















In addition, one of the key informants (KII 1) confirmed lack of facilities in the following way:

*In terms of facilities, Ayehu farm enterprise has serious challenges towards its workers in accordance with food provision, transport service, housing and other related services. In terms of food supply, workers cannot perform their work diligently without food, but the farm enterprise doesn't give any response. In addition to food provision, there is transport problem; they were transported via non public transport (FSR), 150 persons per trip like goods. It is life threatening for workers and we blamed the scenario, but the problem is still persists.*

From the above discussion, one can understand that women workers in the farm enterprise face problems in accordance with lack of facilities such as lack food supply, lack of transportation services, lack of home supply and other related services. These all facilities are basic and fundamental for any workers who are involved at any work places however, lack of these facilities or unable to fulfill these facilities are the challenges and paves the way for servile working conditions for women workers.

### **Job Insecurity**

Regarding job insecurity, the semi structured interviewees and focus group discussants agreed that we are full of frustration and lack freedom at work.

In line with this, one of the semi structured interviewees (I 2) stated her concern in the following way:

*We are always in distrust/doubt on this farm enterprise because one day we may lose our work. Since it is a private farm enterprise, the farm may fire us from our work without question and this makes our work environment full of stress and anxiety. Personally, I do have a number of problems in relation to the farm enterprise, but I always want to choose silence from exposing the problems of the farm as I want to feed my families though I earn little income; this is because I do not have any option. If someone from the administration hears this interview, I may be exposed to either oral or administrative warning, as the administrators care little about workers, but only about themselves.*

Furthermore, another semi structured interviewees (I 7) stated her expression about job insecurity in the following way:

*Once up on a time, one of my bosses warned me because I exposed wrong doings of higher bosses in relation to employee-employer relationships. I was warned that when I may be fired from work if I continue disclosing the failures of the heads. He*



*underlined that I am option less, and the measure will come true if I stick to making the truth on worker exploitation public.*

Likewise, one of the FGD participants (FGD 8) confirmed that:

*Since, it is a private farm enterprise and profit making organization, it does not give priority to employees' rights and safety, rather wants to maximize its profit by putting its strong pressure on farm development workers by leaving alone different benefits for employees and extending their burdens on them for the good of the farm itself.*

In addition to this, one of the key informants (KII 5) confirmed his concern about job insecurity in the following way:

*As a justice office, we always stand for the proper protection and execution of workers' labor rights. In case of Ayehu farm enterprise, women workers are not voluntary to expose their labor rights denial/exploitation fearing that the farm enterprise leaders may fire them from work. We are vigorously exerting our best effort to preserve and protect women's labor rights through awareness creation and educating women workers in collaboration with woreda Labor and Social Affairs office to be conscious of their labor rights.*

From the above discussion, one can understand that both temporary and permanent women workers faced problem of frustration of being fired from job; they are intimidated by their respective work bosses and higher company leaders. This affects their work and paves the way for pervasive labor exploitation and makes them lack of trust on their work.

## **Economic Challenges**

### **Low Payment**

Regarding their payment, the semi structured interviewees, focus group discussants and key informants agreed that, the amount of income in which farm workers earned is very low and does not go with the current economic inflation.

In line with the amount of payment, one of the semi structured interviewees (I 2) stated her view in the following way:

*My fellow workers and I work in this farm with very low wage per day i.e. only 35 birr. Imagine what amount of consumption goods this money could buy? Almost the purchasing power is zero and the farm enterprise does not worry about the income paid per day and the economic inflation of goods and services. I work in this farm enterprise particularly in the area of construction and the employer assumed that this type*

*of work is easy and the pay (35 birr) is adequate for this work. This amount of money today is nothing, but I work here as I do not have any other option.*

Furthermore, another semi structured interviewees (I 4) stated that the amount of payment per day as follows:

*As you have seen it practically from the field observation, I am working in this agricultural site with my fellow workers. The amount of income I earn is 55 birr; this amount is improved this year after strong complaint made to the head office. Previously, we used to earn 35-40 birr; the head office considered our complaint and improved our wage. This decision is for the time being is good when we compare it with other women workers who are earning below this. And yet, the improvement came too late.*

Likewise, one of the FGD participants (FGD 6) expressed her position about the amount of payment per day as:

*We are working in this farm development with very low income per day 35-55 birr interval; you see 35 birr per day is the value of 1kg teff these days and we cannot fulfill our basic needs with this. I live with my elder parents: younger brothers and sisters; our means of living is based on this very low income. I tried to look for another work for a better wage, but my parents are aged and badly need my help and presence nearby.*

In addition to this, one of the key informants (KII 1) supported the above view as:

*When we compare the amount of wage paid to women workers in this farm enterprise with women of other work places, this is very low. Since, the enterprise is privately owned one; it mainly works to maximize profit. In terms of wage, the main beneficiaries are the top and middle level farm leaders than labor workers. According to WSAO, it repeatedly appealed for wage improvement, but still the response is not positive and lacks due attention and women workers specifically are the victims of the case.*

From the above discussion, one can understand that the amount of wage is a major challenge for addressing different socio economic problems and to improve their living conditions and the amount of pay should be proportional to their work in order to satisfy the basic needs of workers.

### **Labor Exploitation**

The semi structured interviewees, focus group discussants and key informants agreed that their labor was massively exploited by this farm enterprise ever since its foundation. Labor is one of the factors of production, so we need to preserve wisely and protect labor rights of workers so as to facilitate the production rates accordingly.

Regarding this, one of the interviewees (I 3) expressed her opinion about labor exploitation as:

*I spent my entire life with in this farm enterprise ever since its foundation starting from bush clearing up to agricultural labor work. However, what I get in return is profit exploitation of my labor without any sort of asset/wealth to support future life. The current hand to mouth life is even made possible with strong labor as I am in productive age; I do not know how I can lead life upon old age. The farm enterprise has unfairly exploited my labor, for no any labor retirement or compensation. In short, our labor is exploited in vain.*

Furthermore, another FGD participant (FGD 2) explained the problem of labor exploitation as:

*“We never thought about labor right protection; our focus is on how to win life making a living. Obviously, the farm enterprise does not bother about workers’ labor rights and concerned government bodies lack proper follow up for farm workers, particularly for women farm workers”.*

Likewise, one of the key informants (KII 1) confirmed that:

*In this farm enterprise, women workers were not given attention about their labor right, and its practice contradicts with the national labor law. Women workers are majority in number compared to their male counterparts. By the same token, labor exploitation will also be high on women workers, and they were forced to work more than 8hrs per day without food access; this shows that labor exploitation was more vivid and massive on women farm workers than male fellow workers.*

From the above discussion we can understand that the problem of labor exploitation in this farm enterprise is seriously exploited due to lower wage rate and needs more attention for women workers. Women’s labor should be treated as a human right issue and women workers should be encouraged and motivated as a back bone of the society than exploiting their labor exhaustively.

## **Social Challenges**

### **Psychological Trauma**

Psychological trauma was one of the challenges that women workers in the farm enterprise face. In this regard, the semi structured interviewees and focus group discussants explained that they are psychologically affected by their employers, respective bosses, caboos and even by their community members.

One of the semi structured interviewees (I 1) stated that:

*While working in this farm enterprise, some employers, caboos and bosses do not have good image/attitude for us, which psychologically impacts workers’ labor rights*

directly or indirectly. One day, my caboo insulted me as 'you are a seasonal daily laborer of AL-AMOUDI under my control'. He warned me that the only solution is negotiating with him (caboo). He confidently told me that no one, including the top farm officials would care about my psychological impact on the work.

