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The Role of Religious Institutions in Conflict Resolution in Ethiopia: A Study on Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church, Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia

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Wisdom at the source of the Blue Nile

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A Thesis on

The Role of Religious Institutions in Conflict Resolution in Ethiopia:

A Study on Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church, Amhara

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By:

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The Role of Religious Institutions in Conflict Resolution in Ethiopia: A Study on Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church, Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia

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Declaration

The thesis tittle entitled "The Role of Religious Institutions in Conflict Resolution in Ethiopia: A Study on Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church, Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia" is my original work and has not been presented for a degree, diploma or fellowship to any other University and that all the sources of materials used for the thesis have been done by respecting research ethics.

Declared by: Mengist Tarekegn

Signature: _____

Date: June, 2018

Place: Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as an advisor for this candidate.

Advisor's Name: Doctor Kalewongel Minale

Signiture: _____

Date _____

Certification

This is to certify that the thesis "The Role of Religious Institutions in Conflict Resolution in Ethiopia: A Study on Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church, Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia" submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master's degree Bahir Dar University Faculty of Social Science Department of Political Science and International Studies done by Mengist Tarekegn ID.No.BDU0900169PR is submitted with my approval as his thesis advisor.

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Acknowledgement

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Figures and a map

ACKRONYMS

ANC=African National Congress

ATR= African Traditional Religion

 AU=Africa union

CCSL=Council of Churches Sierra Leone

DDR=Disarmament, Demobilization and Rehabilitation

ECOMOG=Economic Community Military Observer Group

ECOWAS=Economic Communities of West African States

EECMY=Ethiopian Evangelical Church MekaneYesus

EISC= Ethiopian Islamic council

EMASC = Ethiopian Muslim affairs supreme council

EOC-DICAC= Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter Church Aid Commission

ETOC = Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church

EU= European Union

FBI=Faith Based Institutions

IRCSL=Inter-Religious Council Sierra Leone

MCSL=Methodist Church Sierra Leone

PCOD = Parish Council Organization Department

RUFSL=Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone

SACC=South African Council of Churches

SNNPR=Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Regional State

TRC=Truth and Reconciliation Commission

UMC =United Methodist Church

UN =United Nation

WCRP =World Council of Religions for Peace

Abstract

Since conflict is inevitable in human life, human beings need to have diverse conflict deterrence and resolution mechanisms to attain peace. In doing so, enormous institutions have been used. Religious institutions are among the one's which has been widely used in this regard. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the role of religious institutions in conflict resolution by focusing on Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church (EOTC), with reference to the recent conflicts within the Amhara National Regional State. The study has employed Qualitative research approach. Data was collected with the use of Semi-structured interviews from key informants and Focus Group Discussion. Accordingly, the role of the church in conflict resolution activities, conflict resolution mechanisms employed, challenges the church has faced in this respect had been assessed. The findings of the study reveal that in her long history, the church had holistic contributions. The church had contributions in preventing and cooling down the violent conflict situation. It had been involved in facilitating platforms for discussions and making negotiations and reconciliations among conflicting parties. The combination of preaching, teaching, public pray, reconciliation, facilitation, negotiation and personal conversation were mechanisms employed by the church to the conflict resolution tasks. However, with regard to recent phenomenon in the region, contradictory views were reflected. For some participants, the church didn't effectively get itself involved in settling conflicts as it was expected from her. In contrast, other participants were argued as the church was properly involved in conflict resolution activities through its religious mechanisms.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Conflict is an inevitable phenomenon in human's entire life. This social event happens when people set opinion against opinion, run interest against interests and competing for resources. Value difference, dissatisfaction in basic needs or incompatible economic and political goals that would threat public or parties' interest could also sources of conflict (Zartman, 1997; Jeong, 2010). In the occurrence of these social events, human beings have been often looking for the way outs of the conflicting issues. This societal occasion on its hand, made humans to develop various forms of conflict averting mechanisms either to prevent occurrence and mitigating escalation or resolving conflicts and building lasting peace.

Early the development of conflict resolution and peace building, there was considerable insight in negotiating domestic political affairs to save human life from exposing to fighting and warfare. But the outbreak and atrocity of the first and the Second World War further inspired scholars, political and religious leaders and peace lovers to give more emphasis on looking for more advanced conflict resolution strategies. In relation to this, discussions had been continued to realize the sustainability of accords and settlements to save new generations from relapsing to the bitter war experiences (Wallenstein, 2002). Hence, in the aftermath of the two World Wars, conflict resolution emerged as a new way of conflict addressing mechanism (Ibid).

Accordingly, peace and conflict scholars began to extend conceptualizing conflict resolution as a significant component of peace and conflict dialogues. Ramsbotham (2005), defined conflict resolution as "a situation where the conflicting parties enter into an agreement that solves their central incompatibilities, accept each other's continued existence as parties and cease all violent action against each other" (p.29). He further explained that it is a more comprehensive concept which demands committed actors and long term settlements to address and transform deep- rooted conflicts. This implies that "the behavior is no longer

violent, attitude is no longer hostile and the structure of conflict has been changed" (Ibid). Simon Fisher et al. in Mccandless, and Karbo (2011, p. 31) on their part, explained that "it aims to address causes of conflict that seeks to build new and lasting relationships between hostile groups".

As a human being, we are all dealing about conflict and peace in our day-to-day interaction from lower to the higher levels in different forms by striving peaceful life through the appropriate conflict settling mechanisms. In this respect, conflict resolution as a tool for achieving peace are being employed either through formal institutional mechanisms (UN, AU, and EU), religious and other institutions or informally through individuals, elders and community representatives. Regarding to this, religious institutions and communities have constructive role in providing peaceful paths `towards conflict resolution. They endorse the common values of mutual respect for human beings and had a central unifying force in their inner life and social behavior in human history (Daniel, 2010).

According to Magiven (2013), religious institutions refers to "the house of worships and other organizations that depended at least in part up on religious funding and well-staffed and attended by persons with avowedly religious motivations"(p.4). Similarly the Indian Legal decree (No.41, 1988), reveals that "religious institutions are institutions established for the promotion of any religion or persuasion and includes any place or premises used as public religious worships by whatever means". Worthng (1980) further states that religious institutions as institutions including Churches, charitable entities connected with church, religious publishing houses, broadcasters, missionary organization, group ventures which serve constitute religious organizations and religious orders.

 By considering the above scholars' conception in this study, the researcher used religious institutions to denote all Christian churches and Islamic institution with their respected orders, values, teachings and various form of structures and their organizations in these institutions. But among the above religious institutions, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church is the focus of the study.

In the long history of Ethiopia, various conflict resolution mechanisms were employed to settle conflicts among individuals, groups, community members or any other forms of

violence incidences on the bases of socio-political, economic, cultural disparities and divergence in interests. While many conflict resolution mechanisms are tradition based, others are religious based NGOs and civic society organizations (Yonas, 2017; Yewubneh, 2016). Apart from religious based institutions, in Ethiopia the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church (EOTC), Islamic (EISC/EMASC), the Catholic and the Ethiopian Evangelical Church MekaneYesus (EECMY) have sort of contribution in conflict resolution and community peace (Tsegaye, 2014).

In northern part of Ethiopia, Tigray and Amhara in particular, the EOTC has widespread influence in all aspects of the community interactions and practices (Ofcansky &Berry, 1991). The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church is one of the oldest Christian churches in Africa (Getnet 1998; Flemmen & Muluemebet, 2016). Its history dates back to the fourth century AD and deeply embedded in the Ethiopian ground and passion (Sollid, 2013). In its long history, the Church has developed her own hierarchical administrative structures, which had significant impacts both at the national and local level (Getnet, 1998). The hierarchical structure of the church from the central to the local level is the Holy Synod at federal level, Diocese at zonal level, the *Woreda* diocese, Parish Churches and Monasteries, clergy and spiritual fathers and the households at the bottom (the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter Church Aid Commission (EOC-DICAC), August 2013; Alemayehu, 2011).

The Holy Synod (*Kiddus Sinodos*) which comprises the highest Church leaders (arch bishops and bishops) is the leading body of the Church. It is responsible for religious matters and is chaired by a Patriarch (patriyark) (Ofcansky & Berry, 1991; Getnet, 1998; Alemayehu, 2011). In facilitating its activities, the church has also established two administrative structures; the Parish Council Organization Department and the Ecclesiastical Administrative Council Department.

By using these institutional structures the church has been trying to address spiritual service to its followers for ages. However, the church's role is not merely limited to the religiosity of the people. Rather it had also strong unifying force by promoting social cohesion, conflict resolution and community peace. The Church has been engaged in managing many conflicts that occurred in our country like racial, religious, and regional administrative conflicts

through cultural as well as religious mechanisms (Kenfe-Gebreal, 1993, cited in Meskerem, 2014).

Apart from these long ranged contributions in Ethiopia, the church has continued to play a substantial role in the peace process of the country's recent years' situation. Though conflict is not a new phenomenon in Ethiopia, recently (since summer 2015, in particular) has frequently observed and sometimes escalated up to loss of life and property destruction. In these circumstances, to attain lasting peace religious institutions, either through their own initiative or by considering the government's request, taking part on peace process and have contributed their own shares. In this respect, the EOTC is the one which has a significant impact in reinstating peace in conflict prone areas. However, researches conducted on the role of EOTC regarding to conflict resolution is still insufficient. Thus, the main purpose of this research is to investigate the role of EOTC in conflict resolution processes in Amhara Regional State with reference to the unconditional conflicts in the country and the region.

1.2.   Statement of the Problem

In human history, religion and its institutions have dual motive influence towards conflict, either in promoting conflict or in resolving conflict. In this regard, there is a debate among scholars. On the one hand, scholars reveal that it is a substantial source of non-violent conflict transformation, the defense of human rights, integrity in government, reconciliation and stability in society (Rasul, 2009). Accordingly, religion and its institutions make the people come together, discuss matters that affect their life and develop mechanisms of addressing issues and concerns of conflict resolution and peace building. In this respect, they offer respected sets of values; moral authorities to oppose injustice; strong influence for promoting reconciliation among conflicting parties (Ibid).

On the other hand, religion and religious institutions sometimes becomes a source of division and a powerful motive force of conflict. Religious diversities and civilization competition based on religious difference would flame conflicts (Huntington, 1993). The simple manifestation for this is what happened behind the exclusivist world viewers like the religious extremists of Al Qaeda or the ethno-religious nationalism of the Balkan wars (Powers, 2008). Here, since religious institutions are the key responsible organs of religions in endorsing, coordinating, propagating and preserving religious values, teachings and

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aspiration of their believers; they can put multi- dimensional influences. Thus, from the aforementioned scholars and others view and in our day today observation, one can understand that religion and religious institutions have dual motives forces either in promoting conflict or resolving conflict and building peace.

Despite the existence of these debates, religious institutions have significant contribution in conflict mitigation, reconciliation, conflict resolution and peace building from local to the global levels. Likewise the EOTC also conducted these activities in one or another ways. Thus, the church has its own considerable contribution in conflict mitigation; social cohesion and peaceful community co-existence though it is not sufficiently investigating.

Researchers conducted studies on institutional activities connected to religion and religious institutions. But many of them gave attention on Faith Based Institutions (FBI) basically at national and international level (Tsegaye, 2014). Some other researchers also emphasized on religious based social institutions like Mahiber which has a direct connection to the EOTC (Sileshi, 2006; Flemmen and Muluemebet, 2016; Bitwoded Admasu, 2017). In their studies, they made limited overviews and tried to show conflict resolution activities and mechanism of the EOTC in resolving blood feud and other forms of conflicts in local communities.

On the other hand, Meskerm (2016), Solid (2013), Karbo (2013) and Smordal (2012) have studied on conflict management style among Orthodox priests; conflicts in Ethiopian churches; religion and social cohesion in Ethiopia; and religion and development in Ethiopia respectively. Meskerem's study reveals the conflict management styles among priests of the EOTC. In Solid, Karbo and Smordal study, researchers had shown how the EOTC had valuable contribution for social cohesion and development by inducing important social values to the community and the people. In addition to the above, Alemayehu (2011) has studied the relevance of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church institutional setup for rural development. His study focuses on the contribution of the church's institutional setup in promoting rural development. Aselefech (2014) also studied on the role of Ethiopian Orthodox Church in the Development of Adult Education. Her study focuses on the church's school in advancing adults educational status. Here, the aforementioned and other researches, conducted on EOTC shows that the church has valuable contributions in different aspects of local, community and national issues of the country. However, studies

conducted on EOTC, that shows her contribution other than personal, local and community conflict resolution is limited. Consequently, its contribution, particularly with regard to the conflict resolution and peace building activities did not adequately assessed.

In relation to this, Tsegaye (2014) in his study made a good attempt to show the contribution of the EOTC, basically in resolving the inter-religious conflicts at different parts of the country. However, on the one hand, his study focuses on inter- religious conflict. On the other hand there are new conflict events and the church's involvement in conflict resolution process that didn't assess.

Moreover, recently in Ethiopia including in some areas of the Amhara regional state, conflicts have been unfolding frequently and the nature of conflicts were also extended beyond inter- religious and other small scale local conflict dimensions. For instance the Amhara _ Qimant community conflict was one illustration for that matter. According to the Ethiopian News Agency reported in January, 2015, the conflict that arose between Amhara and Qimant community in north Gondar zone was, as a result of delay in border demarcation and the identity question of the Qimant people. In this conflict more than 95 people were killed in November 2015 (the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission report, 2016).

The other violent conflict in the region occurred in July by following the unprecedented large scale protests in the region. According to different sources, the peaceful protest that later transformed into violent conflict was, over complex questions of ethnic identity and the dominance in economic and political affairs which ties to the ruling party. It was also triggered by the arbitrary arrest of members of the Wolqait identity Amhara self-determination committee. The violent conflict and protest had extended from Gondar town into different parts of the region in North Gondar, South Gondar Bahir Dar, and other parts of the region. It causes for displacement and many deaths for instance over 30 people in Bahir Dar alone; property destruction and detention of hundreds (Amnesty International 2016/17; BBC, August, 2016; European parliament, October 2016). The more recent conflict phenomenon in the region was in North Wollo, Woldiya town and its surrounding. In Woldiya town in January, on Ethiopian Orthodox festival of Epiphany, conflict was unfolding and caused for at least the death of seven persons and to be a number of persons

injured. Protesters blocked roads and destroyed a number of properties including burning buildings and shops that cause for the displacement of persons (UNHCR, January 23, 2018).

In these and other circumstances, the significance of religious institutions' involvement has increased. The government itself needs to work in collaboration with religious institutions to settle conflicts and building peace mutually. The EOTC is among these religious institutions in Ethiopia that involved at regional as well as national level of peace process. However, its contribution in conflict resolution and peace process did not still sufficiently explored. Therefore, as conflict is frequently observed recently and the essence of religious institutions in conflict resolution and peace process has grown from time to time, their contribution need to be studied very well and strengthen for further work to sustain lasting peace in the region and in the country at large. As a result the intention of this study is to explore and indicate the role of the EOTC in conflicts resolution processes in Ethiopia with emphasis on the Amhara National Regional State.

1.3. The Objective of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective
The overall objective of the study is to investigate the role of EOTC in conflict resolution processes with reference to the Amhara regional state.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives
In realizing the above general objective, the researcher further developed the following specific objectives.

> ➤ To identify the main roles of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church played in resolving conflicts in Amhara region state.
> ➤ To explore mechanisms and processes of conflict resolution employed by the church in the study region.
> ➤ To find out the major challenges encountered and prospects on the church, in realizing conflict resolution activities in the study area.

1.4. Research Questions

Based on the above objectives of the study, the following research questions were designed. Hence, the aim of this research is to answer the following questions.

➢ What are the main roles of the EOTC in resolving conflicts in the region?

➢ What mechanisms and procedures of conflict resolution are employed by the church?

➢ Are there factors or challenges which influence conflict resolution process of the church?

➢ What are the prospects that can enhance the church's role in conflict resolution process effective?

1.5.   Significance of the Study

After the study has completed it will contribute to the people and the government stakeholders by showing the contribution of the EOTC in maintaining public harmony, resolving conflicts peacefully, mitigating the possibility of conflict occurrences and enhancing public awareness on peace. It will enhance the potential partnership between religious institutions and concerned stakeholders who are working on conflict resolution and peace building activities. Its significance also extends in exploring experiences and knowledge gained from the church. In addition to this, the study will help the concerned administrative organ to be aware on the gaps of the people in utilizing the church to resolve conflicts. It may also serve as an incentive for further study in the area and issue.

