Role of Afosha in Addressing Socio-Economic Problem among Tulluu Kosorruu Oromo, Ethiopia

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Abstract

This article describes the role of Afosha in addressing the socio-economic problems of Tulluu Kosorruu Oromo, Ethiopia. This study employed a qualitative research approach, and the tools of data collection methods used for this study were semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews, non-participant observation and focus group discussions. The collected data were analysed through narrative or textual methods. The findings of this study reveal that Afosha plays a great role in solving sociocultural issues like resolving conflicts during funerals, difficult times, or challenges; reducing unemployment and underemployment; and during happiness, like marriages. Different from this sociocultural aspect, the role of Afosha is a way for the community of the study area to help each other during times when manpower is needed from their members. Besides, they use Afosha to lend money to treat each other in times of illness, sickness, and famine and also to reduce poverty. Functionalism theory was used for this study to prove the data in anthropological fashion considering the view that society is a system with interconnected pieces that foster solidarity and stability. Afosha is also the key to keeping the solidarity and unity as well as the health of social structure and individual interest. Lastly, this social-based organization may be encouraged by government and non-government.

Keywords: afoosha, culture, economic, Ororomo

1. Introduction

Indigenous knowledge is the cultural and social experience that drives a community to adopt certain values, practices, and norms to coexist in the environment sustainably and to solve their socioeconomic problems (Kloos, 2003). This scholar argued that it is a common feature of all societies in the world where it makes people generate comparative advantages in social and economic development as certain skills for economic production. Kamara (2005) argues that, in Africa, local communities possess developed traditional indigenous knowledge systems for environmental management and coping strategies, making them more resilient to environmental change.

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Ethiopia is also famous for its multifunctional institutions of self-help and solidarity (Pankhurst, 2008). In Ethiopia, indigenous institutions have an inclusive decision-making process in many aspects of society, including customary law, power transfer, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and community development (Abebe, 2014). Tsegaye (2014) also investigated the effects of Hadiya community self-help groups and clan-based groups.

As he argued, this group of people is helping each other based on blood relation only. However, Afosha is also a community-help system although it is not only based on blood relation; it has a broad scope that the researcher carried out this study. Aredo (2010) also investigates urban-based social associations, demonstrating the existence of Iddirs in various forms and indicating their use in the community in terms of funeral insurance and health. The Aredo's study is also weak in scope.

Indigenous peoples are living wherever by hormone and unity, as by forming different structures, self-based organizations either in urban or rural areas by forming different institutions like *Iddir* or *Afosha (*in Amharic and in Afan Oromo, respectively). As this study reveals, Iddir is for financing facilities for funerals; however, *Afosha* addresses socio-economic problems beyond financing facilities for funerals. It has many purposes namely participating in community development, community solidarity, bio-psychological, etc.

According to Kloos (2003), Iddir is one of the social capital organizations that helps reduce poverty by building a strong network and serves as a risk-sharing and coping mechanism for the Northern Ethiopian Community during economic crises. In the same vein, *Afosh*a in Oromia, it is the way community share risks and the way they help each other. Okello (2013) stated in his social capital theories that emphasizes Afosha in terms of its role in developing the relational components of social institutions and communal life.

Although such indigenous institutions in Ethiopia and their share of local-level developmental activities are assumed to be high, their actual contribution to social, economic, and political development is rarely evaluated objectively and experimentally. This scholar focuses on the challenges of indigenous institutions, but in this study, rather than challenging this institution, it means that *Afosha* has a great contribution to government by participating in conflict resolution and helping each other economically in the Oromos in general and Tulluu Kosorruu Oromos in particular. Characterized community institutions as participating in development activities primarily focused on the viewpoints of local social development and the goal.

Mulugeta (2021) argued that community development is one of the top goals for developing countries such as Ethiopia. In his study, *Ikub* is a community-based organization in Ethiopia that helps people save money and limit their spending. But, *Afosha* is differing from *Ikub* based on purpose. *Ikub is a* social saving system, while *Afosha* is for bio psychological and social/community solidarity and unity.

