

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Assessing potentials and challenges of Haiq Estifanos Communal Monastery for cultural heritage tourism development

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The main purpose of this research is to assess the potential of Haiq Estifanos Communal Monastery to become tourist destination and to identify the major hindering factors of tourism development in the site. To attain this objective, the researcher employed qualitative research method. To assess the potential and challenges of the monastery for tourism development, primary and secondary data were collected. To collect primary data, face to face personal interview and participant observation was conducted. In order to analyze the contents of documentary materials such as books, magazines, newspapers and the contents of interviews and personal observation, the researcher has employed interpretive and descriptive analysis. The research identified that the monastery has plethora tangible and intangible heritages that have a great heritage tourism potential of the country. Within the churchyard, there are different historic buildings including the remarkable museum. The museum is unique in its collection; more than 140 scriptures dating back to the 13th century are preserved and displayed for visitors. In addition to the invaluable parchment manuscripts, the museum comprises different heritages, colorful and age-old articles that have religious, historic and aesthetic values. Besides these heritages, the location of the monastery in the peninsula augmented its potential for tourism development. However, factors such as, lack of trained manpower in the field of museum study and heritage management, absence of promotion, lack of awareness among the community, inaccessibility of the museum for women and absence of tourist facility in the nearby area are the major barriers that hindered the site to contribute for tourism development.

**Key words:** Tourism potential, challenges, Haiq Estifanos Communal Monastery.

## INTRODUCTION

According to the 1998 World Tourism Organization (WTO), tourism is the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business

and other purposes. This definition covers the important elements of movement of people to, and their stay in places or destinations outside their usual environment or normal place of residence or work. This movement is

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temporary and short-term. Destinations are visited for purposes other than taking up permanent residence or employment.

Tourism is the largest and fastest growing industry, which has the best possibility for generating many new jobs worldwide (Richard and Devied, 2002). Different tourism Scholars (Xuan and Andrew, 2008; Cyntiha Gunn, 2002) categorized tourism into different ways. In this regard Heritage tourism is one of the pillar segments of tourism. It is widely believed that heritage tourism is the backbone of tourism industry and can successfully help to preserve resources (Richard, 2000). According to Silberberg (1995), heritage tourism is a tool of economic development that achieves economic growth through attracting visitors from outside a host community, who are motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, or religious activity of group or institution. It is also indispensable for people who are seeking to find the way to communicate with their roots and their past, and the main way to reach these needs is through heritage tourism (Huh Jin, 2002).

Ethiopia is a land of unique culture and heritage with a history of thousands of years. It is one of the oldest nations in the world. It has huge heritage tourism potential owing to its natural attractions that include some of the highest and lowest places in Africa along with enormous wildlife including some endemic ones; a very old and well preserved historical traditions with fascinating stele, churches and monasteries (Yabibal, 2010). The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church comprises various historical and religious resources that are internationally recognized and have a potential to attract domestic and international visitors.

The heritages preserved by the church are highly regarded as tourist attraction resources of the country. There are many monasteries, churches, church museums as well as religious festivals, which have great potential to draw international and domestic tourists. The church of Tedbabe Maryam, Estifanos, Aba Giorgis Ze Gascha Atronus Maryam and Tenta Michael are among the heritage which are found in South Wollo Zone of Amhara region with immense heritage tourism potential.

Estifanos communal monastery is situated 35 kilometers away from Dessie. The monastery is rich with essential ecclesiastical and historical heritages such as church buildings, historic houses and museum. The sites are also comprises of non-material heritages including the history of the site and the various festivals performed in the monasteries.

Despite the fact that the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC) church is in possession of indispensable and priceless treasures, most of them are not empirically studied. In fact, different researchers and authors have conducted and wrote articles, papers and books regarding EOTC's contribution to tourism development and role of conservation of cultural heritages researchers like Ayalew (2002: 208), Mengestu (2008), Mezmur

(2011), Gizachew (2014) and Tewodros (2010) wrote and produced some works on cultural heritage tourism. But neither of them did not asses regarding the potential of Haiq Estifanos Communal Monastery to becoming tourism destination.

Due to this fact, the main tangible and intangible heritages found within Haiq Estifanos Monastery are not yet assessed and disclosed both to domestic and international tourists. Even the already known heritages have not been fully utilized due to challenges that hinders the development of heritage tourism in the area. Therefore, the principal purpose of this study is to assess the potential of Haiq Estifanos Communal Monastery to become tourist destination and to identify the major hindering factors of heritage tourism development in the monastery.

### **General objective**

The major objective of this research is to assess the potential of Haiq Estifanos Communal Monastery to become tourist destination and to identify the major hindering factors of heritage tourism development in the site.

### **Specific objectives**

- To asses Haiq Estifanos Communal Monastery heritage resources potential for heritage tourism development;
- To identify the major challenges, which hindered heritage tourism development in Estifanos Communal Monastery

### **Literature review**

#### ***The concept of heritage***

The concept of heritage is debatable (Herbert, 1995; Mengistu, 2008) and the term 'heritage' is used in various literatures. The followings are some of the diversified concept and definition of heritages. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s World Heritage Convention (1972) "heritage" in its broader meaning is generally associated with the word "inheritance," that is, something transferred from one generation to another through birth or legal succession or by any other means. Similarly, for Prentice (1993) the term "heritage" encompasses landscapes, natural history, buildings, artifacts, cultural traditions and the like that are literally or figuratively passed on from one generation to the other. Another scholar also define heritage as everything that people want to save or retain (Howard, 2003). This author also argued that all heritages are pervasive and that it concerns to everybody.

Thus, literature reveals that there is no single agreed definition of heritage. Even though there is a wide range and diversity in concepts and definitions, the term heritage can be summarize into two major categories: 1) Natural heritage, drawing its qualities from nature and 2) Cultural heritage with cultural and built elements in association with people and events. For the purpose of this study, heritage is created by and recognized of the value in what our ancestors left behind, which encompasses entities of material and immaterial treasures, the natural environment, built heritages as well as historic places.

### **Classification of heritage**

According to World Heritage Conventions adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1972, there are two broad categories of heritage: natural and cultural.

#### ***Cultural heritage***

The term cultural heritage and cultural resource are used in Europe and in USA respectively. However, both of them are specifically referring to cultural heritage resources.

According to UNESCO Convention (1972 Article 1), Cultural heritage, encompasses monuments, groups of buildings and sites, inscriptions, cave dwellings, archaeological sites, “which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science”.

Cultural heritage represent a masterpiece of human creative genius and a unique artistic achievement, have exerted great influence, bear a unique or exceptional testimony to a human civilization. On the other hand, Proclamation No. 209/2000 of the Ethiopian research and conservation of cultural heritage state that, cultural heritages are the product of long aged human activity and creativity that comprises the tangible and intangible ones. Mengistu (2008), elucidate that cultural heritage are the product of human prehistoric and historic endeavor besides it indicates the nature of evolution. Cultural heritage is also grouped into two, tangible cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage.

#### ***Tangible heritage***

According to proclamation No. 209/2000 of ARCCH, tangible heritages are cultural remains that can be seen or felt. Tangible cultural heritage include buildings, monuments, Manuscripts, historic places, artifacts and other remains of the same kind that are considered worthy of preservation for the future. These include objects significant to the archaeology, architecture, science or technology of a specific culture. These tangible cultural heritage further classified as, tangible

movable cultural heritage and immovable tangible cultural heritages. According to proclamation No.209/2000 (of ARCCH), Movable cultural heritage comprises:

*‘Movable Cultural Heritage’ means Cultural Heritage not attached to the foundation, that can be moved from place to place easily, and which are handed down from the past generation and shall include parchment, manuscripts, stone paintings and implements. sculptures and statues made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, copper or of any other mineral or wood, stone, inscriptions of skin, ivory, horn, archaeological and bone or earth or of any other material, and also Paleontological remains.*

On the other hand, immovable cultural heritages are heritage that are fixed to the earth with a foundation that cannot be moved from place to place unless and otherwise dismantling them. Some of the immovable cultural heritages, buildings, monuments, Churches, memorial and burial places, historical or pre-historical archaeological sites are the most important one (Proclamation 209/2000 (of ARCCH); Mengistu, 2008).

### **Heritage tourism**

Heritage tourism is a form of tourism that specifically targets the art, architecture, history, monuments, museums, theatres, religious heritage, social interaction, food habits, and lifestyle of people in a certain geographical region (Maria, 2002). According to Jamie and Eric (2011), heritage tourism deals with traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories, people of the past, and present. It includes irreplaceable historic, cultural and natural resources.

Heritage tourism is very important segments of the total tourism demand, and represents 37% of international tourism. It is important that this demand can be estimated to be growing at 15% per year (Richard, 2000). Hence, Heritage tourism, as a part of the broader category of tourism is now a major pillar of the tourism industry (Richard, 2000). On the other hand heritage tourism is an umbrella and comprises both the natural and cultural tourism activity while cultural heritage tourism by contrast, highlights human accomplishments rather than nature (Huh, 2002).

Ethiopia has several varieties of heritage tourism destination in different areas of the country, like monumental heritage related with art and architecture, the religious heritage the natural heritage, traditional arts and crafts, music and dance.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Site description**

Haiq Estifanos Communal Monastery is located 35 kilometers north of Dessie town, the zonal capital of south Wollo administrative zone

in Amhara Region. Geographically, the monastery is located at 11° 20' 20" Latitude 39° 41' 51" longitude. It is also situated in the historic route; 3 kilometers to the way to Lalibela and Aksum which are the most plethora heritages among the historic route tourism resources of the country. The monastery was founded in 13<sup>th</sup> century hence it encompasses different priceless antiquities donated by different emperors and dignitaries. Holy articles, parchment manuscripts, different stone and wood curving tables. Besides the cultural heritage, the monastery is blessed with natural heritages. To collect, analyze and interpret the data obtained from the site and to describe the objectives of the study, the qualitative research method is employed.

### Sampling

For the purpose of this study, the researcher is employed non-probability purposive sampling method. The research is conducted by interviewing selected informants. To select the informants purposive Sampling was used in which respondents are chosen purposefully that are believed to have the required knowledge.

In order to understand the heritage tourism potential and challenges of Haiq Estifanos Monastery data was gathered from the local communities' elderly people, heritage tourism officers and church servants. Informants were chosen based on the knowledge they have in the subject matter,

On the other hand, in order to understand the challenges relating to tourism facilities, information was collected from tourists by using non-probability convenience sampling, because they are selected randomly based on their availability during the time when the data is collected.

Besides, the researchers' own extensive personal observation was employed to generate primary data and to fill gaps of interview.

## DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

The main sources used for this study comprises of primary as well as secondary data. The primary data was collected from the sample population through interviews, focus group discussions and extended personal observations. Regarding the secondary data, the researcher consulted published and unpublished sources such as, books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, articles and internet.

### Data analysis method

In order to analyze the contents of documentary materials such as books, magazines, pamphlets and the contents of interviews and personal observation the researcher has employed interpretive and descriptive analysis method

### The main tourism attractions of Haiq St. Estifanos Abune Iyesus Moe Communal Monastery

Since its establishment the monastery has produced splendid heritages. In the monastery there are both movable and immovable cultural tourism resources. The

church museum, old houses, indigenous trees, and handicrafts are among the cultural tourism resources of the monastery. However in this article I tried to elucidate the most pivotal heritages of the monastery.

### The church museum

The museum is situated within the churchyard and in the eastern part of the church. It was constructed in 1999 E.C and the treasures were transferred from the treasure house to the newly built museum in 2000 E.C. It is one story building. Meanwhile it is a museum building, only the first or the ground floor used as repository and displays the material heritages, whereas the upper floor is served as an office. The two floors are connected with stairs and there is a balcony in the upper floor. The wall of the museum is built from stone and mortar and its roof is covered with corrugated iron sheet. The door and its widows are made of Iron sheet. The ground floor in which the antiquities are displayed has only one section. Despite the fact that women are not allowed to enter into and visit the museum, it became accessible through electronic device in the guest house built outside the churchyard.

### The museum collections

In the museum there are various collections which have been made from organic and inorganic materials, and almost all are ecclesiastical. The lion shares of the collections are parchment books. The church was one of the hubs of church education since its establishment, thus, those monks who had come to the monastery to continue their education wrote different religious, philosophical and astronomical books. Nowadays there are more than 140 parchment books within the museum. Some of these are not found elsewhere both in the country and abroad. Some of these parchment manuscripts are collected from 9<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century in different area in fact most of them were written and copied within the monastery by different church scholars as at that time.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the entire book collections in the museum are parchment made of the skin of animals particularly from goat skin and written by hand. To write on the manuscripts they used red and black ink, which was prepared from different plant leaves, flowers, soils and cereals. To accomplish a single book it could have taken half a year or more. The inner sheets of many of those books are adorned with various paintings of saints, prophets, martyrs, angels, Jesus Christ and Holy Virgin Mary.

As illustrated in Figure 2, parchment book, there is very astonishing painting of St. Mary with her beloved son and Martyr St. Georg which is painted within the parchment in different pages.



**Figure 1.** Some parchment manuscript books within the museum show case which one put over the other.  
Source: Photographed by the Researcher (2016).

The other stunning heritage in the museum is pulpits. These pulpits are made from one pieces of wood and it can be folded and opened. They are used or served for the purpose of reading of holy books which are very cumbersome for handling (informants Aba kidane Maryam and Aba Kinfe Michael, interviewed on September 2016).

**Crowns:** are other collections in the museum; they are made from gold silver and bronze. In the museum there are five crowns gifted by different emperors of Ethiopia. They are decorated with different design and have different sizes. Also, there is a cross over the upper tip of each crown. This signified that the then emperors were Christians with strong intimacy with the church. On some of the crowns, there are inscriptions which revealed that it belongs to the emperors.

**The crosses:** in the museum there are various crosses in different show cases. They are made from different materials, such as gold, silver, brass and wood. They are hand and processional crosses. Regarding their style there are Axumite, Lalibela and Gondarian. Different

words and pictures are inscribed on some of the crosses which increase their beauty and show the ability of the then artisans. They are handover to the church by different kings, dignitaries, nobles, bishop and priests.

### **The sacrificing stone and millstone**

Among the stones (Figure 3), the left one was used to offer sacrifice to the serpent by the inhabitant of the island before they were converted to Christianity by Aba Selama II (illuminator) in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. They used to offer milk and blood of animals as sacrifices, indicating that until that period Christianity was not propagated to the vicinity and the people worshiped the serpent.

The second stone shown in the right side was used for grinding grain. Before the introduction of electric mill, Ethiopians used manual stone mill; thus, this served as a proof of that period. According to my informant, Abune Teklhaymanot and Aba Giworgis of Gascha; the most notable Ethiopian saints were grinding grain to the church community when they were in the monastery (Aba Gebresilasse, interviewed on September 2016).



**Figure 2.** painting of St. George and St. Mary with her beloved son which found in one the inner page of parchment book  
Source: Photographed by the researcher (2016).

### The cooking pot

In the museum, there is a big pot which had been used for cooking that dates back to 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century. It was used for cooking grain for the monks and hermits who resides in the monastery. Abune Tekhaymanot, Aba Giorgis of Gascha and Aba Iyesus Moa were among the famous saints who had used the pot while in the monastery.

### Icons

Different icons are hanged on the wall of the museum; they are diptych and triptych. The image of Saint Mary with her beloved son is depicted in one of the icons and other saints are depicted on the other folds of the wooden plate. They have a potential to grasp the attention of any visitors. Although they were made five century ago, they seem recent and new. The image of holy trinity, Saint Mary and other saints are depicted on the wooden plate. However, it is affected by fire accidents and some of its bottom part is damaged. The frames of each panel are

carved from a single indigenous and well refined wood. These wooden panels were jointed together by using leather string instead of metal hinge by drilling at the junction of the two panels (Figure 4).

### Old houses and the stone bell

As earlier discussed, the monastery is very old and historic. Since then, many houses had been used for various services apart from the church; though many of them were destroyed in different period and currently there are only two historic houses.

### The Tegbar bet (Refectory)

It is situated in the eastern side of the church and rectangular in shape. According to the informant (Aba Birhane Hewt), this historic house is said to have been built while the monastery was established in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. However it was reconstructed in the later period for many times and the final reconstruction was



**Figure 3.** Sacrificing stone and millstone.  
Source: Photographed by the researcher (2016).

conducted during the reign of Emperor Haile Sillase (Aba Birhane Hewt interviewed on November 2016). The house had been used as a kitchen; Abune Iyesus Moa, the founding father and Abune Teklhaymant one of his famous fellow cooked grain and prepared food for other monks in this historic house. The house was built of wood, mud and stone while its roof was covered by grass. It has five wooden windows and two wooden doors. The interior part has two sections and in one of the interior section there are two erected timbers which have been used as pillar of the house and now testify about the oldness of the house (informant, Aba Gebre Medhin, interview on November 2016). Currently, some part of the exterior wall is covered by cement. The roof is also changed and covered by corrugated iron sheet; meanwhile its function is still unchanged. In the monastery there is division of labor, but all monks consumed the same types of food without considering status and age. Those monks who take the responsibility of food preparation cook the meal for the entire monks in this historic house and every monk except the aged take the allotted food there.

### The timber house

Another historic house in the churchyard is located in the north east side of the church and south west of the museum. Its wall is fully constructed of plank wood and its roof is covered with corrugated iron sheet. The wood which the wall is made of has different color. As it is clearly seen in the picture the front part is red and the

remaining is white. Different dignitaries had been buried in the interior section and it is still reserved. *Ras Wolle*, who was the husband of Queen Zewditu and notable noble during the reign of Emperor Menelik II, who lost his life while he was fighting with Teferi Mekonen, the future Emperor Hailesilasse was buried in this historic house (informant, Aba BirhaneHeiwet, interview on November, 2016). But no one can tell the exact year when the house was built. It is not open for visitors; in fact the monks could not consider the house as an attraction. It is one of the forgotten heritages in the monastery and demanded conservation and maintenance work.

### The stone bell

In the west side of the church there is a bell tower which is made from iron. In the bottom of the tower the historic stone bell is hanged. This bell has been used as an alarm for monks to wake up for church services. It is rectangular in shape and produced different sounds when it is struck. This type of bell is not found elsewhere unless in some historic churches of Ethiopia (informant, Aba Gebre Medhin, interviewed on September, 2016)

### Challenges for the development of heritage tourism in Haiq Estifanos Communal Monastery

As discussed so far, the monastery possesses ancient, historic, and religious treasures which have diversified values for different stakeholders. However, these



**Figure 4.** Icon of St Mary hanged on the wall of the museum.  
Source: Photographed by the researcher (2016).

priceless and astonishing treasures could not be accessible for domestic and international tourists due to various hindering factors and some of these are discussed as follows. priceless and astonishing treasures could not be accessible for domestic and international tourists due to various hindering factors and some of these are discussed as follows.

#### ***Lack of standard Museum and other related problems***

Initially the present building in which the antiquities are amassed and displayed was constructed for other purposes thus; it is unsuitable as a museum. It is also very narrow and has not enough space for tourists. Due to lack of space, objects are put over each other. According to informants many of the monastery's treasure are kept in a separate house due to lack of space in the museum. Tourists are not checked upon arrival and entry and exit from the museum; this might expose the movable material objects to theft. Tourists are not also strictly forbidden to photograph museum objects however it is not officially permitted. Though sacred places have many unique features, in Hiq Estifanos monastery there is absence of tourists' code of conduct

displayed on a billboard.

Though there is fixed amount of entrance fee for foreign and domestic tourists, 100 and 10 Birr respectively, there is no ticket available for them. Preparation and presentation of ticket for visitors have two vital benefits, in the first place it is crucial to know the number of tourists that visit the monastery as well as the museum on the other hand the ticket by itself can be used as a promotion tools but they fail to do so.

As discussed so far the monastery is surrounded by Lake Logo, undoubtedly this increase the beauty of the monastery as well as the vicinity, the lack is also one of the tourism attraction, but nowadays the water quantity of the lake is diminished. On the other hand there are illegal fishery activities practiced in the lake. Besides, the loges found in the north east of the lake and the small farmers in the lake surrounding cause contamination of the lake.

#### ***Lack of promotion***

Despite the fact that the monastery has immense immovable and movable treasures they could not be accessed by the public due to several reasons, of these lack of promotion is the prominent one. The monastery





**Figure 5.** The Tegbar bate (Refectory).  
Source: Photographed by the researcher (2016).

does not have its own website that can help to promote its resources; however, they did not promote the tourism resources either through printing or electronics media due to lack of finance and trained man power. Even there is no single billboard on the way to the monastery or in the nearby town of Haiq to indicate the direction where the monastery is located. Due to this and other related hindrances, all the innumerable and priceless heritage of the monastery became inaccessible for domestic and international tourists.

#### ***Lack of tourist facility***

Despite the fact that the number of tourists visiting the monastery is increasing from time to time there are no standard tourist facilities like restaurants, hotels, lodge, internet services and so on. Though many of the tourists have deep interest to rest and be entertained due to the absence of the above facilities in the surrounding, they could not stay more than an hour. In addition, there are no souvenir shops in the site too. Even the nunnery shop which displays and sells some traditional clothes in the house near the main gate lacks varieties and could not satisfy tourists demand.

#### ***Poor handling system of treasures***

The ETOC treasure has been facing great damage due to poor handling method and lack of museum. As stated

earlier some of the parchment books were covered with wooden panel, fin leather and cloth. However, due to long age many of their cover are damaged, even some parts of the parchments' script are discolored or wiped away. Placing external material within the parchment cause discolor of paintings within the book. The worst problem is compiling different parts of the different books in one collection. Some of the parchments and vestments are affected by moisture and termites. Lack of appropriate handling also causes devastation of the manuscript and other treasures that are found in the monastery. Lack of conservation due to lack of trained manpower and finance is also serious problem faced by the monastery.

#### ***Conservation problem***

Large number of EOTC buildings has lost their authenticity and beauty because of unprofessional and unwise conservation and restoration work (Mengistu, 2008). The historic house of the monastery is victim of poor conservation method. As it can be seen in the picture some parts of the exterior wall are covered with cement and this affects the authenticity of the house (Figure 5).

#### ***Lack of awareness***

Though Haiq Estifanos have immense heritage tourism resource, they are not yet exploited properly due to lack

of awareness about them. The local community and the clergy have not distinguished which elements is tourism attraction and which is not. Due to this fact some of the valuable treasures are inaccessible for tourist. In the monastery there are different old houses, as noted so far, but currently they are not considered as heritage tourism resources and no one is giving attention to them. Even they are not open for visitors, rather the church uses them for other purposes. Above all, both the general public and foreign visitors are not aware of the existence of such invaluable heritage resources in the churchyards.

## Conclusion

This study has attempted to assess the heritage tourism potential of Haiq Estifanos communal monastery and the hindering factors that challenge heritage tourism development in the monastery. Haiq Estifanos communal monastery is paramount important to study medieval Ethiopian history, particularly church education. The monastery is house of indispensable and priceless treasures, particularly substantial number of manuscripts. The church museum with its invaluable religious and secular antiquities has the most important heritage tourism potential to draw both international and national tourists.

As revealed in the analysis section, few numbers of international and national tourists are visiting the monastery though the flows are increasing from time to time. Due to the presence of different hindering factors, the heritages of the churches are not properly utilized and the flow of tourists is not satisfactory. The research findings reveal major challenges that have hindered the churches to develop heritage tourism to its full potential as lack of tourist's facility; lack of promotion works; poor handling system of the treasures. Also, lack of standard museum is another contributing factor. Unprofessional conservation work and lack of awareness are the main hindering factors that affect the heritage tourism development in Haiq Estifanos Communal monastery.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to properly utilize the heritage tourism potential of Haiq Estifanos Communal monastery and to attract more tourists to the monastery the following recommendations are forwarded.

- (i) The existing Haiq Estifanos Communal monastery church museum should be expanded in order to accommodate more antiquities and to make suitable for tourists access besides, the existing show case should be substituted by standard show cases to mitigate the damage towards organic fabrics;
- (ii) Constructing modern museum and incorporating additional collection to increase its audience is vital.

(iii) To make it accessible for both men and women, a new museum should be constructed outside the present place because in the current museum women are forbidden to enter and visit the museum.

(iv) Accommodation and recreational places should be constructed.

(v) The church community, the local people, the private institutions and South wollo Culture and Tourism office should work in collaboration with the administrator of the monastery to mitigate the stated problems.

(v) The monastery should promote their heritage tourism potentials through different printing and electronics media.

(vi) Souvenir shops should be opened to exhibit local arts and crafts such as jewelry, basketry, pottery, traditional paints and musical instruments.

(vii) Create collaboration with travel agents and tour operators to promote and draw tourists to the monastery.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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