1.6.   Delimitation of the Study

Though studying the roles of religion and religious institutions in conflict and peace process need to extend at national level in Ethiopia, this study is restricted on Amhara National Regional State by focusing on EOTC. This is due to the fact that in this region the EOTC has historical significance to the majority of the people. The church is a source of many cultural, moral and ethical values to the people including ways of conflict management in this region. The church had also strong connection to the state for long periods. On the other hand, based on different references conflicts have been unfolding in the region and in conflict resolution activities, the EOTC has been continued its own shares in the region. Thematically, the study is delimited on EOTC on its role in conflict resolution activities.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

In conducting this thesis paper, it was not easy to get the secondary data as expected and related previous research works since there are very few or no researches conducted on the roles of the church in conflict resolution specifically. In addition to this, it was difficult to access recorded reports regarding to the church's activities in peace and conflict resolution. Accordingly, the researcher obliged to limit on focus group and Key informants interview data. The researcher had also tried to supplement the literature review task by taking international experiences.

1.8. Organization of the Study

The overall study organized in five chapters. The first part comprises the back ground of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objective, the research questions, significance, delimitation and organization of the study.

Chapter two consists of literature review which contains conceptual and empirical frame works and detail literature survey of related works. Chapter three deal with the methodology of the study, method, research design, data collection instruments and sampling techniques. Chapter four embraces various data analysis process and discussions. The last chapter contains summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concepts of Conflict and Conflict Resolution

2.1.1 Conflict

To deal about conflict resolution and its various mechanisms in order to address certain anomalies among human beings, groups, states or others, one should have a brief understanding about conflict.

Conflict has many meanings to our day to day life. As a result, it has no single universally agreed definition. As many scholars explained, conflict is an inevitable part of human life. It occurs between people in all kinds of human relationships and in all social settings. Consequently, no one can escape from conflict. As long as there is interaction, conflict existed as part and parcel of human society and can take place anywhere at any time. Hence, "there is no immunity from conflict" (Schilling, 2012, p.94). According to schilling (2012), conflict in a narrow 'objective' sense understood as "an incompatibly different position about a particular issue or over a particular thing" (p.95). On the other hand in a broader sense, it includes disagreements, debates, disputes and active efforts to prevent someone from gaining what he/she wants to secure (Sikander, 2011). Wallensteen (2002), on his hand defined conflict as "a social situation in which a minimum of two actors (parties) strive to acquire at the same moment in time an available set of scarce resources" (p.16).It is a disagreement that leads to tension within, and between people (Vestergaard, Helvard & Sorensen, 2011).

For Fisher conflict is "an incompatibility of [real or merely perceived] goals or values between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feelings toward each other" (Fisher, 1977, Rev. 1985 and 2000, p.1).

In general, conflict is used to describe a broad range of human activities including hostility between individuals and people to international war. In this regard, people mostly perceived conflict merely in its negative connotations and try to avoid it, stay away from, neglect or

forget about it. But conflict is not just an evil or negative thing as many perceived it. Rather it has a dual capacity both the force that can detach relationships apart and the force that binds them together. From this point of view, some conflicts can be understood as a desirable social phenomena and have the capacity to bring change. Therefore, conflict managed constructively is an opportunity for constructive change (Schilling, 2012). Hence, conflict by itself is neither good nor bad or neither positive nor negative. It is determined by the way that conflicting parties attempt to handle either in constructive or destructive manner (Fisher, 1977, Rev. 1985, 2000; Schilling, 2012).

2.1.2 Conflict Resolution

As conflict is the part and parcel of human life and human beings have a wide range of differences and interests, it is compulsory to handle conflict in constructive manner through appropriate resolution mechanisms to have peaceful life.

Conflict resolution has been developing as a field of study since the 1950s by following the atrocities of the Second World War (Wallenstein, 2002). In this regard, many scholars such as Shepard, Mouton, Burton, Kelman, Doob, Mitchell, Walton, Hynes, Coogler and others had great contribution for the emergency of the concept (Abu-Nimere, 1996).

Conflict resolution as a concept is open to many interpretations. Consequently, it has no single agreed expression among scholars. On the one hand, it can be regarded as any process that resolves or ends conflict through diverse methods, including warfare. On the other hand, it can be viewed as a non-violent process that manages conflict through compromise or the assistance of a third party (Manning, n.d.). For Jeong (2010), conflict resolution is "a movement from one condition to another for more acceptable long-term process" (p.10). It includes many and varied processes that can be seen in a range of collaborative, participatory, informal, non-binding processes (such as mediation, conciliation, third party negotiation) to adversarial, fact-oriented, legally binding institutional(courts and tribunals) decision making (Boulle, 1996 cited in Manning**,** n.d.**;** Abu-Nimere, 1996).

The main objective of conflict resolution is a purposeful, constructive and productive transformation of conflicts. The process can be carried out by minimizing the use of violence, overcoming antagonisms between the sides of conflicts and maintaining resolution

measures either in a long or short term perspective depending on the nature, magnitude of the issue and parties' interest (Kazanský, 2015).

Conflict resolution demands creating strategies, studying the interests and goals of the participants, their behavior, negotiating mechanisms, creating favorable environment and the third party involvement. It also demands looking for ways to reach, realize and long-term maintenance of agreements between parties (Kazanský, 2015). Thus, conflict resolution has to do with "all process orientated activities that aim to address the underlying causes of direct, cultural and structural violence" (Reimann cited in Omoyefa, 2014, p.53). Rehman, (2011), Sweeney & Carruthers (1996), further strengthened this concept as "a process used by parties in conflict to reach a settlement" (p. 57& 327) respectively.

From the scholars view stated earlier, one can understand that conflict resolution is a couple of activities, that primarily focuses on defining and investigating the causes of conflicts and then examining the progress of the relationships between parties involved in conflict to reach an agreement. It is a process undertaken by parties to settle their conflicting issues, so that it would not become a basis for new disputes in the future. In this respect, conflicting parties may employ diverse mechanisms or approaches of conflict resolution to address their contradictory issues or goals whenever they face conflict.

2.1.3 Methods of Conflict Resolution

In addressing conflict at different levels there are different approaches of dealing with the incompatibilities that existed between parties. These approaches can transform the destructive nature of conflict towards constructive outcomes that enables to establish peaceful relationship among parties. In relation to this, parties might employee win-lose, lose-lose, and win-win approaches to deal with their conflict (Fisher, 1977, Rev. 1985, 2000).

The **win-lose** approach is all too common in our day to day life experience. In this approach, one party gains and the other loses by employing force over the other side to secure one's advantage. However, sometimes, it can be also done through socially acceptable mechanisms such as majority vote, the authority of leaders, or the determination of a judge. On the other hand in **lose-lose** approach, there is smoothing over conflict or reaching on the

simplest compromises. In this case, the creative and potentially productive conflict resolutions do not realized or explored. Each party gets some of what it wants, and resigns itself to partial satisfaction. In this approach, neither side is aware that by confronting the conflict fully and cooperatively they might have created a more satisfying solution. Or the parties may realistically use this approach to divide limited resources or to forecast a win-lose escalation and outcome in the future (Fisher, 1977, Rev. 1985, 2000).

In the **win-win** approach there is a conscious and systematic attempt to maximize the goals of both parties through collaborative problem solving strategy. In this approach conflict is perceived as a problem to be solved rather than a war to be won. Therefore, parties are working for mutually agreeable solutions. They work towards the common and superordinate goals by focusing towards pulling together for their long term relationships rather than short term accommodations (Fisher, 1977, Rev. 1985, 2000).

Kusá on his part suggested the following five basic conflict resolution methods.

Figure 1 Basic methods of conflict resolution
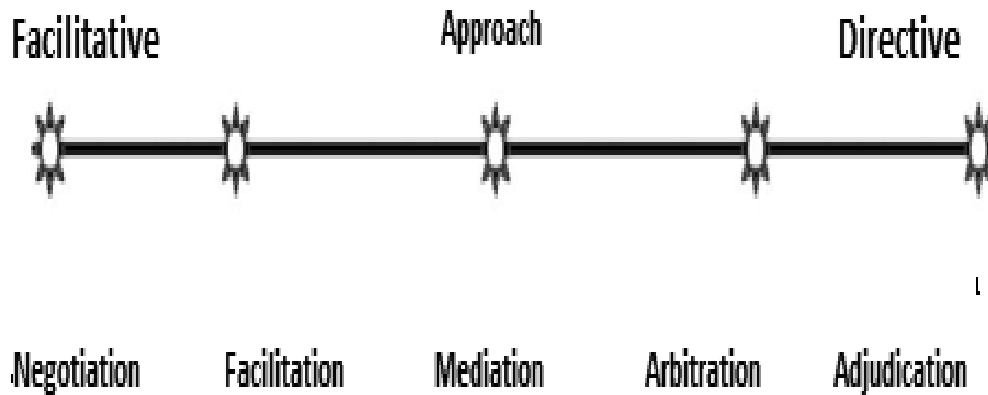
Kusá (2006 cited in Kazanský, 2015, p.78)

Since the level and complexity of conflict in human interaction is different, employing conflict resolution as method to address the parties' contradictory issues could employ in different ways. In this regard, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, facilitation and adjudication are the commonly used resolution mechanisms.

Negotiation is basically an informal conflict resolution process in which parties voluntarily engage to hold talks for the possible resolutions. In this mechanism, the parties' willingness to search mutually agreeable resolutions without the involvement of the third party is paramount. However, in some cases negotiation process can be also carried out with the involvement of third party (Kazanský, 2015). The goal of the negotiation is to create and build relationships among parties and the parties try to come into an agreement on their individual issues or mutual interests (Kazanský, 2015).

Conflict may not always resolve through negotiation. There are conditions when conflict dynamically intense and strong polarization between parties which makes their willingness for mutual negotiation difficult. In this situation, either one side or both parties may refuse to communicate each other. Therefore, to adjust a platform for parties' communication, the third party intervention is necessary as a facilitator, mediator, arbitrator or reconciler (Kazanský, 2015).

Facilitation: is a process of conflict resolution mechanism through the involvement of neutral third party as a facilitator by creating conditions that enable the parties to communicate each other. It is a process, which creates an environment of secured dialogue on complex issues. It is a controlled negotiation with the presence of a neutral expert, who helps the participants to coordinate the dialogue (Jeong, 2010; Kazanský, 2015).

Mediation: is an organized process in which a third party helps the sides of a conflict to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement. The central aim of mediation is creating or re-creating communication channels between the conflict participants through non-coercive third party intervention; that is a mediator. This mechanism is important to initiate opponents for communication to seek solutions through the mediator's assistance (Kazanský, 2015). In mediation, the third party does not have authority to pass a binding decision individually over the parties' rather it has a responsibility to help opponents in looking for solutions by their own (Jeong, 2010; Kazanský, 2015).

Arbitration: is the other alternative conflict resolution mechanism through the third party's binding decision over the contending parties' issues based on the authority given from the parties. The arbitrator can be generally authorized to investigate, mediate and making

recommendations. In doing so, an arbitrator is expected to hear a case, examine evidences, arguments and witnesses and making decisions (Jeong, 2010; Kazanský, 2015).

Adjudication: It represents a form of conflict resolution with the highest obligation level. It involves deciding on the subject of a dispute by a third party which has the competency to deliver obligatory decision that commonly employing in judicial proceedings. It is a structured, formal and an involuntary form of resolution, where the opponent cannot choose a different way of dispute resolution or avoid it (Kazanský, 2015). Consequently, it has a win-lose out come.

In general, unlike arbitration and adjudication, in negotiation, mediation, and facilitation Parties have more power to control the content of final settlement (Jeong, 2010).

2.2 The Role of Religious Institutions in Conflict Resolution a Theoretical Debate

As many scholars agreed and one can easily understand from humans' day to day experiences, no conflict free individual, group, society or state. Multi-dimensional differences such as interest, goals, values, religion, class, economic status, culture…exists among individuals, groups, societies or states and others. These differences sometimes may change the positive human interaction to competitive and hostile interaction to the destructive forms of conflict.

Religion is one of the most significant components of difference among individuals, groups or human societies. Currently, tremendous types of religions have been flourished across over the world with their own unique references and respected institutions. Since religion is one of the most sensitive issues for individuals, groups as well as societies, mostly people have strong connection with their religion, religious institutions or religious based organizations and values in one or another way (Smock, 2006).

Religion and religious institution can also influence human life and practices in different forms including in peace and conflict issues. Religious institutions and leaders do have trustworthiness and respected set of values and moral warrants that gives them power to oppose injustice on the part of governments or else; promoting reconciliation among

conflicting parties; re humanize situations that have become dehumanized over the course of protracted conflicts. Community mobilization, promotion of national and international support for peace process is also their potential they have in peace process (Smock, 2006; Shore, 2009).

Religion and religious institutions have dual effect on conflict and peace. On the one hand, religious differences have contributed to conflict often violent conflict in many parts of the world (Landau, 2003*).* Through the long era of human history religion has been a major contributor to war, bloodshed, hatred and intolerance (Gopin, 2000).

Religion and religious institutions may feed conflict particularly when its normative system is considered to legitimize the use of violence (Harpviken, & Roslien, 2005). Religious institutions and traditions explicitly or implicitly underlie the collective ways of life by serving as the main identity foundations intertwined with other elements such as ethnicity and economic dividing lines. In this identity formation process, ambiguous identities which cause the development of fault lines between various groups of people were appeared. The religiously defined boundaries for inclusion and exclusion coupled with other identity markers create the dividing line between 'We' and 'Them', like what was happened by Muslim Serbs and Christian Croats, Shiite and Sunni Iraqis, Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. Such kinds of divisions increased segregation, hostility and skepticism between groups and later develop towards conflict and War (Harpviken, & Roslien, 2005).

Sometimes religious institutions become motivated to hold stand points to increase quantitative institutional membership other than for qualitative spiritual transformation. In this religious movement, the propagation of religions as institutions becomes the primary focus rather than their core spiritual message, with respect to tolerance, peace, truth, justice and mercy. These dimensions of religious movements lead towards religious ideological extremism which predominantly promoting exclusive, violent tendencies, violating fundamental human rights (Devine, 2017). This religious ideological extremism could also further transcend into territorial annexation and intolerance of all other forms of religious belief and freedoms that brought conflict, destructive attacks and war (Devine, 2017). Thus, it is often viewed religion and religious institutions as a motive for conflict and has emerged as a key component in many current and past conflicts (Levine, 2009). Individuals, groups

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or communities can easily connect religion with violent conflict. This on its hand causes tension and will continue to tension and division between and within societies with differing cultural and religious values (The British academy 2015; Rasul, May 5th, 2009). In this regard, there are many witnesses of violent conflicts in the world in the past and currently, ranging from the 1st century Jewish-Roman War, to the 11th century Crusades, 17th century thirty years War to the 20th century Irish civil war, conflicts in Sri Lanka, fundamentalists' movement in Middle East and in the Horn of Africa, Nigeria, Iraq, and Israel/West Bank/Gaza (White, n.d.; Levine, 2009).

But in contrast religion and religious institutions are also the sources of important values such as empathy, nonviolence, compassion, truthfulness which serve as the bases of conflict resolution, reconciliation and peace-building (Ilo, 2015). As Gopin (2000), explained religion and its institutions have also considerable significance in developing critical peace-related values including openness to and even love for strangers, the suppression of unbridled ego and acquisitiveness, forgiveness and humility, interpersonal repentance and the acceptance of responsibility for past errors as a means of reconciliation and the drive for social justice. Religious institutions have also a vocational role and responsibility to play in fostering the values of truth, justice and mercy over deception and division. Religious leaders continuously engaged in promoting tolerance and persuading others by putting psycho-spiritual influences more in-depth and further-reaching than governmental institutions (Devine, 2017).

Sampson (1997) cited in Ilo (2015), on his part stated that religious actors are increasingly playing an active and effective role in conflict resolution as educators, advocates, intermediaries, and pursuers of transnational justice. They can serve as a powerful warrant for social tolerance, democratic pluralism, and conflict management (Ilo, 2015). Religious leaders through their respected institutions can play significant impact in preventing violence, healing bad feelings or attempting to prevent a re-occurrence, mobilization, give humanitarian assistance during the emergency, assist long term recovery and build peaceful relation (British academy, 2015). They are also powerful forces for peace, even in places where religion has fed the conflict (Landau, 2003).

Employing the assets of religious leaders and religious institutions to promote peace was usually disregarded by politicians. However, traditionally religion and religious institutions had significant role in peacemaking, conflict resolution and peace building. These religious leaders' and religious institutions' contribution has been shown by Israel/Palestine, Iraq, Macedonia, Nigeria, Sudan cases and in Northern Ireland (Landau, 2003; Smock, 2006; Tsegaye, 2014). Mennonites, Catholic Leaders, and the Quakers had successfully intervened in Asian, African, and Latin American conflicts. In this religious conflict resolution activity actors like Desmond Tutu, Maha Gosananda and Thich Nhat Han from South Africa, Cambodia and Vietnam, the Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali al-Husayni al-Sistani in Iraq; the Dalai Lama in Tibet, others in Nigeria, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, and the Philippines had played prominent role (Ilo, 2015). They have mediated the parties involved in conflict; coordinating and facilitating peace movements and gathering in churches, mosques, and temples for peace (De Juanm/Vüllers, 2010).

