most of the respondents forwarded that:

“If we get an opportunity to participate in these ceremonies and festivals, we are forced to sit outside on the ground as beggars and be thrown discarded food wastes either with our own utensils (plates, glasses, cups, etc.) or by used and thrown materials like plastic made and broken pottery which never been returned to their houses”.

Table 1 above displayed the key informants by sex, age, marital status and work experience. As shown in the table above 1 item 1 indicated 6 males and 2 females and 7 married and 1divorced Gafat Bete-Israel. Regarding their age 2 of them are between 31- 40 and the rest 6 of them are between 41 - 50 years. Their work is 3 of them are carpenters and 3 are house detaching works and 2 are diploma without work. Concerning to their educational background 3 of them are 1-12, 5 are diploma holders. Five of them are workers and social affairs and three are from culture and tourism office included in the study.



The study revealed that there is little or no equal participation in different festivals. In ceremonial parities they cannot eat together seating in the same bench even not the same plates and clay material used for food. This indicates that social discrimination and isolation is common in Hossana town and the surrounding in Gafat Bete - Israel people. These societal rejections forced them to build low self-esteem and inferiority in this ethnic minority group.

Social Stigma and Discrimination in Public

All the participants reported that in many public areas such as hotels, restaurants, café and different entertainment in public service areas this ethno minority group of people are discriminated to eat, drink and enjoy together equally with others. Majority of the participants reported that *throughout country when someone died, it is accompanied by the members of community in burial places and the funeral ceremony services would be carried out in churches and burial places. But, if one of Gafat bête-Israel member of people died, the body not buried in the same place together with others because of social prejudice and discrimination. Instead the body is buried in separate burial place. All the funeral ceremonies carried out only by the members of the minority group of people.* Moreover, they reported that *it is totally forbidden to marry from non Gafat bête-Israel community members, they married same*

kinfolk each other. These are common social practice of these marginal members.

These results indicated that these minority ethnic members have high limitation of participation in public and cultural values of the society.

Social Stigma and Discrimination in Education

When asked whether social discrimination in education sector or not, most of the respondents reported that none of their children directly barred from educational institutions by the community members, but the indirect discrimination and prejudice of the society. The stigma and discrimination like insulation, harassment, ill-treatment, not permit to work together, to play, to sit in the same bench made them to drop out of the school early. When they joined to the schools, children's of the non-gafat bête-Israel display the same behavior of insulting, criticizing and even beat them discouraging in classes as well as outside of the classrooms. This is still demonstrated at the schools to undermine their learning. Furthermore, they practice many challenges at school and resulting inferiority, anxiety, loneliness, isolation, etc. that made them distress and dropped out of school. From ancestors' time, the children deprived of their right because of prejudice and discrimination in



Hossana town and the surroundings. This hopeless children in their childhood became laborer to support their families who live in extreme poverty. This stigma and discrimination continued in neighborhood, villages and elsewhere in the public. Moreover, one of the participant stated that:

“Education is one of the most important means of alleviating our children’s lifelong problems however; still they are facing discrimination in their learning and daily lives. They are facing the same inherent challenges”.

According to the respondents report “Harotesa” Association Ethiopia meaning (New Hope Association) is an indigenous non- governmental charitable organization. It is founded by Gafat Bete Israel people of few educated elite members in 2010. Harotesa Alternative School is a project designed in order to bring out of school Bete-Israel children who missed modern education because of prejudice and discrimination.

Some of the respondents reported that:

“We need our children obtain educational opportunity to learn freely without shame and distress but the site of Harotesa alternative school is not as such convenient for teaching - learning process. The land is slanted ground at the boarder stretched to the coast of the river which is not comfortable for games and sport activities. During the rainy season, the river flooded to the class-room and offices. This situation is affecting the teaching - learning process of school and other activities”.

This shows that how much deep rooted societal stigma and discrimination is clearly reflected in school site which is not suitable for schooling. The study informants added that Hossana town municipality and other concerned bodies to provide an alternative place which is convenient for school activities.

This finding indicated that because of inherent social stigma and discrimination most of the children of Gafat Bete- Israel are out of school, few are in this isolated school and the families are in an extreme poverty life.