In addition, another semi structured interviewees (I 4) stated that:

*People always perceive us as dependents of the farm development and ridicule us as shepherd of AL-AMOUDI. This time, we feel bad because of people laugh at our daily labor work. This psychologically affects us; we think that daily labor work is the only destiny we have. People's mal treatment and negative attitudes towards our work affects our motivation towards our work.*

Similarly, one of the FGD participants (FGD 4) explained that:

*Many women workers are victims of psychological trauma by their caboo's, bosses, higher leaders etc; however, for the sake of their work, women give them deaf ears. When we use transport (FSR) early in the morning and evening, people ridicule and call us "□□□" (□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□). This again reminds us of our past pain and causes psychological damage.*

In addition, one of the key informants (KII 3) added:

*Women workers do not feel free about their labor work in the farm because they suffered from negative criticisms causing psychological trauma at work place, on transport and even at their surroundings too. They were insulted, ridiculed and laughed at by their caboos, bosses and higher leaders and also even by their families too.*

From the above discussion, we can understand that ill treatments create psychological impacts and makes women develop inferior feeling towards their labor work, and this consequently degrades their motivation to work.

### **Sexual Harassment**

The semi structured interviewees, FGD participants and key informant interviewees expressed that they were harassed by administrative staffs, respective work bosses, caboos and by their fellow men workers in the farm enterprise both inside and outside the farm.

In this regard, one of semi structured interviewees (I 3) expressed her concern in the following way:

*After I joined the farm enterprise as a daily laborer, one of our colleagues asked me to be his close girl friend; unfortunately, I refused his request. However, he repeatedly seduced me, and yet, I refused. At the end of the day, he tried to harass me at work place*

*repeatedly, and he warned me outside as he will kill. I tried to tell him politely that I don't want to enter into love relationships, and as I can't be out of my family's permission. However, he did not listen me, rather frightened me. Finally, I reported the case to the farm leaders and they gave him last warning that what he was doing was against the work ethics of the farm, and stopped harassing me.*

Another interviewees (I 6) stated her view about sexual harassment as:

*One day, my caboo forced me to give him my cell phone and gave him my number. Then, he repeatedly calls and tells me that he loves me. He disturbed me by calling even at night while I am amidst my families. However, I refused; besides different impositions, he warned me to punish my salary by telling image destroying rumors to top farm leaders. Finally, I tried to honestly report the issue to the farm leaders and fortunately they changed me towards another work site led by another caboo.*

Furthermore, another FGD participant (FGD 11) stated that:

*After I was promoted to permanent office secretariat, one of my bosses tried to harass me repeatedly, but I said no. He promised to give me a sum of money and even other benefits such as better job opportunity by communicating with higher farm leaders. Then, he frightened me as when he off work. Finally, I tell the cases to the farm manager and he punished him as the farm enterprises ethical regulations of employer/employee relationships.*

Likewise, one of the key informants (KII 4) confirmed that:

*Women workers are usually harassed by their respective work bosses, field caboos and by managerial staffs. Once, I remember that many women workers were complaining about being harassed by farm officials both at office and outside office. Knowing that the weak side of women workers is economic, better paid farm workers sexually exploited women laborers using their money. As a result, many women were exposed to HIV/AIDS.*

From the above discussion, one can understand that sexual harassment was a main challenge women workers faced in the farm enterprise at different times. They experienced sexual harassment by their male counterparts such as managerial staffs, caboos and work bosses in the farm. From their words it is possible to understand that women workers are prone to sexual exploitation due to their work status, personal characteristics and their minimal wage which doesn't even suffice for daily food. Many of them are daily laborers, whereas men occupy immediate supervisory positions which give the latter a chance to exploit them.

### **Low Respect from their Community**

The semi structured interviewees, FGD participants and key informants agreed that women workers of the farm got low respect from their community unlike other daily laborers working outside the farm.