In Oromo society, it is the collaboration of community that is critical to the growth of community and preserving peace. It is also one of the best community organizations in general, Chalia district's Tulluu Kosorruu village in particular. Furthermore, these community-based organizations have specific laws and regulations that provide premium-based insurance for funeral costs, accidents, and credit adjustments to help individuals get through difficult times like man-made and natural humanitarian crises, for marriage, for constructing houses for each other, for constructing bridges, for helping with work during times when manpower is needed from their members, etc. Therefore, it plays an important role in motivating community members to collaborate and support one another in socio-economic matters. However, there is an absence of study on this issue as a result; the goal of this research is to describe the role of *Afosha* in addressing socioeconomic difficulties in the Oromia Regional State, taking the case of the Tulluu Kosorruu Chaliya District in Western Ethiopia. This study tries to answer, why does the Tullu Kosorru Oromo go to *Afosha* in this study? How is *Afosha* addressing the study area's social issues? What kinds of economic difficulties does *Afosha* handle in the research area? The purpose of this article is to understand why the study area community joined *Afosha* and its merits for the community and to provide information for scholars, governments, and non-governmental organizations to work on in depth.

Therefore, the significance of this article is that it opens the door to further study of indigenous people like Afosha. This reference is a great contribution to policymakers regarding indigenous self-help organizations, and it is a voice for this voiceless community.

2. Theoretical Framework

Theory refers to the tool used to improve and disprove the evidence acquired. The data acquired in this study was enhanced using *functionalism* theory. One of the most popular schools of thought for understanding numerous aspects of culture and society is functionalism theory. It seeks to identify the function or role that various parts of culture perform in maintaining a social structure. It is a concept that views society as a system with interconnected pieces that foster solidarity and stability (Baert, 2010).

This theory is relevant for this study due to the various reasons discussed below. The Tulluu Kosorruu community in western Ethiopia preserves its cohesion and peace via interdependence and assists each other socially and economically. One of the factionalism theories is focused on the unity and cohesion of community. The aim of *Afosha* is not competition and conflict. It is the way communities work together, work for each other, keep their peace and security, and help each other during accidents, famines, funerals, good situations like marriage, and the like. Structural functionalism is the theory that sees the social structure, like *Afosha*, as fulfilling the needs of individuals in different situations. Therefore, *Afosha* is also one social organization that helps people in indifferent conditions, thus, *functional theory* was proving the study.

This theory has two focal points. One is social structure, and institutions and organizations stand for fulfilling the individual's interest. This idea answers or proves this study. Example *Afosha* helps to fulfil the individual interest in difficult times as well as the other idea of functionalism theory. It is focused on the individual role in community-based organizations like *Afosha*. Therefore, these two main ideas are very clear and prove this study. For example, funerals, accidents, and marriages make two things in functional theory. First, for bio psychological theory, participation in society develops the individual psyche, while, on the other hand, it creates social unity and solidarity.

3. Description of the Study Area

Tullu Kosorruu is in the western part of Ethiopia, in the Western Shoa, Chailiya District. It is found in the West Shoa Zone. Challiya is bordered on the south by Nono and Dano, on the southwest by the Gibe River, which separates it from the Jimma Zone, on the west by Bako Tibe, on the northwest by the Guder River, which separates it from the Horo Gudru Welega Zone, on the north by Ginde Beret, on the northeast by Jeldu, on the east by Ambo, and on the southeast by Tikur.