Social Stigma and Discrimination in Economic

Regarding the social stigma and discrimination in economic aspects majority of rspondants reported that many of Gafat Bete- Israel people live in extreme poverty. They do not have land and property as income generation except hand to mouth economy by making pottery, carpentry and other small manual labor jobs. Many of them including women and children engaged in means of subsistence income generating activities. They lead their life in primitive manual skills like pottery making, carpentry and small scale employments. In order to survive, and manage themselves in life, the whole family including children carried out local works and occupations that has not change their life. The materials produced by this



minority group of people vended in least prices when compared to other community member's products in similar materials. The values of their products were three times lower than that of the same products during the sale in similar services. This showed that there are discriminations in economic activities of this community.

The other manifestation of economic discrimination was lack of willingness to rent the houses of Gafat Bete-Israel even in cheapest prices. Moreover, no one of Gafat -Bete Israel can open cafes, restaurants, coffee houses, etc to improve their life this is because no one enter their houses unless their own community members. This showed that to become a merchant or competent is very difficult because of prejudice and discrimination.

The study findings indicated that generating one's own economy is a fundamental issue in day to-day life. However, majority of this minority ethnic group of people are living in extreme poverty because of societies negative attitudes toward these people. The prejudice and discrimination bound Gafat Bete-Israel throughout their life bound in illiteracy, extreme poverty, opportunity to participate in social activities in business like hotels, cafes, bars, restaurants, and so on.

Social Stigma and Discrimination in Politics

When asked whether they have faced social stigma and discrimination in political aspects or not, five of participants stated that:

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopian constitution confirmed that All Nations Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopians have the rights to self-governance to assign their representatives in their local areas to protect their rights and to keep their benefits such as for resource allocation, for infrastructures, etc. Privileges mentioned in the constitution are nonfunctional for Gafat Bete-Israel community. We didn't have representative at all social construct. Our constitutional and human rights are deprived by majority community prejudice and discrimination.

Gafat Bete-Israel people who are living in Hossana town and surroundings no representatives are represented in different organizations. Because of societal prejudice and discrimination, they cannot exercise their right. Societal awkward traditional prejudice and stigma not allow them equally to participate in the community. They are despised by majority member of the society. They don't have chances to become a leader. This showed that there are prevalent prejudice, stigmatization and



discrimination of Gafat Bete Israel community in terms of political aspect.

Social stigma and Discrimination in Religion

Many people have their own beliefs in order to be guided as life principles. These life guide lines or dogmas vary from individual to individual and from society to society. As the key informants/elders about social stigma and discrimination in religious aspect illustrated that from the very beginning members of Gafat Bete- Israel people had their own culture and beliefs which enabled them to live peacefully and harmoniously among the society and with their tribe as well. However, when time went on some of their descendents were converted in to Christian religion. In Christian religion impartiality among all believers were preached and still preached in different churches but when we come to the reality during the worship no member of Gafat Bete- Israel sit together with respectfully beside other member of the followers because of stigma and discrimination in all denominations. One of the informants added that:

“We could not share or actively participate in all religious formal procedure at the denomination level. For example, they couldn't share during Eucharist day (the day of the Lords Supper) jointly with others. No member of Gafat Bete -Israel people could participate in elders of the church, pastors, evangelists, or any other ministries in the communities of Hossana town and surroundings. To

carry out all religious rites such as baptism, provision of marital agreement, Lords Supper, etc. in the denomination is very difficult. Because of this problem, one of participant stated that to avoid such isolation and maltreatment we built our own church to worship with freedom together with our community”.

This finding revealed that they are isolated in religious ritual ceremonies and religious leader and minister.

Majority of participants reported that:

“When our tribe member of the church died, he / she couldn't buried together with other members in the same place. Even after burial ceremony nobody eat and drink together the prepared meal with these community members because of high level of prejudice and discrimination behavior. To keep out our worship freedom, the funeral and other religious ceremonies we carried out by our own members in our isolated denominations.

This showed that how much social and religious discrimination serious in Gafat bête-Israel community”.