Now a day, even if societies become more "modern" and technologically developed, religion can still play an important role in the public sphere and such positive roles should be recognized and effectively utilized (Moiba, 2016). The aforementioned discussions reveals the duality of religious impacts of religion and religious institutions towards conflict either a motive force for conflict or resolving conflict and building peace.

2.3 Experiences of Religious Institutions in Resolving Conflict

2.3.1 Religious Institution in Israel – Palestine Conflict

The Israel-Palestine conflict is one of the most complex and protracted conflicts in the world since Israel came in to existence in 1948. The land of Israel/Palestine is still continued as the homeland of two peoples locked in conflict over it (Landau, 2003).

For years politicians and diplomats have sought ways to resolve the conflict between the Abrahamic descendant children's of Ishmael and Isaac of the Arabs and Israelis. In this regard, a number of peace negotiations, including Oslo 13, 1993, Taba, Wye River and Camp David had been carried out through the aid of international communities, including USA and UN (White, n.d.). But in that disputing territory where both Israel and Palestine believed and considered it as their "Holy Land," negotiators in both sides did not give

serious attention to religious dimensions of the conflict and resolutions (Ibid). However, later religious leaders of the three monotheistic faiths, Muslim, Christian and Jewish organized summit in Alexandria, Egypt, in the Middle East for the first time to search ways for the Israel- Palestine conflict (Landau, 2003).

The leaders of the three monotheistic religions gathered and pray in the name of almighty, merciful and compassionate God for true peace in Jerusalem and the Holy Land. They declared their commitment to end violence and bloodshed that denies the right of life and dignity in the Holy Land. These religious actors strongly condemn that killing innocents in the name of God is a denial of his Holy Name, and offends religion in the world. They strongly expressed violence in the Holy Land is an evil which must be opposed by all people of good faith (Landau, 2003). Apart from this, in January 21, 2002, religious leaders, including a chief rabbi from Israel, the most important Palestinian sheikh, and the Latin patriarch in Jerusalem, gathered in Alexandria, Egypt. The goal was to work out a joint commitment to promote peace, and to oppose violence and terror. These high-ranking clerics of all three Abrahamic faiths Rabbi Menahem Froman, from the West Bank settlement of Tekoa, and Sheikh Talal el-Sider, a former Hamas leader, have met to discuss elements of a peace agreement based on Jewish-Muslim reconciliation *(*Landau, 2003*).*

The meeting was backed by both the president of the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat, and the prime minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon. It was chaired by the then archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, and the grand imam of the Al-Azhar Islamic University, Sheikh Mohamed Sayed Tantawi. Negotiations continued around the clock to achieve agreement on the wording of the document. At the end of the second day, all parties reached an agreement and signed the Alexandria Declaration. It was for the first time, representatives of all the faith traditions in Israel and Palestine signed a declaration calling for a religiously sanctioned cease-fire and an end to both violence and demonization of the "other" (White, n.d.). In this historical religious gathering, the leaders of the three monotheistic religions, Muslim, Christian and Jewish passed the following statement of declarations in Alexandria. They also request all communities of these religious groups and governments to work in commitment for resolution and respect the Alexandrian declaration.

1. The Holy Land is holy to all three of our faiths. Therefore, followers of the divine religions must respect its sanctity, and bloodshed must not be allowed to pollute it. The sanctity and integrity of the holy places must be preserved, and freedom of religious worship must be ensured for all.

2. Palestinians and Israelis must respect the divinely ordained purposes of the Creator by whose grace they live in the same land that is called holy.

3. We call on the political leaders of both peoples to work for a just, secure and durable solution in the spirit of the words of the Almighty and the Prophets.

4. As a first step now, we call for a religiously sanctioned cease-fire, respected and observed on all sides, and for the implementation of the Mitchell and Tenet recommendations, including the lifting of restrictions and return to negotiations.

5. We seek to help create an atmosphere where present and future generations will co-exist with mutual respect and trust in the other. We call on all to refrain from incitement and demonization, and to educate our future generations accordingly.

6. As religious leaders, we pledge ourselves to continue a joint quest for a just peace that leads to reconciliation in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, for the common good of all our peoples.

7. We announce the establishment of a permanent joint committee to carry out the recommendations of this declaration, and to engage with our respective political leadership accordingly (Landau, 2003, p.51)

2.3.2 The Nigeria's Experience

Most African countries do not have strong democratic institutions that facilitate administration, democratic procedures and dealing with grievances in an effective manner. In this circumstance, unless political leaders and their followers restrained by strong ethical commitment, political opponents and competitive politicians will promote violent conflicts (Phiri, 2000).

Nigeria is the most populous country in West Africa that holds religious diversities of Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion as dominant religions (Afolabi, 2015). It has nearly 350 ethnic groups and more than 250 languages. The three dominant religions in Nigeria consists of 10, 50 and 40 percent for African Traditional Religion, Muslims and Christians respectively (Afolabi, 2015; Piereder, 2014)

Conflict in Africa is still continued as the common feature of many countries. Nigeria is one of the conflicts ridden country in the continent. It has been influenced by a history of violence, particularly conflicts embedded between Christian and Muslim groups. These clashes were commonly seen in the Plateau and Kaduna States of Nigeria. However, recently the Islamist fundamentalist group, Boko Haram has been also the causes of enormous brutal attacks and deaths of the hundreds in Yobe and Borno States (Piereder, 2014).

In the recent past, thousands of people have died, displaced and lost their property in Nigeria due to violence between Christians and Muslims (Olawale and Yemisi, 2012). In fact, conflict in Nigeria is based, more in colonial burden, territorial disputes, ethnic divide, poverty and injustice than religious difference or intolerance (Chukwud, 2013).The worst violent conflict has occurred in Plateau State of Nigeria. The most recent Christian-Muslim conflict in Plateau State occurred in Yelwa-Nshar, in the Shendam local government area in 2004. In this violent conflict, almost 1,000 people were killed and buried in mass graves (Smock, 2006).

In colonial period, Muslim communities were put in charge of the North while the white Christian colonists and missionaries ruled the South. This North-South division deepened and perpetuating the cycles of violence even after its independence. The Niger Delta ,which is an oil rich area of Kaduna and Plateau States, or the "Middle Belt", are where the predominantly Muslim North meets with the predominantly Christian South frequently exposed for violence. The Climate change and an ever-growing Sahara desert also exacerbate the conflict between the north Muslim nomadic herders and south Christian farmers. On the other hand, Boko Haram also used religion to incite violence as an effort to fight political or ideological battles in Nigeria (Piereder 2014).

As explained early, due to the occurrence of violence cycles, Nigeria had been tagged with the "security risk nation". This is by the reason that Nigeria has been experiencing a number of crises, social-vices and absence of friendly relationship among her citizens since independence. These circumstances in turn led to the 1967-1970 civil wars which have had devastating, effects on unity and peaceful co-existence of the Nigerian (Olawale and Yemisi,

2012). As a result, communities in Nigeria loss peace and there was a need for quick solution before it degenerates in to a full blown civil war (Olawale and Yemisi, 2012).

To come out from this threat and state crisis since 1995, both Islam and Christian religious leaders thought about the potentials of the two religions for peace. Then they established an Inter Faith Mediation Centre, and committed themselves to work collaboratively to promote reconciliation. Particularly, the two leaders, Wuye and Ashafa gathered key leaders of the Plateau State for five days of sharing and negotiation in November 2004. It was the first event that gathered the two communities together for a face-to-face contact. The facilitators of this gathering, Wuye and Ashafa employed a combination of preaching and teaching as conflict resolution techniques. In this process the pastor and imam frequently quoted the Koran and the Bible how the two religions teach about peace (Okpanachi, 2009; Smock, 2006; Pierede, 2014).

At the beginning of negotiation process, the atmosphere was full of tense and confrontation. However, at the end of the third day the two sides agreed on the core issues that incited the killing. Then on the fourth day, they continue to address each of these issues.

The first issue was the Christian complaint that Muslims, who migrated to the area from northern Nigeria, violate to respect local traditions and leaders. In resolving this grievance, the principal Muslim leader agreed on their appeal and accepted it as an unacceptable behavior. Then Muslims apologized to the Christians and sought their forgiveness. This unprecedented Muslim's response made Christians in turn to ask Muslims to forgive their unacceptable behavior. On the last day, both sides agreed to work on all remaining issues, to find an ultimately acceptable resolution in both sides. Then they drafted a peace affirmation which was shared by two communities. They prepare public pray for true peace in the name of their Almighty, Merciful and Compassionate God in Shendam local government area of Plateau to end the violence and bloodshed that deny the right to life and dignity (Smock, 2006).

In this religiously organized mediation and religious affirmation, the representatives of the government of Shendam in plateau state acknowledged their defective leadership that

contribute for Yelwa community disharmony and they accept to resolve the problem without any prejudice (Smock, 2006).

After this committed effort, on February 19, 2005, several thousand people celebrate the peace agreement, including many of those who had fled from their homes previously and now felt sufficiently safe to return and resettle. The governor of Plateau State and many other dignitaries attended and declared their support for the peace settlement. Finally reconciliation process achieved successfully (Okpanachi, 2009 and Smock, 2006). This kinds of mediation and reconciliation process brought similar achievement on the city of Jos, capital of Plateau State (Okpanachi, 2009 and Smock, 2006).

Generally in Nigeria to address conflicting issues, religious actors involved as mediator and community mobilizer and reconciliation facilitator.

The Nigeria's cases shows that if religious institution and leaders skillfully organized and pursued an interfaith dialogues, it can encourage previous enemies including those who have personally been involved in conflict, to work together towards peaceful accommodation and achieving lasting peace. This is not merely for religious conflicts rather it can also concern for human development issues, such as poverty, injustice and others that cause resentments which could develop to conflict and crisis (Haynes, 2009).

2.3.3 The Mozambique Experience

Mozambique is a former Portuguese colony which is found in Southern Africa. It consists up to twenty native ethnic groups, European and Indian origin groups as a result of colonization. It became as an independent country in June 1975and established an interim government from Mozambican (the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique - FRELIMO) and the Portuguese politicians. However, in 1976, military force developed in border areas of the former Rhodesia and conflict outburst in the country in which later transformed into an armed confrontation. The armed confrontation was basically between the Mozambican National Resistance – RENAMO, which was created outside the country and the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique FRELIMO, which had political position at a time (Lundin, 1998).

The two warring groups struggled over to settle the problem by the military means. But the armed confrontation could not end. In this situation, certain individuals and civil societies, the Catholic Church and various religious groups had tried many attempts to resolve the confrontation by establishing contacts with the warring parties and initiating them to negotiations (Lundin, 1998). In relation to this, the Catholic Church and other religious institutions had played great role. The Mozambican Catholic Church enjoyed the characteristics of a civil society and it played a very successful role in ending civil war in Mozambique (Serapiao, 2004).

To make conflict resolution process successful and influencing peace negotiations, the Mozambican Catholic Church designed its own approaches. The church started its negotiation process by selecting specific days of the week for prayers to end the war; to explore ways for representatives of FRELIMO and RENAMO to meet and discuss possibilities for peace negotiations; explore opportunities for representatives of Catholic Church, bishops if possible, to meet the leadership of RENAMO in the bush where RENAMO was fighting; to contact influential international figures and ask them to exert their influence to bring the contending parties to the negotiation table (Serapiao, 2004).

As stated in Serapiao's journal article in negotiation process, the first approach was depending on the power of prayer. Um Apelo à Paz, the bishop in Mozambique, ordered Christian brothers and sisters to pray for peace. Friday was the selected as a praying day. The public prayers marched on the streets of small towns, and even cities to churches or to specific gathering places. However, since praying without positive action is worthless, the bishops sought to arrange a meeting for representatives of both FRELIMO and RENAMO only for the purpose of exploring the possibilities of peace negotiations.

Additionally, Pope John Paul requested leaders of the world's major religious groups to meet for world peace at Assis on 27 October 1986. In this meeting one hundred representatives were gathered to attend the meeting. Among them, Don Jaime Pedro Gonçalves, Archbishop of Beira, Mozambique, Franciscan priest; Manuel Carreira Neves, and José Luís Cabaço (on the FRELIMO side) and Evo Fernandes (on the RENAMO) were

selected to participate in the meeting. In this way religious leaders had tried to bring together FRELIMO and RENAMO representatives for peace negotiation. But all efforts were failed and required other options. Then the Catholic Church arch bishop, Gonçalves himself went to   the RENAMO leader, Afonso Dhlakama inside the bush. This trip created better picture and opened hopes for Gonçalves for further work. Therefore, the bishops continue to contact the leaders of warring groups. In this moment both FRELIMO and RENAMO had come to the realization that the Catholic Church paves the way to peace.

 The FRELIMO government invited Pope John Paul II to visit Mozambique on 16 September 1988. During his visit the bishop in his speeches, emphasized the government's mishandling of public to conflict, and he pleaded for dialogue to end the war.
On the other hand, the Catholic laity organization in Rome, the Sant' Egidio Community strongly assisted the mediation process of the FRELIMO and RENAMO military crisis. Finally, after continuous dialogue efforts through the Mozambique Catholic Church bishop and the Roman Catholic community Sant' Egidio, the war between FRELIMO and RENAMO ended with peace accord on October 4, 1992 (Moran and Pitcher, 2004; Lundin, 1998; Mpangala, 2014; Perchoc, 2016; Phiri, 2000; Serapiao, 2004; Smock, 2006 and Haynes, 2009).

The successive mediation efforts made by the Mozambique Catholic church with the aid of the Roman Catholic church community, Sant' Egidio brought an ideological change both in FRELIMO and RENAMO to reach on a meaningful reconciliation, multiparty democracy and peace accord in 1992 (Lamb, 2008).

In general, the Mozambique peace process left some useful lessons which can contribute a potential uses in other conflict situations. It reveals that to make negotiation or mediation successful, attention must be given on the core issues of the conflict; the essence of designing peace framework on target situations for trustworthiness and accepting local mediators based on competence and creativity. Being patience must be also taken as paramount. Furthermore, in Mozambique peace process, one can learn the essence of

looking for the platforms within the confrontation and working for mutual respect, confidence and trust.

Finally, one can see how religious institutions can facilitate platforms for dialogue and reconciliation to build channels for peace and national unity (Lamb, 2008). In relation to this, one can also understand how the mediation efforts of Sant' Egidio in Mozambique were relevant to mediate the warring factions skillfully and effectively (Haynes, 2009).

2.3.4 Sierra Leone and South Africa

Sierra Leone is geographically located in West Africa. It has had experienced protracted conflict in the country since its independence from British colonial rule in 1961 to the end of civil war in 2002 (Civil War 1991-2002) (Moiba, 2016**;** Petra, 2014; Goldmann, 2005) .Islam, Christianity and Africa traditional religion are the major religious beliefs in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone had hosted one of the worst conflicts in Africa. In this conflict, more than 50,000 people were killed and over the half the population were displaced (Cilliersy, Dubez, and Siddiqix, 2015; Evenson, 2004). As Moiba (2016), stated in his doctoral dissertation, youth exclusion and marginalization, the pre-war politics, which was the undemocratic politics of the All Peoples Congress (APC) regime and the support of the rebels from Liberian insurgences were the main triggering factors that ignite Civil War in Sierra Leone (Bah, 2013; Frazer, and Friedli, 2015).

In alleviating the Sierra Leone conflict, the contending blocks in the country had used the military means for years. But the military means to end conflict further worsened the security crisis in the country. This protracted security crisis worried the religious leaders of various religious institutions in Sierra Leone and abroad. In this case, the leaders and representatives of religious institutions in the country stand to work in commitment by using their spiritual power and religious organizations to end the destructive civil war in the country. Particularly, the Christian leaders spoke to each other in churches so that they will find ways together. Consequently, religious institutions through their leaders and organizational structures in collaboration with ECOWAS, UN, and British forces brought remarkable achievements to end the Civil War (Moiba, 2016).

At the macro level, the leaders of the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL), the Inter-Religious Council Sierra Leone (IRCSL), the Methodist Church Sierra Leone (MCSL), African Traditional Religion (ATR) and other churches formally or informally developed the confidence needed to promote peace (Moiba, 2016). This enables them to work together on peace initiatives, missions and negotiations. The Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRCSL), which is founded in 1997, pursued a very active role in mediating conflicts in Sierra Leone by conducting dialogue with the fighting factions, listening to their complaints and condemning human rights violations (Petra, 2014)

In this regard, the bishop of the United Methodist Church (UMC), Christian J.C. Humper was actually able to bring all warring factions together, bring a lot of people, both perpetrators and victims together. Then confessed for what wrong they did in the war (Moiba, 2016; Perchoc, 2016; Portaankorva, 2015).The bishop had used lots of his religious background to calm people down and smoothing the public annoyance about what was going on in their country.