In this regard, one of semi structured interviewees (I 4) described the situation as follows:

*When I returned home after work, community members consider me as a gangster. Not only me, my fellow women workers are also considered the same; this mainly attributed to the low wage we earn. One day, when I was coming back home from work, one of the community members said 'welcome AL-AMOUDI's bride; how is everything there? I hope everything is ok with you; is that not?' This ironical expression makes me feel so sad and I cried.*

In addition, another interviewee (I 6) stated that:

*Our community members considered women workers of the farm enterprise as promiscuous; they consider us that we join the farm in search of our sexual partners and boyfriends. This prevailing thinking in the community even motivated our fellow men workers to enter into seductive acts repeatedly. This negative image and low respect from the community makes many women farm workers quit job.*

Furthermore, another FGD participant (FGD 7) stated about low respect from community in the following way:

*Women workers were not considered as equals with their men counterparts and lack due respect by their community members. This problem hinders our socio economic growth and participation in different aspects in our community, and consequently, affects our labor right and there is also a probability of losing our job and become unemployed.*

Likewise, one of the key informants (KII 3) added:

*Our community still lacks awareness and recognition for women workers' labor right and they did not give equal value with men. Actually, the community has negative image for the farm enterprise itself, leave alone to its workers, but the negative image towards women is worse. Most community members have grievance against the farm; they believe that the farm investment has unwisely snatched their land in the form of land grabbing.*

From the above discussion, one can understand that the attitude of community dwellers towards women workers of the farm is very low and negative compared to men. It is generally expected that women are not capable to perform and they will not succeed. This attitude of expected failure implies that there is low trust in women's capacity to achieve. The misconceptions on

women's capacities affect the opportunities given to them. Women are generally seen as unable to achieve anything.

## **4. DISCUSSIONS**

### **Administrative Challenges**

This finding showed that, women workers in the farm enterprise faces problems with follow up and control measures from respective government offices. Similarly, this finding is related to women participate in every kind of job opportunities even though women's labor does not get the appropriate attention and acknowledgment (Evans & Barbara, 2009).

The participants in this study rationalized their stance by saying that they lack facilities from the farm enterprise. Likewise, the previous researchers finding Eerdewijk, et al., (2015) find out that low or lack of facilities has negative impact to create good working conditions for workers. In most works the availability of facilities is problematic, might either be absent or badly maintained. Lack of facilities hinders women's ability to work on, especially when they are pregnant. Key facilities have a positive effect on women's performance in their working in access to housing and transport services. Moreover, Eerdewijk, et al., (2015) argue that when women workers do not live in the work sites or near by the availability of transport services becomes a critical concern.

Furthermore, as the researcher observed from his direct observation, can understood as the transport service offered by the farm enterprise is dreadful/awful for transportation system. Because, the farm workers were transported via FSR (non public transport) allowed for transporting goods and services. To this effect, the travelers were exposed for the fluctuation of coldness, hotness, and rain in times of traveling at early morning and evening down to their destination (See fig: 1).

In line with administrative challenges the participants of the study agreed that they were faced with job insecurity from the farm enterprise and feel job insecurity. This finding goes against labor law that referred to as an employment law relating to the employment of workers or a law that governs employment relationships. The main topics of a labor law are the contract of employment, the role of any collective bargaining and the statutory control of minimum conditions of work. Conditions of work such as; hours of work, probation period, leave, remuneration for work performed, health and safety of workers, and other conditions are set by

the law. Both parties may engage in collective bargaining in respect of minimum conditions of work as prescribed by law (ILO, 2011).

### **Economic Challenges**

This finding showed that women workers faced a challenge of low income earnings. Likewise, the previous researchers finding Pennington & Belinda, (2009) they have always been vulnerable to temporary, part time work without proper agreements or trade union rights. They are paid less, particularly if they are young and inexperienced. Even when fully employed, large numbers of people lived in poverty because of the unevenness of wage rates and the existence of casual labor in many industries.

Moreover, women were the lowest paid workers in most job classification and more likely to be employed in seasonal and temporary work because a particular society saw their participation in the paid work force as a temporary phenomena short step in their progression towards the expected adult roles of wife and mother (Mercedes, 2007).