Social stigma and Discrimination in Justice

When asked whether any social stigma and discrimination in terms of justice all respondents reported that, *for many years our tribe was suffering from injustice in many ways. There are many injustices that deprived of our human rights such as displacement and unwilling to provide land and unwilling to*



support them economically to alleviate their extreme poverty etc. Inequality of Gafat Bête-Israel is prevalent wherever they take part in majority community meaning they were not respected in different public activities as equal as others. They are not equally treated in front of court, employment, workplaces, wages, marriage and etc. They are not beneficiaries from the resources of town and surrounding environment like building hotels, cafes and entertainment services looking this people as they are inferior.

This shows social stigma and discrimination in terms of justice, injustice is the common daily practices of the community. The word justice they hear which was nonfunctional in their whole history. This minority groups of Bete-Israel are not beneficiaries of international and national impartiality written documents are nonfunctional for the communities.

Social Stigma and Discrimination in Employment

When the question forwarded whether there is stigma and discrimination in the employment, the participants reported that in ground, there are few community members were get the opportunities of modern education. Many of Gafat Bete- Israel people were not well educated people because of well known discrimination and prejudice. According to respondents report, very few members of this ethno minority group of people

were graduated from colleges of education and health at Diploma and Certificate level. However, out of these graduates, very few of Gafat Bete- Israel employed in Hossana town state and private sectors.

One of the participants said that:

‘I am graduated from college of teacher education in the year 2017, but I am unable to be employed in my birth place in Hossana town administration for teaching. In the same year, I went to Wolkite town and employed there’.

Others added that our community members could not employ in the same way as other majority community members employed.

Furthermore, they sated that recently the government of Ethiopia drafted poverty reduction strategy by organizing citizens to participate and manage their lives in small scale income generating enterprises such as in the fields of construction, cobblestone, trade etc. in Hossana town and elsewhere in the country however, no member of Gafat Bete- Israel was selected or participated in this small scale enterprises to alleviate their extreme.

Another discrimination was even though they are skillful in handcraft and different skills however, no community member of people engaged in cobblestone road construction in Hossana town administration.



This shows that how much prejudice, stigma and discrimination extremely oppressing and deprived of their human rights of participation, working and employment of the community members.

Social Affair and Workers Office of the Town Administration

For the question how they visited members of Gafat Bete-Israel community and how they encouraged them in their daily life, all the participants of workers and social affairs office reported that they were not working to change the attitude of the society towards Gafat Bet- Israel on the issues of stigma and discrimination. One of the participant stated that:

“Majority of this community live in extreme poverty in isolated without active interaction and participation in social, educational, political, economic and other aspects of lives. This situation led them to low self-esteem, frustration and addiction in different addictive behavior. If someone feels humanity and argues for the right this community, the society attributed the individual as kinship with the members of the community; he will be categorized by the society as part and parcel of this ethno minority group of people”.

They added that no member of this ethno minority group of people boldly interact for their right and talk in public meetings consistently because of fear of harassment and abuse. Very few members of the majority community attempted to approach them in order to support in many ways but they

displayed inferiority and unwilling to accept their invitation. As of deep rooted prejudice, stigma and discrimination of the community, they didn't work as a state part for their right fully as a responsible body in our sector for their equality.

When asked how they treat as part of the society this community they stated that they are not working to improve their lives in social, educational, political, economic, justice, religious and employment aspects. They are still stigmatized and discriminated and were ignored in all sectors as well.

All respondents informed that even though very few educated individuals of this minority few graduates from different colleges in different field of studies, but no institution enlist them in responsible way. According to their report, the employment situation is based on political outlook, ethnic based outlook, bribery and corruptions. Members of this ethno minority group of people are highly discriminated directly and indirectly no equal participation with other members at work places in different levels. Majority of the society's negative perception not easily removed, it is twisted with the culture. This blocks our commitment to fight for the benefits and rights of gafat Bete- israel.



Further they responded for the question “What measurement will you take to improve their life as a responsible sector in employment ”?

The recent global trend towards inclusion confirmed that people should collaborate and participate fully with others in all fields of activities so as to benefit from their involvement and resource allocation including employment.

