



**Audience Reception Study on Debub FM 100.9 programs with special focus on
*'Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku'***

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Tsedeniya Solomon, entitled an *Audience Reception Study on Debub FM 100.9 programs with special focus on 'Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku'* and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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ABSTRACT

Audience Reception Study on Debub FM 100.9 Programs with Special Focus on '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*'

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Addis Ababa University, 2014

This study aims at finding out the audiences' response regarding Debub FM 100.9 programs with particular reference to issues related to health. In light of this, attempts were made to assess audiences' program preference, their purpose for listening to the program, and some factors influencing their reception towards the program. Regarding related literature, attempts have also been made to review various literatures written in related with the theme. Accordingly, different theoretical frameworks with particular emphasis to the uses and gratifications approach were presented and discussed.

The research method used in this study was quantitative approach. Hence, in order to find answers to the research questions, questionnaire was used as a major instrument of data collection. Accordingly, three hundred questionnaires were distributed to a randomly selected subjects of Hawassa city residents and Hawassa University students. Factors like age, sex, education, occupation, and place of residence were considered to be among the issues that could influence the response of audiences for a particular media text.

The analysis of the data shows that age, gender, and education factors were important in influencing the audiences' program (genre) preferences, and their opinions towards the specific program called "*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*". As (McQuail, 2000) states the need of audiences varies according to their experience, gender and educational levels. Thus, the finding reveals instances whereby majority of male respondents preferred to listen to news and educational programs than female respondents.

What is more, the finding also indicates that significant majority of the respondents in all age groups agreed that "*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*" is certainly educative. However, few of the younger participants viewed the issues raised in the program in a negative way. On the other hand, place of residence and occupation differences were not that much critical factors in influencing audience reception in this study. With reference to occupation, the analysis shows that the transmission time of "*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*" was unsuitable for the overwhelming majority of the respondents, especially for those who were students and government employees. Based on the findings, the study has made some pertinent recommendations.

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List of acronyms

CSA- Central Statistical Agency

FM- Frequency Module

NGO- nongovernmental organization

SNNPRG- Southern nations, nationalities, and peoples region

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The years between 1900 and 2000 have probably seen more changes in technology than any previous centuries. Even though there are differences in technological developments and levels of industrializations among the developed and developing nations, mass media as one vital means of communication, remains true for all. As Mytton (1999) stated pictures and reports of events and people from different parts of the globe, with their natural settings, are carried out everywhere at a high speed through the two electronic media, i.e., television and radio. They are a 20th century phenomena and played a major role in all parts of the world. Although some people still have no regular access, radio reaches everyone and everywhere.

It is true that radio is the most accessed channel for current affairs in the world. Similarly, in Ethiopia, the history of mass media particularly radio is century old. It is the common medium of communication that transmits various informative, educative and entertainment programs that reach the majority of the people in all parts of the country. As a result, the government and non-governmental organizations consider the device to be an important tool to reach large audience in both urban and rural areas as well as both literate and illiterate societies.

As it is known, Ethiopia radio is the only national radio available for long time. However, a number of FM radio stations have recently been operational in different regional capitals/towns of the country. For instance, in Ethiopia, the first FM station, FM 97.1, was launched

in June 2000. It has been transmitting for 24 hours daily, focusing mainly on urban issues and confined to Addis Ababa and near by towns only. Since this station was the first FM station in the country, it has captured a large number of audiences in the cited urban areas. Years after the establishment of FM 97.1, Fana FM 98.1, FM Bahir Dar 96.9, Debu FM 100.9, FM 96.3 (established by Addis Ababa City Council additionally) and Dire Dawa FM 106.1 started their transmission in their respective regions. Expanding such kinds of media stations are vital for the development of a country. But, in order to achieve desired goals, any media company should consider and give great value for audiences.

It is true that all kinds of human communications require person or persons with whom to communicate. The questions "Who is listening?" or "Who is watching?" are surely unwarranted questions to ask. Certainly broadcasters need to know something about the people who are watching or listening whom we call audiences. Audiences can be groups or individuals targeted by and often built by media industries. The word audience can also be used to describe groups of people who are connected by some form of socio-cultural ties. These audiences can be labeled as what Ross and Nightingale (2003:4) called "audience formations" which are "shaped by pre existing social and cultural histories and conditions, and sometimes also by sense of shared interest that incline them to repeatedly use particular media vehicles".

Most of the media industries need to know whether their audiences are satisfied or not on the programs they transmit because the life of any media rely highly on the existence of

active audiences. As a result of these, the producers of media texts often work with an image of the audience and what they want. Thus, this particular study is a survey of Debub FM100.9 on the radio listening habits and other determining variables of radio audienceship.

Debub FM 100.9 is a radio station owned by the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional Government (SNNPRG) beaming its programs to the people of the region and some areas of neighboring regions, viz. Oromiya Region. It is the first radio station in the region and began its transmission on March 2005 G.C and under the auspices of southern Mass Media Agency that was established in accordance with proclamation No.87/2005. Its purpose of establishment as stated in the proclamation is "...discharge its responsibility by making a close and wide coverage of the life of the society in the ever rising international need for swift information exchange" (Proc No. 87/2005:1).

Currently, Debub FM 100.9 has transmitter capacity of 10 KW, and the station is head quartered in Hawassa. Furthermore, it has 8 re-broadcasting stations (each with a transmitter capacity of 1kw) of which one is not yet functional. In addition to Amharic, this radio station broadcasts its programs in more than 40 local languages (a promotion pamphlet, January, 2011). FM 100.9 is expected to have potential audiences of 15 million people in the ethnically diverse region.

In addition to these, the station broadcasts a variety of programs, which mainly deal with economic, social and developmental issues that occur in the region. For example, news, entertainments like sport, music, drama and programs related with gender, health, cultures are some of these. However, this study focuses on the reaction of audiences regarding the program that deals with issues related to health.

As it is well known, Ethiopia is one of the least developed countries, the people heavily suffers from health problems. As a result of this, most of the media houses in the country broadcast programs on health issues so as to create awareness in the society. Thus, '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*' is one of the programs of Debut FM which address a variety of important messages related to health. The program was first aired on March 2005, and continued to reach its audience every Tuesday afternoon from 3:20p.m- 4:50p.m. This program was likely started to broadcast following the launching of Debut FM 100.9 radio station, and is on air once a week.

In addition, as its name indicated "*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*" is a kind of program where audiences' call-in and raise questions regarding their health problems and share ideas on some related issues. However, whatever the program addresses the needs of the audience has not yet been studied systematically. As a result, this study aims at examining the reaction of audiences regarding Debut FM 100.9 program that dealt with issues related to health.

In addition to these, the station broadcasts a variety of programs, which mainly deal with economic, social and developmental issues that occur in the region. For example, news, entertainments like sport, music, drama and programs related with gender, health, cultures are some of these. However, this study focuses on the reaction of audiences regarding the program that deals with issues related to health.

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1.2. Statement of the Problem

It is obvious that people watch television and listen to the radio at different times, but the question is we don't know with how much attention and with what degree of dedication. Furthermore, we often do not know which programs most audiences prefer to watch or listen.

There is no doubt that, at most basic levels, audiences are crucial in communication to all media in general and radio in particular. Thus, producing and transmitting programs without audiences would merely mean waste of time, energy and resources. On the other hand, as Abercrombie (1996: 140) contends, audiences are not blank sheets of paper on which media messages can be written. Rather, they are key element for all kinds of mass media. In most western countries, audiences have prior chance to determine how effective media messages are. As a result of these, the active audience perspective declared that media content is very dependent on the experience and social location of audience members (Jensen, 1991, cited in McQuail, 1997:101).

So far, there are some studies conducted on audience reception. For instance, Beset (2007) had conducted reception research on radio audiences of Mecha district in Ethiopia. The study focused on radio messages that discourage early marriage. The findings of the research were in line with social realities occurred in the target audiences and the issue at focus. The other is Tibeb's (2006) thesis on audience reception analysis of how youth make

sense of HIV messages of “Yibekal” radio program. It mainly focused on how audiences interpret or understand the messages of ‘Yibekal’ program.

In Ethiopia, some broadcasting channels operate relentlessly without attempting to find anything about audiences gratification and, they often do not conduct an audience research. For instance, as Debub FM 100.9 has a short time experience, no single study has been found in the area of audience reception. But, in a city like Hawassa where audiences do not have any alternative FM channels to listen to, a great care is needed to broadcast good programs that could gratify them.

Hence, it is generally agreed that the development of a country highly depends on healthy population even though majority of the people in Ethiopia are seriously affected by many types of communicable diseases. As a result of these, it was felt that important to conduct audience reception research on a particular program called *Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*. Thus, this study is an attempt to fill this gap.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study is to examine audience response regarding Debub FM 100.9 with particular reference to *Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku* program.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The study has the following specific objectives.