The administrative center of these districts is Gedo. Tulluu Kosorruu Village is one of the villages the *Cheliya* District has. It is located on the paved Road to Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, to Finchowa Sugar Factory highway. It is located 215km from Addis Ababa. And the economic activities of the Tullu Kosorru community depend on agriculture. This community, primarily *Afan Oromo* speakers, exhibits a fascinating blend of agricultural practices. Their cultivation sequence prioritizes maize, wheat, barley, and beans, alongside long-cycle sorghum, teff, and potatoes, reflecting adaptation to local environmental conditions. Regarding their religion, Christianity has largely replaced the *Waaqeffanna*

Religion rooted in the Gadaa system. The arrival of Christianity has significantly impacted the *waaqeffanna* religious practices but not eradicated them entirely, demonstrating a dynamic process of cultural adaptation and religious syncretism.

Many of the Oromo living in the village of Tulluu Kosorruu suffer a lot during the summer: they harvest crops only once a year or receive rainfall only once a year. During this time, the poor are helped in various ways by *Afosha,* like facilitating loans of grain or money for the poor. The other challenge is, during the harvest, the *Afosha* members together save the grain from trouble. Therefore, this community-based organization is a pillar and core in addressing sociocultural problems. The reason why this area is selected for this study is that the community is very known by *Afosha,* and their participation in such institutions is very hot. The community of Tullu Kosorru Village is active participant in helping each other, peacekeeping, and participating in development. For all of these activities, *Afosha* is the backbone. The reason why *Afosha* is considered as a pillar is that the community decides all directions of their lives at *Afosha.*

4. Research Design and Methodology

4.1. Research Design

Research design is the framework of research methods and techniques chosen by a researcher to conduct a study. This study is qualitative in nature because qualitative research is very important in educational research as it addresses the “how” and “why” research questions and enables a deeper understanding of experiences, phenomena, and context (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, this study has followed a qualitative approach to attain its objectives. Both primary and secondary data were collected on the role of *Afosha* in addressing the socioeconomic problem of the Tulluu Kosorruu community. Conventional anthropological methods such as a semi-structured interview schedule, in-depth interviews with key informants, non-participant observation, and focus group discussion were employed to understand the true feeling of the community on this research theme.

4.2. Sampling Size:

In order to observe their true feelings towards their challenge and their current situation, it was very important to find information from people in their surroundings or people who have direct relevance through work or their day-to-day livelihood. Therefore, in this research, the sampling techniques used were purposeful sampling methods used to understand deep knowledge regarding this institution. According to Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A.

(2012), it is a sampling technique in which the researcher relies on his or her own judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in the study.

Accordingly, thirty-two (32) people from Tullu Kosorruu, Oromia, Ethiopia, have been selected. Those who were selected are all a group of people who are very well known and experienced in this institution (*Afosha*). Depending on the information gathered from the *Afosha* leader, ten key informants, as well as three (3) FGDs, that is, one FGD for males with eight participants (8), one FGD for females (10–17) with seven participants (7), and one FGD with knowledgeable people from the village with seven participants (7) were interviewed. Qualitative data analysis (QDA) is the process of organizing, analyzing, and interpreting qualitative data, non-numeric conceptual information, and user feedback to capture themes and patterns, answer research questions, and identify actions to take to improve a product or website. This study has a qualitative and narrative research design. The reason researchers use narrative research design is because it is used when someone is willing to tell their story, follows a chronology, and the researcher wants to write it. (Creswell J. W., 2012), and presented the data in a textual or narrative manner.

4.3. Ethical Consideration

To investigate scientific and real studies, the investigator has ethical considerations for the whole process of the study, from the starting point to the end point of the study journey. First of all, before starting the field work, the researcher took consent from the village leader, and informed the participants the purpose of the research. Their willingness and ideas of participants were secured during the interview. The researcher of this study also did not depend on the single informant for all purposes of the study, and all participants' ideas, attitudes, and feelings were respected. This ethical consideration was for the purpose of assuring the participants confidentiality and coming up with real, concrete information on the objective of the study.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Introduction

The chapter discussed the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data acquired from selected sample respondents via tools of qualitative data collection methods discussed above. The purpose of this study was to appraise the community-based organization (*Afosha*) in addressing the socioeconomic problems of the Oromo in the Tullu Kosorru rural village in western Ethiopia

5.2. The Causes for Community to Join Afosha

One of the reasons for the Oromo in Tullu Kosorru, western Ethiopia, to join *Afosha* is as an integral part of their culture. A household that does not participate in it does not have equal treatment with those who have or participate in the *Afosha*. Communities understand him/her as a person who does not know the culture and has no morals.

The participants discussed *Afosha* as the following:

> *My Grandfather, My father, and all my ancestors are participants in the self-help community. Therefore we can't separate it from our life condition, and we look at it as one of our cultural elements.*

These informants said that really it is the culture of helping each other during difficulty and happiness, for example, during funerals and marriages.

The other key informant also argued as follows:

> *All my clan participate, and the leader as well as the committee of the Afosha. I was socialized and reared in this ideology. Therefore it is a culture of belonging. Even if having more than two members of Afosha is considered a reach, he is a good man and disciplined. Therefore we participate because of this. I am also one committee leader of this community-based organization*.

One of my key informants discusses his situation as follows:

> *During my leadership, I helped people who needed help during problems they faced. I reconciled people and made peace. The members of this organization contributed to development, like constructing bridges and constructing houses for the poorest and older people. We helped fatherless or motherless children*.

As one of my key informants explains why he needs to enter or go to *Afosha* as follows:

> *For me, it is one of the things I need in my life for existence. When I was born and until I got to know myself, my father and grandfather were involved in this Afosha, and I was acculturated in this mood or lifestyle. If someone doesn't have Afosha, in our community no one understands him/her; if somebody fights him/her, suffers, gets sick, goes hungry, or dies, there is no one to stand by with him/her. Therefore, having Afosha is about having a peaceful life and happiness.*

The other participants in this study discussed *Afosha* as the following: *It is the way people make peace. During our meeting, we have time to discuss issues like economics, governance, conflict resolution, etc.*

Therefore, it is the pillar tool to help us to make peace and mainstream blessings. The collected data and informant voice are approved and analyzed with the E.B. Tylor definition

in anthropological fashion (Cronk, 2019). He argued that culture is a complex whole that includes all aspects of human ways of life. This organization also took one element from the ways of human life and community and considered *Afosha,* as it is an integral part of their culture.

5.3. Role of Afosha to Address Societal Problems

Jamrozik (1998) defines social problems as "social conditions, processes, societal arrangements, or attitudes that are commonly perceived to be undesirable, negative, and threatening certain values or interests" (Jamrozik & Nocella, 1998, p. 1). It can be seen in a single country or affect the international global society.

They can affect the society by harming its harmony, stability, safety, or freedom. Unlike physical issues or natural problems, social problems are related to social processes and social interactions. For instance, while malnutrition might seem like a physical condition, it is actually a social problem resulting from war, conflict, poverty, or abuse. Most of the social problems are results of social inequality and its implications (Jamrozik & Nocella, 1998). In this community there are social problems like poverty, underemployment and unemployment, conflict, disagreement on economics, etc.

Therefore, Afosha is the institution, meaning an institution based on humanity rather than religion, politics, and education. It helps to solve social problems. For example, conflict is solved by Afosha members based on their rules and regulations. To solve poverty, unemployment, and underemployment, this institution facilitates finance loans and savings and gives consultation on using time and economics properly. The people of the study area have formed *Afosha* in various places, like religious places (e.g., at church), schools, and workplaces, to solve the problem and promote their solidarity and unity in the community. Many of the Oromo people living in this area establishing *Afosha* help each other a lot, work together, and live together in times of joy and sorrow. This organization is divided into various parts based on age and gender. It is known as *Afosha* of women's, men's, and youth. It is different based on its purpose. Everyone is useful for living together, building relationships, strengthening the economy, creating peace, and so on. One of my key informants discusses the role of religion in social life, as follows:

> *I am an Oromo, and I follow a Christian religion. I have two more Afosha: first, the community that I was living in within my home or surrounding area, whether they are*

> *Christian or not, and then other Afosha in the church with Christian followers. For me, Afosha in different ways with different people is to show that I can live with people in peace, to get help and support during workloads, and to have good relationships with people in the church and outside of the church.*

According to Seyoum (2015), there are enormous roles being played by community-based organizations for their members and for community development in all directions of human life. In this study also, the members of the *Afosha* could arbitrate disputes among members or reconcile quarrelling members. During challenges faced by the members of this community self-help organization, especially like funerals and accidents, this organization is the core in addressing their problems either economically or socially.

In addition, the economic costs of numerous expenditures, particularly at the time of the deaths of family members, were better shared by financial assistance. In this second sub-part, the study analyzed the contribution of *Afosha* to solving the social problem of Oromoo in Tulluu Kosorru, western Ethiopia, and the findings obtained from respondents were discussed as follows:

> *The future plans of households to forward their future plans to participate in developmental activities and whether their Afosha participate in the wedding ceremonies of their locality, respectively.*

There are numerous areas in which this community organization will participate for the sake of community development. Similarly, the other majority of respondents, consisting of household members of *Afosha* in Tulluu Kosorru, justified that their *Afosha* were participating in the wedding ceremonies, financial matters, sickness, and other challenges of their locality. The majority of respondents argued that the *Afosha* were involved in wedding ceremonies through the renting of materials such as chairs, tables, kitchen utensils, and others in most cases, while they were also engaged in cooperation for weddings of their members in the study area.

Thus, there are many factors, like member, leader, community, and external factors, that comprise participation style, relationships, information sharing, mutual interaction, efficiency of leadership, commitments of all stakeholders, awareness-related issues, and many others that could influence the practices and performances of *Afosha* services for the study area community.

The idea of respondents to this research was that they had membership in more than one. The cause of that household revealed that it creates a feeling of pride to have membership in more

than one *Afosha,* which could provide better opportunities to share the situation of joy or sorrow with a very large number of people from two or more *Afosha* members.

The other also discusses why *Afosha* is needed for Oromoo in Tukku Kosorruu, western Ethiopia, as follows:

> *We do not separate Afosha from our lives, and it is part of our culture. It is a place where we meet, play together, discuss one's problems, and solve problems, and it is the help canter.*

The findings identified the way people govern and help each other, especially during times of grief or death, marriage, the deaths of animals, and various other problems, as well as the way they help each other at work and reconcile or make peace. While human life is not out of this situation,. Whatever their ways of formation, *Afosha* contributed key roles for the overall community development in general and for the better financial status and peace of their members in particular.

Moreover, the connection is not limited to a single community or location. Individual households are connected through complex relationships of *Afosha*-centric associational activities and to networks of wider communities' to build peace, love, and need help in financial and other ways, as it refers to the findings obtained.

Therefore, there are so many factors that motivated people to establish or join Afosha, which might be categorized under social, economic, psychological, and emotional factors in the study area. Hence, some of the households joined it for the sake of sharing the sorrow and difficult situations faced since human beings were collective creatures with their demand to share joy and sorrow to pass and normalize the hardship.

Its members provide the financial and household support that could be given by it during the sickness or death of family members or relatives. Among the reasons suggested by the key informants, the internal organization and the overall outcomes of the *Afosha* also comprised the rationales. Thus, it is cost-effective and time-saving and hence has a direct impact on their social life experiences.

Besides, it creates reliable cooperation and equal opportunity since it doesn't discriminate among people based on their wealth status, develops a sense of ownership, and is capable of organizing funds, grains, and materials for the immediate problems of individuals. It depends on its own resources and, hence, creates self-reliance. In addition, it is structured, transparent, accountable, responsible, responsive, and autonomous decision-making, and hence democratic by its structures as to the findings of the study. In addition, the other people in the

study area were forwarded their reasons to join, which were associated with the demand for relief from psychological and emotional problems, including stress, depression, and others, by spending time with its members in the most challenging life situations apart from its financial assistance.

Hence, the active involvement of the *Afosha* members in sharing one's sorrow, facilitating situations, and carrying out the entire activities, including the funeral ceremonies, could create a mentally stable state of mind that led them to join this organization. Besides, when the death of one's blood relatives is immediately known, the chairman of this organization gives orders to declare that incident in all areas and calls for the whole family of *Afosha* to be in the house. Then, the members were organized into certain subgroups and took on responsibilities to manage the house of the man who died underneath, clean the house, fix the camp, welcome guests, and others, which will continue for the next few days or a week, even up to the month.

As a result, *Afosha* works at the local level to improve the social lives of its members. It focuses on tackling issues such as working with challenged individuals, addressing challenges faced by its members and families, and enhancing social and emotional well-being. Thus, the study concluded that household members of the *Afosha* in the study area were revealed to have participated in the wedding ceremonies of their localities through the renting of materials and in cooperative forms.\

Respondents identified that the rationale behind their joining *Afosha* was to simplify certain social problems that were expected and unexpected. In addition to that, the members of *Afosha* in Tullu Kosorruu responded to the benefits of its services by creating cooperation and partnership to share the bad situations faced by its members and providing a means to recover from the unsafe conditions.

5.4. Role of Afosha in Social Solidarity

Bierhoff (1999) stated that solidarity is an essential component for the proper functioning of a social system. He also defines solidarity as the members' motivating readiness to embrace and agree on their common belongingness as members of a collective system, as well as their trust in one another to fulfil the mutual expectations related to membership in their respective roles (p. 38). *Afosha* is the way communities express their unity, promote themselves, and show that they have good sociality. The study area community discusses why they join the *Afosha* as follows: One of my participants argued as follows:

Join because it is the way we all, the Tulluu Kosorruu community, express our good sociality and to be considered good as well as to have equal treatment with the community and to be free from social exclusion.'' The other is that a person who doesn't have Afosha and doesn't participate in it is excluded from all social life in our community, as he/she is considered valueless and deviant.

The other, my informant, discusses why she joins the *Afosha* as the following:

The main reason why I joined Afosha is to create social solidarity and unity as well as to share sorrow and joy with community members.

5.5. The Role of Afosha in Addressing Economic Problems

Community-based organization is the way people reduce poverty and address the problems of the community (Ajo, 2019). There are also findings obtained qualitatively from data sources through participatory observation, interviews, and focus group discussions that were conducted with committee leaders of *Afosha* on addressing the economic problems of the Tulluu Kosorruu community. Basically, according to the findings of the study, the payment of regular contributions on time is a very crucial action.

The study revealed that those members of the *Afosha* in the study area were very grateful for their regular participation in the meeting sessions of their *Afosh*a, which might focus on how to solve any economic problems being faced or to design strategies to enhance the performance of their members of the organization, which was among the most appreciated features observed among the members in the study area. Hence, it is crucial to measure the participation level of its members to identify the current trend in the performance of the expected *Afosha* services. Other immediate demands, and also in line with this service, they are playing on the reduction of harmful traditional practices.

In addition, they arrange loan provisions to manage unforeseen challenges like illness or the destruction of harvests in rural areas. This, in turn, helps members have the easiest and quickest provision of credit, with fewer ups and downs to challenge their problems. Community sanitation and crime prevention are also two of their most pressing areas of intervention. It has also been playing a key role by engaging in development projects and coordinating members.

On the other hand, most of the members of *Afosha* in the study area were identified with the commitment to actively engage in their local developmental activities for the sake of ensuring

community development through their *Afosha,* which in turn could bring benefits for their organization.

