

Review of Dissertation Work

Title: **'The magnitude of governance in addressing HIV/AIDS issues in Ethiopia.'**

Pages 133.

Author: **Daniel Messele Balcha**

Presented to: Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Sociological Studies, Department of Public and Social Policy

The topic of the presented dissertation is one of the most recent and dangerous social and life problems of the developing countries; Ethiopia belongs among the worst damaged by this ruinous disease of HIV/AIDS. The aim of the author is to understand the magnitude of governance of this epidemic disease in Ethiopia by studying activities of governmental institutions which are legally responsible to control, eradicate and make Ethiopia free from HIV/AIDS, and voluntary organizations such as civil societies (non-governmental organizations) and Business Community (for profit sector). The main concern of the study is the consequence of a new law imposed by Ethiopian government in 2009, No.621/2009 'Proclamation to Provide for the Registration and Regulation of Charities and Societies'. The author elucidates his research as follows: "the study explores the effects of the 2009 Charities and Societies Proclamation in addressing the HIV/AIDS issue in general and its effect on HIV/AIDS partnership forums in particular". (p.2)

The study took as case studies two largest states (Oromia and southern nations, nationalities and peoples) of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and its federal capital city Addis Ababa.

The dissertation is logically structured and systematically organized into five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction to the problem of the subject of the study, which is HIV/AIDS as not only an individual problem but as a family, regional and national problem. If words are interpreted to practice, the seriousness of this "killing machine" in Ethiopia's social killing fields is this epidemic as Mr. Girma Wolde Giorgis, the former President of Federal Republic of Ethiopia, officially declared: "Our cemeteries are filled beyond capacity. Parents are dying from HIV/AIDS or burying their children; a

generation of fathers and mothers is being lost leaving the grandparents to grieve and raising the next generation. I cannot understate the terrible nature of the crisis that is enveloping our societies. As bad as it is today, the reality is that it is getting worse". (Quoted by the author, p.3)

The World Health Organization (2007) reports that Ethiopian health system is in a very bad standard in which (0.2 beds per 1000 population); for rural population there is no health service at all, or, if it exists, 50 % of rural population have to walk 10 km to reach the health centre. As mentioned above, the magnitude of this epidemic is cutting off productive age groups (15-49 ages) of the country; in addition, a new law-proclamation No. 621/2009 was imposed on activities of NGOs.

In the second chapter, the author discusses the theoretical bases for guidance in his field research on topics of HIV/AIDS governance and social capital and trust, one of the topics of discussion in the contemporary sociology.

After he defines the problem of his study in chapter one and prepares himself with theoretical bases as his flashlight of field research elucidated in the second chapter, the method of collecting data from the field is discussed in the third chapter. The steps of collecting data are explained as reviewing the available documents on the problem of research, semi-structured interviews and partner-tool survey used for gathering information from key players in the problem, and finally the research method of a problem-tree used.

Chapter four is the main part of the dissertation, in which the author collected his empirical data for his research from two largest states of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and its capital city, namely the state of Southern Nations, Nationalities and People, Oromia and Addis Ababa. One of his findings which is very important is the Figure on p. 56 with the title 'Ethiopia: three ways of looking at HIV distribution prevalence, number infected and density, 2011' which elucidates the HIV prevalence of people with mortal disease. This data from the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia is a real picture of this epidemic disease in the country showing every detail of information from all member states of FDRE.

The presented dissertation provides wealth of information supported by 13 various figures and nine tables. The result of the research clearly shows negative effects of the Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009 on HIV/AIDS on NGOs. Views of the Partnership Forum members (Table 9, p. 103) clearly show how that proclamation crippled the activities of NGOs who are fighting against this dangerous disease.

The research results certify the second hypothesis of the author, which are the negative effects of the proclamation on the activities of NGOs who are working on the prevention of HIV/AIDS disease.

Reading through this dissertation I came across some minor technical errors, which can be corrected before its publication if the author intended to do so. Some literature which was indicated in the work were not listed in the reference, such as Walt & Gilson 1994 (p.27), Jochum 2003 (p. 41), Poister 2003(p.75), and one quotation directly from Rawls, J. (1971) was not indicated by page (p.95). There are minor spelling errors which should be corrected, such as (ego) must be ago (p.67), and (on) must be one.

I do have one question for the author, which he should answer during the exam time. The author writes throughout his work, that the Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009, has “unintended effects of the new law towards NGOs working on human rights issue in addressing the problem of HIV/AIDS” (p.97). This proclamation which paralyzed the activities of NGOs who are working on human rights, is not a typical authoritarian regime character? If not, why the parliament did not change the law from 2009 until today?

Except these minor errors, the dissertation is theoretically based, empirically well researched, it is a very good work done, and I strongly recommend it to be accepted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D.

Prague, 8th June, 2015

PhDr. Alemayehu Kumsa, Ph.D