A Catholic Bishop of Makeni Diocese and the member of IRCSL, Biguzzi in northern Sierra Leone on his side frequently contacted the rebels during the war years. The bishop had worked in commitment to build confidence, lobbying for a ceasefire and disarmament, organizing prayers for peace and participant in the negotiations that led to the peace agreement (Frazer and Friedli, 2015). Bishop Biguzzi had contacts with the World Council of Religion and Peace as well as with Norway, and obtained financial support for the peace process in Sierra Leone. This strengthened the bishop's effort more effective.

The other influential religious man who engaged with the CCSL member churches to end the war was Peacock. He facilitated to institute the national day of prayer to end the war and was instrumental for the formation of the IRCSL and in the peace efforts of the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone.

Finally, the war came to an end in 2002 after a combination of the methods of faith-based diplomacy by the CCSL and IRCSL, supported by All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), Norwegian Church AID, and World Council of Religions for Peace (WCRP), ECOWAS, the UN, military campaigns led by British forces, Economic Community

Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) and other ATR defense forces (Moiba, 2016; Petra, 2014). These efforts forced the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUFSL) and its allies to sign a peace accord in Lomé to end the war. Later, the peace accord was followed by a process of Disarmament, Demobilization and Rehabilitation (DDR) programme and other transitional justice systems (Frazer and Friedli, 2015; Moiba, 2016; Portaankorva, 2015).

South Africa is a country that has had serious conflicts in the past, especially during the apartheid rule. Conflicts in South Africa were manifested in many areas of lives between the black majority led by the African National Congress (ANC) and the white minority led by the National Party. The uncompromising stands on the part of the two parties, led many people to deaths, imprisonment and deprivation (Omoyefa, 2014 and the Religious Foundations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), 2013).

After many years rule of the apartheid, conflict in South Africa settled in 1994 with the first non-racial multi-party election, and by transferring the political power to the black people. The Non-violent conflicts settlement between the black majority and the white minority was achieved in 1994 and followed by the inauguration of a new constitution in 1996 (Omoyefa, 2014).Within the long period apartheid rule of South Africa, racial division and unjust black repressive rule created deep rooted grievance and hostility between the black and whites in the country. This critical problem requires high commitment and series of activities to avoid hostile relationships through reconciliation other than simple political transformation. In this regard, religious institutions and religious leaders could play a significant role by employing their tremendous abilities and moral languages to influence the people. This was what has been done in South Africa that led the people towards reconciliation and relatively positive public interaction among the whites and blacks.

In South Africa, the call for people for reconciliation came with a fruitful campaign by preachers. They were linking faith with political transition every week and on radio stations across the country. Religious institutions have been widely spread and provided places for meetings, and their hierarchical structure allows connecting the local people to national and international offices and communication structures. The TRC used churches as meeting spaces to hold hearings on human rights violations (Shore, 2009). Churches infuse love in to

Africans to play a visible role in peace and reconciliation conferences. Religious leaders like Bishop Tutu's neutrality role for truth and reconciliation and his commitment to love for all South Africans Black, White and Asian helped to sustain the process even when it faced much problem (Shore, 2009). The TRC had used the recurrent use of prayer and prominent role of religious leaders such as Chairman Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a former president of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), and Deputy Chairman Alex Boraine, a former president of the Methodist Church of South Africa (The Religious Foundations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2013).

The South African TRC offers the real lessons on the power of a religiously inspired process of "truth-telling" to transform a nation's tolerance. The TRC process also offers some lessons of being committed for more possible success in conflict resolution and reconciliation.

2.4 Religious Institutions in Ethiopia

As Ethiopia is country of multi nation and nationalities, peoples in Ethiopia have their own language, cultural practices, religion and religious institutions with their own diverse structures. The three major world religions, Christianity, Islam and Judaism have also practiced for centuries in the country (Haileyesus, 2012). The Ethiopian Orthodox Christian Church and Islam are the predominant religious institutions, historically as well in number of followers and socio political influences (Marcus, 2008). As Marcus (2008), stated in his journal article, the EOTC is the widely prevailed religious institution in the northern parts of the country. On the other side, Islamic religion is widely practiced in eastern Somali and Afar regions, as well as in all major parts of Oromia, in the East and South (Getnet, 1981 and Marcus, 2008).

Currently, the Christian evangelical and Pentecostal groups has been emerging in fast growth and playing their own impact on the country's multi- dimensional issues. The Protestant churches such as Mekane Yesus and the Kale Hiwot have strong holds in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Regional State (SNNPR), western and central Oromia, and in urban areas. In Gambella in west, Mekane Yesus followers represent the highest number of the population (Marcus, 2008).

It is also believed that in Ethiopia, some sections of the population are belonging to the traditional beliefs and religions. All of these religions communities have been practiced for centuries in tolerance and mutual understanding, though there have been some times confrontations among them (Haileyesus, 2012).

2.5 The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church

Many historical evidences witnessed that Christianity was emerged in Ethiopia in the mid-4th century or possibly earlier. Consequently, Ethiopia embraced Christianity and maintained the doctrine of Christ beginning from the fourth century. Since the introduction of Christianity, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church prevails over the country and put its own impact on millions of Ethiopian life and still continues today. In this regard, a Syrian Christian Frumentius who later became a bishop, Aba Selama, put the church's foundation during the kings of Abrha Atsbha in the 1st half of the fourth century around 332 A.D. (Alemayehu, 2011).

The EOTC is one of the ancient and the largest of the five Oriental Orthodox Churches; the Syrian, the Indian, the Armenian and Alexandria, Egypt. It is also one of the oldest Christian Churches in Africa and is a founder member of the World Council of Churches (Alemayehu, 2011; Gelawdewos, 2017 and Solid, 2013).

One of the church's unique features is, its believe in *Tewahido,* a *Ge'ez* word which refers to the Oriental Orthodox belief in one single unified Nature of Christ and the inseparable unity of the Godhood and Manhood in the Person of Christ (Alemayehu, 2011). In other expression, it is a belief in a complete natural union of the Divine and human natures into one as opposed to the "two Natures of Christ" belief (unmixed, but inseparable Divine and Human Natures) of the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches. It is a belief in the full Divinity and the true Humanity or the oneness of God and Jesus Christ (Flemmen and Muluemebet, 2016 and Gelawdewos, 2017).

The Ethiopian Orthodox *Täwahido* Church has deeply rooted impacts on Ethiopian history, social life, values, morality and in all aspects of the people in general. It has its own liturgy, educational system for clergy and laymen, monastic tradition, religious music, and an extensive tradition of commentary and Biblical studies (Abbink, 2003). The Church is believed as the

largest Christian church in Ethiopia, constituting approximately 50% of the population until 2008. However, the Statistical report released in 2008 revealed that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church had decreased to 43% of the population, which has a significant reduction vis-à-vis the 1994 (Haustein and Ostebo ,2011 and Solid, 2013).

On the other hand, from the total Christian population of Ethiopia, most Orthodox Christians and religious institutions are found in Amhara and Tigray regions. The two groups together constitute more than 80 percent of the Christian population in the two regions. When members of these two groups are combined with others who have accepted Orthodoxy, the total Christian population might come to roughly 50 percent of all Ethiopians according to the pre 2008 statistical report (Marcus, 2008).

As shown in the map the higher percentage of EOTC members are in the northern and north western parts of Ethiopia, particularly in Amhara and Tigray region.
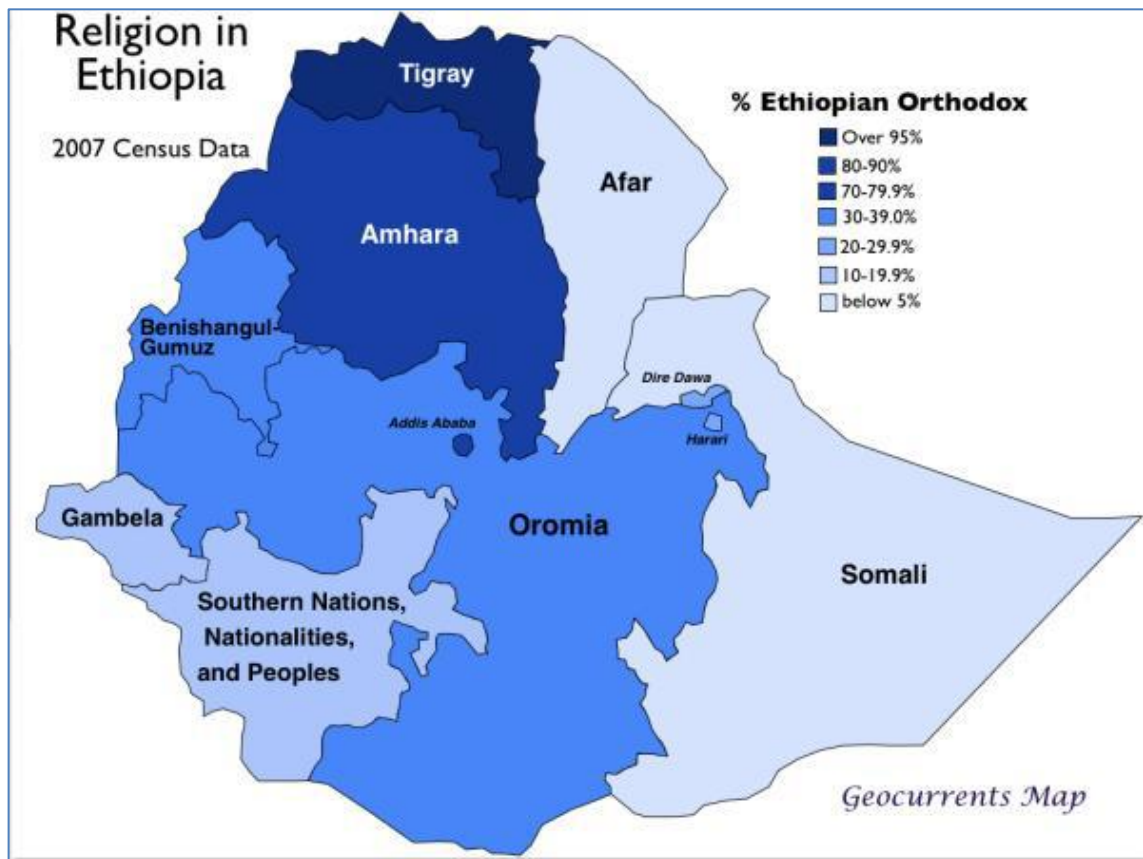
Source: Solid, (2013, p.23).

Figure 2 A political map of religious distribution in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is a highly organized religious institution which is administered by its own complex hierarchical structures (Ghelawdewos, 2017).The Church is basically organized by "three levels of hierarchies; the episcopate, which consists of the patriarch, the archbishops and the bishops; the presbyterate, which consist of the priests and the elders; and the diaconate, which consist of archdeacons and deacons" (Solid, 2013). The church has also its own administrative structures. Since Ethiopia was ruled by a theocratic monarch rule for centuries, the Church and State had a bilateral unity. Within this bilateral unity, religious affairs were conducted by the Patriarch and the Holy Synod. On the other hand, the secular affairs were managed by the administrative Board whom appointed by the Emperor. Therefore, the Patriarch and the Holy Synod and the administrative board were the two major structures during the imperial regime. Currently, these two administrative structures of the EOTC are represented by the Parish Council Organization Department and the Ecclesiastical Administrative Council Department (Alemayehu, 2011). This administrative structure of the church is clearly stated in the church's religious document called *Kaleawadi.* The church has also other divers' form of administrative structures which helps her to facilitate either her spiritual or secular goals.

2.6 Religious Institutions in Conflict Resolution and Peace in Ethiopia

All most all religious institutions attach the importance of peace, reconciliation and forgiveness in their theological teaching. Likewise in Christian theology and their liturgical service or Eucharist (*Kidasse),* strong emphasis is given for peace, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Accordingly, the Christian Churches involve in different fields by striving for the peaceful coexistence of Christians and Muslims in Ethiopia as well as in resolving other kinds of conflicts. As Tsegaye (2014) stated in his study, one of the EOTC administrative department; EOC-DICAC, EECMY Peace Office, the Catholic Church and the Ethiopian Muslims Affairs Supreme Council (*Megilese)* (EMASC) has contributed for peace by empowering different segments of the population with skills and techniques for peace building, maintaining conflict early warning systems and in resolving the existed conflicts at different parts of the country (Tsegaye, 2014).

For instance the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), the most important protestant denomination in Ethiopia especially in Oromia (Wollega), had great contribution in conflict resolution and peace process of the Oromo-Gumz conflict caused by grazing land and land demarcation since 1993 to 2008. The church involved in conflict assessment, organizing peace and reconciliation conferences, the establishment of peace councils and peace committees, monitoring, organized dialogue forums, meditation and other peace building activities (Tsegaye, 2014).

 The Ethiopian Muslims Affairs Supreme Council *Megilese* (EMASC) on its part also played a vital role in promoting peace, tolerance, and understanding among different communities in Ethiopia. The Council had made good attempt to resolve the conflicting issues in cooperation with religious leaders and the local governments, especially in *Shashemene, Dire Dawa* and the Somali region. The council involved in peace and reconciliation activities in Somali region and made effective achievements. Its activities include working around mosques to prevent religious conflicts and avoiding any tendencies towards religious extremism (Tsegaye, 2014).

2.6.1 The EOTC's Thoughts on Conflict Resolution and Peace

It is obvious that the central mission of the church from God is making human with good personality, thoughts and spiritual qualities for what God needs to hold the Kingdom of Heaven. In doing so, the church regularly prays, preaches and teaches for peace, love, forgiveness and other human as well as religious values. In relation to this, Melake Mikr Kefyalew stated that "the whole history of the church is one continual effort to form the conscience of the people to help them by her preaching and her sacraments to establish peace in individual hearts, in family as well as in nations" (2009, p.55-56). According to his expression, the Scriptures and worship activities in the church also constantly remember the community members that, living peacefully and in harmony with other member of the same group (and with everybody else) is an obligation, not as an option (Kefyalew, 2009).

 In the Holy Bible under Luke (6:31), human beings also ordered to treat others the same way as they want them to treat and in everything, to do to others what they would have them do (Matthew 7:12). It also reminded that conflicting with another community member

is more than a mere dispute between equals. Rather it represents a disruptive action against the essence of that community and a factor to detach in the relationship with God. Accordingly, the believer is not as close as possible to God when battles against other community members. "Love of God entails loving acts toward our neighbors and moral behavior resides for most in acting out of duty, with devotion to and love of God" (Corrigan, et al. 2012, cited in Kefyalew, 2009, p.55).

As conflict is inevitable in human life, and when it transformed into violent situations, reconciling the hostile parties is one of the significant measures to settle the conflicting issue. In this regard, Mathew 5:23-25, 18:23-35 states that reconciliation among the people must be done before going to God. This religious guideline in other word puts making reconciliation as one of the church's responsibility. Thus, believers, leaders and other members of the church often engage to reconcile the hostile parties. In general the EOTC religious thoughts, biblical orientation and values can contribute in supporting either the conflict prevention or resolution endeavors.

Based on the aforementioned and other religious mechanisms the church has made attempts to manage and resolve diverse forms of conflict happenings in different parts of our country. According to (Tsegaye, 2014), the EOTC department EOC- DICAC made effort to bring about peace and reconciliation by engaging in an enthusiastic involvement with government officials and religious leaders of Muslims, Orthodox, Protestants, and Catholics for peace and reconciliation processes. This department of the EOTC started its mission by going to the conflict areas, engaging in discussion with both groups and eventually implementing a peace process which eventually came into some achievements. One fruitful manifestation that can be stated in this regard was what the church has been done in resolving the Muslim-Christian conflict in Jimma in 2007.

Furthermore, the EOTC had involved as facilitator or actively engaged in peace and reconciliation processes in *Gambella, Godere, Agaro, Assosa, Metekel, Kofele- Kore, Mejenger, Kamise*, and *Dessie* either in resolving religious or border conflicts. The recent history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewhido Church reveals its involvement and proactive role in promoting peace, reconciliations and peaceful coexistence among the different peoples constituting the population of the country. Similarly, the Ethiopian Catholic Church

through its justice and peace office, actively involved in *Dessie, Wonji* and *Gegessa* and *Harar* to resolve conflicts by promoting a spirit of solidarity, dialogue, forgiveness and reconciliation (Tsegaye, 2014).

Generally, one can understand from the literature that religious institutions can make a considerable contribution in resolving conflicts, maintaining and effectively implementing peace strategies in different countries of the world. Similarly, they would have also a great significance in making peace and reconciliation in the context of our country if possible works together. Hence, the most widely prevailed and long years historically connected EOTC with the majority of the people in Amhara region, could have also a great significance in this regard.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Approach

Depending on the nature of the research, the knowledge claims and the capacity, or experiences, researchers use different approaches, strategies and methods to make certain inquiry over a particular investigative issue. In this regard, Creswell (2009) put quantitative, qualitative and mixed research as the approaches to be used for scientific investigation.