- ❖ To examine the opinions of Debub FM 100.9 audiences regarding *Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku* program.
- ❖ To evaluate to what extent this program influences audience's decision regarding their health.
- ❖ To identify factors that might affect the audience's reception of the program.

1.4. Research Questions

This study aims at answering the following major research questions.

- ❖ How do the audiences react to '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*' program produced by Debub FM 100.9?
- ❖ How does '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*' program influence audiences' health decisions?
- ❖ What are the factors that affect the audiences' reception of '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*' program?

1.5. Significance of the Study

According to Assael (cited in Abel 2005), research on audience composition, habits and preferences, has become an essential tool for the management of broadcasting systems throughout the world. At either extreme of broadcasting policy that of permissiveness, which attempts to give the audience what it wants and the extreme of authoritarianism, which allows the audience what it ought to get, managers have found research indispensable for reaching their objectives. The researcher believes that audience research is necessary to improve programs that are produced by media stations and to establish a wholesome

relation between viewers or listeners. Thus, this study may help the media companies to understand the centrality of audiences for the success of their programs and attempt to produce programs that highly resonate with their audiences. And, it also used for students and researchers who may have interest in conducting further studies in the area.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The study focuses on a particular issue, that is, the audience reception of '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*' program produced by Debub FM 100.9. This radio station reaches an estimated audience of 15 million people in the ethnically diverse region. However, due to shortage of time and resources, the study is limited to the responses of Hawassa city residents and students pursuing their education at Hawassa University.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

Since the subjects of this study are selected randomly, it is difficult to argue that the sample is representative of all the audiences. As a result, the conclusion drawn from this study cannot be generalized to the whole residents of Hawassa city. On the other hand, besides the reluctance of some individuals to provide information, lack of related written documents at the radio station were among the constraints of the study.

1.8. Organization of the Study

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter deals with the background, statement of the problem, the research objectives, the research question and limitations of the study. The second chapter reviews the literature related to the study. The third chapter is where the

methodology of the study is discussed in detail. The fourth chapter includes the findings and discussions. Finally, the fifth chapter concludes the thesis and suggests recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Starting from the late twentieth century, media theories had varied views of audiences in relation to the media. The theories state the works of different scholars regarding audience reception. This chapter draws attention to the different roles audiences were assumed to occupy in relation to the media as reflected in different theories. The discussion begins with the definition of the term ‘audience’ as conceptualized by different researchers and followed by the explication of the earliest effect theories and concludes with the introduction of the more recent ones.

2.1. Defining the ‘Audience’

Most scholars commonly define an ‘audience’ as a group of people or individuals, who actively engage in a particular media outlet. Yet, for the pioneers in the field of media research, the word ‘audience’ is very familiar as a collective term for receivers in simple sequential model of the mass communication process (source, channel, message, receiver, effect). When look at the history of the term ‘audience’, it shows that it has been in use long before the introduction of broadcasting modes of accessing information (Ross and Nightingale, 2003:4).

In the earliest media theories, ‘audience’ meant the congregated ‘mass society out there’ passively receiving media contents. However, McQuail (2000:360) finds it convenient to put the notion of audience in different and overlapping ways, i.e., “by place (as in local

media audience), by people (specific age belief groups), by the type of channel, by the media content, i.e., the subject matter and by time (prime time)” (as cited in Eyasu, 2008).

However, it is also important to distinguish between audience as a concept and the actual audiences that are inhabited whether in a theatre, cinema, or living room. For example, Ang (1991: 13) draws a theoretical distinction between “television audience” as discursive construct and the social world of actual audiences’ (cited in Kristyn Gorton 2009: 13). These two things might not always be the same and one must be aware of the differences between them. The term ‘audience’ itself might no longer adequately describe the groups of people watching television, but for the time being, it is the concept we have and yet one loaded with historical, cultural and political implications.

There are different types of audiences, as a result it is important to determine the type of audiences in order to address them properly. According to Wicks audiences are categorized into two. The first one is the mass audience. As he stated, mass audience is most often viewed as homogeneous composition of individuals who are separated from one another and behave autonomously (Wick, 2001:37).

This concept of the mass audience developed along with the rise of the hypodermic needle theory which assumes the audience as an undifferentiated mass that was particularly inclined to the powerful media influence (ibid, 2001:37). However, the concept of the mass audience started to be eroded with the rise of the limited effect theory in the 1950 and the subsequent audience centered theories that assume the audiences as active in various

degrees (ibid, 2001:37). Apart from the paradigm shift, the technological advancement has allowed the introduction of more and specialized media programs that intended to specific audiences. In relation to the effect of the technological advancement, new communication technologies have changed traditional notions of the mass audience, the mass communicator, and the relationship between the two (Davis and Baran, 2006:19).

Finally, this paradigm shift from effect to active audience theory and the new media environment has brought the notion of mass audience to be no longer dominant. Instead, the trend of audience segmentation has become outshined. After the subsiding of the mass audience, “the age of the segmented audience, enabling people to program their own media environment had arrived” (Wicks, 2001:38). Different scholars and media organizations suggest various ways of segmenting media audiences. One example of these is Turow, (2003:38) who maintained that media organizations segment their audiences into three broad categories, namely, demographics, psychographics, and lifestyle categories.

According to Turow (2003), demographic factors are referring to characteristics by which people are divided into some indicators such as age, gender, occupation, ethnicity, race, and income. The second way to differentiate groups is by psychographics, or categorizing people on the bases of their attitudes, personality types or motivations. The third broad way to describe media audiences is by using life style categories.

By this we mean finding activities in which potential audiences are involved that mark them as different from others in the audience or in the population at large (ibid, 2003:38). This

new trend of segmenting audiences is appreciated for its provision of ample opportunity where “audience members find it easier to identify newspapers, television programs and other media suited to their tastes” (Wicks, 2001:192). Others consider the implications of this new trend positively as “the seeds of a new cultural democracy in which alternative meanings circulated and communication patterns are as much people-to-people as they are top down, creating spaces for new forms of public communication and participation” (Croteau and Hoynes, 2003:332). However, this idea is challenged by some who maintained that dividing audience members into segments encourages social divisions by emphasizing differences between people, not their similarities (Turow, 2003:204).

As Croteau and Hoynes (2003:332) also indicated, opponents of audience segmentation believe that this trend breaks down “the common cultural bonds- reinforced and reproduced by mass media- that formed the basis for a national identity”. In the contemporary media environment, we might see some media continuing to produce programs at targeting the mass audience. In any case, however, although these situations are somehow a deviation from the current practice, “the trend towards producing programming with ever narrower audience segments is clear” (Wicks, 2001:39).

In most of the recent media studies, the word audience is often used as a way of talking about people, either as groups or as individuals.

Audiences are constantly making their own cultural environment from the cultural resources that are available to them. Thus, audiences are not made up of cultural dupes; people are often quite

aware of their own implication in structures of power and domination, and of the ways in which cultural messages can manipulate them. Furthermore, the audience of popular culture cannot be conceived of as a singular homogeneous entity; we have to take seriously the differences within and between the different fractions of the popular audience (Grossberg, cited in Kristyn Gorton 2009:15).

Ross and Nightingale (2003:4) used the term to refer to large groups of people, like the mass audience for television or radio news, newspaper readerships, the general public, or even people attending a major sporting event or a rock concert. According to these scholars, the word 'audience' can also be used to describe groups of people who are bounded by some form of socio-cultural ties called "audience formations", which are "shaped by pre-existing social and cultural histories and conditions, and sometimes also by sense of shared interest that incline them to repeatedly use particular media vehicles".

When come to the idea of audience reception research, most previous studies were focused mainly on the message of the media or in other words, the content of the program, not on the audience. This is because many scholars assumed audiences as a mass, which consisted of a diverse gathering of people. The members of the mass audience were not viewed as individuals who are distinguished from one another and behave independently. However, now-a -days researchers believe in audience's active participation in media. As

Abercrombie (1996:140) noted, audiences are not like blank sheets of paper on which media messages can be written. In relation to this, the effect of the technological advancement, Davis and Baran (2006:19) argued that, “new communication technologies have changed traditional notions of the mass audience, the mass communicator, and the relationship between the two”.

According to Corteau and Hoynes (2003: 260), audiences are peoples who are ‘active readers’ of media messages and not passive recipients of them. Audiences actively engage themselves with the media contents they access and construct meaning in light of the context of the everyday life wherein they are situated. The notion of ‘active audience’ in reception theory is intended for embracing three concepts that complement each other (ibid: 266). The first one is the denial of the passivity and gullibility of audiences. It means that audiences engage themselves to bring about their knowledge and experiences as they make sense of media contents. The second concept points at the claim that reception and interpretation of media outputs is not strictly individual, but it is also a social activity. Individuals share a number of elements commonly in their social setting and their lived life brings about factors which influence the way audiences make sense of media contents (Corteau and Hoynes 2003: 268). The third point embedded in the ‘active audience’ notion is the ‘collective action’ people could occasionally take in response to certain media program contents (ibid: 268-269).