The strongest organization is measured by its large financial and human capacity; participate in certain activities that enhance the level of community development, which in turn strengthens the overall capacity. Besides, this organization in the study was recognized for their willingness to participate in certain social events such as wedding ceremonies, holidays, and other cultural celebrations by supplying their materials, providing financial support, and others.

There is the role of members based on their gender in the *Afosha*. For example, at funerals, male members were expected to dig graves, organize funeral ceremonies, carry the dead body or person, welcome guests after the funeral ceremony, and perform other required services when they were forwarded by the committees of their *Afosha*, which lasted for a few days or a week.

On the other hand, there is a clear procedure by which people pay their contribution and receive benefits. The chairman is responsible for managing and following the implementation. The secretary registers payments, and the treasury collects the money or grain and deposits or stores it at the site. Therefore, the findings led the study to conclude that *Afosha* in Tulluu Kosorruu village was being provided financial support and insurance for lost cattle and house destruction to facilitate loan opportunities.

Generally, *Afosha* in Tulluu Kosorruu provided loans for its members and also facilitated the situation of obtaining health insurance for medication and treatment for its members. It provides loans and health insurance for its members due to its weak financial capacity and the prohibition of such practices by their regulations. The members of this organization in the study area provide insurance for cattle and house destruction. The other findings obtained from the focus group discussion and key informants revealed that the *Afosha* provides a cash donation as a gift to the family of the deceased to cover miscellaneous expenses related to the funeral and the mourning as well as the other challenges faced. The committee members of this organization are in charge of giving a certain amount of money from the Afosha Sanduqa maallaqaa (cash box) to the committee, which then donates this monetary gift to the challenged family.

In addition to the financial gift, and in relation to the *Afosha* rules, there might also be financial loan access for the family of the deceased that encounters difficulties defraying the burial and mourning costs. In general, the study concluded that this organization of the study

area was providing certain social and economic benefits for their members based on the findings of the majority of respondents.

According to Mariam D. H. (2000), community self-help organizations financial insurance is the core function for their members in terms of financial supply and other immediate demands. And they provide psychosocial support to help victims recover from their grief and arrange loan provisions to manage unforeseen challenges.

In addition to this, community sanitation and crime prevention are also two of their most pressing areas of intervention. It has also been playing a key role by engaging in development projects and coordinating members. *Afosha* of the study area also actively participates in different community development programs, such as the construction of roads, the provision of credits, conflict resolution, risk coping, poverty reduction, assistance to offset losses, the accidental death of oxen, the construction of a burned house, and the maintenance of houses for the disabled or an elderly member.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1. Conclusion

In this study, *Afosha* is the pillar system used by the community of the study area to address social, cultural, and economic problems in their entire area of life. In addition to this, the contribution of *Afosha* is economic productivity, financial resources, capital assets, and level of skill and knowledge accumulation. These economic assets are also contributing to local economic development and social development by strengthening and considering the existence of social capital, social cohesion, solidarity, psychological and social supports during emergencies, and social activities, especially funeral services and accidents. As well as *Afosha* members helping local communities by supplying basic social services like oil, sugar, and flour, which lower costs and prices. It provides all services for the funeral system and supports the local community in different emergency situations.

6.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher forwarded the next suggestions. Accordingly, government, political systems, and development institutions may allow and give recognition to *Afosha* as development actors and also emphasize ensuring its economic productivity and capital development.

In addition, members of *Afosha* may focus on improving their financial and capital capacity by diversifying sources of income-generating activities to realize their contributions in addressing socioeconomic problems.

Policy makers to work on the responsibility and cooperation of the community to solve its problems through indigenous knowledge like *Afosha*

On the last, the rules and regulations of the government on social associations should be integrated with the community's cultural values and customs in the supporting system. Because community associations are everlasting, sustainable local socio-economic development should be supported by realizing *Afosha's* empowerment, their full participation, and the need to develop a sense of ownership amongst the members.

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