Qualitative approach is one in which the investigator often makes knowledge claims primarily based on constructivist perspectives (Creswell, 2009). This approach focuses on the reports of experiences or data that cannot be adequately expressed numerically. Accordingly, its method generates words as data for analysis (Hancock, Windridge, and Ockleford, 2007; Patton, and Cochran, 2002). Furthermore, qualitative approach enables the researcher to present among the people and observe institutions or record behaviors in their natural settings; conducting discussions, interviews and observations (Creswell, 2009). Thus, qualitative research gives the researcher an opportunity to make an emphasis on the detail aspect of the phenomena under study.

On the other hand, quantitative approach is one in which the investigatory primarily uses postpositive claims for developing knowledge by collecting data through predetermined instruments that yield statistical data. Mixed approach on its hand is, one in which the researcher inclines to base knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds. In this approach, data collection involves gathering both numeric information as well as text information to conduct study on a particular issue (Creswell, 2009).

Accordingly, researchers can employ one of the three alternative approaches when they are interested to make an investigation on a particular issue. Accordingly, in this study, since the study is focusing on investigation of the roles and experiences of EOTC in conflict resolution and peace activities, the nature of these issue are more convenient for qualitative approach. Hence, the study had employed a qualitative approach and exploratory research

design. Exploratory research design is significant either to explore an area where little is known or new to be studied (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle, 2006). Thus, since investigations on the role of EOTC in peace and conflict resolution activities particularly with reference to the recent phenomenon in Ethiopia and Amhara region are little known, it needs to be explored. Accordingly, based on its specific objectives, this research was designed to identify the role that the EOTC plays in conflict resolution and peace process in Ethiopia with particular reference to Amhara region. The research tried to assess the extent of its involvement in conflict resolution process and to examine the contribution of the Church to the peaceful community interaction in general.

3.2 Data Sources

Data collection is one of the most important components in the research, which enable to obtain relevant information from the research respondents. The choice of the method of a particular study depends on the purpose of the research at hand. Accordingly, by considering the time and cost availability, a researcher needs to identify reliable data sources to make effective exploration on a particular issue. In doing so, the researcher employs both primary and secondary data sources in this research. Those data sources are supposed to enable the researcher to access adequate data which makes the study trustworthy.

3.2.1 Primary Source of Data

The primary data had been collected from Key informants and focus group discussion (FGD) participants by employing semi-structured interview data collection instruments. Semi-structured interview is common in qualitative research. Though interview questions are adjusted early in semi-structured interview, respondents also have an opportunity to reflect their intentions freely for questions posed by the interviewer. On the other hand, it also helps to manage the participants towards the intended target (Yalew, 2017).

By employing the above instruments, primary data was collected from religious leaders and other participant who had close contacts with the church in relation to conflict resolution and peace process on behalf of the church. Key informants and FGD participants were selected from religious leaders, officials of the EOTC in Amhara regional state; the council of

religious institutions and religious fathers. Since the church has no one central regional structure at regional level, the researcher had collected primary data by taking religious leaders, church fathers and officials of the EOTC Dioceses at Zonal level as key informants and FGD participants.

The key informant participants were selected purposefully by considering their knowledge, position and closeness to the issue raised by the researcher from Woldiya, Gondar, South Gondar, (Bahir Dar, West Gojam and Awi-Metekel Dioceses ,they were under one diocese to recent). Participants were selected from these Dioceses of the EOTC in Amhara region basically to identify the church's role in resolving conflict outbreaks in the region where these Dioceses are found.

In addition to this, key informant participant was also selected from the Council of Religious Institutions in Amhara Regional State. This is by the reason that, since the church is one members of the council and coordinator of the council, it is believed that participants from the council would help to access additional information about the church's activities on the issue raised. It has also significance for data triangulation that has gained from religious leaders, church fathers and officials.

3.2.2 Secondary Source of Data

Relevant data regarding to the EOTC such as; structure, organization, components, historical foundations and contribution, teachings and other important documents has been gathered from different secondary materials. This enables the researcher to gain better understanding about the church and to adjust the ways of approaching with participants and to establish trust and contact with them. This on its hand assisted to ease the researchers work more.

In addition, various written documents including journals, books, and other research works which focus on EOTC has been assessed in order to determine what has been stated on the topic of this study. Moreover, other related works on religious institutions at international level has been also assessed. This helps the researcher to be aware on the valuable contributions and experiences of religious institutions in different countries. This on its hand assists the researcher to have better insight on the role of EOTC in peace and conflict resolution activities from the other countries' experiences and point of views.

Generally, the reviews of these documents were essential in identifying the gaps in previous researches on the subject under study and in the selection of appropriate research framework and tools for the study.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The general method of this study is qualitative approach. Qualitative researches rely almost exclusively on purposive sampling. That is because it needs to work with participants who have the information needed or are in an environment that needs to be studied

Purposive sampling is appropriate to select individuals, institutions or units on particular issue that would give responses for qualitative research questions (Etikant, and Bala, 2017). In this regard, employing probability sampling technique is less convenient in selecting participants on such kinds of issues. Therefore, the researcher had employed purposive sampling technique.

In purposive sampling, the researcher had used snowball sampling technique. Snowball or Chain Sampling is important to identify cases or data from people who know cases more and rich in information that who would be a good interview participant or locating information rich participant through referential method (Biernacki, and Woldorf, 1981; Yalew, 2017).

In this regard, the researcher found snowball sampling more appropriate for the selected issue and study area. The study focuses on the EOTC in Amhara regional state, where conflicts were unfolding in particular.

The numbers of sample participants from the church are determined by data saturation level which makes the study trustworthy. Accordingly, nine key informant participants and ten participants in FGD were involved in data collection process. These participants were selected from North Gondar, South Gondar, North Wollo-Woldiya and Bahir Dar Dioceses. This is due to the fact that, in these areas of the Amhara region, diverse forms of recurrent conflicts were observed and there was an involvement of religious institutions in settling conflicting issues in these localities.

The selection of participants, both key informants and FGDs were conducted in accordance with their knowledge and experiences they have, position and closeness to the issue stated.

Thus, majority of the key informant participants and some FGD participants were church's higher official (the managers and secretariats) in the aforementioned Dioceses, who are carrying out the church's daily activities at Diocese levels and an official from the Council of Religious Institutions in Amhara region. Other key informant and FGD participants were selected through snowball technique by the help of higher religious officials among religious fathers, church administrators, priests and officials. In similar vein, these participants were selected by considering knowledge and experiences they have and closeness to the issue stated.

FGD was conducted to access supportive information for the data collected through Key informant interview. It also helped the researcher to access additional information and perspectives from the participants regarding to controversies existing on the roles of the church it can play and the recent empirical realities. Only two FGDs were conducted in this study. This happens basically because of two reason; the time constraint and the difficulties faced the researcher to gather participants in one place within the available time from North Wollo and South Gondar Dioceses.

 Lastly, in the study a total of nineteen participants were involved both as key informant and FGD participants. The two categories of FGD participants, each of them consists five members were involved in the discussion from Gondar and Bahir Dar dioceses. The intersection of data gained from Key informant interview, FGD and reviewed data were important for data triangulation.

3.4 Data analysis and Discussions

 The collected data through key informant interview, FGD and literature review are organized appropriately and analyzed systematically. The entire interview was conducted merely by the researcher. An average of one hour duration was invested with each interviewee and FGDs. Responses from each interviewee have been recorded by note taking and recording. Mostly note taking had been used to record interview data. This has been done due to the participants' unwillingness to give their sound through recording mediums. In relation to this, to access reliable data, the researcher had taken notes attentively and re-organized the collected data immediately after the interview process were completed. This

assisted the researcher to prevent information missing and having the required information to the study. The collected data were also translated and transcribed into appropriate data forms for the research process.

The data had been refined and classified into main topics and sub topics in accordance with the objectives and research questions. After that, the findings of the research questions were analyzed and discussed by contrasting with the international experiences. Since the research is in line with qualitative approach, and focusing on exploring and disclosing the practical experience and contributions of religious institutions (EOTC in focus), these data are appropriate for textual expressions. Thus, the data generated from interviews were described and presented qualitatively.

Qualitative analysis is the analysis of qualitative data such as text data from interview transcripts. It is heavily dependent on the researcher's analytic and integrative skills and personal knowledge of the social context where the data is collected. Moreover, the emphasis in qualitative analysis is "sense making or understanding a phenomenon, rather than predicting or explaining" (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p.113).

In analyzing the collected data qualitatively, first key concepts and ideas were thematically categorized and arranged in line with the objectives and research questions then the data were analyzed thematically. Thus, thematic analysis was the analysis mechanism employed in this study. Thematic analysis is a qualitative analysis mechanism which is used to analyze the data by their themes (Dawson, 2007).

3.5 Ethical consideration

In conducting research on a particular issue, the proper treatment of the study population and participants is mandatory. Researchers need to respect the participants and sites. They should not put participants at risk when conducting researches. Moreover, confidentiality and the anonymity in the research process were considered. Accordingly, in the course the research process, the research had been carried out based on the good wills of the participants. In order to meet this requirement, the researcher made clear introduction about the study, explaining the objectives of the study, negotiating the consent of the respondents before data collection. In this respect, the researcher understands that disclosing any

participants' personal or other sensitive information in the data collection or in the analysis and reporting process is strictly prohibited. However, in this study since there is no sensitive personal, group or institutional issue that put the participants at risk, pseudonyms and other coding mechanisms to protect participants didn't employ in the study. Thus, the researcher mostly stated the participants' names as it is in the research work.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

In organizing the data, a kind of framework have been created to put the collected data into systematic order and themes for proper interpretation. For this purpose, the collected data has been broken down into appropriate pieces of thematic categories to make the data meaningful. The themes are organized in the way that they can address the purpose of the study, the objectives and research questions. Accordingly, all the data collected are organized into the following themes based on the specific objectives and the research questions. These identified themes are, the EOTC Structural set-ups and their utilization in conflict resolutions and peace , the roles of EOTC in resolving conflicts, mechanisms and processes of conflict resolution used by the church, major challenges encountered the church and prospects on the church, in realizing peace and conflict resolution activities efficiently.

4.1 The EOTC Structural Set-Ups and Their Utilization in Conflict Resolutions and Peace

Like that of the world governments, which have various forms of established structures to manage people and rule their country, the EOTC has also her own unique established structures from central to local levels. In these structural set-ups, the Parish and Ecclesiastical Administration Councils' election, assignment, regulation and procedure from the Patriarch to the single Church is well stated under her administrative document (the constitution of the church) called "*Kalawadi*". It is arranged by considering the Holy Spirit above all. The structure stretches from the Holy Synod to the local parish churches and households as shown in the following.

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │   The Holy Spirit   │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │   The Holy Synod    │
                    └─────────────────────┘
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                               ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │   The Patriarchate  │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                               │
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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │       Diocese       │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │   Woreda Diocese    │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                               │
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                    │   Parish churches   │
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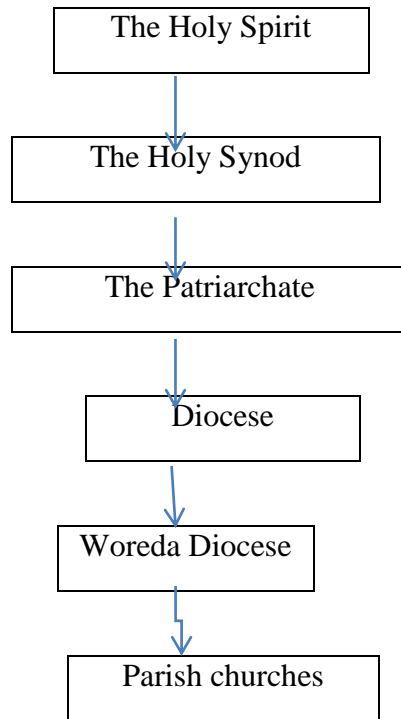
As stated in the Kalawadi, below the Holy Spirit, the Holy Synod is the highest authoritative organ in the church and the second is the patriarchate office. Both the church's higher positions are found at the central level. In this administrative structure, no regional arrangement is found that can take the responsibilities to handle activities at regional level. The hierarchy precedes directly from the federal to the diocese at zonal level to Woreda and local parish churches.

In each level of the church, power and responsibilities are given for stakeholders among believers based on the rules and regulations stated under the *Kalawadi*. Moreover the church has also the following complex structures to facilitate the chain of commands from the center to local and local to the center.

The Parish Council Organization Department (PCOD) is responsible for organizing both clergy and laity (including the youth), starting from local Churches up to the hierarchy to the Patriarchic. The local Parish General Assembly is composed of all Clergy and Parishioners, including the youth of the Sunday school. The Executive Committee (half clergy and half laity, including youth) members are elected by the General Assembly of the Parish Church. A number of small committees or sections, which are responsible for the major spiritual and

social services in the local church, such as evangelical, education, development, welfare and others organized under the executive committee.

The District Parish General Assembly consists of members who represent the clergy, laity (men, women and youth members), and the administrator of the local Church (Aleka). At district level, the executive committee members are elected every three years by the General Assembly. The same procedure is followed for the formation and organization of the General Assembly and Executive Committee at Diocesan and Patriarchal levels. The General Assembly is presided by the Bishops at the Diocesan level, and by the Patriarch at the national level. The EOTC Central Parish Executive Committee will take over and execute, through the General Secretariat, on the national level, what has been decided at the General Assembly, after confirmation by the Holy Synod. The Dioceses also have general assemblies, each having its Secretariat and it's Executive Committees (GetuHailu, 2006).

The Holy Synod which is the highest body of the church meets twice a year. It is composed of Patriarch and of all Bishops and Archbishops. There is also a permanent Synod committee ready to discuss urgent matters. It is composed of the Patriarch, Holy Synod Secretary, the General Secretary and three Bishops. The Bishops take part by turns every three months. The General Secretariat or Patriarchate Head Office gives guidelines to all Dioceses. Under the Patriarch administration ten departments and other councils, centers, and other organizations and one commission (DICAC) exist. These are responsible for the following activities:

1. The Evangelical and Missionary Activities Department: organizes and coordinates the spreading and strengthening of the knowledge of the Gospel.
2. The Department of Education: maintaining, controlling and advising the traditional schools, the Theological Colleges & School and the Clergy Training Centers.
3. The Ecclesiastical Affairs Department: takes care of clerical affairs by assigning parish heads, appointing new employees, receiving appeals from parishes for administrative personnel.
4. The Monastic Affairs Department: looks after and maintains the Monasteries.
5. The Parish Council Department: is working for the organization of Parish Councils on local and district level all over Ethiopia.

6. Sunday Schools Department: its main aim is to keep the young people within the Orthodox Church and its dogmatic and spiritual life.

7. Administration Department

8. Finance and Budget Department

9. The Registration and Preservation of the Ecclesiastical Treasury Department

10. Planning and Development Department

11. Ecclesiastical Vestment Production and Distribution Department

12. The Scholars Council

13. The Ecclesiastical Court: is responsible for theological, sacramental and ecclesiastical affairs. The Holy Synod is the highest ecclesiastical court. It is more involved with Church cases.

14. The Legal Service is more involved with governmental courts.

15. Audit: reports annual audits

16. The Foreign Affairs Office: under the special Secretariat of the Patriarch, takes care of all matters outside the Church and outside Ethiopia.

17. The Rental Houses and Buildings Management Organization: is responsible for the administration of the income from the Church's properties, for making leases and for maintaining buildings.

18. The Child and Family Affairs Organization: deals with orphans and destitute children.

19. The Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (DICAC): it works as a development wing of the Church (Getu Hailu, 2006).

In relation to peace and conflict resolution activities as stated in *Kalawadi* under the department of law, disputes and conflicts among the clergies or any laities in all parish churches resolved by self-correction, reconciliation and forgiveness before transferring to the formal state and other conflict resolution mechanisms (the EOTC 4th revised *Kalawadi*, 2009).

An interview data collected from the participants also reveals that the church has its own mechanism in Each and every parish churches to resolve conflicts among the communities particularly within believers based on the rules and regulations stated under the *Kalawadi*

through the established council of parish churches. On the other hand, to resolve urgent and current affairs, the church organize temporary committees from the religious fathers and elders those who have dignitaries and acceptance by the community members (Aba Habte Gabrel, Interview, March, 18, 2018). As an interview with Melake Mihret Girum on March 28, 2018, the church has structures from local household to the Holy Synod that works with the government stakeholders in conflict resolution and peace endeavors. However, though the aforementioned idea is found in the church structure and few respondents support this; majority of the participants didn't agree with it. For them first of all the above structures are merely used for believers. Consequently, it doesn't serve for all forms of conflict in the community members out of her believers. Secondly, they didn't agree on the existence of clear and openly functioning established structures in the church that extends to the community level in order to carry out the peace and conflict resolution activities officially. For them within the church's numerous structural setups there is no an independent officially organized structure which has its own assigned regular officials like modern state structure to carry out peace and conflict matters at all levels within the country. But it doesn't mean that the church does not have any contribution to conflict resolution and peace activities. Rather the church has undeniable contribution to peace and conflict resolution (Ato Fasil, Interview, April, 12, 2018 and Melake Birhan Fisha, interview, April, 18, 2018). Melake Tabor Haile Eyesus Fentahun also agreed with this idea as;

> *There is no any established structural arrangement or department that is set independently to follow up and manage conflict and peace activities through employed professionals or civil servants within the church's administrative structures. The church rather conducts conflict resolution and peace activities by following her religious and cultural values and teachings in all parish levels. Locally, since believers are also organized by religious associations (religious Mahiber), the laities themselves or through their father confessors and religious leaders have the opportunity to solve their problems* (Interview, April, 25, 2018).