This is implementing in many countries including Ethiopia. But this principle of inclusion is not applying in our local area because of negative societal outlook and prejudice towards of minority group of people. In order to improve their issues the sector office workers suggested that creating awareness program on the rights of equality and human right/dignity to be respected, introducing majority community for inclusive society. Inclusion might give them an opportunity to interact with others and develop their self – confidence in their daily lives. Introducing the rights and equality of citizens to the society, remind them it will benefit collaboration and participation with others in all areas of activities in order to alleviate poverty, etc. Citizens of this minority group will be encouraged and advised to fight against that made them low self esteem and inferior from the society from the participation. Moreover, they added that inter-sectors collaboration among stake holders to enable them to improve their life situation and support them in

all available circumstances to achieve their human rights and dignities.

Cultural and Tourism Office of the Town Administration

When asked cultural and tourism office experts , the culture of Gafat Bete-Israel in Hossana Town and surroundings they forwarded that their culture is not introduced, supported and developed together with their language, custom, and festivals as well. However, their culture is rich, it is not introduced as that of majority community culture. The zone culture and tourism office didn’t give emphasis on their culture and custom of this community. That means the sector office did not contribute in developing their culture because of ignorance, prejudice, social stigma and discrimination.

This sector has high responsibility to introduce, enhance, and develop the culture both technically and materially however, it is influenced by societal negative attitude. All cultures have contributions for the development of political, economic, educational, social, religious and other aspects for the country. The sector office did work to harmonize and fill the discrepancy of their culture from the very beginning. The issues related to this minority group of people were despised by the majority.



One of the major issues was their custom and culture.

Inclusion in Harotesa Alternative Schools

When asked whether inclusive education is possible or not in Harotesa alternative school, the school data record indicated that out of 309 students only 10 students from extreme poverty family and orphan children joined the school. The 299 (96.76%) of them were Gafat Bete- Israel children. All of the key informants forwarded that even if the surrounding community member children get an opportunity to join this school with full coverage of uniform, school fee, food, and other privileges, the family will be degraded in the society as members of Gafat Bete-Israel group i.e why they are involved these marginalized ethnic groups. Therefore, the families are not allowed their children to join this school fear of undermining by the surrounding community. Harotesa alternative school remained as segregated school because of stigma and discrimination. All of the teachers are from Gafat Bete- Israel minority community. This indicated that how much societal segregation and discrimination is so serious issues in the society.

The participants added that Hossana town education office provided some training and technical supports for this special school staffs

however, however, it is very limited when we compared to others.

Many instructional materials were donated by different donors still the materials are not distributed fairly by town administration office to the school, the reason is the usual stigma and discrimination in elites.

Gafat Bete- Israel People Wanted in Surrounding Community

According to their report of the majority study participants the society wants them for different occupational skills. The surrounding community wants them like clay materials, pottery, carpentry, doors making, detached house buildings, etc. Some of the participants added that:

“When a popular man died in a community like rich person, generous person, famous man, hero man, educated person, etc, we called the family to weep in telling what he did when was alive carrying out dancing, by wearing wild animal skin as a cap and the skin wearing on back part of the body. Some of the mourn makers stir holding stick in one hand and in other hand shield in their other hand for family members in mourn celebration expressing his or her good deeds when he or she was alive until the funeral was completed. Finally, the burial ceremony ended, we are invited by the dead man relatives to eat and drink in separate place excluded from non Gafat bête- Israel members”.



This indicated that they are wanted only for occupational skill and labor to do things when majority of community members unable to do a kind of tasks. Otherwise, they are not able to collaborate with their neighborhoods in both pleasant and mourn times. As a result, many of them lead an isolated, undermined life without participation. This stigma and discrimination began from prolonged time of ancestors and still continued to the present time. Many of them were despised and not treated as human beings, they want them to exploit their cheap labor.

Causal Factors of Stigma and Discrimination

When they were asked the causal factors for stigma and discrimination, the respondents reported that from the beginning their descendants were suffering from stigma and discrimination at different places in different ways by the majority community elsewhere. This situation persisted in disappointing way on the members of Gafat-Bete Israel people in the town and surroundings. The stigma and discrimination made them separate from the interaction of the society. *According to informants report the major causes of stigma and discrimination are prejudice. This minority Gafat Bete-Isral community eats domestic dead animals but not majority of the society did. Furthermore, unable to keep personal and group hygiene, lack of land ownership and lack of own property.* Moreover, the acceptance of Gafat Bete-

Israel their inferiority without causative reason is one of the reasons. It is simply societal cultural prejudice and custom made.