The participants of the study also agreed that, beyond lower payment there is wage gap among similar educational background and work experience between office workers because of strong kinship relations and some one's strong tie with higher farm leaders. Similarly, this finding is related to privatization can have an adverse impact on salary levels and structure and pay supplements. Privatization often causes a move toward more performance based pay schemes, more flexible working conditions ( less security of tenure, increased use of non unionized contract labor, fewer benefits, and longer hours), and larger wage differentials (Bennel, P., 2002).

The result obtained from the participants of the study revealed that, women labor workers of the farm enterprise were faced with labor exploitation. Similarly, many jobs are conceived as male or female preserves for which members of the opposite sex are not considered. This is especially apparent in certain professional and supervisory occupations, which are reserved for men, and in some low skilled blue collar jobs for which only women are thought fit (ILO, 2002).

Furthermore, this finding contradicts the Ethiopian labor proclamation no. 377/2003 administration system as a whole, occupational safety and health and work environment, industrial relations, employment conditions through setting and enforcing minimum work place standards to address work place vulnerabilities. The labor proclamation prohibits employment of



children below the age of 14 years and the engagement of young workers (i.e. between ages 14 and 18 years) in types of employment which are considered hazardous (MoLSA, 2012).

### **Social Challenges**

The information obtained from participants of the study revealed that, women labor workers of the farm enterprise were faced sexual harassment as they were harassed by administrative staffs, respective work bosses, caboo's and their fellow men workers at their work places and outside the farm. Similarly, this finding is related to the issue of sexual harassment and abuse has been given little importance in the labor sphere. Since, women confront and put up with similar aggressions in the home, sexual harassment and abuse in the work place is not considered a unique situation (Mena. and Silvia, 2005).

Likewise, women's are prone to sexual harassment irrespective of their status, personal characteristics and the types of their employment. They face sexual harassment at working places, educational institutions, on the way on transports and at home. Most of them are tend to be concentrated in the poorer service jobs, whereas men are in an immediate supervisory position, which gives them a chance to exploit them subordinate female (Barati et al., 2013).

The study finding showed that, women labor workers of the farm enterprise got low respect from their community dwellers unlike other daily laborers working outside the farm. In line with the above finding Pasque and Wimmer, (2011) argues that society has a false belief that women are by nature less intellectually and physically capable than men. Many liberal feminists explain women exclusion or inequality with reference to ideas of female inferiority or incapacity that inform the background and education of both men and women.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings identified in this study area, the following conclusion is drawn. Women workers of the farm enterprise in Ayehu have faced different challenges concerning administrative, economic and social aspects. In terms of administration, they faced problems such as; bureaucratic despot, lack of follow up and control services, lack of facilities and job insecurity. Economically they faced problems such as; low payment or wage per day and labor exploitation. In terms of social aspects, women workers of the farm enterprise faced problems such as; psychological trauma, gender based violence and low respect from their community.

Generally, we can conclude that women workers of the farm have faced many challenges in relation to their working conditions. And yet, it is undeniable those women workers have benefited from opportunities working in the farm.

To conclude, even though women pass through both challenges with opportunities at work, many are still kept in low paid position. So, their challenges are serious than the opportunities they had. Because the information obtained from study participants showed that, many farm workers and women workers too faced with serious administrative, economic and social challenges than opportunities they reap.

Therefore, the farm enterprise should take permanent measures in order to benefit farm labor workers through Agro processing mechanisms that can save the lives of majorities of the farm workers, gender based violence is a challenge in the farm; the woreda Justice office and woreda Women, Children and Youth Affairs office should work to take corrective measures, women workers of the farm enterprise should enhance their self confidence by developing work habit and feel work security by avoiding job insecurity from the farm enterprise and the farm development should devise a strategy to help farm workers; particularly women workers have their own house so that they would not be in problem upon retirement.

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