4.2   The Role of EOTC in Conflict Resolution and Peace

Since the EOTC has long history in the country, the church has many contributions to the people and the country. It has a holistic contribution in education, environmental preservation, historical heritages, literature, music, art, ethics and moral educations, anti HIV/AIDS campaign and others. For instance in education, the Church had been played the

leading role by providing education for about more than one thousand and six hundred years (Aselefech G/K. 2014). Likewise, the church has her own contributions in peace teaching and peaceful conflict resolution over the conflict events among the community or the people and politically affiliated groups (Aba Habte Gabrel, Interview, March, 18, 2018). In his response, he explained that "the church's role to the country and the people is more than resolving local or community conflicts and cooling down violent conflicts rose in the country. The church had also myriad roles in national unity, anti-colonial resistance for national independence and sovereignty". In relation to this, the participant mentioned how the church was standing with the people in anti-colonial struggle. For instance how the church had played significant role in public mobilization to fight the Italian incursion in 1996 at Adwa.

Whenever the church conducts such a socially significant tasks in peace and conflict resolution, she has used different conflict resolution mechanisms and peace process. The most commonly identified conflict resolution and peace mechanisms in which all the participants agreed are; teaching and preaching, forgiveness, reconciliation, mediation, Personal conversation, facilitation and Public pray (*Mihila*). An interview with Melake Mihret Girum and Aba Habte Gebreal also confirm this idea as the church has long years' experience in resolving conflicts through reconciliation, forgiveness, mediation, teaching and preaching peace to the people by considering it as one of her responsibilities.

4.2.1 Teaching and preaching peace

Though the central mission of the church from God is making human with good human personality, thoughts and spiritual qualities for what God needs to hold the Kingdom of Heaven, the church also regularly prays for national peace, preaches and teaches for peace, love, unity and equality of all human races. The church gives emphasis for peace from personal pray to liturgical services. For instance in her liturgical service, the church declares peace eleven times for the peaceful existence of the people and the country. Accordingly, the church has due emphasis and credit on teaching and preaching peace and peaceful co-existence among the people. In this regard, the participant (Aba Habte Gebreal) explained that;

Human beings are doing the sum of thoughts in their mind. Therefore, if we work on human mind we can bring change and create peaceful community and state in the country. In her long history, the church has been doing on human mind for peace, love, and the essence of peaceful conflict resolutions and participating in resolving conflicts for centuries. It is such kinds of her activities enable her followers and other people to live in peace, tolerance and unity in the country (Interview, March, 18, 2018).

According to the FGD participants' view, the church often teaches and preaches peace in any available situations including in her liturgical service, in holy days, weekends, public conferences where the church is invited as participant or in any others available means. Participants additionally explained that in her teaching, the church regularly remind to work for peace by resolving conflicts and to bring public peace not merely for its followers, but also to work for all human races. Kefyalew (2009), in supporting this view explained that "The Scriptures and worship activities in the church also constantly remember the community members that, living peacefully and in harmony with other member of the same group (and with everybody else) is an obligation, not[as] an option" (p.54).

In her teaching she reminds that, conflicting with another community member is more than a mere dispute between equals rather it represents a disruptive action against the essence of that community and a factor to detach in the relationship with God. Scholars further strengthen these assumptions as; "The believer is not as close as possible to God when battles against other community members. Love of God entails loving acts toward our neighbors" (Corrigan, et al., 2012, cited in Kefyalew, 2009, p.55).

Accordingly, participants argued that the EOTC throughout her long history used this religious teaching as key instrument which had significant contribution to build stable society in the country in one or another way. For them in this regard, the church's role was not merely limited on preventive functions. Rather, it has also a valuable impact on actual conflict occurrences to smooth the situation for further resolution, easily managing the conflicting issues and to facilitate close contacts among the conflicting parties. This further helped the people to live peacefully in tolerance and respect even in place where security stake holders did not sufficiently addressed. That is way the church has employed preaching and teaching as means of conflict resolution (Aba Habte Gabrel, Interview, March, 18, 2018).

Similarly, the majority of the key informant participants had also shared this view as in each of her moment and activities; the church preaches and teaches for peace, peaceful community co-existence and about the evils of hatred and enmity. She teaches and preaches for peace, to her followers in all parish churches, Sunday Schools, members of religious associations and regular church program attendants by quoting important biblical quotes and stories related to peace and the evils of violent conflicts. The church also ordered religious fathers (father confessors) to extend their teaching about brotherhood and reconciliation to their spiritual children (soul children). Kefyalew (2009), further strengthen the church's role by saying as "the whole history of the church is one continual effort to form the conscience of the people to help them by her preaching and her sacraments to establish peace in individual hearts, in family as well as in nations" (p.55). An interview conducted with Aba G/Mikael confirmed the aforementioned elaboration as;

> *The church has worked in conflict prevention activities for centuries since its establishment. She always teaches and preaches peace not merely for its followers but also for others and the country as a whole; to live in love, respect and unity. The church teaches and preaches about peace for youths in Sunday schools to abstain from criminal offences, disturbance and hostility; to develop humbleness and the habit of resolving any kinds of conflicts through discussion* (Interview, March, 25, 2018).

Melake Mihret Girum on his hand regarding to the church's role in her teaching and preaching explained that;

> *In her teaching, the church considers making reconciliation as one of the significant Christian duties to hold God's Holy Land. This on the other hand, enables to easily induce reconciliation into the community traditions. Accordingly, this religious teaching initiates not merely religious leaders and fathers but also the laities to engage in reconciliation to resolve conflicts among different parts of the community as well as the people in general (Interview, March 28, 2018).*

These church's activities had worth to moderate hostility among the people and groups and strengthen peaceful interactions among them. Thus, the church had significant contribution in resolving conflicts before their escalation and transformation into more destructive forms and crisis through teaching and preaching. That is these kinds of church's long age experiences and traditions make

the people live in relative peace and unity for centuries even today (Aba Habte Gabrel, Interview, March, 18, 2018; Aba G/Mikael, Interview, March, 25, 2018).

For instance, when conflict broke out in Gondar town and transformed into the other parts of the Amhara region following the protest over complex questions of ethnic identity; the dominance in economic and political affairs which ties to the ruling party which has an ethnic element and the arbitrary arrest of members of the Wolqait identity Amhara self-determination committee; the church has involved in conflict settlement process (Amnesty International 2016/17; BBC, August, 2016; European parliament, October 2016). Since the day (July 13, 2015) when the protest changed into violent conflict, the EOTC religious fathers, and church official presented in the conflict area and preached for peace and peaceful co-existence to the people involved in violent and destructive measures.

As key informants and FGD participants explained, in their preaching, religious fathers plead both the protestors and the government forces in the name of God and the holy cross to stop taking improper measure that risked the people. In addition to this, to mitigate the conflict that prevailed in different parts of the region, the church continuously preached the people in all available situations; on Sundays, churches regular attending programs, on religious Mahibers, religious ceremonies by focusing on peace, reconciliation and forgiveness. Religious fathers and officials of the church also made peace as the primary topic in their teaching. This church's effort continued until relative peace restored to the people and the region. These religious measures to restore peace assisted the conflict resolution process. It was also implemented when the conflict re-occurred in Woldiya and its surrounding. Accordingly, these church's efforts in collaboration with government and other religious institutions, contributed to cool down the violent tensions and making relative peace in these conflict unfolding areas. This on its hand contributed to the save the people and the region from further crisis in these areas.

Scholars studied on religion and religious institutions also reveals that religious institutions can influence human life and practices in different forms including in peace and conflict issues. For them, since religious institutions and leaders do have

trustworthy, respected set of values and moral warrants that gave them power, they can oppose injustice on the part of governments or else; promoting reconciliation among conflicting parties; re-humanize situations that have become dehumanized over the course of protracted conflicts. This on its hand facilitates situations for common benefits and lasting peace (Smock, 2006; Shore, 2009).

Besides this, scholars in their studies also tells that , religious institutions have a potential in community mobilization, promotion of national and international support for peace process (Smock, 2006; Shore, 2009). Studies in British academy also strengthen this idea as, religion and religious institutions serve as important sources which serve as the foundations for conflict resolution, reconciliation and peace-building. Religious leaders through their respected institutions can play significant role in preventing violence, healing bad feelings or attempting to prevent a re-occurrence, mobilization, give humanitarian assistance during the emergency, assist longer term recovery and build peaceful relation through their teaching (British academy, 2015). That was what had been done in South Africa. Religious institutions in South Africa effectively used religious preaching and teaching to reconcile the long years developed hatred and conflict between the whites and the black Africans at the end of the Apartheid rule.

For this purpose, the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and Methodist Church of South Africa had continuously called for reconciliation even by using radio broad casting campaigns to teach and preach for peace, love and reconciliation that later brought the successful reconciliation between the Blacks, Whites and Asian in South Africa. In doing so, the prominent religious fathers like Alex Boraine and Bishop Tutu had taken the lion shares in coordinating and promoting the churches' missions (Shore, 2009).

An interview conducted with an official in the Council of Religious Institutions in Amhara region on April, 12, 2018 also confirms that the EOTC has her own share for peace in the country by supporting conflict resolution activities and by providing deep rooted peace values and tradition in her religious teaching and preaching. The church has also served as the chairperson of the Council of Religious Institutions in Ethiopia. As a chairperson of the

Council of Religious Institutions' from the federal to local level, it has its own impact in any peace activities and conflict resolution process by collaborating with other religious institutions and stakeholders. The church has participated and coordinated peace dialogues and making recommendations. Thus, one can understand from these discussions that the church's teaching and preaching have contributions both in preventive and in conflict resolution process when conflict occurred.

4.2.2 Reconciliation and Forgiveness

Once the conflict transfers into violent situations, religious institutions and religious leaders have still the role to reconcile the hostile parties. "Reconciliation is hence spiritual ethics and there is nothing greater than creating peace and love in this ever changing external world" (Kefyalew, 2009, p.66). Reconciliation needs openness, forgiveness, bringing individual needs and goals to common needs and goals. In this respect, religious institutions teach their adherents to reconcile each other and live in peace and love first. Otherwise, they thought that it is impossible to be reconciled with God and holding the Kingdom of Heaven. This religious foundation gives better opportunity for the church to use reconciliation as a means to resolve conflicts among the people and creating peaceful coexistence within the community. In this regard, Mathew 5:23-25, 18:23-35 states that reconciliation among the people must be done before going to God. This religious guideline in other word puts making reconciliation as one of the church's responsibility. This implies that the church needs to order and work with every laity and the leaders to resolve disputes, conflicts, disagreements and hatred with anyone. These kinds of church's practices in the community further helps to induce these important religious values into the society to continue as tradition. This on the other hand, helps the people to easily reconciling each other and with others within their communal existence.

In this regard, one can see how the EOTC has worked in conflict resolution and peace process by reconciling the conflict between Amhara- Tigray communities recently. As an interview with Aba G/Mikael and the FGD participants in North Gondar Diocese shows that, the Church was involved in resolving the conflict between Amhara and Tigray communities near Soreka where the Gondar – Humera land transportation flows. In this area due to the conflict between the two the communities, all kinds of transactions and travel

exchanges between the Amhara and Tigray communities and commercial exchanges were blocked. In conflict alleviation process regarding to this, the church had sent religious fathers and representatives to the conflict area to negotiate the conflict among the two communities. They were gone to the area with their religious closes and the ark of covenant (*Tabot*).

In Ethiopian Orthodox Christian communities taking the ark of covenant (*Tabot*) to request and plead the conflicting parties in the name of *Tabot* is one of the significant conflict resolution mechanisms. Basically, this conflict resolution mechanism employs as a last resort to resolve serious community or group conflicts. Since the majority of the populations in these communities are Christians, they have great respection for *Tabots and have* a strong believe on these kinds of religious mechanism to negotiate the conflicting parties.

The church called individuals and religious fathers from both community members to initiate and mobilize the people for peace and reconciliation. Accordingly, these religious fathers and representatives called the two community members to stand for peace, love and to think about their long years' historic brotherhoods and sisterhoods among them. They also remind the inseparable blood ties and religious unity among the two community members. By reminding those valuable pre-existing interactions of the two communities, religious fathers and the church officials plead the people for reconciliation in the name of *Tabots* they have taken to the place.

Later on, this church's effort enables to reduce tension, moderate the conflicting parties in to their relative peace from their hostile interaction. Accordingly, it enables to re-instate the pre-existed inter -communal peaceful interaction relatively; returning the displaced to their home and work place and reconciling each other. Moreover it also enables to support individuals whom their properties damaged cooperatively. Blocked transportation flows and other economic activities were continued their daily activities. Thus, the EOTC in North Gondar through her religious fathers and officials had played significant contribution in conflict resolution process of these areas. However, though the church has played such significant attempts to reconcile the two communities, it does not mean that all things are absolutely backing towards the former one. Still there are remaining issues that demanding further works and national and political commitments.

The other mechanism that the church employed in her principal domain of religious teaching and preaching to bring the conflicting parties towards peace process for reconciliation is forgiveness. Regarding to forgiveness, the holy Bible says, "And when you stand in prayer, forgive whatever you have against anybody, so that your father in heaven may forgive your failings too." (Mark 11:25). "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you don't forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father will forgive your trespasses" (Mathew 7:14-15). Promoting forgiveness, at both the personal and the social levels, is the main function of the church's teaching. According to her teaching forgiveness is a means of gaining peace, and it is a gift of God. Without forgiveness, there is no way of coming free from the past and it needs a change of heart that allows peaceful relation in the future. This on its hand creates social space in the community for wrong doers in particular to come for forgiveness, which has significant role in reducing hostility and to extend social cohesion among the community (Faith and Order Commission, 2005). Apart from this, in the post-conflict situation, the church promotes truth telling and pursuing various kinds of justice, helping to bring forgiveness and long term reconciliation to become the agenda of the peace process.

4.2.3 Public Pray (*Mihila*)

In the occurrence of serious problems, as an alternative mechanism to find solutions, the church has called religious leaders, fathers and worshipers for public pray or *Mihila.* In Christian tradition, this spiritual pray has carried out by the church to request solutions from God to the problems they encountered.

 The church employs *Mihila* or public pray not merely for requesting God to resolve serious conflict crisis, civil strife and war but also to avoid other man made or natural occurrences such as drought, famine, epidemic disease etc. In this praying program, even though the main goal is to request God for solution to the problem, it has also the potential to hold public attention towards positive thoughts, demanding peaceful resolution and hopes for them. This on its hand reduces further crisis, destructions and hostilities among the people or the conflicting parties. Accordingly, the EOTC church has been called the people (believers), her religious officials and fathers for this kind of public pray. This religious

practice has implemented by the church for centuries previously and in recent two years' Ethiopian conflict experiences. For instance in the process of alleviating the violent conflict raised following the protest against the government, in Amhara and Oromiya regions in Ethiopia due to political, identity based questions, administrative dissatisfaction and other interests on the government; the church declares seven days public pray on every beginning of a month. When these violent situations were unfold, to contribute her own shares in peaceful conflict settlement and to save the people and the country from further crisis, the EOTC Holy Synod passed order for its respective followers to make public pray. Accordingly, the EOTC Dioceses in Amhcara region, particularly in conflict unfolding areas, of the North Gondar, South Gondar, North Wollo-Woldiya and Bahir Dar Dioceses and others called believers for public pray. In this praying program the regular church attendants, religious fathers and religious leaders has participated according to the program scheduled by the church as the key informant interview and FGD participants explained.

In the public pray religious fathers and officials regularly preach for peace, love and request the concerned stakeholders to respect public dignity and give adequate responses. In this regard, the public pray had a positive impact by holding and diverting public attentions towards peaceful moments in the crisis situations. Thus, this church's activity had its own contribution in the process of reinstating peace from the violent situations and further escalations in these areas of the Amhara region. Public pray as a means of conflict resolution mechanism was employed in Mozambique, Sierra Leon and Nigeria.

Mozambique was under protracted civil war between the two strong opposition groups, FRELIMO and RENAMO. To resolve the serious conflicts among the two parties, the Mozambican Catholic church through her bishop Apelo à Paz, called the Christian brothers and sisters to pray for peace by selecting Friday as a public praying day. Accordingly, the public prayers had marched on the streets of small towns, and even cities to churches or to specific gathering places. This public pray holds public attention and fighting groups to assist negotiation which helps to move them forward to the negotiation table for peaceful settlement (Serapiao, 2004).

Similarly, in Nigeria to resolve the conflict they faced in Plateau states and other localities of the country, they had employed public pray as one important instrument. They prepared

public pray for true peace in the name of their Almighty, Merciful and Compassionate God in Shendam local government area of Plateau to end the violence and bloodshed that deny the right to life and dignity. The public pray they had been conducted in Nigeria was significantly changed the conflicting communities towards close contact and peaceful negotiations which later brought successful resolution and peace among the conflicting communities (Smock, 2006). This shows that public pray has the power hold public attention, smoothing violent conflicts and tensions among contrasting parties for peace negotiation and conflict resolution. Likewise, the EOTC has used public pray or *Mihila* as a means to resolve violent conflicts in our country and the region.

4.2.4 Facilitation and Personal Conversation

The other mechanism that the church used in conflict resolution and peace process is personal conversation and facilitation. The church works in facilitating grounds to the conflicting parties for discussion and negotiations. In this regard, the central purpose of the church is working with the concerned stakeholders to create platforms to make dialogues by smoothing tensions and threats within the people and the conflicting parties.

According to Jeong (2010), facilitation is a process of conflict resolution mechanism through the involvement of neutral third party as a facilitator by creating conditions that enable the parties to communicate each other. Thus, it is one of the potentials of the church that the church can do in time of conflict crisis and tension by using her religious assets and values through her neutral involvement.

In relation to this, one can see how religious institutions can facilitate platforms for dialogue and reconciliation to build channels for peace and national unity in Mozambique (Lamb, 2008). The Catholic Church had sent the archbishop, Gonçalves to contact with the RENAMO leader Afonso Dhlakama inside the bush. The archbishop's trip created better picture and opened hopes for him to work further. Then the bishop continued to contact the leaders of warring groups. In this moment both FRELIMO and RENAMO had come into the realization that the Catholic Church paves the way to peace and later the opponent groups had prepared themselves for negotiation that later led them into reconciliation. Thus, religious institutions have the capacity to make acceptable facilitation role if they work in

commitment. Likewise the EOTC has also carried out some facilitation tasks even though it is not as comparable as what the Mozambican Catholic church did.

The EOTC has worked for peace and peaceful conflict resolutions by organizing temporary committees from laities, elders and clergies to facilitate grounds for discussion, returning the displaced people, release the detained and accused and to make reconciliations. These activities are particularly employed in resolving politically related conflicts (Aba Habte Gabrel, Interview, March, 18, 2018; Aba G/Mikael, Interview, March, 25, 2018). In this regard, the FGD and key interview participants in the study pointed out some cases as stated below to show how the church can play its own role in conflict resolution and peace activities. These cases are basically taken from the recent years experiences in our country, in Amhara region in focus.

The first case is related to violent conflicts in Gondar Town. In the past two recent years, in Ethiopia recurrent violent conflicts were observed by holding multi-dimensional issues. Gondar is one of the forefront towns where violent conflicts occurred in Amhara region. Particularly, since July, 13, 2015 in Gondar Town violent conflict began to unfold. In that day, the church was celebrating the end of fasting and the memorial festival of Saint Abune Gebremnfes Kidus. In that moment unprecedented violent conflict was breakout. When religious leaders and church officials heard the event, they immediately break the ceremonial programs and went to the conflict area to mitigate the crisis and to save the people from harms. The church officials, religious fathers and priests had been going to the confrontations with their crosses and by wearing religious clothes to cool down the situation and save the people from deaths and injuries. Since their arrival in that conflicting area, religious officials and fathers request and plead the people who involved in destructive actions, government officials and security forces to stop their improper measures that would further worsening the situation. They requested both the conflict participants and government stakeholders to look for solutions peacefully. In addition to this, religious officials and fathers also made personal contacts with the government officials and the people to discuss for solutions and to facilitate grounds for discussion. This church's effort created relative trust on the part of the people to prepare them for dialogue.

They also forwarded recommendations and condemning the improper uses of the government measures. In this regard, the church had significant role to cool down the situation by using her religious efforts. Later on, the church through North Gondar Zone Diocese officials, religious fathers and priests in collaboration with the government stakeholders facilitated grounds to held discussions for solutions and to prevent further destructions. Accordingly, discussions had been held, relative peace has been reinstated and the more destructive measures were mitigated. Similarly, the church was also involved in resolving conflicts raised in Armachiho, Chilga, Quara and Shinfa in North Gondar.

The church has also her own contribution in resolving the Amhara – Qimant community conflicts. Even though the conflict among the two communities finally concluded in 2016/17 by referendum, the EOTC had role to resolve the conflict among the two ethnic groups. In similar ways the church had sent religious fathers, priests and representatives to cool down tension, violence and settle conflict out breaks between the two communities amicably in collaboration with other government stakeholders.

On the other part of the region, violent conflict had been unfolded in North Wollo, Woldia town and its surrounding in 2017/2018. Due to this violent conflict, some died, injured, buildings are burned and some are detained and displaced (UNHCR, January 23, 2018). In the conflict that breakout on Ethiopian Epiphany festival, the church had played her own role to cool down the violent conflict by using her religious sprites and assets in collaboration with the government stakeholders. The church's contribution in that violent situation was really one of the manifestations of the church's role that saved the people and their properties from further crisis and destruction according to the participants view.

When this unprecedented violent phenomenon occurred, religious fathers, the church officials including the bishop of North Wollo Diocese and other priests coming for Epiphany festival together request the people and the government special forces in the name of the *Tabot* and the cross to abstain from taking improper measures. They preached for peace and conducted public pray by breaking other festive programs. They were also moving between the conflicting groups and making speech for them to moderate the situation. These efforts at least enable to cool down the tension which led for public dialogue on the part of the government later. In this regard, Aba Habte Gabrel, explained

that " from the situation seen at a time, one can easily understand how violent conflict could cause for more dangerous consequences if the church did not work in collaboration with the community and the government organs to settle the violent situations" (Interview, March, 18, 2018). Moreover, the church has also participated in public dialogue and forwarding her shares which has valuable contribution in the process of reinstating peace in the area. In addition to this, the church was one of the participants that engaged on attempts to return the displaced and making reconciliation among the people (Aba Habte Gabrel, Interview, March, 18, 2018).

The church had also contributed its own effort in conflict resolution and peace process when violent conflict upsurges in Bahir Dar town in 2014/15. The conflict was raised when the road construction and expansion project along Meskele square began to construct. In this case, the church had worked to avoid unnecessary rhetoric and mistrusts between the government and the people. The church has worked to smoothing down the violence and facilitates the situation to make open dialogue with the people. It had worked to avoid the disagreement between the people and the government by building trust on the people, to have clear information and to construct the road based on the public interest.

The church had also conducted negotiation to release imprisoned persons and other individuals connected to this. Finally, the road infrastructure has been constructed for common benefits to the church and community at all. Thus, the church had significant role to resolve the violent conflict rose at a time in Bahir Dar town.

On the other hand, in settling the disputes among Debre Tabor university students following the conflicts raised in different parts of the country, the church was one of the participants to cool down the problem, save students from more injuries and further expansion of violent conflicts. The church had made discussions with the concerned stakeholders together with other religious institutions to manage the problem peacefully and returning students to their regular teaching and learning activities.

Thus, in any observable conflict out breaks, the church has worked to resolve conflicts by facilitating discussions to the conflicting parties and negotiating these parties for reconciliation (Aba G/Mikael, Interview, March, 25, 2018; Aba G/Tsadik, interview, March,

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27, 2018, FGDs, April, 6 and 21). Moreover, as Melake Birhan Fisha in his interview explained "in any political or local conflict resolution process there is no dialogue or reconciliation process that the church didn't involve as a participant" (Interview, April, 18, 2018). Therefore, this implies that church has her own contribution to the people and the country in this regard.

The church has also involved in conflict resolution and peace process through the government coordinated religious institutions' forum by sending her officials and representatives in places where conflicts breakout to look for solutions. In addition to this, the church facilitates and coordinates other member of religious forums for conferences and to seek solution together. She also contributes for peace and conflict resolution by encouraging elders to work in mediating community conflicts.

However, according to one interview participant, even though the church has contribution in conflict resolution and peace, connected with marriage couples, neighbors, land borders, irrigation water, flooding water canals, children and the parents and money betrayed between individuals, the church's role on other conflicts particularly in politically affiliated conflicts couldn't be taken into much considerations. Some FGD participants have also made points supporting this key informant participant. For them the church has shown reservation to involve in full commitment as facilitator or negotiator to resolve politically affiliated conflicts. According to the aforementioned key informant, the church's role to solve conflicts between the couples, family members, neighbors is highly valuable. But these church's activities are implemented mostly by the believers. For this key informant and some FGD (four) participants, the church's role in politically related conflicts as it has been seen recently in our country or the violent conflict that occurred during the Derge regime is not sufficient. They also further argued that the church has worked for what political leaders need to say. Hence, there is no conflict resolution activity that has been done by its own initiative confidently, rather the government officials coordinate and inform to say something for their own political purpose.

An official from the Council of Religious Institutions of the Amhara region on his part explained that, even though the church has her role in this regard but the church was not alone. It is with other religious institutions. Thus, from the above discussions regarding to

the role of the EOTC in conflict resolution and peace process particularly on its role in politically affiliated conflicts, one can understand the existence of contentious views.

4.3 Challenges and opportunities of the Church regarding to its Peace and Conflict Resolution Activities

As both the FGD and Key informant participants stated that the EOTC has many opportunities which enable the church to undertake peace and conflict resolution activities. Accordingly, Some of the opportunities that the church does have are, the church has good opportunities to teach and preach peace and love anywhere at any time; has many followers and can easily address for millions; has many officials and clergies in northern part of the country and other urban areas in particular; has many monthly and annual memorial and ceremonial days which open opportunities to contact with collected people; Sunday programs and daily church attending programs in urban areas in particular. In recent years (since 2011), the establishment of religious institutions' forum in Ethiopia and its extension towards regional and local level has also gives space to the church to involve in peace and conflict resolution activities. In this religious forum the EOTC has a chairperson position at all levels.

This position and responsibility in the forum further creates space to easily contact with the government bodies who are working in peace and security issues and with other partner religious institutions. Moreover, the formation of multiple structures in the church administrative system and its daily close contact with her believers, her long years' experience in teaching and preaching peace, love and unity has significant impact for public peace by resolving disputes, disagreements and violent conflicts.

But, despite the aforementioned opportunities the church has, there are also challenges that obstruct her activities and effectiveness in peace and conflict resolution process. In this regard, FGD and key informant interview participants remind that the EOTC has hosted and passed through countless challenges in her long years' history. The church has lost many believers, religious scholars, religious heritages, religious texts, values and dignities in different times. In the 9th century by Yodit, Giragn Mohamed in 15th century, the colonial incursion, the Mehadist incursion and other internal civil strife occurred in the country in

different periods. These challenges have been obstructed the healthy spiritual or socio-economic and cultural contribution of the church to the people and the country more than it has contributed in history.

As peace is one of the central missions of the church, the church has been continued to engage in peace activities at different levels by using her religious values and assets. However, there are still challenges that influence on the involvement of the church in conflict resolution and peace activities. In relation to this, Some FGD and interview participants argued that, inaccessibility of materials, like vehicles to travel for her peace activities creates difficulties to the church to easily address everywhere. On the other hand, the constitutional right of religious freedom has not been still implemented. According to some interview participants and majority of FGD participants (Six), there is a political imposition on the church. They argued that, sometimes religious leaders and higher officials commanded to do merely to the political will of the government and media consumptions. Due to this, some religious leaders and officials become politically dependent. These conditions directly or indirectly brought certain impacts on the church to hold public acceptance in her activities.

As the data gained from the majority of FGD and some key informant participants' response, the other emerging challenge to the church particularly in relation to her activities on peace and conflict resolution is connected with political disputes and violent conflicts. Religious leaders, officials and representatives have reservations to involve actively in these issues. Their main argument for this is due to the doubt they have from government responses and public acceptances to achieve the church's mission confidently and in commitment. Hence, the development of such kinds of attitudes and improper and indirect imposition over the church, church's officials and religious fathers is challenging. For them, the government also turns its face merely when it faces challenges and forgets her when problems handled. This kind of government's approach to the church didn't give comfort for religious fathers and church officials. Moreover, insufficient willingness and commitment from the government to see their faults and their attempt to push problems towards the people other than taking sufficient corrective measures create doubt upon the church officials and leaders.

On the other hand, some community members who don't have proper religious knowledge and awareness, often wishes to achieve merely their emotional interests. For some of them, her activities and participation in peace process and conflict resolution didn't view in a positive way. Accordingly, they believed that her activity is sided to the government and leaving public issues silently. The increment of these attitudes within her officials and staffs on one hand, and public attitudes as the church is sided with the ruling bodies on the other hand becomes challenging. The development of these attitudes on some segments of the society diminished and deteriorated public support and acceptance of the church. This on its hand has also a negative impact on the church's effectiveness in any conflict resolution or peace missions.

In contrast, other participants argued that, since the central mission of the church is making peace, love and unity to the people and the country; there is no one who doesn't wish peace, love and unity. Consequently, there is no much public attitude or activity that affects the church's role concerning to peace and conflict resolution. That is why, even though the aforementioned attitudes exist within the community, since the church has voice and acceptance by the majority of the people, her involvement and participation in different conflict management activities, cooling down the violent situations peacefully when the issues became beyond the government stakeholders' capacity to settle alone peacefully. Therefore, when the church becomes part of the solution on the occurrence of violent events, conflicts could transform into better and positive outcomes more than what the government does alone. This shows that the church has still great acceptance by the people and even by the government. In this respect, Melake Mihret Girum further explained that;

> *For instance if one government official and religious father come into the public discussions on similar issue by representing the government and the church respectively, a religious father would have more support and acceptance than the government official. When religious fathers speak in the name of the church, they don't return without something positive. It implies that when the church speaks to the people and other stakeholders speaks to the people in this regard; the church would bring better outcomes other than the government stakeholders* (Interview, March 28, 2018).

This shows that the people (believers in particular) have strong trust on the church. Consequently, since the government also perceived this, it needs her cooperation to work

together in peace and conflict related issues. Accordingly, for this categories of respondents, since the church has many opportunities to address peace and conflict resolution activities, financial and transportation constraints don't consider as a challenge that affects the church's effectiveness.

However, as it is one of the earliest religious institutions and highly embedded in the heart of the majority, it has expected to work more than this. The church also needs to work more strongly on its followers to raise their consciousness in evangelical services, love, peace and unity both among her followers and other groups of peoples in Ethiopia. The church should also strengthen her positive influence on the government to work strongly for peace, equality, development and justice in commitment.

4.4 The Similarities and Differences between the Church and State Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

At the beginning what makes both the state and the church similar is, both of them demands peace to their people, institutions and their country. However, since conflict is inevitable social phenomena, we cannot prevent it from occurring within human interactions. Consequently, both of them forced to employ certain mechanisms to settle it and bring peace to their people, institutions, their country and if possible beyond that. Hence, in some situations both the state and religious institution shared similar resolution mechanisms. However, in some situations, the two higher human institutions may employ their own mechanisms depending on the nature and magnitudes of the issues. Connecting to this, the EOTC has employed facilitation, *Shimglina* and reconciliation as a means of conflict resolution. It is clear that these resolution mechanisms are also employed by governments in modern state system.

 Predominantly, the church has employed reconciliation, forgiveness, preaching gospel and teaching in combination as the most commonly functioning strategies. These conflict resolution mechanisms are highly connected with religious foundations. Accordingly, every conflict resolution moment is being seen from the religious values and significances other than seeing merely from world perspectives. Consequently, these strategies have good acceptance by the people and have the power to resolve conflicts in peaceful ways.

Other than these commonly employing conflict resolution mechanisms, the church has used public pray (*Mihila*) in time of serious crisis like what has happened recently in our country. The church also used the Holy cross and other holy cloths and religious assets to request the conflicting parties for negotiation, mediation and reconciliation. These mechanisms have the power to soften violent conditions for further resolution process. Moreover, in these conflict resolution mechanisms the contending parties can have alternative opportunities to reach on mutual agreement and sustaining future relations among the conflicting parties.

In contrast in states, government stakeholders sometimes have seen when they employ coercive mechanisms to resolve conflicts rose within states or between states. Of course, they also use several alternative conflict resolution methods, like negotiation, mediation, reconciliation, facilitation and others. The government uses legal proceeding and court decisions as a conflict resolution mechanism to address the conflicting issues raised based on different references within the people or the people and the government. But since in this conflict resolution mechanism decisions made merely for one side in accordance with the predetermined guiding rules, laws, regulation and the witnesses they heard; it couldn't address the interests of both conflicting parties at a time. As a result it doesn't able to erase the inner resentments of the conflicting parities. Consequently, it doesn't lead the parties to live together in peace by strengthening their future relations.