2.2. Historical Overview of Audience Research

As most written materials indicate, reception studies started developing around 1980s. Some people assumed that audience research is just a matter of knowing if anyone is listening or viewing, but it is the various methods and techniques used to find out about the audience, and it is also a means of providing essential information to aid the creative process of program making. In addition to this, reception study deals with how audiences understand media messages relevant to their individuality and social backgrounds.

In the early times, most media researchers were interested in knowing the influence of the media. Yet, later on some scholars, who mainly focused on the active participation of audiences, conducted some contemporary audience researches. For instance, a number of researchers came to the media studies with the belief that audiences are active and can construct meaning not as exactly intended by the media producers, but as the audience's own life styles, experience and social interactions dictate.

According to McQuail (2000:367), reception study "emphasizes media use as a reflection of a particular social-cultural context and as a process of giving meaning to cultural products and experience in everyday life." Unlike other kind of studies, audience reception tries to isolate variables like race, ethnicity, age, gender, and income in an effort to see how different social groups tend to construct different meanings for the same text.

Ross and Nightingale (2003:7) identify five elements of media events that are sources of audience research interest, 'the audience participants as individuals; the audience activities

of the participants in the media event; the media time/space of the event; the media power relations that structure the event; and the mediated information with which people engage. They further suggest that ‘In all audience research, certain assumptions are made about what aspects of the media event are acting on audiences and about whether or not such “influence” is likely to benefit them or the researchers’ (ibid, 2003:7). Thus, they argue that any consideration of the media and audiences will be partial rather than comprehensive. Hence, in order to understand how audiences have been conceptualized, it is necessary to consider the various theoretical paradigms employed in audience analysis.

“There was a time when in the developed industrialized countries where broadcasting began in the 1920s, audience research was not at all widespread” (Mytton, 1999:16). According to Mytton (1999: 16) broadcasters in the early days of radio in Europe and the United States knew remarkably little about their listeners. During that time, the researchers applied very unreliable and misleading methods.

In the 1970s, there was a crisis in audience research around the notion of powerful media and powerful audience. In the *Effects of Television*, James Halloran (1970) argued that ‘we should ask not what the media does to people, but what people do with the media, which refocused an approach to the media and studying audiences. As indicated in many written materials, during 1970s and 1980s, most empirical and cultural studies were mainly focused on media audiences. Their aim was to gain a more useful understanding of what people were doing with media in their daily lives. David Morley and Charlotte Brundson (1980) are

pioneers of the audience research tradition. Their research undertaking was done on the Nationwide, BBC TV news magazine. Morley examined the context of media to determine the meaning people took from the program and he concluded that ‘meaning is not solely inscribed in the messages produced by the media, but is the outcome of the interaction between the audience and the text’. He also found out that audiences from the same socio-economic background could generate different interpretations of the same message (cited in Williams 2003: 191).

In relation to audience research tradition, McQuail (2000:366) also identified three main audience research approaches. The first one is structural tradition of audience research, which deals with media structure and social composition of audiences. According to McQuail (2000:366), the size and reach of radio audiences were essential to media management. In addition, media use is largely shaped by certain constant elements of social structure. So, knowing about the social composition of audiences like education, gender, income, place of residence, position in the life cycle, etc, is an essential issue in audience research tradition.

The other tradition of audience research that McQuail identified was the behaviorist approach. The main aim of this approach is to elucidate and predict the individual’s behavior in the process of choosing and responding to media messages. In this approach, he stated two main types of behavioral audience research. (2000:366) The first one is the typical effects model, which was a ‘one-way process in which the audience was conceived

as a passive recipient of media stimuli.’ In this model, media audiences were considered as “masses” being made up of isolated and defenseless individuals. This notion of ‘masses’ puts a particular image on media audiences as passive receivers who are easily manipulated. The other phase of “behavioral” audience research was in many ways a reaction from the model of direct effects. In this regard, the audience was viewed as relatively as active and motivated set of media users/ consumers, who were in charge of their media experience, rather than passive receivers.

The cultural approach is the last classification of McQuail’s audience research tradition. The cultural studies tradition emphasizes media use as a reflection of a particular social-cultural context and as a process of giving meaning to cultural products and experience in everyday life (McQuail, 2000:367).

In the early days of 1920s, the role of audiences was considered as passive and the media was considered to be powerful. This was a dominant view in explaining the relationship between audiences and the media. This view was reflected in the traditional effect theories. However, new audience research challenges the view of this traditional theory. Now-a-days audience research does not aim to tell program makers what to do. Rather, it focuses on how audiences generate meaning from the media, which is known as the active audience theory. Thus, in this modern theoretical approach the media does not easily manipulate audiences.

2.3 Active Vs Passive Audience

2.3.1 Passive Audience

In the 1920s, looking at audiences as passive and the media as powerful was a dominant view in explaining the relationship between audiences and the media. Most researches in the past focused only on the message of the media not on audiences. At that time, audiences were seen as submissive absorbents, and it was believed that the attitudes and behaviors of audiences are the result of a powerful external force- media.

The notion of the "passive" audience has evolved a great deal in this newer "mainstreamed" model but the specter of the "passive audience" tradition creates the fear of the rise of mass society. During the time of early mass communication theory, there were a number of possible reactions to the presence of mass society. Yet, some other approaches put the validity of certain concepts of this "mass society" theory under question. For example, active theorists often deny the dominance of the mass in mass communication. Blumler (1979: 21), a leading exponent of uses and gratifications theory, notes that this school has "always been strongly opposed to mass audience terminology as a way of labeling the collectivities that watch TV shows, attend movies, and read magazines and newspapers in their millions". The inability to find and measure a convincing evidence of mass "hypodermic" effects facilitates the use of the new "active audience" (Berelson, 1959 and Klapper, 1960) (as Cited in Biocca, 1987:57). However, who was this "active" audience member and what would

be evidence of the activity.

The active audience member began to take on characteristics of the classical liberal democratic citizen. Freedom of choice and the exercise of that choice was a sign of "active audience activity". It was achieved by denying the effectiveness of mass communication and mass culture. Consequently, declarations of the death of the passive audience were to become an academic ritual (for examples of a widespread phenomenon, Berlo, 1977; McLeod & Becker, 1981; Palmgreen, 1984 as cited on Biocca 1987), and then the action of the active audience became an imperative.

2.3.2 Active Audience

In the early days of media research, there was a trend to treat the media as "all-powerful" in shaping the way audiences react. This view was reflected by the traditional effect theories, which are also known as the magic bullet theories. This effect paradigm emphasized the power of media in determining how audiences think and behave (Williams, 2003:206). However, later on studies proved that media were not powerful and had no direct effect on people's attitude or opinion, as people also could be influenced more by other factors like education and social position (Davis and Baran, 2006:135). In other words, the new audience research, reception studies, has emphasized the power of the audience to resist the media with their 'critical' and 'creative' abilities. When describing the audience activity as information processing, active audience theorists point out that individuals have varying levels of attention and involvement (Anderson et al, 1983).

Most researches conducted in the early days show that audiences are no longer seen as an undifferentiated mass of passive recipients of messages. But, today the concept of audience is transformed from perceiving audiences as ‘mass entity’ to various fragmented pieces. Thus, Williams (2003:192) states that detection of audiences to make meaning has produced ‘active audience theory’ which has established itself as a new accepted view in media studies. This theory also aims at ‘understanding how audiences actively engage in the process of generating meaning and the factors outside the media that shape the sense they make of media messages’ and focus on inquiring “what audiences think and do” in order to understand the influence of the media.

Generally speaking, active audience theory looks at audience in a more closer and elaborated way than previous theories and tries to understand the factors that affect the interpretation of media texts. However, different scholars have criticized this theory. The major critique is that active audience theory has given more power to the audience that question the notion of media power. In other words, the active audience approach is totally discarding the existence of media power. As stated in Williams (2003:207),

Active audience theory by stressing the ability of audiences to make their own meanings from what the media pump out, to use media technologies for their own purposes and to take their own pleasures from what they see, hear and read undermines or even invalidates the concept of media power.

However, the active audience scholars might be dissimilar in some aspects, they all agree on the diversity of interpretation of media messages and the ability of the audience to critically see what the media offers them (ibid: 206).

2.4. Audience Reception Theory

According to most media researchers, reception study is an area whereby audiences are studied in relation to meanings drawn from media products. For instance, Davis and Baran (2006: 276) define reception theory as “audience-centered theory that focuses on how various types of audience members make sense of specific forms of content.”