According to their report, the major and fundamental causes of stigma and discrimination were bilateral ways of life style growth among both groups of people. This condition, on the side of minority groups of children inherited psycho-social problems such as distress, anxiety, inferiority, loneliness, isolation, harassment, etc. from their descendants. Their poor interaction lags behind from full participation in the society in their context where they grew up. On the other hand, the general society practices of stigmatization and discrimination become the custom of their daily lives without defined causes. These unidentified causes leave them stigmatized and discriminated openly.

The Impacts of Stigma and Discrimination on Psycho- social and Its Challenges

As the reports of the respondents, number psycho-social impacts were seen up on this ethno minority group of people. Among the impact results feelings of loneliness, harassment wherever they went, discrimination where ever they interact. Developing abhorrence themselves while thinking about their stigmatization and discrimination by others. Even some of them migrating to other places



fear of this stigma and discrimination. This was continued for several years and still problem at the present time in Hossana town administration and the surroundings. According to the respondents report, members of Gafat Bete- Israel people faced a number of challenges in their daily lives while they are living with members of the majority community in Hossana town. Among these challenges some were inability to participate in social, educational, political, religious, justice, economic, and employment aspects. They feel loneliness, anxiety, inferiority, lack of self - confidence etc. during their social life with others in different daily lives. They live in frustrated life in the town and surroundings. They are ignored by the majority people.

The Degree of Stigma and Discrimination in Different Regimes

1. Stigma and Discrimination during Hailesilasie Regime: Stigmatization and discrimination of this minority group of people were high during the regime of the Imperial Haile Selasie in many ways according to the informants' reports. During the time many Land Lords monopolized the land resources and human resources. They used the power of rule on the minority groups and other members of the society until the collapse of Derg regime. By the time the Land Lords highly oppressed them making servant and laborers. They made them land and property less. For example, males were working

outside home activities and engaged in different deeds like cultivate their land, sowing crops, harvesting and threshing, cattle grazing activities, etc. The females were engaged mostly in different home activities in order to serve their land lords wives and children. They didn't have their own properties and land. They are dependent on their owners for basic necessities like food and clothes and shelters. Moreover, their basic rights were deprived and violated in many. They are treated as sub-human.

2. Stigma and Discrimination during the Regime of Derg: Although Derg took a number of measurement from topple down of the regime of the imperial to the provision of the lands owned by the land lords to the poor and landless people according their report. During Derg, they became free from slavery and oppression of land lords and the labor exploitation. The majority of them freed from being dependent on their oppressors and exploiters by the time. They began to practice their own life style such as in pleasuring to begin to guide oneself, wanting to live where ever they liked, etc. More or less, the lives of members of this ethno minority group of people were more preferable than that of the imperial because it began keeping freedoms and rights of their descendents and all citizens rights.



3. Stigma and Discrimination during the Regime of E.P.R.D.F: After the fall of Derg, the regime of E.P.R.D.F. began to rule the country for more than two decades, members of this minority group of people are not benefited in many aspects of lives. The way of stigmatization and discrimination of Gafat Bete-Israel people increased from time to time because of many reasons according to their report. The country followed the ethnic federalism doesn't keep the rights of the minority ethnic group. It stands only for majorities' rights it doesn't keep the rights of minority who are living with majority.

This expose to extreme racism, nepotism political outlook, and other factors contributed for the deprivation of the Gaft- bête Israel equalization opportunity right. The study attempted to show the high level of stigmatization seen rather than decreasing in this regime.

For the question asked how the stigma and discrimination will be improved, most of the respondents report indicated that stigma and discrimination in Hossana town and surroundings might be improved by taking some types of measures. For example, preparing awareness creation program, collaboratively working by the responsible bodies and stakeholders, implementing international and national human rights declarations and drafting effective

strategies to improve or minimize the impacts of stigma and discrimination, etc. Some of these strategies are:

Education: creating equal education opportunities and equipping the whole surrounding community with the knowledge of equality and human rights. This sense of equality enables all people to collaborate together with each other in order to overcome the problems of prejudice and to bring full participation.