Besides this, the foundation for state conflict resolution mechanisms are predominantly, domestic laws, customs, constitution, international experiences and government interests. But the foundations for church approach conflict resolution process are mainly religious values, teachings and religious texts. These conflict resolution mechanisms are also conducted by considering what they would face or gain even when they pass away. Therefore, it demands spiritual assets and it can put significant influence on conflicting parties to make resolution over their disputing issues.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of religious institutions in conflict resolutions and peace by focusing on the EOTC. Accordingly, the researcher has tried to examine the EOTC's role in conflict resolution and peace activities in Amhara region where violent conflicts had been occurred.

As the church and her believers widely exist in the region, the church is highly linked with the people. The church's values and teachings are also strongly embedded in the community traditions. Hence, the church has valuable contributions in socio-economic, cultural and political life of the people. It has great contributions in education, environmental preservation, historical heritages, literature, music, art, ethics and moral educations etc.

As the majority of the participants point out, the church's praying, preaching and teaching about peace, love, unity and equality has a considerable role to prevent conflict occurrences by minimizing hatred among individuals, community members or diverse interest groups. These religious activities have also valuable impacts on actual conflict occurrences by smoothing situations for further resolutions.

In her long years' experience, the church has been contributed her own shares to settle conflicts related to killing, ethnicity, border, religion, conflict among mirage couples and land resource. In conflicts raised recently in Amhara region in Woldiya and its surrounding, in North Gondar and Bahir Dar in particular, the church had played its own contribution in conflict resolution process and peacemaking. For instance, when the violent conflict broke out in Gondar, the church officials and religious fathers immediately went to the place and preach, teach and plead the violent participants and the government stakeholders, security forces to stop their improper and destructive measures that risked the people. Similar measures were taken when the conflict break out in Woldiya. The church had been also tried to reconcile the Amara and Tigray communities by employing her religious assets and values such as *Tabots* and the Holy Cross in Soreka and other parts of North Gondar where

both ethnic communities interacting each other for ages. The church had her own shares as a facilitator for dialogues and a participant to cool down the violent conflicts unfold in Bahir Dar and other parts of the region. The church had also a facilitative role to create platforms for negotiation and discussions among the conflicting parties and responsible stakeholders.

In contrast, some participants of this study didn't confidently agree with the effectiveness of such church's roles in conflict resolution measures. For them, the aforementioned church's role in conflict resolution are merely for political and media values. The church didn't work in commitment and as its historical or religious potentials it constitutes. As a result, her activities didn't address the root causes of the conflict raised.

As a mechanism, the church has employed preaching and teaching to settle conflicts. Basically, these mechanisms were highly significant as preventive measures. The church has also employed reconciliation, public pray, facilitation, negotiation and using other religious values and assets to capture public attention and making conflict settlement process.

In the course her involvement, there were some constraints which challenge the effectiveness of the church's activities. The first thing in this regard was the mob mentality of the people in some situations. Due to insufficiency in proper religiosity, people sometime merely need to achieve their emotional interests without considering its sustainability. In this case, they became reluctant to the church's activities in conflict resolution for peace process.

On the other hand, sometimes improper imposition and indirect intervention of the government officials on the church and their attempt to use the church as an instrument to achieve their political missions were observed. Moreover, insufficient government responses and commitment for public issues made religious leaders, officials and religious fathers to have reservations to involve actively in this issue. This on its hand sometimes reduces the effectiveness of the church's activities in conflict resolution and peace.

The EOTC has diverse forms of administrative structure from the central to local level. Vertically the structure stretches from the Holy Synod, the Patriarchate, the Diocese, Woreda diocese, the parish church to the households. In these religious administrative structures, there are numerous horizontally and vertically arranged structures and committees which run the church's religious as well as other social affairs. But as majority

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participants point out and as per the researcher's document review there is no independently established structure within these multi-level and multi- dimensional structure to undertake and follow up her activities in peace and conflict resolution. Rather the church has involved in peace and conflict resolution process according to her long years tradition and the biblical orientations. Sometimes it also organizes temporary committees to carry out this mission.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the data analysis and the major findings, the following conclusions were made.

- ❖ The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of religious institutions in conflict resolutions and peace by focusing on the EOTC. Accordingly,

- ❖ In her long history, the church had holistic contributions.

- ❖ The church's regular praying, preaching and teaching about peace, love, unity, and equality has been instrumental in preventing and cooling down violent situation for further resolutions by minimizing hatred and enmity among individuals, groups, community members and other interest groups.

- ❖ The combinations of preaching, teaching, public pray or Mihila, reconciliation, facilitation, personal conversation and other religious assets were employed as mechanisms to resolve the conflict occurrences.

- ❖ But particularly, connecting to the recent phenomenon in our region there are contradictory views. Accordingly, for some participants, the church didn't involve effectively in settling conflicts as far as it was expected from it. Thus it implies that the church didn't work as the potentials it constitutes in this regard.

5.3 Recommendations

In the course of this study, attempts have been made to point out the contribution EOTC in peace and conflict resolution activities, conflict resolution mechanism and the challenges faced while the church made endeavors in this regard. The finding shows that the church has significant role in preventive activities, soothing violent situations for further resolutions and

in facilitating platforms for negotiation, reconciliation and discussions. However, there are still insufficiencies in addressing the roots of the conflicting issues. There are also attempts of government impositions on the church that would affect the existing trust between the people and the church. Therefore, based on the results of the study, the following recommendations were forwarding.

- Since the church's regular praying, preaching and teaching about peace, love, unity and equality has the power to capture public attention and bring attitudinal change, it must be encouraged and supported for further works and more effectiveness.

- The interaction between the church and the government should be further strengthened. However, there shouldn't be improper imposition of the government on the activities of the church. In this regard, the constitutionally guaranteed religious freedom rights should be properly implemented.

- As a religious institution, there shouldn't be any distrust on the part of the people in her activities either in facilitating platforms for discussion, negotiation, reconciliation or other efforts of the church. The church should attempt to do in full commitment and confidence as per its capacity and religious assets it constitutes. This makes the church to hold and increase public trust on her activities.

- The church should work more to advance the religiosity of all sections of her followers.

- It is better, if the church has an established structure or department that coordinates and follows up peace and conflict resolution activities. It also enables the church to easily manage and facilitate situations to solve problems that would disturb the normal peaceful life of the people by establishing better networks with higher religious officials, government and community members.

- Furthermore, the establishment of religious forums in the region as well as in the country is appreciated and it should be strengthened. It gives additional space to the church to involve in peace and conflict resolution activities.

- Lastly, as conflict had been frequently observed in the country including in Amhara region, it is a time to work with different segments of the society, institutions and stakeholders. Since, religious institutions can contribute significant role, their

contributions, experiences in peace and conflict resolution need to be studied, explored more in detail and initiates for more studies.

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Appendix1

S.N	Name	Place	Date of interview/ discussion	Data collection tool from the participant	Position in the institution
1	Aba Gebre Mikael	Gondar	March,25/2018	Interview participant	An official in North Gondar diocese
2	Ato Fasl	Bahir Dar	April,12/2018	Interview participant	An official in the Council of Religious institutions in ANRS
3	Melake Genet Gebre Sellassie	Woldiya	March,18/2018	Interview participant	An official in North Wollo diocese
4	Melake Birhan Fisiha	Bahir Dar	April,18/2018	Interview participant	The secretariat in Bahir Dar diocese
5	Melake Mihret Girum	Bahir Dar	March,28/2018	Interview participant	The administrator of Kidane Mihret church
6	Melake Tabor H/ Eyesus Fentahun	DebreTabor	April,25/2018	Interview participant	The administrator of Debretabor Eyesus church
7	Like Hiruyan Yonans Mezgebu	DebreTabor	May,1/2018	Interview participant	The Manager of South Gondar zone Diocese
8	Melake Genet Aba G/ Tsadik	Bahir Dar	March,27/2018	Interview participant	The administrator of St George cathedral and a member of Bahir Dar diocese
9	Aba Habte Gebrel	Woldiya	March,18/2018	Interview participant	The secretariat of North Wollo Diocese
10	Aba G/ Sellassie Wolde Mariam	Gondar	April,6/2018	FGD Participant	An official in Bahir Dar diocese
11	Memihir Meseret	Gondar	April,6/2018	FGD Participant	The secretariat in North Gondar Zone diocese
12	Memihir Aba Mulu Shitaneh	Gondar	April,6/2018	FGD Participant	Religious Father in The secretariat in North Gondar Zone diocese
13	Kesis H/Eyesus Bekalu	Gondar	April,6/2018	FGD Participant	A priest in Gondar Gabreal church
14	Mergeta Kelemu Belay	Gondar	April,6/2018	FGD Participant	A teacher in Menbere Medihaniyalem

					church
15	Melake Mihiret Felege Tibeb	Bahuir Dar	April,21/2018	FGD Participant	An official in Bahir Dar diocese
16	Like Kahinat Zekarias Chekol	Bahuir Dar	April,21/2018	FGD Participant	An official in Bahir Dar diocese
17	Melak Araya G/ Mariyam	Bahuir Dar	April,21/2018	FGD Participant	A religious Father in Silassie cathedral Bahir Dar diocese
18	Melake Selam Eafream Mulualem	Bahuir Dar	April,21/2018t	FGD Participant	Manager in Bahir Dar diocese
19	Memihir Tefetseme	Bahuir Dar	FGD April,21/2018Participant	FGD Participant	An official in Bahir Dar diocese1
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Appendix 2

ጥናትና ምርምሩን ለማካሄድ ለቃለመጠይቅ የተዘጋጁ መሪ ጥያቄዎች

በቅድሚያ በቃለ መጠይቁ ለመሳተፍ ፈቃደኛ ስለሆኑ እያመሰገኩ ፤ ለቃለ መጠይቅ የተዘጋጁት ጥያቄዎች በባህርዳር ዩኒቨርሲቲ በፖለቲካል ሳይንስና አለም አቀፍ ግንኙነት ትምህርት ክፍል በሰላምና ግጭት ጥናት ፕሮግራም ለሁለተኛ ዲግሪ ማሟያ የጥናትና ምርምር ርዕስ መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ሲሆን በቃለ መጠይቁ የሚሰበሰቡት መረጃዎች ጥናትና ምርምሩን ለማካሄድና ለትምርታዊ አላማ አገልግሎት ብቻ የሚዉሉ ከመሆኑም ባሻገር የመረጃዎቹ ሚስጥራዊነት የተጠበቀ መሆኑን ላረጋግጥላችሁ እወዳለሁ፡፡ በተጨማሪም በቃለመጠይቁ ስለሚያደርጉት ተሳትፎና ስለሚሰጡኝ መረጃ ከፍ ያለ ምስጋና አቀርባለሁ፡፡

የጥናትና ምርምሩ ርዕስ: "the role of religious institutions in conflict resolution in Ethiopia: A study on Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church in Amhara Regional State" በዚህ ርዕስ ላይ መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ይረዱ ዘንድ የሚከተሉት መሪ ጥያቄዎች ለቃለ መጠይቅ ተዘጋጅተዋል፡፡

1. የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋህዶ ቤተክርስቲያን በተለያዩ አካባቢዎች የሚከሰቱ ግጭቶችን በመፍታት ረገድ ያላት ሚና ምንድ ነው?

2. ቤተ-ክርስቲያኒቱ በተለያዩ ሁኔታዎች በማህበረሰቡ ውስጥ የሚከሰቱ ግጭቶችን ለመፍታት የሚያስችል ምን የተዘረጋ መዋቅራዊ አሰራር አላት?

3. የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋህዶ ቤተክርስቲያን በተለይም ከቅርብ ጊዜ ወዲህ በአማራ ክልልም ሆነ በሀገሪቱ በተለያዩ አካባቢዎች የተከሰቱ ግጭቶችን በመፍታትና ሰላማዊ የህዝብ ለህዝብም ሆነ የህዝብና መንግስት ግንኙነት እንዲኖር በማድረግ ረገድ በአርዓያነት ሊጠቀስ የሚችል ያከናወነችው ምን ተግባር አለ? ከዚህ አኳያ ስኬታማ ስራ ሰርታለች ብለው ያስባሉ?

4. ከቅርብ ጊዜ ወዲህ ከሚታዩ ነባራዊ ሁኔታዎች አንፃር ቤተ-ክርስቲያኒቱ ያላት ሃይማኖታዊ አቅምና ልምድ ግጭትን በመፍታትና ሰላምን በማምጣት ሂደት ምን ያህል በተግባር እየተገለፀ ነው ብለው ያስባሉ?

5. ቤተ- ክርስቲያኒቱ ግጭቶችን በመፍታትና ሰላምን በማምጣት ሂደት ውስጥ በስፋት የተሳተፈችባቸው የግጭት አይነቶችን ቢዘረዝሩልን?

6. ቤተ- ክርስቲያኒቱ ግጭቶችን ለመፍታት በምታደርገው ጥረት ያላት ተቀባይነት ምን ያክል ነው ? ለዚህ ሀሳብ ተጨባጭ የሆኑ ማሳያዎች ካሉ ቢገልፁልን?

7. ቤተ- ክርስቲያኒቱ ግጭቶችን ለመፍታት በምታደርገው ጥረት የምትገለገልባቸውን ዋናዋና የግጭት መፍቻ ዘዴዎች ወይም መንገዶች ቢገልፁልን?

8. እነዚህ የግጭት መፍቻ ዘዴዎች ወይም መንገዶች በዘመናዊው አለም መንግስታት ከሚ ገለገሉባቸው መንገዶች ጋር ያላቸውን አንድነት ልዩነት ቢገልፁልን?

9. ቤተ- ክርስቲያኒቱ ግጭቶችን ለመፍታት በምታደርገው ጥረት ያጋጠሟትን ፈታኝ ሁኔታዎች በዝርዝር ቢገልፁልን?

10. ቤተ- ክርስቲያኒቱ በማህበረሰቡ መካከልም ሆነ በህዝብና መንግስት መካከል ግጭቶች ሲፈጠሩ ችግሮችን በመፍታት ረገድ የድርሻዋን ለማበርከት ትችል ዘንድ ያሉ መልካም አጋጣሚዎችን በዝርዝር ቢገልፁልን?

11. የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋህዶ ቤተክርስቲያን እነደ አንድ ታላቅ የሀይማኖትና የሰላም ተቋምነቷ በየጊዜው የሚከሰቱ ግጭቶችን ለመፈታትና ዘላቂ ሰላምን ከማረጋገጥ አኳያ ከማህበረሰቡ፤ከመንግስትም ሆነ ሌሎች አካላት ጋር ተባብሮ ለመስራት የተዘረጋ ውጤታማ አሰራር ካለ ቢገልፁልን?

12. የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋህዶ ቤተክርስቲያን በግጭት አፈታትና ሰላም ጉዳይ በምታደርገው እንቀስቃሴ ያሏት ጠንካራ ጎኖችና የሚስተዋሉ ድክመቶች ምንድን ናቸው ብለው ያስባሉ?

13. በክልላችንም ሆነ በሀገራችን በተደጋጋሚ የሚስተዋሉ ግጭቶችን ለመፈታትና ዘላቂ ሰላምን ለማምጣት መደረግ አለበት የሚሉትን የመፍትሄ ሀሳብ ቢጠቁሙን፡፡ በዚህ ረገድ ቤተክርስቲያኒቱ ሊኖራት የሚችለው ሚና ቢገልፁልን?

14. በመጨረሻም በተነሰው የጥናትና ምርምር ርዕስ ላይ ያለዎትን አጠቃላይ አስተያየት ቢገልፁልን?

2. ለቡድን ዉይይት የቀረቡ ጥያቄዎች

1. የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋህዶ ቤተክርስቲያን በተለይም ከቅርብ ጊዜ ወዲህ በአማራ ክልልም ሆነ በሀገሪቱ በተለያዩ አካባቢዎች የተከሰቱ ግጭቶችን በመፍታትና ሰላማዊ የህዝብ ለህዝብም ሆነ የህዝብና መንግስት ግንኙነት እንዲኖር በማድረግ ረገድ በአርዓያነት ሊጠቀስ የሚችል ያከናወነችው ምን ተግባር አለ? ከዚህ አኳያ ስኬታማ ስራ ሰርታለች ብለው ያስባሉ?

2. የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋህዶ ቤተክርስቲያን በተለያዩ አካባቢዎች የሚከሰቱ ግጭቶችን በመፍታት ረገድ ያላት ሚና ምንድ ነው?

3. ቤተ- ክርስቲያኒቱ ግጭቶችን ለመፍታት በምታደርገው ጥረት ያላት ተቀባይነት ምን ያክል ነው ? ለዚህ ሀሳብ ተጨባጭ የሆነ ማሳያዎች ካሉ ቢገልፁልን?

4. ቤተ- ክርስቲያኒቱ ግጭቶችን ለመፍታት በምታደርገው ጥረት ያጋጠሟትን ፈታኝ ሁኔታዎች በዝርዝር ቢገልፁልን?

ስለሚያደርጉልን ትብብር በድጋሜ ከፍ ያለ ምስጋና እናቀርባለን፡፡