Reception scholars are interested in knowing the influence of the media based on how audiences construct meanings from the media texts. They believe that media texts are open to different interpretations depending on the audience’s background and knowledge. Thus, reception analysis gives emphasis to the ability of audiences to take out the meanings they wanted from popular media and cultural forms.

Audience reception theory is a humanistic approach of audience study which has come to be widely used as a way of characterizing the wave of audience research, which occurred within communication and cultural studies during the 1980s and 1990s. It is more concerned in understanding and explaining the way audiences make sense of media messages and the factors outside the media that shape the sense they make of the texts. In other words, reception theorists focus on the roles that audiences play in the scheme of things, not on texts.

The audience reception theory has the strengths of focusing attention on individuals understanding within the particular context of their lives, and how they interpret media contents in communication process. As Stagier (2005: 4) contends, reception studies are practically pragmatic field that matters for our social, individual, and political life. Generally, one can simply indicate that reception theory undoubtedly has a tremendous impact on the way in which media studies are now conducted. It is very important for the mass media to know what kind of audience is targeted because every text assumes to convey meaning to the audience.

As indicated previously, reception studies started developing around 1980s and deals with how audiences understand media messages in relevant to their individuality and social backgrounds. In the early times, media effects theories were based on the view that powerful media institutions are able to inject audiences with their messages, and affect their behaviors. However, later on, some contemporary audience researches were started to be conducted by different scholars. For instance, a number of researchers came to the media studies with the belief that audiences are active and can reconstruct meaning not exactly intended by the media producers but as the audience's own life styles, experience and social interactions dictate.

Among contemporary audience reception theories, Hall's encoding/decoding model is the one. Encoding-Decoding model is the starting point of active audience theory, which mainly examines the relationship between the media message, as it is 'encoded' by a media

producer and the ways that message is interpreted or 'decoded' by audience (Williams, 2003:195).

In contrast to other media theories that disempowered audiences, Hall advanced the idea that audience members can play an active role in decoding messages as they rely on their own social contexts, and might be capable of changing messages themselves through collective action. Hall categorizes the different meanings formed while decoding media messages:

This category is the preferred reading theory that distinguishes three kinds of meanings; the dominant, negotiated and oppositional. The dominant or hegemonic decoding is when the audience accepts the preferred meaning encoded in the text. The oppositional reading occurs when people understand the preferred reading, reject it and decode meaning according to their own values and attitudes, and a negotiated reading is 'where people adapt rather than completely reject the preferred reading' (cited in Williams 2003:196).

Hall's model does not focus on individual's media usage. Rather, it gives emphasis to "how different social contexts and backgrounds" influence individual meaning making (Williams, 2003:196). In relation to this, Morley was the first person to test Hall's encoding/decoding model in his audience study. The result confirmed Halls argument that people are not passive and different groups make sense of a message in different ways based on their social background (ibid, 2003).

On the other hand, in criticizing Hall's encoding-decoding model, Morley (cited in Williams, 2003) argues that not only class background which could affect the way audiences interpret media messages but as he found out people from the same socio-economic background generating different interpretations of the same media content. Thus, in addition to what Hall found out, he suggested that "social variables such as age, gender and ethnicity are often as relevant as class background in shaping the way in which people decode media messages" (ibid: 197).

2.5 Theoretical Framework: Uses and Gratification Theory

Previous research on early effects theory assumed audience members to be 'passive' and 'receivers' of the direct influence of media that could bring immediate and measurable changes in attitudes and behaviors. This model was brought into question with the emergence of another approach called the 'uses and gratification' model which emphasized on the selection of media content by the audience members, and diverted the understanding of audience from passive to active. In this approach, theorists were not asking how the media effects audiences, but how were the audiences using the media. They suggested that audiences had specific needs and actively turned to the media to consume various texts to these needs. As a result of this, scholars like Blumler and Katz published a collection of essays that illustrated what they saw as a 'coming of age' of the 'uses and gratifications' approach. The main impression of this approach is that media use relies on the perceived satisfaction, needs, wishes, or motives of the prospective audience member.

Unlike other theoretical perspectives, this theory holds that audiences are responsible for choosing media to meet their desires and needs to achieve gratification. This model is one of the influential approaches in audience research. The original conception of this approach is based on the research for explaining the great appeal of certain media contents. The core question of such research is not what media do to audiences, but what audiences do with media. When compare it to the classical effect studies, the uses and gratifications approaches take the media consumer rather than the media message. It views members of the audience as actively utilizing media contents rather than being passively acted upon by the media.

According to the uses and gratification model, audiences have different uses of media and make choices over what they want to watch or listen. Whenever audiences encounter a media text, they expect to get something, which is beyond mere entertainment. The approach emphasizes audiences' choice by assessing their reasons for using a certain media to the disregard of others, as well as the various gratifications obtained from the media, based on individual social and psychological requirements. As a broader perspective among communication researches, it provides a framework for understanding the processes by which media participants seek information or content selectively, commensurate with their needs and interests (Katz et al., 1974a). Audience members then incorporate the content to fulfill their needs or to satisfy their interests (DeFleur, 1983, as cited in Biocca).

According to Katz, and etal (1974), the uses and gratifications approach “argue that people

bend the media to their need more readily than the media over power them.” In order to provide more theoretical rigor, these scholars (1974: 21) described five elements of the uses and gratifications model:

- The audience is conceived as active; an important part of mass media use is assumed to be goal directed.
- In the mass communication process, much initiative in linking need gratification and media choice lies with the audience member.
- The media compete with other sources of need satisfaction.
- Many goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individuals themselves; they can report their interests and motives.
- Value judgments about the cultural significance of mass communication should be suspended while audience orientations are explored.

The uses and gratifications perspective brought audiences to the centre stage of media researches by recognizing the cognitive variables in understanding the role of the media in everyday life (Ross and Nightingale 2003: 29).

Contrary to the previous effects theories, the uses and gratifications approach, from the outset, aimed at developing a different view of audiences, i.e., as active users of the media output. This approach differs from other theoretical perspectives in that it regards audiences as active media users as opposed to passive receivers of information. Similarly, this model describes the view that media audiences have a complex set of needs, which force them inherently to use and to derive out satisfaction.

In contrast, traditional media effect theories focus on “what media do to people” and assume audiences are homogenous (Katz, 1974). The principal elements of uses and gratification include motives and needs of people to communicate, the social and psychological environment, communication behavior and the consequences of such behavior, and finally the mass media. Along this line, Rubin (1990) argues that the media message intended to persuade audience to do something, or behave in a certain manner, or on the other hand, reinforce existing attitudes, because media contents are usually not necessary or sufficient cause of audience effects, because, media message is one source of influence in social and psychological environment. It assumes that audience members are not passive consumers of media. Rather, the audience has power over their media consumption and assumes an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives.

According to Fiske et al (1990), the uses and gratification theory has its initial assumptions and objectives, and then they forwarded five assumptions and three objectives. The first assumption is that audiences actively seek out media to gratify individual needs and likes, for passing time, arousal and relaxation. Secondly, audiences utilize media to comply with expectations. Thirdly, audiences vigorously select channels and contents that resemble their needs. The fourth assumption deals with those viewers or listeners who are aware of their motives for watching or listening. For this purpose, researchers use interviews, self-report measures and questionnaire in order to find out whether they achieve their needs.

The last but not the least idea states that motives and gratifications of media use must deeply be analyzed before evaluating the cultural influences of media. Which means, before attempting to look at the consequences of media on society, it is wise to look at the uses people have from the media and how media use gratifies individual needs (Infante, Rancer and Womack, 1993 and Fiske, 1990).

However, some researchers have criticized the theory. They said that uses and gratification approach is not inclusive; it has its own drawbacks. One of the criticisms of uses and gratification theory is that it implies the media is capable of knowing what audiences want, which means, it does not consider the power of media, rather it is only an audience centered approach. The other drawback of the paradigm is that researchers are unable to put clearly and distinctly how much active or passive audiences are (Smurthwaite, 2004). They believe audiences to be active and conscious while they are either watching or listening. Other scholars like Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) also argue that due to the intangible and intrinsic nature of concepts used in the theory, it is difficult to measure satisfaction. Irrespective of such critics, the uses and gratifications model is quite a useful model in contemporary audience research and indicate that for this reason this study is informed by this theory.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was reviewing literature related to audience research. Thus, theories from the effect to the contemporary audience reception have been discussed. Unlike the previous theories, active audience studies see the audience in a more closer and elaborated way. For instance, the uses and gratifications perspective is a major shift in the description of the role of the audiences in the sense that it emphasized the active role of audiences by focusing on “what audiences do with the media content rather than what the media do to the people”. This model is one of the influential approaches in audience reception studies. Audiences are seen as actively utilizing media contents rather than being passively acted upon by the media. “Audiences do not comprise a vacuum to be filled by messages. Instead they must be conceived as being psychologically active in their use of the media and the way they react to media content” (Gunter, 2000: 45).