Protest: It is also used to suppress discriminatory attitudes and to challenge commonly held stigmatizing images. Medias and advertisements are some of its examples.

Contact: It puts a human face on a stigmatized and discriminated group of people. Contact can augment the effects of education and protest, whether the person making the contact is the celebrity or a typical citizen. Have a clear, consistent message, be sustained over time and challenge myths and provide accurate information, etc.

Major Findings of the Study

The assessment of social stigma and discrimination of Gafat Bete Israel ethno minority group of people in Hossanna Town and surroundings research result or findings are obtained from interview of key respondents of



Gafat-Bete Israel people and professionals from different sector offices and from personal observation of the researchers.

This research finding covers all aspects of lives such as social, educational, political, and economic, justice, religious and employment. The study finding revealed that ethnic minority people of Gafat bête-Israel were not participating with the general society in different social services such as in hotels, cafes, tea and coffee houses, restaurants, festivals and anniversaries together with their natural brothers and sisters in different ceremonies in the community. They were strongly forbidden to marry beloved natural brother and sister from the general society or to be married by someone else out of Gafat- bête Israel. They were not seen as equal as other citizens by many of surrounding community. They have very few educated members of this ethno minority group of people to fight against stigma and discriminatory practices up on them.

Children's of Gafat Bete -Israel people were not be expelled directly from any institutions to be accommodated to learn with others but when they began learning with majority children they faced stigma and discrimination practices indirectly excluded by the children that already abide among them. They could not participate fully with other children both inside and outside of the class – room level for they didn't have self - confidence.

This situation made them unhappy and aggravated they to drop out of school. Currently, this marginalized children sent to segregated Harotessa school to learn in segregation.

Members of Gafat Bete- Israel people could not obtain an opportunity to participate in political involvement. For example, in their majority dwelling place of Bobicho area no minority represented in election.

They are not treated as equal citizen as others in their environment and they are faced injustice in many ways. The rights of many members of Gafat Bete- Israel people are violated and disrespected by the general society.

They have no sufficient land resources and economic allocation. They are not supported for necessities and source of income generation and couldn't engage in different business activities. For example, in hotel services, cafes, restaurants, tea and coffee houses, etc. For this reason they couldn't overcome their extreme poverty with their indigenous occupational skills.

Stigma and discrimination were also resided in the denominations against to this ethno minority group of people. Weddings, funeral ceremonies and other religious rites are not celebrated for them as other members of the



society. Improvement was not seen in churches because of prejudice and discrimination. For this reason, Bete- Israel prefers to worship alone in segregated churches.

Stigma and discrimination were also seen in employment areas. Those few educated members of Gafat Bete Israel people are not employed equally as their community educated people. Because of prejudice exclusive environment condition employment and collaboration in work places with others, it is difficult in Hossana Town and Surroundings rural areas.

CONCLUSION

In this study, the finding revealed the following conclusions based on the basic research questions raised on the introduction. From the responses of the respondents' interview results and personal observations of the researchers, the study indicated that Gatat Bête-Israel minority group of people are suffering from different types of prejudice, stigmas and discriminations. Some of them are social, educational, political, economic, justice, denominational and employment area of stigmas and discriminations.

These stigmas and discriminations clearly prevailed in people of Bete-israel in Hossana town and the surroundings. This is a common practices not to participate fully with the general society in many social trends. The result of stigma

and discrimination lead them to lonely, inferiority, depression, depart, anxiety, lack of self – confidence, hopelessness, drank hard, etc. in their daily life.

In many public service areas such as hotels, restaurants, café and in different entertainment places these ethno minority groups of people are discriminated in their birth town and the surroundings. Some of the indicators of these social discrimination are not sitting together, to eat, to drink and enjoy together equally with others natural neighbor brothers and sisters. Moreover, they are forbidden to marry non Gafat bête- Isreal community members. The surrounding community wants them for clay materials, pottery, carpentry, door making, detached house buildings and labor works. These people are skillful in local occupations.

One of the social discrimination is educational discrimination none of Gafat Bete-Israel children not directly prohibited from educational institutions to attend with the community children, but the indirect discrimination and prejudice of the cumulative society experiences limited them to be involved in education. The effect of stigma and discrimination like insulation, not wishing to work together, to play, to sit in the same bench together create them to drop out of the school



early. This was still revealed situation on their children at the schools and demoralize their learning equally in and out of the school.

The other social stigma and discrimination is economic area, many of Gafat Bete-Israel people live in extreme poverty for they have no own land and property as income generation except hand to mouth means of substance economy like pottery, carpentry and other small manual labor tasks. Many of them including women and children engaged in survival income generating activities. They live in primitive manual skill and small scale private employments. No members of Gafat Bete-Israel could open cafes, restaurants, coffee houses, etc to improve their life because nobody enter their houses unless their community members. This showed that it is very difficult to become a merchant because of societal prejudice and discrimination.

Regarding political aspects to allocate their representatives in their locality to exercise their rights and privileges mentioned in the constitution are nonfunctional for the members of Gafat Bete-Israel community. They don't have any representative at all social constructs. Prejudice, stigmatization and discrimination deprived their rights to participate in political activities.

In Christian religion impartiality among all believers were preached and still preached in different churches but when we come to the

reality during the worship no member of Gafat Bete- Israel sit together respectfully beside other brother and sister member of the followers because of discrimination in all denominations. They could not share or actively participate in all religious formal procedure at the denomination level. They couldn't share during Eucharist day (the day of the Lords Supper) jointly with others. No member of Gafat Bete -Israel people could participate as elders of the church, pastors, evangelists, or any other ministries in the communities to carry out all religious rites such as baptism, provision of marital agreement, etc. in the denominations.

In terms of justice the finding displayed that for many years the tribe was suffering from injustice in many ways. There are many injustices that deprived of their human rights such as displacement and unwilling to provide land and unwilling to support them economically to alleviate their extreme poverty etc. They are not equally treated in front of court, employment, workplaces, wages, marriage and etc. They are not beneficiaries from the resources of town and surrounding environment gifts like building hotels, cafes and entertainment services. The word justice is nonfunctional in their whole history. These minority groups of community are not beneficiaries of the international and national justice written documents.



Concerning employment, many of members of Gafat Bete- Israel people are not beneficiaries because of well known discrimination and prejudice. Recently, the government of Ethiopia drafted poverty reduction strategy in order to make citizens who were suffering from extreme poverty in the country as the source of income generation by organizing in small scale enterprises such as in fields of construction, cobblestone, trade etc. in Hossana town and elsewhere in the country however, no member of Gafat Bete- Israel was involved in these small scale enterprises to alleviate their extreme poverty.

The culture of Gafat Bete-Israel is not introduced, supported and developed together with their language, custom, and festivals as well in culture and tourism office. However, their culture is rich it is not introduced as that of majority community culture. The zone culture and tourism office couldn't give due attention on the culture and custom of this community. That means the sector office did not contribute in introducing and developing their culture because of ignorance, prejudice and discrimination.

The finding revealed that it is not clearly told for the disadvantaged groups the discrimination impacts that made them separate from the interaction of the society. It is simply societal cultural prejudice and custom made tradition. The

causative reason attributed by majority community were eating dead animals flesh, unable to keep personal and group hygiene, lack of land ownership and lack of own property. Otherwise, societies looking in inferiority without root causative reason.

In Haileselasie regime, they didn't have their own properties and land. They are dependent on their owners for basic necessities like food and clothes and shelters. Moreover, their basic rights were deprived and violated in many ways, they are treated as sub-human. In the rest two regimes, the regimes changed but they did not bring a change for Gafat Bete- Israel community a change of life. There are many challenges this community facing social, educational, political, religious, justice, economic, and in employment inability to participate equally.

These conditions create psycho-social effects in the minority community like feelings of loneliness, depression, hopelessness, anxiety wherever they went and where ever they interact. Many of them migrating to other places of the country fear of this stigma and discrimination.

To improve the situation of this community, preparing awareness creation program, collaboratively working by the responsible bodies and stakeholders, implementing



international and national human rights declarations and drafting effective strategies to improve or minimize the impacts of stigma and discrimination

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