Generally, contemporary audience reception studies indicate us new approaches to the dynamics of audience-text relationship. Reception study provides the mass media to see what kind of audience is targeted because every text assumes to convey meaning to the audience. Moreover, it has indeed a great impact on the way in which media studies are now conducted.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Research Design

In order to respond the major research questions of the study, it is necessary to provide appropriate research methods, i.e., the sampling technique, data collection tools and the analysis procedure. Thus, this chapter will mainly discuss on the methodologies that are used in the study.

The research method used in this study is quantitative approach. The reason is that quantitative method is used in a situation where a qualitative method is difficult to administer in cases where study populations are very large. This study method is also an approach which explains phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using statistical method. It is used to gather information from large number of population quickly and also facilitates the study of human attributes. Thus, in order to collect the necessary data for the study, survey method was employed.

Typically, survey method is used in the study of a sample population for the purpose of making estimated assertion about the nature of the total population from which the sample has been selected. It involves asking individuals, questions about their opinion, beliefs, attitudes or behaviors with regard to the given topic.

According to Hancock (2002:8), individuals are selected to take part in the survey because they share certain characteristics and form some kind of population. Moreover, survey as a

According to Hancock (2002:8), individuals are selected to take part in the survey because they share certain characteristics and form some kind of population. Moreover, survey as a quantitative method of study is noted to give the advantage of breadth, i.e., a chance to cover a larger sample of the universe (Wimmer and Dominic, 2006).

3.2. Subject of the Study

The subjects of this study were the residents of Hawassa city and Hawassa university students. Hawassa was selected because it is the home and capital of Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional state, and this city has a large number of populations as a result. Furthermore, the study mainly focused on the audience reception of '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*' program produced by Debub FM station and aired in Amharic. So, most of the residents of Hawassa city are Amharic speakers than other cities in the region. In addition to the inhabitants, Hawassa university students were the other subjects of the study.

3.2.1 A Brief Description of the Study Area: Hawassa City

Hawassa is the capital of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPR), situated on the shore of Lake Hawassa, in the Great Rift Valley system of Ethiopia. It is 270kms south of the capital Addis Ababa. According to the 2007 census conducted by the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia (CSA), this city has a total population of 258,808 of which 133,123 are men and 125, 685 women, with an area of 157.21 square kilometers. A total of 61,279 households were counted in this city, which

results in an average of 4.22 persons per household. The census reported that there are 57,469 housing units.

The current population of Hawassa city, however, according to a recent data from the City Council is estimated at 304, 000. Hawassa city administration has eight sub-cities. These are: Menaheria, Mehal, Bahil Adarash, Hayk Dar, Tabor, Misrak, Addis Ketema and Tula sub-cities. Each of the subcities has a number of Kebeles under their administration.

3.2.2 Hawassa University

Hawassa University, whose origin dates back to 1976 with the establishment of Aawassa College of Agriculture (ACA) is a University in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region. Hawassa University was established as a body of Dehub University on December 22, 1999 as a result of the Council of Ministers regulation no.62/1999, which brought together the Hawassa College of Agriculture, Dilla College of Teacher Education and Health, and Wendo Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources. Dilla College of Teacher Education and Health had afterwards separated from the then Dehub University, and the now Hawassa University, to stand as an autonomous University except its health faculty that has been incorporated as part of Hawassa University at present.

3.3 Data Collection Instrument

3.3.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire is one of the basic instruments of sample survey. As Kothari (101:2004) stated, it is considered as the heart of a survey operation. This method of data collection is

common particularly in the case of big enquiries. A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. Hence, in this study the researcher used questionnaires to collect data on the given subject matter. Even though three hundred respondents were expected to participate in completing the questionnaire, only 278 respondents were willing to complete the questionnaire. In this study, the data collection process took about two weeks.

The researcher developed different types of questions, such as close-ended questions which sought a limited response from respondents, and open-ended questions which allowed respondents to answer freely using their own words. Beside this, the questionnaire has two parts. The first part deals with demographic information about the respondents and the second part focuses on questions that relate to the area of the study.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The principle of sampling is to remove bias as much as possible so that the sample the researcher selected is representative of the whole, but it does not mean that it will always tell us the whole story; there are some differences between the characteristics of the sample and those of the population or universe from which it was drawn. However, we can reduce the magnitude and likelihood of the differences or bias by increasing the size of the sample (Mytton, 22:1999).

In this study simple random sampling technique is used to select the population. It is a

common method in a sample survey of the population. This type of sampling is also known as chance sampling or probability sampling where each and every item in the population has an equal chance of inclusion in the sample and each one of the possible samples, in case of finite universe, has the same probability of being selected (Kothari, 152: 2004). Since there is no identified group of audience, simple random sampling technique helps to recognize a representative sample of the population.

According to Kothari (152:2004) using sampling method has the following advantages;

- ✦ It can save time and money. A sample study is usually less expensive than a census study and produces results at a relatively faster speed.
- ✦ Sampling remains the only way when population contains infinitely many members.
- ✦ It also remains the only choice when a test involves the destruction of the item under study.
- ✦ It usually enables the researcher to estimate the sampling errors and, thus, assists in obtaining information concerning some characteristics of the population.

Thus, in this study a relatively proportional allocation of sample size was given for each stratum. That is, Campus and Hawassa city. Due to time constraints and the limitation of money, the researcher administered 300 questionnaires. The allocations of the sample sizes were 150 for campus students and 150 for the residents.

To get a representative sample from campus, among the four campuses of Hawassa

University, the main campus was randomly taken. In proportion to the student population of each college in the main campus, further proportionate samples were randomly taken from each.

As there are three colleges (College of Social Science and Humanities, College of Business & Economics and College of Natural & Computational Sciences), a proportionate sample was assigned to each, based on their student population. Then, departments were randomly chosen from each college. Thus, Department of Sociology from Social Sciences and Humanities; Department of Biology from Natural and Computational Sciences; Department of Accounting from School of Accounting and Management were randomly chosen for this study. Hence, the allocations of the sample size for each of the departments were 50, and all of the students from each department were graduating class students.

With regard to the other section, Hawassa city residents, among the eight sub-cities, two were randomly chosen. These were Tabor sub-city and Adiss Ketema sub-city. A proportionate ($n=75$) sample size was assigned for the inhabitants of each sub-city. The questionnaires were administered to the residents of these two sub-cities.

3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The questionnaires were designed both in Amharic and English languages, and also distributed to respondents in their own surroundings (place of work/study or home) to write down their responses to the questions. It was directly distributed and collected by the researcher. Then after, once the data collection process was done, the researcher analyzed

and interprets the information carefully by using tables, percentages and charts. The quantitative data collected from the participants were analyzed according to their nature. Thus, the analysis process of this study began by presenting the findings obtained from the demographic data of the respondents. What is more, the researcher has tried to link the results of the study with theoretical frameworks used in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Introduction

This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and discussion of results. As it was mentioned in the first chapter, the main purpose of this study was to examine audience response regarding Debub FM 100.9 programs with particular reference to '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*'. In order to collect the required data for the study, questionnaire was employed as a major tool. The questionnaire has two parts. The first part is demographic information about the respondents, and the second section included issues related to the study i.e., the audiences listening habit of the program, their purpose of listening the program and their opinions towards this particular program. The data was collected from the sample population of Hawassa Residents and University Students.

In this section, the analysis is presented in ways that are associated with the objective of the study. The discussion started with demographic data and followed by questions related to the topic. The demographic variables used in this study were respondent's sex, age, occupation, educational status and their place of residence.

4.1 Demographic Distribution Of Respondents

In this study, a total of 300 questionnaires were distributed, of which 278(93%) were returned and 22(7%) were missed. As it is shown in table 1, 145(52%) of the respondents were campus students. This figure is seconded by the Residents of Hawassa city that made

up 133(48%) of the respondents. From both divisions of the study area, most of the respondents appeared to be males that account for about 156(56%) of the total population, while the remaining 122 (44%) of the respondents were females.

When look at the age distribution of respondents, as table 1 below indicates that majority (56.4%) of the respondents were aged between 18 and 30. Nevertheless, the participation of those respondents who aged >51 constituted the smallest proportion (3.9%). From this we can understand that majority of the respondents of this study were youngsters.

The other important demographic variable is education. As has already been argued in the literature review, the listening or viewing habits or interests of audiences are highly influenced by different factors; among this education is one. As depicted in table1, more than half (61.8%) of the respondents had pursuing first degree and a very small percentage (1.07%) of the respondents had no formal education.

Moreover, with regard to their occupational status, significant number (52.1%) of the respondents were students, (16.5%) were government employees, and self employed, private workers and NGO accounted for 11.1%, 7.1% and 2.8%, respectively. The rest (10%) of the participants were unemployed.

Table 1. Demographic Information of the Respondents

Informants		No_ofrespondents N=278	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	156	56.1
	Female	122	43.8
Age	18-30	157	56.4
	31-40	78	28.0
	41-50	32	11.5
	>51	11	3.6
Educational Status	No formal education	3	1.0
	Junior Secondary	11	4
	High School	26	9
	Diploma	48	17
	First Degree	172	60
	Masters Degree	18	6.4
Occupation	Government employee	46	16.5
	Self-employee	31	11.1
	Private sector	20	7.1
	NGO	8	2.8
	Student	145	52.1
	Unemployed	28	10.0
Residence	Adiss Ketema	61	21.9
	Tabor	72	25.8
	Campus	145	52.1

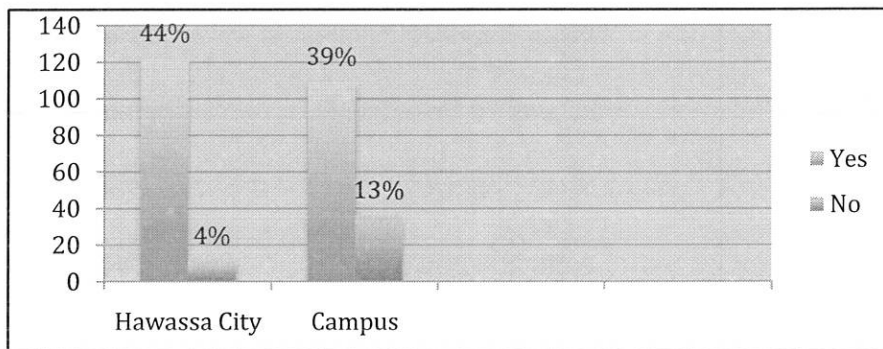
4.2 Respondents listening habit of Debub Fm programs

The listening or viewing habits of audiences are embedded in the flow of their daily activities. Most of the time individuals are listening to radio as a habit, not intentionally or purposely. With regard to the radio listening habits of audiences, respondents were asked whether they regularly listen to Debub FM 100.9 or not. Accordingly, a significant number, i.e., 231(83.09%) of the respondents reported that they regularly listen to radio, whereas 47 (16.9%) of the respondents said that they do not. This indicates the overwhelming majority of the respondents regularly listen to Debub Fm 100.9 programs.

In relation to this, when we compare the listening habit of respondents of both strata, the chart below demonstrates that the city (Hawassa) audiences are more regular listeners of Debub Fm programs than Campus audiences. Because, out of 133(48%) of Hawassa city respondents, 122(44%) said “Yes” and 11 (4%) replied “No” (See Chart1 below).

Moreover, out of 52% of campus respondents, 39%(109) listen to the station programs. On the other hand, 13%(36) students were not familiar to the station. It implies that a greater proportion of Hawassa residences listen to Debub Fm programs than Campus students. Thus, one can conclude that the proportion of people who do not listen to Debub Fm on campus is greater than of the city dwellers.

Chart 1. Respondents’ radio listening habit by place of residence whether they regularly listen to the FM radio program



4.3 Respondents’ Opinion Regarding ‘Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku’ Program

It is obvious that the opinions of individuals differ from one person to another person. In other words, audiences would not be reacting equally for similar programs. As a result of this, the reception of audiences for a particular program would be different because media texts are highly influenced by the experiences that the audiences have had in mind.

What’s more, there are factors that could affect the reception of individuals while listening to a particular media program. In the same way, in this study, there are some demographic characteristics that influence the reception of audiences’. Thus, when we examine the reaction of audiences based on their educational status, each and everyone of the respondents from different educational backgrounds had different frequency of listening to the program (See Table2). Of all the respondents who claimed to listen to the program (n=120), the table below reveals the respondents’ listening to “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” by

their educational status. Accordingly, out of the total respondents in each educational category, those who had no formal education and those who had Junior secondary education have had a better listening habit, i.e., 8% of junior secondary school respondents did listen to this particular program “always”. This pattern was similar for those who had High School education. Likewise, 20% of Diploma holders did listen to the program “always”.

On the other hand, the remaining respondents with different level of education did not have wide variation on their listening habit. However, majority of those respondents who had Masters’ degree and First degree did not listen to the programs at all.

In addition, respondents were asked to evaluate the level of importance and to what extent this program influences their decision regarding their health. Accordingly, 50%(n=60) of the respondents from all educational backgrounds viewed the program as ‘very important’ in addressing problems related to their health. And 44%(n=53) of them rated the issues raised in the program as ‘important’. Only 6%(n=7) of the respondents viewed the issues raised in the program in a negative way. This often indicates that the respondents’ opinion regarding this particular program is different. In relation to this, McQuail (1997) argues, all audiences are behaving differently because they are from different backgrounds with many different attitudes, values, experiences and ideas. Hence, the experiences of “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” listeners’ with different educational backgrounds often confirm this argument.

Apart from educational status, age, gender and occupational status of audiences would also have an influence on their reaction for certain issues. The follow table summarizes the listening habits of the respondents based on demographic variables.

Table 2: Respondents listening habit of “Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku” by Educational status (a cross tabulation)

How often do you listen to “Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku” program?		Educational status						Total
		Junior secondary	High school	Diploma	First degree	Masters degree	No formal education	
‘Always’	Count	9	9	24	1	0	2	45
	% of total	7.5%	7.5%	20%	0.8%	0	1.6%	37.5%
‘Sometimes’	Count	2	8	22	16	2	1	51
	% of total	1.6%	6.6%	18.3%	13.3%	1.6%	0.8%	42.5%
‘Not at all’	Count	0	4	2	11	7	0	24
	% of total	0	3.3%	1.6%	9.1%	5.8%	0	20%
Total	Count	11	21	48	28	9	3	120
	%of total	9.1%	17.5%	40%	23.3%	7.5%	2.5%	100%

With regard to their occupation, as shown in table 3, significant number of the respondents who were self- employed (n=31) and 75% of respondents who were unemployed (n=15) claimed that they ‘always’ listen to the program. However, other respondents engaged in

different kinds of occupations were not regular listeners of this particular program. That is from the total listeners of this particular program, 43% of the respondents claimed that they listen to the program ‘rarely’ and ‘not at all’.

Table 3. Respondents’ listening habit of ‘Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku’ radio program cross-tabulation by occupation.

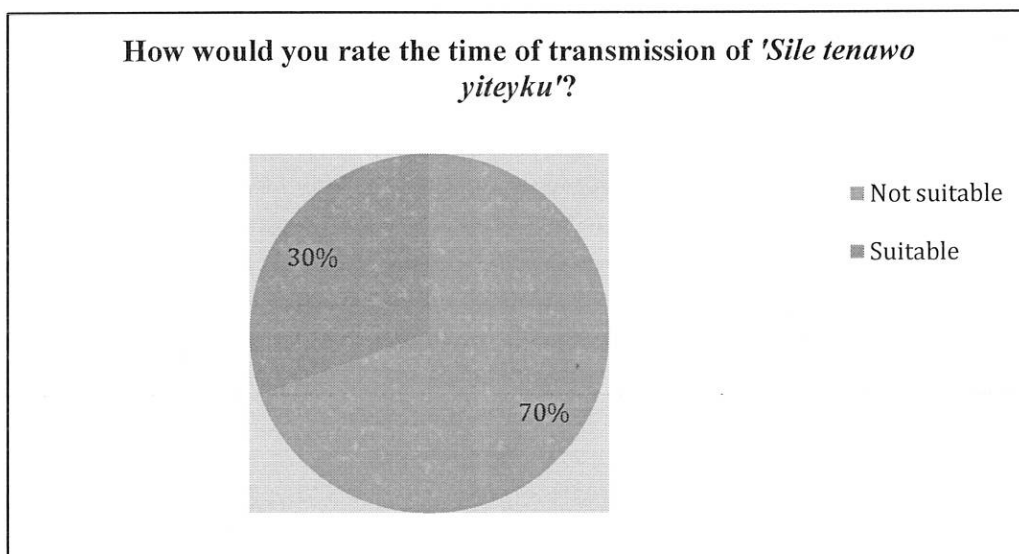
If ‘yes’ how often do you listen to this program?		Respondents by occupation						
		Government employee	Private sector	Self-employed	NGO	Student	Unemployed	Total
‘Always’	Count	6	7	31	0	9	15	68
	%within occupation	13%	47%	100%	0	28%	75%	57%
‘Sometimes’	Count	8	3	0	3	13	4	31
	%within occupation	47%	20%	0	60%	40%	20%	25.8%
‘Not at all’	Count	3	5	0	2	10	1	21
	%within occupation	17.6%	33%	0	40%	31%	5%	17.5%
Total	Count	17	15	31	5	32	20	120
	%within occupation	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In connection with this, Harnold L. Wilesky (1995 as cited in Bedaso, 2008) states that media text selection and the regularity of media usage are likely to be influenced by the following specific strategies, i.e., timing, scheduling, and placement or design of content.

However, in contrast to this argument, this study also reveals that most respondents were uncomfortable with the transmission time of the program.

As can be seen from the pie chart below, the time of transmission is not suitable for 70%(n=84) of the listeners of 'Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku' radio program. But= 36 (30%) of respondents said that the time was 'suitable'. This implies that most of the audiences of this program may like to see change on the transmission time.

Chart 2: Respondents on the suitability of the transmission time



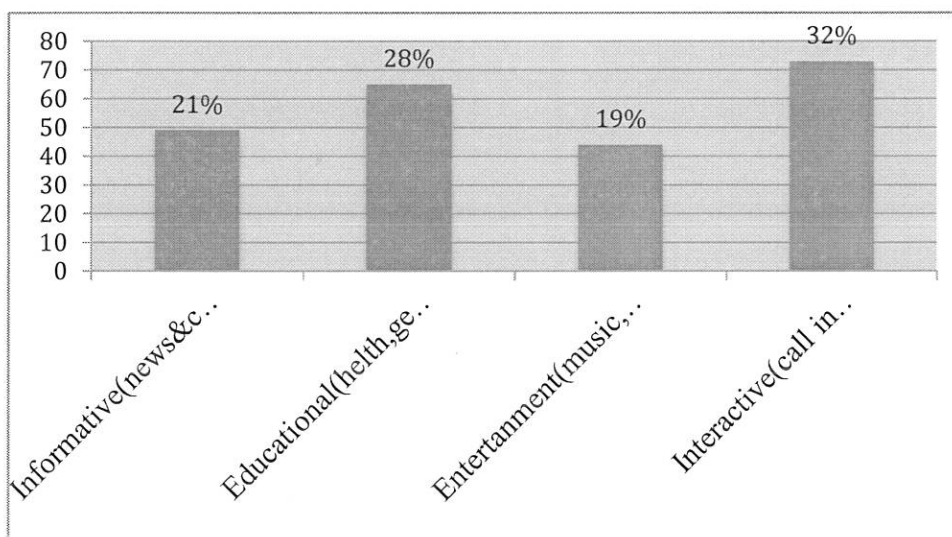
4.4 Respondents' Program Preference

As mentioned in the literature review part, the uses and gratification perspective provides a framework for understanding the processes by which media audiences seek information or content selectively, commensurate with their needs and interests. Audiences do not want to

listen or watch any program at random. Rather, they are selective in what they prefer to watch or listen. Thus, in this study, majority of the respondents, 73(32%) preferred mainly interactive programs, followed by educational programs, preferred by 65 (28%). The percentages of respondents who desired informative and entertaining programs were relatively nearer: 21%(n=49) and 19%(n=44), respectively (See the graph below).

In addition, as learned from the data, among the kinds of programs aired by the station, some of the respondents of this survey rated entertainment programs their least choice. Although, most of the respondents in this survey preferred to listen to both national and international or modern as well as traditional music, they noted that in this radio station, only regional-based traditional music is aired extensively. This situation might have contributed to their low rating of entertainment program.

Chart 3: Respondents by the kind of program/issue they prefer to listen



Moreover, some scholars agree that different genres of programs are evaluated differently. They can be placed in a value hierarchy, i.e., some genres are considered to be worth more than others. For instance, informative programs, such as news and documentary programs are placed at the top of the hierarchy, and action series and soap operas are placed at the bottom. The informative genres are given the highest scores by the audience (Gunter and Wober, 1992, cited in Alasuutari, 1999:182).

Accordingly, as McQuail (1997, as cited in Alasuutari) argues, all audiences do not have and will never have similar meaning and taste of programs. The need of audiences varies according to their experience, gender and educational levels. In relation to this, Alasuutari (1999:182) notes that when he asked audiences about what news and fiction on media mean for them, male and female interviewees whom he had interviewed have expressed their views in the following way. For the majority of male interviewees, the most important thing on media was news. However, the reverse is true for female interviewees.

We need the news because it's about global matters. We have to follow what's going on in the world. (Male interviewees)

The most important thing on media is the news. If I had to choose just one thing, I would pick out the news. I can live without fiction. (Male interviewees)

I just have to see the news. . It's just casual watching. The other - fiction - I watch with a smile. It might be something serious. (Female interviewees)

In line with this, Morley (1986) also adds that there are clear differences of media usage in audiences' everyday lives depending on their gender. Programs like news and sports are preferred by men, while fiction, soaps and dramas get priority by females. Following this argument, when we compare the preferences of male and female respondents of this sample study, it could be argued that significant number of male respondents would want to listen to something that could inform and educate them. While some of the female respondents noted that they consume media outlets for only entertainment purposes. This indicates the influence gender plays a part on the respondents preference of a program.

4.5 Purpose of Listening

As already been mentioned, the main objective of this study is to examine the reaction of audiences towards Debub FM 100.9 regarding the program of '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*'. According to Williams (2003:199), "There are specific audiences for particular media products." Accordingly, in this study the audience reception of this particular program would be presented in the following ways.

It is true that one of the main purposes of mass media is educating the audience. Audiences are eager to know about relevant issues and events in immediate surroundings, society and about the world as well. As discussed in literature review of this study, audience's consumption of media product is goal oriented and purposeful because from the uses and gratifications perspective, it is well understood that they are active and seek out media content that gratifies their needs. Moreover, according to active audience theory, audiences are those individuals who interact with the communication process and use media texts for a

certain purpose.

If this is the case, as indicated in table 4 below, among the sampled listeners of Debu Fm 100.9, 75% of respondents between the age of 41-50, 64% of respondents above 51 years of age, and 53% of the respondents between the age of 31-40, respectively, claimed that they listened to “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” program.

From this, it could be argued that the respondents who listened to the program for educational purposes were those who were found in the upper age bracket. This indicates that the respondents’ age level did have an impact on their purpose of listening to a particular program. On the other hand, more than half or 56 % (n=62) of the respondents between the age of 18-30 rarely listened to this particular program.

Table 4: A cross-tabulation of respondents listening habit of “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” by age

Do you listen to the radio program called ‘ <i>Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku</i> ’?	Age of respondents					Total
		18-30	31-40	41-50	>51	
Yes	Count	48	41	24	7	120
	% Within age of respondent	43.6%	52.6%	75%	63.6%	52%
No	Count	62	37	8	4	111
	% Within age of respondent	56.4%	47.4%	25%	36.3%	48%
Total	Count	110	78	32	11	231
	% Within age of respondent	100	100	100	100	100%

What is more, asked to compare this particular program with other programs in the station, significant majority of the respondents in all age groups of this sample survey felt that “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” is a kind of program which helps them acquire vital information about their wellbeing. They added that the program often invites medical professionals to give important explanations about different health problems and their prevention methods. Thus, the respondents concurred that the program is not only educative, but it is also informative and interactive. Whereas, some of the audiences aged between 18-30 felt that there is nothing special about “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” program.

Besides, when describing the audience activity in media consumption, active audience theorists point out that individuals have varying levels of attention and involvement (Anderson et al, 1983). Accordingly, in this study some of the listeners of “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” program reported that they tune in to participate or involve in the issues raised in the program. Whereas, most of the respondents claimed that they listened to the program but not participated.

On the other hand, when one looks at the influence of the program regarding their health, majority of the respondents whose age are greater than 31 agreed that they found the program very educational, and often have a great influence on their decisions in many cases. This might be because, according to uses and gratification theory, the same media message

doesn't necessarily affect audiences in the same way since media audiences are made up of people who are not identical to each other.

Accordingly, as can be seen from the first and second row of the cross tabulation below, 100% of those aged >51 were highly influenced by the program called '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*' and this figure was followed by those respondents aged between 31-40(81%) and those aged between 41-50 (79%), of the sample respectively. From the respondents' responses, the program has helped them to gain knowledge on health and related issues, i.e., the cure and prevention of certain diseases and the treatment method; and also they noted that the program improved their understanding on sanitation and nutrition issues, as a result of which they started to give more attention to such kind of issues.

However, when we look at the third and the fourth row of the above cross tabulation, respondents who replied 'Low' (29%) and 'Very low' (33%) were those aged between 18-30. This implies that "*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*" program did not have much influence on the decision of younger participants.

Table 5: The influence of "*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*" program on respondents' decision regarding their health, cross-tabulation by age.

If 'Yes' to what extent does this program influence	Respondents by Age				
	18-30	31-40	41-50	>51	Total

your decision about your health?						
Very High	Count	8	15	8	2	33
	% Within respondent	16.7%	36.6%	33.3%	28.6%	27.5%
High	Count	10	18	11	5	44
	% Within respondent	20.8%	43.9%	45.8%	71.4%	37%
Very low	Count	16	0	0	0	16
	% Within respondent	33.3%	0	0	0	13.3%
Low	Count	14	8	5	0	27
	% Within respondent	29.1%	19.5%	20.8%	0	22.5%
Total	Count	48	41	24	7	120
	% Within respondent	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

4.6 Reasons of the Audience for Listening to “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*”

Audiences can have varied reasons for their preference to attend to a particular media program. Similarly, the motivation of the audience for listening to a certain radio program like “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” varies from individual to individual. For instance, audiences may watch or listen to quiz programs but not others. Some, according to Fiske (1990), may watch it to compare oneself, to create social interactions with other people or community, to be educated and to participate in the contest.

According to (McQuail, 1997) people use media for a variety of reasons. He categorized this into four: information, personal identity, integration and social interaction, and entertainment needs. Audiences can decode media messages in different ways for different reasons. Moreover, according to the uses and gratification model, audiences have different uses of media and make choices over what they want to watch or listen. Whenever audiences encounter a media text, they expect to get something, which is beyond mere entertainment. The approach emphasizes audiences' choice by assessing their reasons for using a certain media text.

In line with this, the two consecutive tables below, i.e., table 6&7, describe the reasons as to why the respondents liked or disliked the program called '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*'. Among 120 respondents who were familiar with this program, 36%(n=43) of them listened to '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*' program to get new things or ideas; and 29%(n=35) and 25%(n=30) of the respondents claimed that the issues this particular program covered and the originality of information they obtained from the program, respectively, caught their interest to listen to the program. The remaining 10%(n=12) of them liked the way the program was presented, or in other words, the manner it is presented. From this, one can understand that respondents have their own reasons for listening to '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*' radio program. It means that the need or motivation for listening to a certain program varies from one individual to another.

In contrast to this, table 7 shows the reasons of respondents who were not familiar with or not listeners of ‘*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*’ program. Asked to choose among the reasons, 55%(n=61) of the respondents said that they did not have time, and 45%(n=50) of them said that they did not have access to radio.

Table 6: Respondents’ reasons for listening to ‘*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*’

	Reasons	Frequency	Percent
What draws your interest to listen to the program?	Because it gives me original information	30	25%
	Because it helps me learn new things or ideas	43	36%
	The issues it covered	35	29%
	The way it is presented	12	10%
Total		120	100%

Table 7: Respondents’ reasons for not listening to ‘*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*’

	Reasons	Frequency	Percent
If your answer is ‘No’, could you please select one of the reasons?	Because I don’t have time.	61	55%
	I dislike the guests they invite.	0	0
	I don’t like issues it covers.	0	0
	I don’t have access to radio.	50	45%
Total		111	100%

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the findings and some possible implications and suggests some pertinent recommendations. As discussed in the first chapter, the aim of this study was examining the reaction of the audience towards Debu Fm 100.9 programs with special focus on '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*'. As active audience conceptualization is a major shift in the perception of the role of the audience, uses and gratification theory was used as a major theoretical framework for the study.

In order to answer the research questions raised in the study, quantitative research method was used. In this regard, proportionate numbers of questionnaires were administered to a randomly selected respondents, and the collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The analysis of the data was made in accordance with the respondents' age, gender, education, occupation and place of residence. Based on the findings of the study, the following summary and conclusion have been drawn:

The finding from this study reveals that age, gender, and education differences were important variables in influencing audiences' genre preference, and their reactions regarding the programs of the station. It was also noted that place of residence and occupation differences were not that much critical factors in affecting audience reception of certain media texts. Accordingly, majority of male respondents preferred listening to news and educational programs than female respondents. Among the programs aired by the station,

media texts. Accordingly, majority of male respondents preferred listening to news and educational programs than female respondents. Among the programs aired by the station, some respondents of the survey rated entertainment programs as their least preferred irrespective of the fact that most of the respondents in the survey preferred listening to both national and international or modern as well as traditional music. According to the respondents, in this radio station, only regional-based traditional music is aired extensively. This might have contributed to their low rating of entertainment program. As (McQuail, 1997) argues, all audiences do not have and will never have similar meaning and taste of programs. This study's findings seem to affirm the fact that the needs of audiences vary according to their experience, gender and educational levels.

The finding also indicates that significant majority of the respondents in all age groups agreed that "*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*" is definitely an educative program. However, few of the younger participants viewed the issues raised in the program in a negative way. They felt that there was nothing special about "*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*" program. This implies that the influence of the program varied according to age level. As Assael (1998) contends, young people want to seek information that deals with entertainment, and events related with their age.

With regard to education, the finding shows that the respondents from different educational background had different frequency of listening to the program. Most of the respondents

who had Master's and First degrees evaluated the issues raised in the program in a different way.

As the analysis indicates factors like place of residence and occupation differences were not that much critical variables in influencing the audience's reception of this particular program.

The finding also reveals that the transmission time of "*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*" was unsuitable for the overwhelming majority of the respondents especially for those who were students and government employees, as a result of which they were not regular listeners of the program.

As clearly stated in the literature, the central point of the uses and gratification paradigm is that audiences have needs and objectives they seek to achieve from media firms. Besides, according to this paradigm, audiences are active and purposive. The study shows that more than 50% of the respondents listened to the program for educational purposes. What is more, the finding shows that 65% of the respondents confirmed that they actively participated in the issues raised in the program.

On the basis of the findings, it can generally be concluded that the listeners of "*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*" program were not passive receivers of the media texts; rather they were actively involved in their consumption of the content of the programs.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

- The producers of “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” program should consider changing the transmission time of the program so as to increase the share of its ‘loyal’ listeners.
- As the finding indicates, entertainment program was the least preferred program for some of the respondents. Thus, Debut Fm 100.9 should try to balance its provision of regional and national music to its audience. This could help the station to accommodate the various tastes of its audience.
- The producers’ of “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” program should also incorporate issues that would attract the attention or interest of the educated segment of the society, especially those who have tertiary level of education.
- “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” program, as it stands now, seems to appeal more to adult listeners. Thus, the producers of the program should consider incorporating issues that would resonate with the younger section of the society.
- Relevant academic institutions should collaborate with media houses in conducting research that would benefit both the media houses and the audience at large.

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Appendix

Dear respondent,

I am a second year postgraduate student of Journalism and Communication at Addis Ababa University. I am doing my thesis on audience reception study on Debub Fm 100.9 programs with special focus on “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” program. Your authentic and meticulous answers have great contribution to the outcome of the research. Therefore, you are kindly requested to give genuine responses to the questions below. The researcher would like to remind you that information you give to these questions is going to be used only for research purpose and kept confidential. Thus, by any means the information you provide will not harm your personal life.

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation in advance.

Part one: Demographic Information: mark (x)

1. Sex: Male Female

2. Age 18-30 31-40

41-50 >51

3. Your educational status

a. Junior Secondary c. Diploma

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b. High School

d. First Degree

e. Masters Degree

4. Occupation

- i. Government employee ii. Private sector
iii. Self-employee iv. NGO
v. Student vi. Unemployed

5. Do you listen to Debub Fm radio programs?

a. Yes

b. No

6. If "Yes", how often do you listen to the station program?

- a. Always
b. Sometimes
c. Rarely

7. Which kinds of programs or issues do you prefer to listen on the radio?

- i. Informative (news and current affairs)
ii. Mainly educational (health, gender etc)
iii. Mainly entertaining (music, sport, drama)
iv. Mainly interactive (call in show programs)

8. Do you listen to the radio program called '*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*'?

A. Yes

B. No

9. If your answer is "Yes" what draws your interest to listen to the program?

i. Because it gives me original information

ii. The issues it covered

iii. The way it is presented

iv. To learn new things or ideas

10. If 'No' could you please select one of the reasons?

i. I don't have time

ii. I don't have access to radio

iii. I don't like the issues it covered.

iv. I dislike the gusts they invite.

11. How would you rate the time of transmission of "*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*"?

i. Suitable

ii. Not Suitable

12. Do you participate on this particular call-in show program?

i. Yes

ii. No

13. If your answer is “Yes” how do you evaluate this ‘*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*’ program?

- i. Important
- ii. Very important
- iii. Not important
- iv. I don’t know

14. To what extent this program influences your decision regarding your health?

- i. High
- ii. Very High
- iii. Low
- iv. Very Low

15. If your answer is ‘No’, in what kind of discussion do you want to participate?

16. What is your opinion regarding Debub FM “*Sile Tenawo Yiteyiku*” program?

17. Would you please briefly write down what you have gained from the program?

18. How do you compare this particular program to other programs transmitted on Debub
Fm 100.9?

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and all sources of materials used for this study have been appropriately acknowledged.

Name: Tsedeniya Solomon

Signature: 

Date of submission: October, 2014

Place of submission: Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia