

Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies

Child Rearing Practices in Sidama Zone Bultuma Kebele

Miheret Ayele



May, 2007

**Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies**

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in
Developmental Psychology

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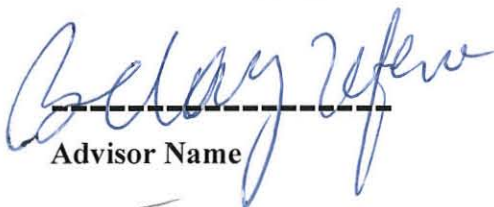
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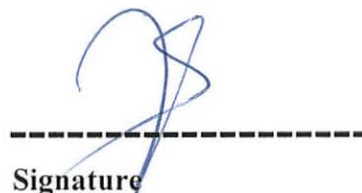
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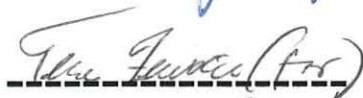
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Abstract

Child rearing is culture bound in the sense that culture is central in understanding the practice of child rearing in any setting. Theories like contextualist theory and ecological system approach theories take into account the cultural nuances of child rearing which affect the development and rearing of children. This study has set out to understand the child rearing patterns and practices of the Sidama as its fundamental objective. To identify the features and patterns of child rearing and to reach at the findings of this study different methods were used. A questionnaire with a variety of items on important aspects of child rearing practices was prepared to collect data from two-hundred sample population and Focus Group Discussions as well as interviews were held with various members of the Bultuma kebele (peasant association) which is where the research was conducted.

The following aspects of child rearing came out clear as among the most vital characteristics of child rearing among the Sidama. Child rearing has the goal of ensuring conformity and acceptance of parental interest. Thus the child rearing practices are focused on fulfilling the desires and interests of parents. Children are generally regarded as assets, with economic as well as social values of guaranteeing economic security or social prestige mainly because they continue lineage and carry the names of their parents in the future. The value that is given to children in the society is also related with the parental treatment in which parents demand total obedience and respect from the children and use different methods including physical punishment to get that. The 'good' or 'bad' characters of children are seen from this angle of accepting the authority of adults with out questioning.

There are important and unique childcare systems among the Sidama. For example, toilet training and weaning take place according to the convenience of the mother but not the child and they appear to be issues, which are much less eventful in their importance in the relationship of children and their parents. This is mainly because the baby will not be forced to wean unless otherwise a pressing issue like pregnancy occurs. When we come to toilet training the baby is toilet trained since the time of infancy as he/she is helped to

eliminate outside of a dipper and as a result the toilet training experience tends to be smooth and gradual avoiding tension between parents and children.

Another equally important aspect in child rearing among the Sidama, is the fact that good parenting is largely equated with the parents' ability to make sure that the basic needs of children are met. In this regard neighbors and relatives also contribute their share and mostly their help is more than material. In Sidama culture extended families, neighbors and relatives are in the inner circle of the child in which they care, love, groom and sometimes punish the child.

The Sidama children are not passive subjects in the whole process. They start to assume different roles and responsibilities as early as five years, which starts with little household chores and they continue to contribute their share in the economic and social endeavor of the family

In a context where there is little economic dynamism, class difference and in a context where the ways of life in the society are not much differentiated the culture is bound to have more weight in defining child rearing than any other factor. The values and beliefs about children, the parental treatment and the childcare systems are similar, over age, sex or economic activity of the respondents. Economic status is more or less similar to all the inhabitants of the community under study mainly because of similar economic activity that the population under study is engaged in. As a result of this the child rearing practices of the area under study are also similar except some minor individual differences.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background

In this chapter an introduction will be made on the subject of child rearing, which is the issue under discussion, along with a discussion of its basic and general aspects among the Sidama. In connection with this to facilitate our discussion of the issue of child rearing among the Sidama a brief mention of the socio economic and demographic composition of the Sidama is also made. Lastly the statement of the problem, objective, significance and scope of the study are discussed to give you an idea about the issues that are going to be the interests of this study, what outcomes are expected from this study and what contributions it would make in psychological research in this country.

1.1.1 Child rearing: the concept and the practice

In some societies the birth of a baby is just another normal medical event. But among the Sidama this occasion is an important social event which is felt by the whole community. In the village of the Sidama there are few such occasions which break the regular flow of daily life, like childbirth. If anyone observes a council of men investigating the nature of a day to decide whether that day is good for child birth and if their decision is followed by joy-cry ('illilta') of women then it means the arrival of a new born to the Sidama in an auspicious day. The sex of the baby is revealed to neighbors and outsiders by the number of times the joy-cries are repeated (four times for a boy and three times for a girl). But if luck is not with the parents of the newborn, that is, if the day is an inauspicious day, the birth of the baby will be kept a secret until a sacrifice is made to reverse the bad omen (Vecchiato, 1985, pp.147-148).

After the birth of the baby is announced the baby will pass through different experiences. The mother being the first person the baby comes to be attached with, she provides the love, care and affection. As the new born grows up he/she will come into grips with various cultural experiences and ceremonies. The family or more particularly parents are responsible in shaping the behavior of the child by the way they bring up their child to make sure that the child grows up to possess behavior conventional and acceptable by the family in particular and society in general. This process is what is known as *child rearing*.

Most research on child development in general and child rearing in particular are based on theories emanating from Western cultural experiences. Consequently therefore, the resulting assumptions of these theories as well as the findings of such research are bound to be Eurocentric. They do not take into account aspects of child rearing or developments which are culture bound and which are non-generalizable to other cultures (Edward 1996 cited in Gardner et al., 2002, pp.51). It is as a reaction to this that contextualist theories of human development have amplified the importance of culture in influencing child development in general and child rearing in particular in understanding the cultural specificities of child development or child rearing. Scholars like Vygotsky and Bronfenbrenner are among the most important proponents of this theory which brought to our attention that studying developmental psychology in different cultural contexts which leads to the development of indigenous theories instead of the universalistic theories which suggest a grand theory of child development workable in every culture through out the world. Especially after the findings of cross-cultural studies on child rearing, which have made it evident that childrearing must be dealt in its cultural context the cultural specificity of the practice came out strong in the literature of child development. This research too understands the vitality of cultural context in the study of childrearing among an ethnic group in South Western Ethiopia in an attempt to understand the patterns of childrearing that stem from the cultural realities that form the Sidama.

Child rearing could be loosely defined as the process by which children are cared for and brought up by their parents or other caregivers in such a way that is acceptable to the culture in which children are raised. Child rearing is part and parcel of a bigger process

which is known as socialization by which a child is groomed to become a member of a particular culture and takes on its values, beliefs and other accepted ways of life (Gardiner et al 2002, pp. 51). Child rearing is thus a socialization that happens at a narrower setting i.e. in the family setting and has parents at the center of it as agents facilitating the growth and development of the child physically and mentally. Parents in this regards, therefore, groom their children and teach them skills, manners and values in order to make them successful in their later life.

Therefore culture and context (the cultural realities and the family setting of a given society) are very vital in the understanding of child rearing. It is not only the context that is important for the study of child rearing, the meaning that something or some behavior carries in a given culture should also be taken into account to understand the effects a certain form of child rearing has on the child. One form of child rearing or parental behavior, which could be perceived as detrimental to the healthy growth of the child in one culture, could be perceived as bringing about negative results in the life of children in another culture (Cole et al, 1998, pp. 278).

Child rearing practices and patterns has also been dealt with as a subject of psychological research by some Ethiopians on different Ethiopian cultures. A discussion of some of these studies as well as findings will be made in one of the upcoming sections of this paper. But here I want to underscore that this same subject of child rearing will be the issue of discussion of this paper and I will be making an attempt to understand child rearing practices, patterns, goals, and methods among the Sidama. This study starts out with the belief that culture and context are vital elements in understanding child rearing practices in any culture and the Sidama are no different in this respect. In this study a discussion of child rearing which happens mainly at the family setting and that which is mainly mastered by parents, who are considered as the most important agents of child rearing, will be made. This study is thus aimed at understanding the cultural specificities of child rearing among the Sidama and enrich our understanding of the nuances of child rearing in a traditional agrarian context.

Child rearing has its own different pattern in Sidama culture like any other culture. The role of the father in disciplining the child is minimal, as this is believed to be the responsibility of the mother, or an older sibling, especially a girl. In rearing a child all adult members of a village participate one way or another. In addition to warranting acceptable discipline from children, village members show affection and praise (Hamer, 1971, pp.182-183). In a society like the Sidama where kinship relations are very strong the role of rearing the child goes beyond parents; other members of the community also play their roles in child rearing. Thus the dominant values and attributes of the society that children are expected to uphold are determined not only by parents but also by other members of the community like relatives and neighbors. In support of this Macoby (1984, pp. 319) states that studies demonstrates that parental guidance and their treatment of child rearing should not be seen in isolation from other societal agents of child rearing.

Parents may provide their knowledge and skills as well as the customs and traditions of their society through various means. But most of the times methods of child rearing especially in traditional societies like the Sidama tend to be highly sexualized and is largely carried out through direct instruction and modeling (Birhanu, 1983, pp.25-26).

Obedience to parents and other elders is one of the desired outcomes of child rearing among the Sidama. For example the relationship between a father and a son is described by the word *najete*, which means both fear and respect in the local language (Hamer, 1971).

Concerning how parents care for their infants, among the Sidama infants are believed to be unable to suck milk from their mothers and mothers are believed to be unable to produce milk usable for the infant for some days immediately after birth. As a result milk from the breast will be dropped into the mouth of the infant in addition to butter that is given once a day to the infant on the thumb of an adult for at least a month. But as soon as the breast of the mother begins to produce a continuous flow of milk the infant is encouraged to feed on her breast. Breast-feeding is considered to have more importance to the infant much more than a way of getting nutritious food. It is considered as an

important pacifier along with thumb sucking during the first year of life (Hamer, 1971, pp.175).

The Sidama believe that the day a child is born determines his/her fate. His/her personality and success in life is believed to be determined by the day the child is born. If the child is born on what they believe to be an ominous day the parents will subject the child to a certain ritual to correct his/her fate.

After an infant is born he/she will be kept in seclusion with the mother for two months. Others will visit them but they do not sleep with other. After 2 months the mother leaves the seclusion to attend to other businesses and the infant stays there for another 3 months. This is supposed to keep the infant from various environmental hazards including "evil eyes" of strangers. Thus his experience is limited to the emotional care and provision of his mother. Child rearing during this stage is limited to the mother, as the infant is deliberately kept aloof from the contact of guests and strangers and even the father. The fondling, kissing and luring of the child at this stage is left totally to the mother (Ibid, pp.174 and 176).

When the child is matured enough to eat solid food and begin to stand and walk the father gets involved in rearing his child. However, it is still the mother who toilet trains him and exercise weaning while the father is involved in helping the child to walk and be independent. After age two the child is expected to feed himself/herself and thus began to exercise independence. As part of the recognition of the child's independence the father will give him a name (Ibid, pp. 179). After weaning till the child reaches the age of six he/she will be taught to be obedient disciplined and control his/her anger mainly through threats and minor physical punishment. Older siblings also play their role in influencing the child through demanding obedience as well as respect. Parents as well as siblings use "teasing" as a mechanism of teaching the child self-control. To ensure the compliance of the child to accepted norms and values of society parents, other adults and older siblings punish small children (Ibid, pp.183&186).

By the time when a child reaches the age of 6 or 7 changes in the pattern of rearing are seen. Responsibility training, sexual segregation by way of defining social roles and 'developing awareness of the importance of status distinction based on difference in wealth' are lessons taught to children. These conducts are indoctrinated through various methods that include plays, participation in rituals of adults, carrying out domestic chores and tasks. At about the age of 8 the Sidama also use stories and proverbs to transmit their norms and customs (Ibid, pp.187).

Plays that involve competition even if they are not supervised teach children skills useful for adult life. Boys are engaged in games that develop physical fitness and leadership skills while girls are engaged in plays that promote the dexterity of their hands that helps them to perform household chores and other female roles of the society such as cooking, hair braiding and the like. In addition to games children after this age are also subjected to rituals such as circumcision and boys and girls began to spend less time with each other as girls get involved in assisting their mothers executing domestic chores and boys began to keep herds. Boys are pressurized to be hard working and they are introduced with certain virtues such as the "desirability of wealth", courage and knowledge (Ibid 187-189 and 191-192). Wealth in the form of size of herd, the extensiveness of ones garden are highly valued attributes of a successful adult life and especially boys are groomed by their parents to learn such skills to have a successful adult life (Hamer, 1970, pp.55).

1.1.2 The Sidama: General information

In this section we will have brief information on some of the fundamental aspects of life of the Sidama. Any research on the cultural aspects of child rearing among the Sidama should have at least some understanding of the socio economic and demographic make up of this ethnic group who inhabit a section of the Southern parts of Ethiopia. The Sidama are one of the largest ethnic groups living in the present Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State in south central parts of Ethiopia. They make up 4% of the total population of Ethiopia. According to the 1994 census the Sidama are estimated to be 2 million (Aadland, 2002, pp. 32-33). With a growth rate of 3% annually

they are estimated to be about 2.78 million by now. The area inhabited by the Sidama is considered among the most fertile areas in southern Ethiopia. They have such neighbors as the Wolayita, Guji, Derassa and the Oromo. The Sidama are speakers of the Cushitic language family and their language-Sidama shares linguistic affinities with Hadiya, Kambata, Oromiffa and the like (Hamer, 1970, pp. 50).

The climatic setting in which the Sidama live varies from a dry grassland to mountainous plateau making the cultivation of varied food staffs possible like the major staple, *enset*, maize, and important cash crops such as coffee and recently *chat*. A variety of fruits like Mangoes, avocadoes, peaches and others grow in large numbers. Rain in the middle as well as high altitude provide for a productive plant life while the lowlands provide a conducive environment for the breeding of livestock. Thus, naturally agriculture is the major mainstay of the Sidama (Hamer, 1970, pp. 50).

The Sidama village is a 'cluster of homesteads' with round huts. One village consists of about 30 households in which a large number of kinsmen and women reside (Ibid; Aadland, 2002: 32-33). Division of labor is a necessity in rural Sidama especially for the production of *enset*, maize and coffee. The man of the house, the head of the household, along with his sons take care of the planting while women assisted by their daughters are responsible for the harvesting of *enset*. Herding is a reserve for small children. On the other hand, activities needing large labor force such as clearing paths, building houses and the like are performed by communal labor.

According to oral tradition the Sidama are descendants of two founding fathers who eventually also resulted in the formation of two clans, Bushe and Maleda. Mythology has it that these two clans have come to where the Sidama are now in search of fertile land. The present day Sidama is comprised of 13 sub-clans derived from these major clans. The Melghe, Yonasse, Shabadinho, Assarado, Hollo, Harbegona, Harbe, Gribicho and Hadicho claims to have descended from the Bushe clan while the Hawala, Sowela, Kawena claim descent from Maleda (Braukamper, 1977, pp. 1977).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Child rearing practice, given its importance in understanding human development and personality, should be given due attention in psychological research in the country. This study thus approaches child rearing practices among the Sidama in an attempt to answer the following research questions:

- What are the values of children among the Sidama?
- What are the major beliefs uphold by the Sidama about children and childhood?
- What are the infant and child care practices in the society?
- What are the parental methods of child treatment?
- What are the roles of extended families and adult members of the community in child rearing?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of the child in the society?

1.3 Objectives

This study has the general objective of identifying and describing culture specific features and patterns of child rearing in a cultural setting among the Sidama. As an extension of this general objective the study also intends to identify and understand the vital role played by parents as well as significant others in raising children among the Sidama in a traditional setting.

1.4 Operational definitions

Child rearing: when we talk about child rearing we are referring to the package of values of children, beliefs, child care practices as well as treatments parents/care givers use to raise children. The roles and responsibilities that children are expected/ encouraged to assume and the way they are expected to interact with parents, other adults, and older siblings are also considered as vital elements of child rearing in this study.

Values of children: refers to the major reasons why parents want to have children.

Beliefs about children: refers to the various beliefs parents or generally the society has about children and childhood. Who are children, what is childhood, what are the attributes of a 'good' or a 'bad' child, what are the defining characteristics of a girl child or a boy child all these fall under this category of beliefs about children. Beliefs about children are thus reflective of the perception and parental/societal attitude towards children. Besides, how childhood is perceived and described among the Sidama are also included in this concept

Infant and Child care: refers to the practice of feeding, sleeping, soothing, weaning, and toilet training that parents/care takers are engaged in with their infants and children at their early age. This practice of tending and caring for infants and children is referred in this study as infant and child care.

Parental treatment: refers to the methods used to discipline, guide, and train their children to assume culturally acceptable behaviors. The method that parents/care takers use to discipline children, punishment and reward mechanisms used to encourage or discourage the behavior of children are an important aspect of parental treatment. Mechanisms used to teach skills, guide children into assuming a certain behavior are also another important aspect of parental treatment.

Roles and responsibilities of children: refers to the tasks that children are expected to undertake in or outside of the house.

1.5 Significance

This research I believe will contribute its own share in the following areas:

- I. It will test the workability of most Eurocentric theories of human development which have based their research and assumptions on western societies.
- II. It will help to see if child rearing has different features between collective (like the Sidama) and individualistic societies.
- III. It will enrich our understanding of the nuances of child rearing in a traditional context happening at a family setting. Such a study certainly will contribute to a better understanding of other traditional communities and their child rearing practices in the country.
- IV. It will also help us to understand the values and personalities of adult members of the Sidama society as the foundations of adult personality and behavior are laid during childhood.

1.6 scope

This study has the following limitations

- ✓ It does not include the practice of child rearing among the socially excluded minority groups of the Sidama. The child rearing practices of these groups I believe is different from that of the majority of the Sidama for they are discriminated due to their occupation. As a result their child rearing takes on a different dimension, which deserves a separate treatment.
- ✓ The study has spatial as well as time limitations. Only one kebele is taken to get the samples of the research.
- ✓ The study will be confined to child rearing practices in the rural setting, as the primary interest of the research is to understand the traditional forms of child rearing. This leads to the avoidance of child rearing practices of the Sidama who inhabit urban areas

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

In this section we will see theories which will be used in this research. We will start with by just bringing up aspects of these theories, which are related to this study. This section will also lay the ground for the theoretical framework I use in this paper to explore into the child rearing practices among the Sidama. This section will explain why contextualist theory is chosen to understand child rearing among the Sidama. In addition here, a discussion of empirical research on child rearing across cultures and studies of child rearing in Ethiopia will be made.

2.1 Theoretical Frame Work

Over the past century psychologists developed quite a number of theories about human development. Some of these theories have been criticized as greatly ethno-centric while some are proved to be helpful in understanding child rearing across cultures. Thus as it has already been amply discussed in the background child rearing is culture bound. In this paper the socio-cultural theory of child development as proposed by the ecological systems theory of Bronferbrenner and the contextualist theory of Vygotsky are used to give us the theoretical framework we need to help us see the importance of culture in child rearing and to show that the practice is culture bound. These theories are discussed below in the way they are related to our issue of discussion.

2.1.1 Socio-cultural theory

Various scholarly writings have tried to identify factors that are very essential for child rearing in different cultures for the past two decades. Among these factors: the significance of the family as the most essential agent of child rearing is uncontested. Cross-cultural studies of child rearing showed that the inculcation and internalization of societal values and norms by other agents is also an important aspect of the child rearing process (Draper, 1974, pp.263-264). Most of developmental theories had viewed individuals as separate from their social and physical environment. Theories like that of Piaget view development as an individual achievement. This view however had been challenged by other theorists who emphasized the importance of social belief systems in development, theories like that of Ivan Vygotsky.

2.1.1.1 Contextualist theory

Vygotsky is one of the most prominent and the pioneering socio-cultural (contextualist) developmental theorist who flourished during the days of the Russian revolution (Miller, 1993, pp. 372). What made Vygotsky different from his contemporary developmental theorists is his belief that development cannot be understood by conducting a study of an individual in isolation. The development of the child is understood only through the examination of the external social world in which the individual operates. For Vygotsky learning occurs as the child interacts with his/her environment, people and objects

Vygotsky discusses three important processes in child development. These are (1) **the role-played by the culture** (2) **the use of language** and (3) **the zone of proximal development (ZPD)**. These three major components have been described in many literatures and used by different researchers.

More important to us here are the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and the role of culture in the development of the child. ZPD refers to "the distance between a child's actual development level and the higher level potential" (Vygotsky 1978, cited in Gardiner et al 2002, pp.32). This distance between the potential and actual development

can be determined by problem solving under the supervision of a more capable peer or adult. Those who supervise the child might use "prompts, clues, modeling, explanation, leading questions, discussions, joint participation, encouragement and so on" to help the development of the child depending on the culture (Miller, 1993, pp.381). In short the concept of the ZPD could be broadly used in our case to understand the role parents or other care takers play in serving as models as well as guiders in the child's learning of new skills, behaviors and knowledge. These skills, knowledge and behavior that the child learns through modeling, instruction and guidance of the care taker/parents are products of the context in which both the parent and the child operate. This brings us to the concept of context which can also mean culture. The role of culture as a context of development for the child, Vygotsky argues, is the package of "social influences" which contribute significantly to the cognitive development of the child. The learner can rely on the experiences of others and the knowledge which has been transmitted to them by generations of people who were parts of the culture (Gardiner et al, 2002, pp.32-33). Thus in short the culture provides the artifacts for the child to learn socially and culturally acceptable skills, knowledge and behavior.

According to Vygotsky the development of the child is interplay between the requirements of the culture (which includes the values of the care giver) and the demands of the child. He argues that parental guidance or the child rearing practices employed by parents to nurture children and teach them the important cultural and practical lessons necessary to live in a certain culture (Gardiner, 2002, pp.32-33).

2.1.1.2 Ecological systems approach

The other theory which will be used to capture as well as illuminate the cultural nuances of child development is the so-called ecological systems approach. The ecology of human development is theorized by Bronferbrenner who defines it as "the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings [the family] in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these setting, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded". The ecological system "allows us to

go beyond the setting being immediately experienced” and helps us to blend the different environments human development occurs (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, cited in Gardiner et al, 2002, pp.20-21). This theory like the Vygotskian theory puts the culture of a society at the center in the understanding of child rearing or other aspects of human development. But this theory as we will be seeing below goes beyond the culture being experienced through the help of care takers/parents and helps us establish the link between the culture and the care taker which are the major agents of child rearing. It divides the ecology of systems into the following:

The Microsystem is the most immediate environment of all. It is a system which offers the child to interact in a face to face setting which includes interaction at home with care takers, older siblings, peers, neighbors and relative (cited in Gardiner et al 2002, pp.21). The Mesosystem on the other hand is a system made up of two or more Microsystems such as for instance the family and peers and the link between value systems (Miller, 1993, pp.377). The subject of interest in this paper is to see how parents try to shape the behaviors of their children among the Sidama. In this respect therefore this theory underscores that the family which constitutes the micro system is influenced by settings such as peers, neighbors and the child’s interaction with them, which weighs on their rearing patterns and methods. Child rearing is also influenced by settings like the socio economic status of the family which Bronfenbrenner called the exosystem as well as the macrosystem which includes all the above systems as well as the belief system, resources, life style of the society and the ideologies of the culture which have their own imprints on the way parents rear their children (Miller 1993, 377, pp. Gardiner et al, 2002, pp.23).

Unlike these theories universalistic or individual determinist theories of psychology have their limitations in understanding indigenous psychology because of their tendency to universalize child development or child rearing. This tendency to devise a grand theory workable to all human beings has a way of downplaying regional variations or differences which arise from cultural diversity. Their strife to find universal explanation to practices of child rearing in particular and child development in general blurs

important aspects of cultural specificities essential in shaping child rearing/child development.

It is this interest to account for cultural variations in understanding the child rearing practices of the Sidama that I have emphasized on socio cultural theories of child development. These theories make it necessary to look into empirical data from the society/culture under study. This way such theories enrich the study of child rearing by making up for new information to understand child rearing in a specific cultural, societal and environmental setting.

The other thing that I would like to stress in this section is that in the understanding of child rearing both parents and children play their parts. Children affect their rearing directly or indirectly for instance by affecting how parents or caregivers react to their behaviors. However, in this paper I will be trying to understand and child rearing practices only from the perspective of parents. Thus parental influence on the development of the child is the major interest of this paper rather than the influence of the child on the parent in child rearing.

Thus the primary focus is deliberately made on caregivers/parents and not the children who are reared. Even when discussing the roles and responsibilities of children in this society I will focus on parental expectations of what tasks and responsibilities children should have. This vantage therefore decidedly avoids the discussion of how children learn and develop and concentrates on how parents rear and teach their children.

Cultures or sub-cultures provide different types of contexts for the child to grow up. Processes as well as nuances of child rearing vary from culture to culture or community to community. Rural and urban communities may have different child rearing practices, nuclear or extended families may have different child rearing practices. The skills children are required to acquire, the responsibilities they are expected to assume vary from culture to culture depending on the child rearing practices parents and other caregivers employ to rear their children.

2.2 Literature on child rearing

In this section of this chapter various findings which attest to the cultural specificity of child rearing are discussed. These findings show different aspects of child rearing practices in different parts of the world. First a discussion of findings from different parts of the world is made to give us a general overview of literature on the global level. Next, findings from studies done in Ethiopia are also discussed with some detail to help us see the gaps that are needed to be filled in the study of child rearing in Ethiopia.

2.2.1 Empirical research from outside of Ethiopia

2.2.1.1 Child rearing and cultural context

Various researches have tried to identify factors that are very essential for child rearing in different cultures for the past two decades. Among these factors: the significance of the family is identified to be the most essential element of child rearing. Cross-cultural studies of child rearing showed that the inculcation and internalization of societal values and norms by parents as well as other agents are important aspects (mechanisms) of the child rearing process (Draper, 1974, pp.263-264).

During the 1950s an extensive field research, which was set out to examine the practice of early child rearing in six different societies, concluded that child rearing practices varied markedly from culture to culture and that it is almost similar in form and pattern among people of similar cultures (Dennis O'Neil, 2002, pp.3).

Many findings among various cultures such as the Tamang of Nepal show that an action, which may be understood as punitive in one culture, may carry a different meaning in another. Thus concluding that certain parental behaviors always result in the emotional insecurity of any child brought up under any cultural context, to the very least, is unjustifiable, as it does not take into account cultural variation. In another word "what is perceived as endangering competence in one cultural framework may be seen as

epitomizing successful child rearing in another [and could be seen positively both by parents and children]." For instance one finding on the Tamang caregivers of Nepal show that discouraging the expression of "negative response" of children does not result in child insecure attachment. As apposed to the conventionally accepted Eurocentric assumption that children who are discouraged to express negative emotions tend to be insecure. Tamang kids as well as adults have been appreciated for displaying and maintaining compassion and positive relations with others and thus are psychologically competent (Cole and Dennis, 1998, pp. 276-278). It is with this assumption that scholars tried to appreciate the difference between child rearing in individualistic and collective cultures (Draper, 1974, pp.266).

There are a number of researches done on different cultures showing various patterns of child rearing across different cultures which stress the notion cultural variations result in the variation of child rearing practices. One study found out that Baganda (Uganda) infants are much more advanced in their psychomotor development compared to European, American Black and American white infants. This is proved to be caused as a result of the cultural setting they are brought up in, which encourages sociability which is a highly valued trait that adults are expected to possess in the society (Kilbride and Kilbride, 1974, pp. 296 and 307).

An interesting study by Caudil can also serve as an example to show that child rearing is culture bound. The study was conducted on three to four months old Japanese and American babies in relation to maternal care. The finding of this research shows that the responses of the babies are in line with the cultural expectations of their respective cultures. While the American babies displayed verbally and physically 'assertive' behavior the Japanese ones exhibited verbally and physically restrained behavior (Cole and Dennis, 1998, pp.310).

Findings among the Yanomamo society of the Amazone Basin shows that their child rearing style or the goal of rearing children is very much related to aggression and children are trained and groomed to be aggressive and fierce as this is the most important determinant behaviors which brings respect and prestige among Yanomamo adults.

Exactly the opposite behavior on the other hand is encouraged by the Pygmies of Central Africa who are encouraged to be timid and much less aggressive (Gardiner, 2002, pp.66-67).

2.1.1.2 Gender and child rearing

The other issue worth mentioning is gender based behavioral dispositions that most traditional cultures expect from their young children. Studies in Kenya, Papua New Guinea, Turkey and many other such cultures show that after 6 or 7 years girl children are not allowed to play with their male counterparts (Gardiner, 2002, pp. 167).

Studies have also shown that there can be sections of a society who are subjected to greater responsibilities and control and at least face greater pressures coming from parents. A finding on the Luo community of Kenya shows for example that first-born boys are subjected to greater responsibility and nurturance training (Draper, 1974, pp.265).

2.1.1.3 Child rearing during infancy

A longitudinal study conducted in the 1950s in America found out that early parental warmth is associated with high self-esteem of the child during the later years of childhood. The finding also concluded that the situation of the family that a child of 12 years old has lived in since early childhood affects his/her educational competence at school. This finding by implication shows that the way the child is brought up and interacted with his/her parents during early childhood affects the child even if he/she grows into an older child and affects his/her self-concept, which in turn affects his/her educational as well as other engagements (Sears, 1970, pp. 268 & 287-288).

The findings of a study on the Efe of Zaire also show that infants of 5 and 8 months in this culture are subjected to simultaneous interaction with their mothers as well as other adults. Babies of this age who are usually attached to the mother, mostly the single agent responsible for tending and taking care of the baby in western cultures, are exposed to

interaction with other adults among the Efe. This difference is caused by the social context and the culture that the Efe are born and raised. Such experiences cause the infants to develop a 'self that incorporates other people'. Thus the assumption that the "social development" of the child at its early stage is "hierarchical and sequential in nature" is not universal to all children of the world. This study proves the point that infants are capable of having 'multiple' relationships at the same time. The study found out that Efe infants spend almost half of their time with people who are not their mothers. The ecological setting in which the Efe live is also one important factor determining the intense social interaction between adults and infants. This is because the Efe live in camps ('transient settlements'). Members of this camp are most of the times kins but there can also be visitors from outside who reside in the camp (Tronick and et al, 1992, pp. 568-569 & 573-575).

In a similar undertaking different researchers who worked on the Baganda infants found out that childcare practices among Rural Ugandan women who allow the infant to explore his/her environment nurtures a higher social development of Baganda infants during their first year of life. The fact that they are carried in the back and are allowed to have more physical freedom to move and interact with others while the mother engages in various social events and so on gives the infant more exposure with the outer world. This is especially true when we compare Baganda infants with for example American babies who spent most of their early years under a much more austere control and protection. This shows that different cultural childcare practices have different results in the development of children (Kilbride and Kilbride, 1974, pp. 297). For instance like many other societies in Africa Baganda kids are smiled to frequently by care takers as well as other adults; are given to other adults to be hold; are encouraged to sit in various social events where they engage with lots of people tend to be socially important objects. Such exposure before their first year of life instills in the kids a lot of 'sociability' traits at this very early stage of their life. Such early rearing practices of the baby by parents and the interaction the baby is exposed to with other members of the community are said to have contributed for their sociality in adult life. Thus in short the social milieu in which child rearing takes place determines the social behavior as well as the forms of child rearing practices that children receive in a certain culture (Ibid, pp.305-307 and 310-311).

Socioeconomic context and social organization also affects the way children are reared. Variation of these contexts from culture to culture results in different forms of child rearing (Draper, 1974, pp. 264). Moreover, it is a very well established fact that receives 'considerable empirical evidence' that child rearing in traditional subsistence societies is molded by the 'specific modes of economic organization' of the society. These modes of economic organization shape the attitude of members of the society including parents towards what skills and techniques they want their children to acquire. Thus there are special roles that children are expected and groomed to possess in accordance with the needs of the particular culture. Findings also show that these forms of child rearing practices leave permanent mark in personality. For example, herding responsibilities that children in traditional societies are subjected to affect the personality development of boys (Draper, 1974, pp. 264).

2.2.2 Studies done in Ethiopia

Historical data on children is very meager in Ethiopia. And as Pankhurst said children had long been 'seen but not heard' in this country (Kaplan, 1994, pp. 5). Not only do we lack data on children in the remote historical past but also in our recent history. A study of child development which is not rooted in the historical past of the society can not understand the historical cultural and sociological context in which child development takes place. This unavailability of historical sources on children in Ethiopia is described by Tilahun as a 'paradox since the future of the society depends on its willingness and commitment to invest on its children' (Tilahun, 2002, pp.48-49). In a country of people more than 60 million 56% of the population is estimated to constitute children and the youth below 20 (Ibid, 52).

However, though they are limited, there are efforts made to understand the situation of children in the country with different themes. The recent attempt of Melkamu Afeta (2006) to study socialization among the Borena Oromo, and the research of Dessalegn Tasama (1983), Tsegaye Okubay(1985) are a few to mention. The work of foreign researchers like John H. Hammer and Reidulf K. Molvare are also worthy contributions

to our understanding of socialization in general and child rearing in the Ethiopian cultural context. We will try to summarize the findings of these researches and a number of others below.

Even though they are limited, there are efforts made to understand the situation of children in the country with different themes and some of them are discussed here.

The issues of child-rearing practices and parenting style have been discussed in the Ethiopian psychological literature even if with a generalization that child rearing in Ethiopia is very culture bound with the two dominating parenting styles that are Authoritative parenting style (Birhanu, 1996) and Authoritarian parenting style (Cox, 1967, Levine, 1965).

In an article on child rearing practices and parenting styles among the Silti communities in southern Ethiopia also concluded that children are reared in an environment where they are seen as passive listeners of their parents, and that they should be told to do this or that rather than engaged with discussion. They are not allowed to express their opinions most of the time. Considering such aspects of child rearing Abraham Hussein concluded that such rearing does not encourage independence and social responsibility (Abraham Hussein, 1996, pp.142-145).

Melkamu Afeta's (2006) study on child rearing and socialization in Borena culture considers children from birth to three years. He used questionnaire, focus group discussion, and natural observation to answer some of the questions he raised like, what are the traditional child rearing practices in Borena and what are the feeding, sleeping and other caring customs among the ethnic group. Melkamu reported that there are very useful child care practices like prolonged duration of breast feeding and a sleeping arrangement in which the baby slept with his mother for an extended period of time, which, according to him, will have a positive contribution to their socialization. The numbers of caretakers, their quick response to the infant crying, the verbal soothing and many other initiation ceremonies at different ages of the child are some of the socialization processes, which Melkamu identified among the Borena. However there are also few harmful traditional practices, which Melkamu reported in the society like female

genital mutilation and absence of the use of modern medical institution during delivery, which are part of the child rearing practices that he believed to have negative consequences on the child.

Reidulf K. Molvare (1995) wrote a book entitled "Socialization and Social Control in Ethiopia" in 1995. The book set out to investigate the establishment and preservation of values, norms and customs in Ethiopia. With these purpose however the writer only considers the culture of the Amhara ethnic group with a reason that Amharic is the only living language he speaks and with the argument that Amharic and Amhara culture is widely spread in the country.

Molvare said that the goal of socialization is "to incorporate the young into the community" so that there will be homogeneity in the society concerning values and customs. Deviation from the established norms is usually taken as a "nuisance" that might endanger the harmony of the community"(pp.318).

To keep this in control the society socializes the young by using informal methods of socialization not "legislation or formal schooling". Children are reared and socialized according to him with a positive and negative verbal instrument in which the former include "advice of parents, use of folklore, and instructions at the right of passages "while the later include" gossip, scandal, rumor, teasing, and insults". Moreover, a supernatural way of socialization, that is "awe" or respect for what is thought to be the will of God, spirits, the ancestors, fear of being cursed, obligation felt to fulfill or honor an oaths" are used as important mechanisms of child rearing at the family level and socialization at societal level in addition to the harsh child rearing and disciplining which suppresses many "natural tendencies" in the first years of formal and informal education (pp. 325).

Molvare criticized the bringing up of children as "too strict" and the "freedom of choice has always been strictly limited". He argued that if the very strict "rules" of Ethiopian upbringing is relaxed, there will be a chance to bring about a more harmonious and "happy" or at least less aggressive society. For these he suggested that Ethiopian parents and schools should consider the different forms of a child rearing practices which modern psychology suggest. The Ethiopian church, according to the writer, must also teach

'ideals which are in the range of human capabilities' than being "utopian". With this he believed the church could contribute in the shaping of "peaceful" and "cooperative" society. To say the least Molvare's work is very Eurocentric which tries to understand a totally different culture, an Ethiopian culture, with the eyeglasses of the West. His suggestion of a 'better' socialization for Ethiopians is a little hard to swallow.

John H. Hammer's (1972) "Folktales, Socialization, and the Content of Social Relationship: An Ethiopian Example" is an article which attempted to understand socialization among the Sidama by hypothesizing, "when early socialization practices are carried out by the adult members of the community, in addition to those nuclear and extended families, the dominant emotional attribute(s) transmitted to children will be associated with generational rather than dyadic difference.....if this is correct then it may be presumed that dyadic interests will vary with status change in the life cycle while the emotional attribute(s) transmitted originally by the older generation of the community will remain relatively constant".(pp 389) To test this, the researcher used an indirect projective type approach in which he analyzes 40 Sidama folktales. Summary of the dyadic frequencies of attributes, age group, and sex of storyteller and theme of story are also analyzed.

After he scrutinized the data and the judgment of the elders on the folktales, Hamer concludes that in Sidama culture as one progress through the lifecycle "emotional commitment to authority focuses on dyadic relationship appropriate to change in status"(pp.404)

He argues that children early in their age learn to commit themselves to develop characteristics that ensure conformity and the respect for authority. Adults encourage children in their early childhood to be obedient to older men by reinforcing these behaviors by giving material rewards like food and clothing. These teach children the reciprocity of the social relationship in early life so in adolescence the child is already socialized to oblige and to respect the political system and authority of elders to get a respect for oneself and one's property.

In another research John Hamer and Irene Hamer (1971) try to see the relationship between achievement motivation and child rearing/socialization among the Sidama. They mention that the informal, subtle encouragement of aspiration of mothers and fathers of the youngsters and especially the high level of respect of the later "is believed to lead to high goal aspiration" which is an important element in achievement motivation. Moreover they explained that the Sidama reward system which includes blessing, endearment, food and clothing which are meant to symbolize to the child that in addition to performing well as an individual, he is considered as a worthy member of his community. This reward system, according to the researchers, can strongly reinforce achievement motivation (pp 234-236). Their research finally concluded that the Sidama youth are achievement oriented, even if independent training is not a strong part of their childhood training (pp. 24).

Dassalegn Tesema in his study of socialization and cultural life of the youth among the Hadiya deals with a very interesting custom and tradition of the Hadiya socialization process. Dassalegn, belonging to the Hadiya ethnic group, he employs an emic approach to study the ethnic group. His methods of research are interviewing elders and observation. By examining the general culture and different age groups, Dassalan identified different agents of socialization. This includes family, peers and the community at large.

According to Desalegn, the purpose of child rearing by the family focuses on

- Ensuring family cohesion
- Maintaining good reputation and proper social stand
- Bringing up honor and inheritance to family name (to accomplish this elders recite ethnic origin and venerate heroes of the community) and tradition including socio-economic activities
- Identification of their social role (pp. 9-16)

Concerning the peers, to mention some points, the different games, songs and other rites of passage which they all take part in helps them to develop different social skills, helps their integration with one's age group and the community. Some of these games are

Gubnacha (Wrestling), Kallo-o (field hockey), Orancha (a game of young boys in war in which they fight in groups). Desalegn adequately discusses how the games are played and what the intended outcomes of these plays are and how the Hadya teach their values in an informal traditional setting (pp. 18-19).

Periodic songs and dances are also another Medias of socialization according to Desalegn. When boys and girls are together they sing about love and friendship and also criticize each other. Their songs show the life of their community, the good deeds and evils of men in the community and also through their songs they venerate heroes and wealthy people, insult idle and roaming individuals. At times, Desalegn argues that, their songs foretell upcoming social change. In this way youngsters learn the values and norms of their society (pp. 20-21).

There are also many other rites of passage, which are used by the society in way of putting the young in line. Rite of suma-wechancha (age names) and rite of circumcision, which are very important for adolescents, are cultural initiation ceremonies used by the society to socialize their young (pp. 22-26).

In discussing the methods of child rearing by the Hadya, he says that they use reward in the form of food and clothing or blessing and punish by inflicting physical pain as well as denying food and new clothing. Denunciation is another punishment, which involves cursing, which at the worst case involves ostracizing the offender from families, neighbors and close relationships.

Proverbs, stories, folktales are also used to inculcate good behavior and to indicate the consequences of violating social norms. The different kinds of traditional cooperative activities like sera (for house construction, ceremonies, and rituals) or Geja (for seasonal farm activities) are used to accustom the youth to the usefulness of mutual assistance and to encourage them to take part in social and economic activities happening in their environment (pp. 29-31).

Dessaegn concludes by emphasizing the role of family, peers and community in rearing as well as socializing the child with a comment that modern education and mass medias are threatening the resilience of these traditional forms of child rearing and socialization. The family and the community at large are now loosing their stronghold in coaching their children to groom them to a successful adult life.

Tsegaye Okubay (1985) in his study of child rearing and socialization in rural Adwa, argues that child rearing and socialization is affected by the socio-economic status of the family. He classified families in the area as low, middle and high-class family. He concludes that though there is a difference on how children are reared and socialized among these family group there are similarities in the contents and goals of child rearing and socialization with other cultures in Ethiopia.

Another study by Rigness and Gander try to give us cross cultural differences in child rearing between American and Ethiopian children (Rigness and Gander, 1974, pp. 60-64). Tigist and Dereje tried to show the patterns of feeding of infants in Addis Ababa (Tigist and Derege 1996, pp. 57 & 65). Another student Rahel Gebre-Selassie studied the quality of child and early care givers (2005) while others like Desalegn Mekonen studied the maternal and new born care practices and reached a conclusion that the support that mothers get in child rearing in the form of support system during pregnancy and after birth makes the involvement of neighbors and relatives very vital in child rearing (Desalegn, 2005). Other studies on maternal parental care practices (Sisay Zeleke, 2006), maternal knowledge, attitude and practice of breast feeding (Kebede Terfessa, 2006) attachment pattern of infants (Gadissa Kebede, 2006) are done with regards to child rearing.

Many other such studies on child rearing have been done since the 1970s and this study is another addition to child rearing patterns and practices among one of Ethiopia's ethnic groups, the Sidama. The attempt here as it has been explained already in the previous chapter is mainly to identify the rearing practices of children among the Sidama and contribute to our understanding of the culture specific features of child development and child rearing in this country.

CHAPTER THREE

Methods and Procedures

This section deals with the methods used and the procedure followed in doing the research. Thus, the data source, the sampling technique, the samples used and other important aspect of the methods will be discussed. More ever the result of the pre test of the tool will be presented followed by the procedures of data collection and the method of analysis.

3.1. Design

This is a descriptive research focusing on child rearing practices in a specific cultural setting. The study mainly relies on primary data gathered from subjects using questionnaire, focus group discussion, and interview in the study area.

3.2. Population and sampling

Population: - the study is conducted in Southern Nation, Nationalities and People Regional State, Sidama zone, Aleta Wendo woreda, Bultuma kebele (peasant association).

All the four localities in the kebele and the house holds in them, with at least one child, were the target population of the study. According to the statistics in the Keble there are one thousand forty three house holds in the area with an estimated population number of 7,500.

Sampling: - The population of the study is distributed in four localities names Nequlo, Amneto, Hatubega, and Ejesra. From this localities three was taken as a study cite by

excluding the fourth one- Nequlo. This was done to avoid the influence of urbanization as Nequlo is relatively near to the town.

From the three localities two hundred families were selected to make up the sample for the research depending on whether they have children and the accessibility of the houses. However after the data were collected twenty cases were discarded as their information is either incomplete or inappropriate.

Thus the actual sample of the research consist a total of hundred and eighty subjects. The general information and demographic characteristics of the samples are as follows.

The first back ground information was the age of the subjects. The youngest respondent in the research was 18 years old while the oldest one was 90 years. The mean age is 41.42 with a mode value of 40. Concerning sex distribution among the samples 115 of the subjects are male while 65 are females.

Another more important variable is the number of children each respondent have. There are 21 subjects with only one child and 4 subjects with more than 12 children, 1 and 12 being the minimum and maximum number. Generally the mean of the age distribution is 5.25 and the mode value is 4.

Protestantism is the widely reported religion in the area with 159(88.3%) subjects reporting it as their religion followed by 8(8.4%) of Muslims, 6(3.3%) traditional belief and 3(1.7%) orthodox Christians and with only 1 catholic.

Concerning the educational back ground of the informants 61.8% of the subjects can not read and write while 17.2% attended elementary school, 7.2% reach junior secondary school and only 2 subjects were found in the sample population with a certificate who are teachers of the nears by elementary school.

Concerning the samples for the focus group discussion (FGD), participants were selected from the respective localities where data were collected via questionnaire. There were six groups of participants which are homogenous in sex and relatively in age.

The first group is that of male youngsters with in the age limit of 14-16 years. Fifteen participants, most of them are 16 years old, were included in this group.

Another youth group of the FGD is that of the girls in which 12 females who are 15 years old (with the exception of 2 participants who are 14 years old and another 16 years old). The participants of both groups are unmarried and have no children but they were included in the samples since they are prospective parents and more importantly they can describe the child rearing practice of their community from their own experiences which is not that distant.

The third and fourth groups consist of young mothers and young fathers respectively. The age of the first group vary from 26 to 35 while for the second group it is between 32 and 45.

The last two groups are that of the old people groups in which subjects which are older than 45 and which have the respect of the community as an elder were included. The male and female participants were included in different groups

Concerning informants who were interviewed for the research, all were purposefully selected. Though at the beginning of the study there was a plan to interview Non governmental and government organization officers, health center officers, and other development work agencies it could not be materialize as non exist functioning in the area. Thus the researcher interviewed a school directress, a school teacher a health committee representative of the Kebele, and the representative of the kebeles' mother health committee.

3.3. Tools

In this research three instruments were used to gather information. These are a questionnaire, focus group discussion and a semi-structured interview.

Questionnaire: - a structured questionnaire of 63 items was used for data collection. The 63 items are all open ended items focusing on the different research questions. Consequently the first 12 items are dedicated to get back ground information on the

subjects. Five items focused on the values children have in the society while 14 items were focused on the beliefs the society have about children and child hood. There are also another 26 items focusing on the infant and child care system in the society. Twelve items on parental treatment of children and three items which deal with the role and responsibilities of children in the society are included. Items which focuses on the role of neighbors and relatives are also included (2 items).

The items are presented in way that questions which focus on the same issue are presented consequentially to keep a flow of ideas; and the questionnaire is prepared in Amharic.

Focus group discussion (FGD): The FGDs are held with different groups with an already prepared guideline. Different questions are prepared which deals with the major issues of the research but which require a detailed response and also which needs a cross reference among informants.

Major questions and other probing questions are part of the guide line. Moreover the emphasis which is given to different issues varies depending on the kind of the groups which is involved. For example issues which are related to cultural practices and their justification is discussed very well with the elderly participants while issues related with childhood were more discussed with the youth groups.

Interview: a semi structured interview was held with key informants from the study area. Thus different questions which refer to a specific situation of children are included in the interview. Seven to ten questions were prepared with probing questions.

3.4 Pilot study report

The purpose of the pilot study was to check the applicability and quality of the instrument which is developed to collect data about child rearing practices in Sidama culture. The questionnaire was prepared in Amharic language consisting 73 open-ended items. The questions were divided in to different sub-titles focusing on different aspects of child rearing.

Though the questions of the questionnaire were prepared in reference to available literature on child rearing practices and ethnographic data on Sidama people and culture, I believe it is important to test the quality of the instrument to get the right answers/data for the questions asked. Hence, a pilot study was conducted by taking 15 subjects, who are believed to share common features in ethnic background, educational status; socio-economic status and location.

The pilot study was intended to check the clarity of the questions and their cultural appropriateness, the time it takes to fill the questionnaire, the reaction of the respondents to the questions and other such issues. The pilot study was conducted in Awasssa town on 15 parents. It takes an hour and 30 minutes to finish the questionnaire. After the pre-test, the questionnaire is modified in such a way that the questions were reduced from the 73 items to 63. The reasons to discard some of the items and make modifications to some of the questions are summarized in the following table.

Table 1: Result of the Pre-test of the Questionnaire and the Modifications Made

Type of problem Observed	Number of items with Such a problem	Example of an item with such problem	Measure taken	Example of an item which is modified
Repetitive ideas	5	When do children start to know what is right and wrong or what is good and bad	discarded	discarded
Lack of clarity	4	Is it possible to make an unruly child behave properly? How?	modified	What do you do to teach your children good manners
Difficult to answer/time taking questions	5	Can you tell me any tales or stories, which you usually tell to your children?	Included in the focus group discussion	Can you tell us tales and stories which are told to children in your culture? what about sayings (maammashsha) about children in Sidama language?

3.5 Procedures

As it had been mentioned already the study is conducted in three localities of Bultuma kebele. By taking in to the consideration the expansiveness of the study area and a potential language barrier (as there are people who do not speak Amharic) four assistances were hired, who are from the same area and have a certificate from the teachers training institution. The assistances were hired to help in the data collection procedure and also as a translator in the whole process.

The local administration (the woreda and also the kebele) were communicated about the research which is done in the localities, with a formal letter from the Sidama zone administration office. The willingness and cooperation of the officials is one of the thing which contribute for the success of the research

On the first day a half day training was given to the assistances in which the objective and the contents of the research is thoroughly discussed. In the training we tried to replace some of the concepts which are written in Amharic in to their respective Sidama meaning so that all of us can say the same thing while interacting with the informants

The questionnaire was administered house to house. In doing so the first problem was convincing the respondents that their answers is going to be used only for the purpose of the study but not for any kind of government or non governmental aid work ; which most of the respondents expect.

The other obstacle in the data collection procedure was getting a large number of female respondents. Most of the time the men of the house get offended when the mother was sought for the interview even though the purpose and the reasons were explained to the husbands. Some times the researcher was forced to interview both parents from one house hold even if one of the questionnaires is doomed to be discarded. At times, even if the father is not at home the mothers are not comfortable to sit for an interview with out the consent of the former.

In addition to this, at a time when the mothers were interviewed they interrupt the interview repeatedly to attend to their children, their cooking or one of their house hold chores which leads to spending longer time in one house. This and other reasons contribute for the less number of female subjects and also the whole sample number in general

Concerning the focus group discussions, participants who qualify the subtle requirement like sex and age were communicated by the local officials. Most of the focus group discussions were held in an open space setting where the community meets for different kind of discussions.

The discussions of the focus groups were held both in Amharic and Sidama depending on the personal choice of the speaker. The responses were recorded in tape reorder with the consent of the participants.

3.6. Methods of data analysis

Once the data were collected both qualitative and quantitative analysis were used. Accordingly, data which are obtained from the questionnaire were quantitatively analyzed by using the 13th version of a statistical package for computing data SPSS (statistical package for social science).

As most of the items are open ended with a different generic answers a multiple response set analysis is used. The findings are reported by using a descriptive statistics of frequency distribution, cross tabulation, mean, and other statistics.

The data which is obtained from the focus group discussion is also analyzed qualitatively. The responses of the participants are synthesized in light of the research questions in different groups. The responses of the FGDs as well as the interviews are also integrated with the qualitative analysis of the data in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

The major objective of this research is to examine the child rearing practices among the Sidama of Bultuma kebele specifically focusing on the values, beliefs, methods of child care and roles and responsibilities of children in the society.

Data were collected from 180 sample parents in the area using questionnaire and focus group discussion and interview were also used. The sample size and the general information on the informants will be presented and will be followed by the findings of the research in which data from the questionnaire, the FGDs and the interviews will be analyzed in relation to the major questions of the research

Concerning the sample size and their back ground information 9 items were used in the questionnaire and their summarized answer is presented in table 2

Table 2: Sample Size and Demographic Data on Subjects

DATA	DESCRIPTION	CASE	DATA	DESCRIPTION	CASE
*RECODED AGE			EDUCATIONAL STATUS	Can not read or write	110
				Can read or write	9
	1.00	62		Elementary school	31
	2.00	27		Junior secondary	13
	3.00	40		Secondary	13
	4.00	25		Certificate and above	2
Total		180		Total	178
SEX	Male	117	OCCUPATION OR MEANS OF INCOME	Farmer	143
	Female	63		Merchant	24
	Total			Daily laborer	4
RELIGION	Protestant	159		Artisan	1
	Orthodox	3		Employee	3
	Muslim	8		Farmer and merchant	2
	Traditional belief	6		Total	178
	Catholic	1			

** Income is recoded from its original continuous value (see annex 4)*

4.1. Goals of having children

4.1.1. Reasons to have children

The respondents were asked their reasons to have children and they give varied reasons. Some of them gave “child centered” reasons to have children while others gave “non-child centered” reasons. Those who want to have children for a “child centered reasons”, which are 2.9 % of the total sample population, said that they want to have children just to see them grow and succeed in life.

But a great majority of respondents gave “non-child centered” or “adult centered” reasons for wanting to have children. 28.6% of the sample population said that they want to have children so that they help them in domestic work, 16.8% said they want children to have heirs to inherit their property. Forty six respondents (16.8%) said they want children to get economic and social security during old age while another 12.8% want children for more social reasons – wants children to continue their lineage and bear their names after they passed away. In addition, 4.8% of them wanted children so that they will bury them and mourn for them when they die. The rest of the respondents gave different reasons for wanting to have children. The reasons are because children are gifts from God, because it is a natural law to have children, because children are sources of respect and prestige and because children are assets. The answers are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Why do you want to have children?

Why do you want to have children?(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
To help me in domestic work	78	28.6%	1
To have a heir	46	16.8%	2.5
To care for me when I get old	46	16.8%	2.5
To continue my lineage and keep my name	35	12.8%	4
To have someone to bury me properly when I die	13	4.8%	6
Because they are gift's of God	14	5.1%	5
Because it is natural law/or a culture	6	2.2%	8.3
To have prestige and respect in the society	6	2.2%	8.3
To see them succeed in life	8	2.9%	7
Because children are assets	6	2.2%	8.3
other	15	5.5%	
Total	273	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

The mean of the desired number of children that parents/respondents want is 5.6% with 1 and 12 as the minimum and maximum number of children wanted. As can be seen in the table below the most desired number of children is 4 and 6 with a frequency percentage of 25% and 18.9% respectively

Similar responses are also obtained from group discussion about goals of having children. In a focus group discussion with young fathers showed that the value they give to children is mainly social. They noted that children are valued for they continue lineage and they are the ones who inherit the property and lifetime achievements of the father and their parents. They are the ones who preserve the name and history of their parents. Parents are survived by their children and their children's children. Their names and deeds are recounted in the years to come only if they have children.

Most of the participants in the elderly groups said that children are important because they run errands for them and help them in different household chores. They also admitted that children are also a helper and a shelter in old age. But more importantly they perceive the value of children to be mainly related to death. They said that the most important value of children is their usefulness in the occasion of death. Children will mourn and give a proper burial for their parents.

On the other hand a discussion with young mothers shows that the value children have is more economic, yet a bit different from that of the elders and young fathers. Even if this role in economic security during old age is recognized by the young mothers they emphasized more on the immediate values children have for their parents. According to the respondents children are needed because they run errands for their mothers when they are young, they will support their parents in work and especially the boys will support the family if the father is deceased. When it comes to inheritance my discussants emphasized that boys are preferred over girls as the later are not allowed to inherit the property of their fathers.

The same reasons are also mentioned by male and female youngster participants, who are unmarried, about the goals of having children. They generally said that children are wanted for their help in domestic work, for old age security and for continuation of family line and name (Refer annex 1)

4.1.2. Attitudes about childlessness

The respondents were also asked what they think will happen to them if they don't have children. 28% of the sample population said that their first worry would be the issue of inheritance. They said that they would have no one to inherit their property and their property would be inherited by strangers. 12.1% of the respondents said that not having children would have resulted in the lack of respect in the society. Children give prestige and parents without children do not have as much respect and acceptance in the society as those who have children. The same number of subjects responded that they want to have

children because of fear of loneliness. 11.3% of the respondents said that if they did not have children they would not have someone to carry their name and history in the future. The least common worry which is mentioned by only 2.9 % of the sample population is the belief that if one does not have children one will face instability in ones marriage and may face the problem of divorce. See the Table below for their summarized answers

Table 4: What do you think will happen to you if you do not have any children?

What will happen if you don't have any child(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
I would not have a heir	67	28.0%	1
I would not have someone to care for me in old age	21	8.8%	5
I would not have someone to bury me properly	15	6.3%	6
I would not have someone to assist me in work	10	4.2%	7.5
My marriage would be at risk	7	2.9%	9
I would not get respect in the society	29	12.1%	2.5
There would have been no one to carry my name	27	11.3%	4
my lineage will be discontinued	10	4.2%	7.5
I would have been lonely	29	12.1%	2.5
other	24	10.0%	
Total	239	100.0%	

In the focus group discussions young mothers said the following about being childless “If a man does not have a child he will be alone in life with no one helping and no one inheriting what he has been working for. If a woman is childless she is then the most unlucky one as she has no helper and that her husband might bring a second wife to the house or divorces her if the worst come”. When the women were asked if it is usual that the husband divorce the childless woman they said “not really, but the woman might leave by her own will if she can not have a child”. As one of the participants said “what is the point of staying married without a child?”

According to these women, if one does not have a child there will be no one to run errands and to help in different tasks. If couples do not have children, their old age will be full of misery as there is no one to take care of them besides there will be no one to mourn for them and bury them properly. In addition if one has no child it means, as one informant puts it "what they have been doing all their lives will be taken away by strangers as they do not have anyone to inherit their spoils".

The group of participants of elderly fathers said that parents without children are perceived as people who are not recognized by the future and as the Sidama saying goes "even a tree without a seed is worthless let alone a father without a child" "A father without a child is as good as dead." Children are thus considered as embodiments of the history, name and deeds of their father's / parents. Bareness is perceived as a great loss on the part of parents. As another Sidama saying goes "a village /a family into which a child is not born will be inherited by strangers" signifying that ones lifetime efforts will not be inherited by a deserving heir- but a total stranger.

4.1.3 Sex preferences and reasons

Regarding parental preference to the sex of children we found that 88% of the subjects responded that they want to have children of both sexes while 4.4% said that they have no preference. Out of the total number of samples 5.6% of them said that they prefer to have males and only 1.1 % said that they prefer females. When we see the sex preference of the subjects the majority said that they want both sexes as children; however from individuals who prefer a single sex those who prefer a male child are larger than the female ones. From the 5.6% of the samples who prefer boys over girls, 21.4% said that they prefer boys because male children always stay around their parents even if they get married. Similarly, the respondents said that they prefer boys because they are the ones who inherit their property when they die and because boys contribute to the economy of the family and help fathers in the farm.

Similar reasons have been given in the focus group discussion with young mothers when it comes to preferences of boys over girls (see focus group discussion with young mothers in annex 1)

4.2. Belief about children and childhood

When we come to see the beliefs of the Sidamas about children we get interesting insights especially from the focus group discussions held with mothers fathers and unmarried young members of the localities. The date when children are born is believed to determine the fate of children and their community. According to Elderly men, traditionally birth date of a child is believed to determine the character as well as the fate of the child. It was believed by forefathers that a child born on the day called "Bita" in Sidama calendar is believed to have success in life for his own but his success will be harmful for the community. He is believed to bring nothing but scarcity and famine. Another example of a baby born on an ominous day is the one born on the date of the "Argajma" who is believed to bring death and illness to the community. To set right the bad consequences of the birth of children born in such ominous day sacrifices will be made and the baby will be washed with blood to cleanse the evil out of him. The placenta and the umbilical chord of the baby will not be buried on the date his date of birth because this is believed to bring folly to the community. Thus an alternate date will be set and his umbilical chord and placenta will be buried and his birth will be announced on this later date. There are also children born on good days such as "Adula Gucha", "Dulete Ilancho" or "Lumassa". These are good days which bring wealth, prosperity, blessing to the baby as well as the community. According to participants these days are set by traditional astronomers who determine the dates following the arrangement of stars on the sky.

Another occasion which reflects the belief of the community about children is the celebration of the birth of children. In these celebrations the mother keeps butter for the occasion starting from the time when she knows that she is expecting a baby. And the father is also expected to make preparations for the celebration by buying sheep or beef to slaughter on the date of the birth of the baby. The celebration becomes more if the

baby is a boy. This celebrations show the importance the society attach to having children and other beliefs about children.

Hence respondents from the sampled places are asked about their belief about children and childhood in which there answers is discussed as follows.

4.2.1. Who are considered children?

In an attempt to understand beliefs parents have about children and childhood various questions have been asked. The first question was about who are considered children in the area. And the following answers are given.

Table 5: Which age group is considered as children?

Age(in years)	Frequency	Percent	Rank
1-4	91	50.6%	1
1-5	37	20.6%	2
1-8	3	1.7%	6.5
1-10	11	6.1%	3
1-15	3	1.7%	6.5
1-2	10	5.6%	4
1-7	9	5.0%	5
other	9	5.0%	
missing	7	3.9%	
Total	180	100.0%	

As can be seen from the above table those who are considered as children by 50.6% of the respondents are those below the age of 4 while 20.6% of the respondents said that children are those below 5 years. There are also 6.1% subjects who consider the age gap between one and ten belong to children. As can be seen from the table the age groups of 1-2, and 1-7 have mentioned by 5.6% and 5.0% subjects as children age.

As the answers shows the widely accepted age for children is 1-4. Though this is the common belief in the area about children's' age the differences we observed in the answers can be attributed to the educational back ground of the respondents. It is observed that parents who had been to modern education seem to mention older age range to describe children/childhood when compared to those who did not go to school. This observations is also strengthen by the interview with one of the teachers, who said that, concerning childhood , the time children begin to assume responsibility and begin to be treated like a grown up depends on the educational status of the parents. "If the parents are educated, they understand their children need and they let them play for a while than making them always busy with house hold chores" (an interview with a teacher: annex 1).

In describing children by using different traits respondents mentioned characters which they choose to describe children with. The answers are summarized as follows in table 6.

Table 6: Characteristics of children

Characteristics of children(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
They do not know what is good or bad	56	25.7%	1
They are not aware of danger	28	12.8%	4
They differ by the way they eat	5	2.3%	6
They differ by the way they do things	39	17.9%	2
They differ by their thought	29	13.3%	3
They differ by their conversation and pl	12	5.5%	5
They differ in their age	26	11.9%	4
Other	15	6.9%	
Total	218	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

As table 6 shows, 25.7% of the total sample population responded that children do not distinguish between what is good or bad while 12.8 % of parents have said that children

are those who do not or cannot protect themselves from danger. 17.9% of the respondents said that children are different from adults in the way they do things while 13.3%, 2.3% and 5.5% of the respondents stated that children are different from adults in the way they think, in the way they eat and in the way they converse respectively.

Even if participants of the focus group discussion differed with their definition of children, most of them said that children are those below the age of 5 and some others said that children are those below 10. However, there was a general consensus among participants that those below 10 are considered children who are not capable of differentiating the good from the bad and the worthy from the unworthy. These are called *qaqo* while those children between 10 and 15 years of age are called *beto*. They are children who are expected to know what is good from what is bad and what is valuable from what is not valuable. This category of children is taken more seriously by adults and they are also expected to assume more important economic roles in the society.

Young mothers on their part defined children by some of the characteristics like, “children are those who do not know what is good or bad or what is dangerous or safe. Those who do not flee when an ox is running wild or those who walk into fire and the like”. If the child is not capable of avoiding accidents or danger then he is a child. Those below three years are called “*qaqo*”. The “*beto*” which are above five years are also considered children. But after five years they said the child is old enough to take responsibility and to help around so he/she is not a child. They also said in a similar manner with the other above participants children spend most of their time by playing. After some time they will be made to run errands for their mothers and do small household chores. After 10 years, they became active workers in assisting their family, though how good they become depends on their individual smartness and the training they get from their mothers.

4.2.2 Beliefs about ‘Good’ and ‘bad’ children

In order for us to understand what beliefs parents have about children, the characteristics that are believed to make up “good” or “bad” child are identified by respondents. The responses of the sampled parents are summarized in percentiles as follows.

Table 7: Characteristic of good children

Good child(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
A child who obeys and says “yes” to his parents and other adults	116	39.9%	1
A child who is respectful to his parents	50	17.2%	2
A child who accepts advice	17	5.8%	5
A child who does not argue or quarrel or insult others	16	5.5%	6
A child who helps his parents in work and serve as a messenger	22	7.6%	3
A child who is well mannered, morally upright and brings respect to his parents	16	5.5%	7
A child who do good things for others	14	4.8%	8
A child who is serious in his education	19	6.5%	4
A child who listens to and obeys God's works and go to a church	5	1.7%	9.5
A child who exactly deliver what he is sent for	5	1.7%	9.5
Other	10	3.4%	
Total	291	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Table 8: Characteristics of ‘bad’ children

Bad child(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
A child who is not respectful to adults	27	8.3%	6
A child who is not obedient to parents and neighbors	91	27.8%	1
A child who quarrels and insult other people	47	14.4%	2
A child who does not listen to his parent	29	8.9%	5
A child who is not well mannered	20	6.1%	7
A Child who steals	32	9.8%	4
A Child who chews chat	43	13.1%	3
A child who does not like work and who does not want to run errand	17	5.2%	8
A child who disturbs the neighborhood	5	1.5%	10
A child who spends the night outside his home	6	1.8%	9
Other	10	3.1%	
Total	327	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

As can be seen from the above tables obedience and respect for parents and elders are the two most important qualities for a child to be considered as a ‘good child’. On the contrary disobedience and disrespect to parents are the two marks of a ‘bad child’. Hence 39.9% said that those who obey and say “OK” to his/her parents are good children and 17.2% designated respectfulness as an important attribute. 5.8% of the respondents added to the list of good children, keenness to accept advice as another important quality of such a child.

Responses are also given by respondents as to the characters of ‘bad’ children. Accordingly, 27.8% said that disobedience to parents and neighbors is considered as character of a bad child. Children who insult people and quarrel with children are

considered as bad children by 14.4% of the respondents. There are also other descriptions which are given for 'bad' children as it is summarized in table 8.

The same issue of 'bad' and 'good' child is also discussed in the focus group discussions in which every group gave answers which have similarities as well as distinctiveness.

Young father participants identified the qualities of "good" child and "bad" children. According to them good children are:

"Those who are obedient, hard working, those who accept instructions from their parents, those who accept guidance and advice from their parents, those who are attentive and do what their parents tell them to do. While Bad-natured children are those who are disobedient, lazy, those who do not assist their parents and neighbors in various work activities, those who do not listen to their parents and go against their will. A child who disturbs his parents and neighborhood, who steals and gambles is also considered a bad child" (focus group discussion with young fathers: annex1).

Young mothers as well as elderly women gave similar responses as their male counterparts. Female youngsters and male youngsters also give similar answers about the behavior of "good" and "bad" children with a little more emphasis on the roles they have to assume in helping their parents as well as other adults.

According to male youngster participants

"Both boys and girls are expected to be obedient to parents and this is the most important quality of good children. It is noted that a child willing to help his/her parents, a child who obeys his/her parents, a child who works hard, thinks for his/her family, a child who does not get involved in unacceptable behaviors such as theft, a child who is attentive and listens to his/her parents and do as they say is considered a good child in our community." (Focus group discussion with male youngsters: annex 1)

In discussing the reasons for the above mentioned bad characters of children or in other words the causes of bad character of children there are interesting findings. 35.6% of the

respondents said that the cause of the bad nature of children is lack of proper guidance and advice from parents. While 20.5%, 10.5% and 5.4%of the respondents attributed the cause to bad company, lack of receptiveness of parental advice in the child side, and nature as the child might be born as a bad one respectively. 4.6% of the respondents relate the cause to parent’s failure to satisfy the basic needs of their children. The influence of older siblings, the nature of the day they are born, lack of punishment and education are also some of the other causes of bad behavior in children identified by parents. These answers are summarized in the table below.

Table 9: What are the causes for children’s bad behavior?

Causes of children's bad behavior(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
Not getting the proper guidance and advice from parents	85	35.6%	1
spending their time with bad friends	49	20.5%	2
Having bad behaviors by nature	13	5.4%	5
Not being punished for misbehavior	7	2.9%	8
Not listening to the advice of parents	25	10.5%	3
If their parents are unable to fulfill their basic needs	11	4.6%	6
Spending time in bad places like chat places	15	6.3%	4
The nature of the time that they are living made them bad natured	4	1.7%	10
Because of the day on which they were born	3	1.3%	11
Learning bad behavior from older siblings	8	3.3%	7
If they grow up outside of their parent'	3	1.3%	12
If they do not go to school and get education	4	1.7%	9
Other	12	5.0%	
Total	239	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

In the focus group discussion when answering to the question why children become bad natured young father participants said the following

"One of the most important reasons why a child becomes bad natured is because of his/her friends. If he/she stays with bad-natured lazy friends he/her will learn bad character from them. The other factor causing bad-behavior on the part of children is the inability of parents to provide basic material needs of children as well as proper parental guidance. Parents, especially fathers who are unable to fulfill the basic needs of their children like food and clothing will by default encourage their children to go around in search of food to satisfy their needs which reduces the say and influence of the parent over the child. Those parents who guide and monitor their children get good children and those who don't get bad-natured children." (Focus group discussion with young fathers: annex 1)

About the reason why children become bad natured elderly women discussants have said that bad company, lack of control and instruction from parents are among the reasons behind the bad behavior of children. Others on the other hand hold the belief that the kind of a child one has is just luck. As one of the mothers put it "some of the children might be good and some of them might behave badly. All can not be good or all can not be bad".

4.2.3 Beliefs about changing the behavior of children

Before proceeding into how parents try to change the behavior of children the respondents were asked if it is possible to do so. From the total 180 subjects 153 or 85% believe that it is possible to change the bad behavior of children while the rest (12.8%) said that it is not possible to change the bad behavior of children.

Parents were also asked to report what they do to change the behavior of their children from bad to good. Their answers is presented in table 10

Table 10: Changing the behavior of bad children

How to change children's' bad behavior(a)	N	Percent	Rank
Through advice	130	51.0%	1
By teaching children to acquire good behavior	22	8.6%	3
By bribing and cajoling them	17	6.7%	4
By scolding and beating them	47	18.4%	2
By "sera"	6	2.4%	7
Through the advice of elder people and relatives	5	2.0%	8
By spending more time with the child	7	2.7%	6
By sending them to school	4	1.6%	9
By taking them to Church and with the help of God	11	4.3%	5
other	6	2.4%	
Total	255	100%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

The majority of respondents, 51%, believe that it is possible through parental advice, 18.4% said that scolding and beating, 8.6% said moral education and 6.7% said bribe and cajoling to change children's behavior.

Taking children to church, prayer and putting the matter in god's hands is also another methods which are stated as mechanisms to change bad behavior of children by 4.3% of respondents. a few of the respondents(2%) said that the traditional methods of using the advice of elderly people and 2.4% using "sera" or (chaining and beating children by the gathering of relatives and neighbors) are effective methods to change the bad behavior of children. Spending more time with children, talking to them and sending them to school are also mentioned among the mechanism parents use..

4.2.4. Beliefs about childhood

The respondents were asked to define childhood, what it means and what the most defining characteristics of childhood are. The majority of the subjects described childhood as a time of play and happiness (41.6%) while 21.1% say that it is a period of ignorance when children do not know what is good or bad. 36.1% of the respondents said that childhood is a period between 1 and 5 years.

Table 11: How do you describe childhood?

Childhood(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
It is a time of play and happiness	69	41.6%	1
It is a time of not knowing what is good or bad	35	21.1%	3
It is a time for work and a time when children make lots of mistakes	2	1.2%	4
The time between 1-5 years	60	36.1%	2
Total	166	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Discussions with female adolescents as well as other group discussants share similar views on this issue. The female youngsters said:

“Childhood is a playtime especially until kids are old enough to be able to help their parents in various work activities. They spent most of their time in plays until they reach the age of 5. After this age they will be expected to help their parents in various work activities at home or outside. They are involved in activities like picking wood, fetching water and herding.” (Focus group discussion with female youngsters: annex1)

Male youngsters characterized childhoods as a time when children consider everything like a play and a time when children do not realize the worth of things as the Sidama saying goes “children build something in the morning and destroy it in the evening”. In another hand participants also said that childhood is a time of learning and assisting parents in work.

4.2.5 Beliefs about Childhood Plays and Holidays

4.2.5.1 Beliefs about the importance of play

To understand what importance parents attach to play this study used sets of questions. One of these questions has to do with the time that children are allowed to spend playing. Accordingly, 56.1% of the subjects said that children should not play for an extended period of time while 41.1% said that they allow their children to play for an extended period of time. The major reasons (beliefs) parents raised for prohibiting children to play for an extended period of time are the attitude that long play time will spoil children and take their valuable time of work and study; and the conviction that if children play for longer period of time and stay outside of home they will get out of the control of their parents. See the table below for their answers in percentage

Table 12: Why should you not allow children to play for a longer time?

Why should you not allow children to play for a longer time?	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Long play time will spoil them	24	13.3	1
They should also do some work and assist their parents	22	12.2	2
They would not have the time to study their lessons	4	2.2	4
They will be out of their parents control	5	2.8	3
They will not have time to study or do some work	2	1.1	5
Other	2	1.1	
Missing	121	67.2	
Total	180	100.0	

According to focus group discussion participants mostly children play when they go out for herding or when they go out to fetch water from the streams. Therefore, in the fields they play football, hide and seek and such other plays.

To summarize the information which obtained from focus group discussion on plays; there are boys' plays and girls' plays like the gender based roles and responsibilities children of the two sexes are expected to assume in society. This plays, even if they are not sanctioned by the adult world and parents they have the approval of parents and the society unlike games like gambling for instance. According to information from female adolescents and interview (Aster Bulta) the list of plays children play in their locality include the following:

- Girls -: are involved in plays like ገመድ ዝላይ (ጠብ ጠባ)፣ ተኮ ተኪጀ(ሰኞ/ማክሰኞ- , hide and seek, high jump, a play in which children pretend to run a household and cook food by using mud, leaves and water,

Boys- are involved in plays like foot ball, a cultural equivalent of chess which is called ሁጌ, a game in which boys play by throwing small spears called ቃሉ, ሰዲቃ- a play by which boys play by throwing dried mud into small pits and ካዳማ which is an aggressive play in which boys divide in groups and play by kicking each other.

Mato-riddles are another form of play which parents especially fathers play with both boys and girls through which they teach them about their lineage and family history (Interview: Alemitu Zewde, a school teacher: annex 2 and FGD with Male Elders: annex 1)

“Mostly children play when they go out for herding or when they go out to fetch water from the streams. Therefore, in the fields they play football, hide and seek and such other plays. Boys also have responsibilities and thus do not play as much as they want even if they have a relative liberty to do what they want to do compared to girls. Therefore, there is little time for children to play as they have household

chores and other work activities that they are expected to accomplish as children. However, if the family children grow up in is a little educated, children get better opportunity for play” (Interview: Eshet Yemam, a school teacher: annex1)

4.2.5.2 Holidays

The respondents were asked if there are holidays on which children participate. The question was raised with an intention of looking in to the importance the society attaches to children and childhood. Hence, 39.1% said that mostly children take an active part in Fitche/Chambalala holiday (the Sidama celebration of the advent of the Sidama New Year), the Ethiopian Christmas and the Ethiopian New Year also mentioned by 24.3% and 10.7% respondents respectively. However, a significant percentage of the subjects reported that the participation of children in celebration of holidays is minimizing with the passage of time and according to 13.6% children no more take part in holidays. Their responses are summarized in the following table.

Table 13: Holidays in which children participate

Holidays	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
Fitche/Chambalala	95	39.1%	1
Ethiopian Christmas	59	24.3%	2
New Year	26	10.7%	4
Take part in religious songs in church	2	.8%	6
They do not take part anymore	33	13.6%	3
Easter	5	2.1%	5
other	23	9.5%	
Total	243	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Adolescent as well as elder Participants of focus group discussion identified holidays that children take part in as major actors. These include holidays like Genna and Hoya Hoya which are not holidays originating in the Sidama culture. But All participants agreed that the holiday of “ Fiche” or “Chambalala” is the major Sidama traditional holiday in which children take active part. In this holiday that commemorates the commencement of the Sidama New Year a feast to celebrate the advent of the New Year is launched by villages. Enset is prepared mixed with abundant butter and is given to children who go house to house singing “ Je ji Je ji.....chambalala” wishing happy holiday for adults. Each of the children are given pieces of enset (workie) mixed with butter. The second day of the celebration is that which is devoted to children. Children sing fitche: by moving from one household to the other. They are given food and fathers take over the responsibility of herding cattle replacing children so that the later could celebrate the holiday and go round singing house to house.

4.2.6. Beliefs about the two sexes

4.2.6.1 Girl’s behavior vs. boy’s behavior

This study shows that there are distinctive behavioral traits attached to children of the two sexes; as 81% of the subjects agreed while only 15% said that boys and girls are not expected to behave differently. Those who said that boys and girls are expected to behave differently in accordance with their sexes were asked to describe the distinctive behavioral differences of boys and girls and their answers can be seen in the next tables.

Table 14 what are the behaviors of a good girl?

Character of a good girl(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
One who respects her parents and listens to them	57	21.6%	3
One who obeys her parents(especially her mother	68	25.8%	2
One who does household tasks and help her mother	99	37.5%	1
Polite, quite and one who walks chin down	14	5.3%	4
Who go to school	8	3.0%	5
Others	14	5.3%	
Total	264	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Table 15: what are the behaviors of a good boy?

Character of a good boy(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
Obedient and one who listens to his pare	66	24.4%	2
Hard working/ one who assists his family	93	34.4%	1
Respectful	39	14.4%	3
Tolerant, one who does not get angry easily	10	3.7%	6
One who avoids bad places, who does not	9	3.3%	7
One who protects the property of his family	2	.7%	9.5
One who obeys neighbors	2	.7%	9.5
Who does not steal	4	1.5%	8
Who go to school and who is serious about it	16	5.9%	4
Who run errands and do it quickly	12	4.4%	5
Others	17	6.3%	
Total	270	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

With regards to a good behavior a female child is expected to have; 37.5% of the respondents said that a good girl is the one who does household chores and assists her mother. 25.8% said that a girl who obeys her mother and her parents are good girl. 21.6% of the respondents said that one who respects her parents and listens to what they say is the good girl. 5.3% of the respondents said that a good girl is the one who is polite, quite and one who walks chin down. In addition, going to school and coming back home early is also mentioned as qualities which a girl child is expected to display.

As can be seen from table 15 the behavior boy children are expected to display have a lot of similarities with that of girls even if there is a difference in emphasis. The majority of respondents, 34.4% said that hard work is one quality which a boy is expected to possess followed by 24.4% and 14.4% of respondents who said respectively that obedience and respect to parents are other very important qualities a boy child is expected to have. Tolerance and the ability to control anger is also mentioned as a behavior a boy child is expected to have by 3.7% of respondents. The ability to avoid bad company and bad places is also said to have been one of the qualities a boy should have according to 3.3% of the respondents. Going to school on time and running errands quickly for parents and also for neighbors are also some of the good characters which are mentioned by the respondents as a good behavior of boy child.

In a group discussion with young male fathers, elderly women, young mothers, male youngsters and female youngsters it has been indicated that there are sex based behaviors children are expected to display. Girls and boys are believed to have distinctive behaviors and each is expected to behave consistent with these behavioral qualities. Girls are expected to be more reserved, less out spoken, more respectful to parents and elders. They are also expected to be more responsible and less playful. Boys as well are expected to be obedient to the wills of their parents but they have the liberty to have more time for play especially during their very early years as they are not expected to assume much of household responsibilities as early as girls do. Girls are described as responsible, more caring, and hard working while boys are always more in to play and can be disobedient.

Traits that a girl should have are listed down and appear to be more elaborate compared to that of the qualities boys are expected to have. The list for girls include on top of what has been mentioned above the following:

- A girl who gets back home quickly from where she is sent
- A girl who obeys her neighbors
- A girl who gets back from school as early as possible
- A girl who does not complain about food which is given to her

Girls who are considered “bad” are said to display characteristics among others like

- Insult their mothers
- A girl who avoids order from her mother
- A girl who is lazy and slow in doing household chores
- A girl who does not do something right even after she is told repeatedly how to do it
- A girl who tells secrets of her family to outsiders

Moreover the subjects were also asked how they think their children learn these sex oriented behaviors which are listed above. Their responses are summarized in the following table.

Table 16: How do children learn the sex based behaviors?

Learning sex based behaviors(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
From parents and family	98	42.6%	1
From close guidance, advice and follow up	9	3.9%	7
From relatives, neighbors and other people	13	5.7%	4
From their environment	43	18.7%	2
By nature	14	6.1%	3
From religion	9	3.9%	6
From different plays	6	2.6%	7
From other girls and boys	12	5.2%	5
Other	26	11.3%	
Total	230	100.0%	

As can be seen from the above table participants responded to the question how children learn the sex based behaviors. Accordingly 42.6% of the respondents said that children learn these behaviors from parents and other family members while 18.7% said that they learn these behaviors from their environment. Relatives, neighbors and other adult members of the society also play an important role in teaching children the appropriate behavior, according to 5.7% of the respondents. The teaching of parents as well as religious teachings is believed to contribute in teaching children according to 3.9% of the respondents respectively. Also 6.1% said they learn it from nature while 5.2% said that they learn it from other children.

This discussion of the teaching of the sex based behaviors of children bring in another much larger concept in child rearing which is the parental methods of child treatment that is related to discipline and training. The findings of this topic are presented in the following section.

4.3. Parental Methods of Child Treatment

4.3.1 Guidance

Respondents were asked to report what kind of guidance and monitoring mechanisms they use in helping their children acquire a good behavior. Their answers are summarized in the following table

Table17: What kind of guidance mechanisms you use so that your child acquires good behavior?

Guidance methods of parents(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
Giving advice	108	39.3%	1
Controlling and following up the places where children spent their time	72	26.2%	2
By following up their behavior and their actions closely	28	10.2%	3
By encouraging children to focus on their education	13	4.7%	5
By showing them what to do and what to say	19	6.9%	4
By scolding and punishing them	11	4.0%	6
By taking them to church and praying for them	4	1.5%	
Other	20	7.3%	
Total	275	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

As the above table shows giving advice and monitoring the places that children spend their time appear to be the most important mechanisms for guidance as they are mentioned by 39.3% and 26.2% of the respondents respectively. The 10.2% of the respondents said that following up their behavior and what they do closely are the methods through which they as parents guide their children into acquiring acceptable

behavior. 6.9% stated that they try to show their children the right thing to do or say so that they act in the right and acceptable way themselves. In addition to the already mentioned mechanisms encouraging children to focus on their education is considered as a means of guiding children to assume good behavior according to 4.8% of the total sample population. 4% on the contrary said that they try to provide guidance to children by scolding and punishing them. Holding prayers and taking children to church are also mentioned as mechanisms used by parents to ensure the good behavior of children by 1.5% of the respondents.

4.3.2 Good and bad parents

According to elderly men focus group discussion participants parents are considered good when they are able to fulfill the basic needs of their children such as the provision of good nutritious food, proper clothing, and school expenses of their children and so on. Parents who are insulting, nagging, who quarrel with their children day in day out, parents who curse their children are considered bad parents.

Young fathers also gave similar responses to the question of what the roles and responsibilities of parents should be. The responsibilities of parents for them are sex based and there is what a father should do and a mother should do. Consequently, a father has the responsibility to provide for his children while a mother takes care of them. Like that of the male elders these participants gave similar answers to what the qualities of a good parent are. For them failure to fulfill the basic needs of children makes parents a bad caretaker.

4.3.3 Independence Training and Parental Stimulation

To understand how much parents are willing or keen to encourage independence of thinking in their children and to see how they relate with them to better understand the methods of the rearing methods they use I have asked certain basic questions to our sample population. The first thing the respondents were asked was whether they discuss matters with children or not. 83.9% of the respondents said that they discuss matters with

their children while 6.1% reported that they do not. As to the contents of the discussion 25.3% of the sample population said that the matters for discussion are mainly focused on advising children about good behavior and conduct. Discussing the future of children is also another common subject for discussion according to 11.4% of the sample population also discussions about the education of their children according to 15.7% of the respondents. 14% of the respondents said that they discuss with children how to improve the life of the family in the future. 8.3% said that they discuss about the Sidama culture and history. According to 6.6% of the respondents discussion is held between parents and children about their farms and businesses. Religion and social life are also other topics of discussion among 5.2% and 3.1% of respondents respectively.

Table 17: What do you discuss with your children?

Discussion(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
About their future	26	11.4%	4
The discussion is mainly focused on advising them	58	25.3%	1
About improving our livelihood	32	14.0%	3
About Sidama culture and history	19	8.3%	5
About their education	36	15.7%	2
About religion	12	5.2%	6.5
About social life	7	3.1%	8
About farming and business	15	6.6%	6.5
Other	24	10.5%	
Total	229	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

4.3.4 Parents vs. children ideas

Some items are included in the questionnaire to see whether adults/parents take seriously the ideas of children or not. The first question which was asked intended to see if the child has a say on things which are bought for him/her. Thus the respondents were asked the question who chooses when a parent wants to buy something for children. The responses are summarized as follows.

Table 18: who choose things to buy for children?

Who choose things to buy for children?	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Parents	78	43.3	1
Children themselves	30	16.7	3
Father	36	20.0	2
Both parents and children	24	13.3	4
Someone who has good knowledge of what is to be bought	4	2.2	6
Mothers	7	3.9	5
Total	179	99.4	
Missing	1	.6	
Total	180	100.0	

From the total sample population only 16.7% said that they let children buy stuff of their own only after they are old enough. 13.3% said that they shop the stuff themselves but take the children along to choose. The majority of the respondents 43.3% said that parents are the ones who choose and buy things for the child. 20% of the respondents reported that only fathers shop for their children while only 3.9% said that the mother is the one who does the shopping. Some of the respondents which constitute 2.2% also said

that they involve someone (a relative or a neighbor) who knows the market to shop for children.

Concerning parents versus children ideas, the respondents were also asked regarding the acceptability of children's opinion by parents. Subjects were asked whether they expect children always to accept the ideas of parents. With only 7.8% saying No, the majority, which is 90.6%, said that children must always listen to their parents and accept what they said, as parents know what is good for the children and always knows better.

The views of focus group discussion participants are more or less similar to the views of the sample population on this issue. The mothers responded that "it is not good to spoil a child by letting him/her to sit and talk with adults", Fathers on the other hand give a slightly different answer. They said that most of the discussions with children revolve around the parent instructing and advising the child. Parents tell their children in such discussions to do this or that and tried to guide them towards identifying to what is good and what is bad. Some elderly women responded that they as parents discuss with their favorite children and some others said that they believe that it is good to listen to what children has to say.

According to young male group discussants children are not allowed to discuss with their parents or other adults in important matters. They are not encouraged to express their opinions when adults gather. They are ordered to stay outside of such gatherings. However, children are allowed to ask their parents questions that matter to them and could get answers. Their interaction with their parents is mainly receiving guidance and order. But during evening time fathers tell stories to children and engage with them by encouraging them to try to get the answer for riddles. This interaction between fathers and their children is traditionally called '*mato*' among the Sidama.

4.3.5 Punishment and Reward

4.3.5.1 Punishment

Concerning punishment the first thing the respondents were asked was the age on which parents begin to punish their children. They gave diverse answers to this question and that parent start to punish their children as early as two years (13%) or as late as five years according to 13.9% of the respondents. The frequent age given by respondents is three years (22.8%). According to 17.8% of the respondents, they start punishing their children when the later begin to understand what is good or bad. Some (8.9%) also said that children are punished beginning from their early years of life. see table 19.

Table 19: Starting from which age are children punished?

Punishment age	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Two years	24	13.3	4
Three years	41	22.8	1
Four years	15	8.3	6
Five years	25	13.9	3
After the child differentiates between right and wrong	32	17.8	2
Beginning from early years of life	19	10.6	5
Other	16	8.9	
Missing	8	4.4	
Total	180	100.0	

As we have seen from the above discussion the age at which children begin to receive punishment is different from parents to parents. So is the kind of punishment administered to the different degrees of offences a child may commit. Hence, parents

were asked to report the kind of punishment they administer for minor offence and for major offence. But before we go to that, the focus group discussants also report different kinds of behaviors which are considered by parents as a wrong deed and liable the child to punishment and also they discussed the common types of punishments.

Hence According to young fathers, the following behaviors are punishable:

“Laziness, unwillingness to assist family in work

Unwillingness to accept parental advice and inability /unwillingness to learn from prior mistakes

Disturbing the neighborhood

Disrespect for the elderly” (Focus group discussion with young fathers: annex 1).

Mothers and elderly women also give us additional list of behaviors which make children liable to punishment. According to young mothers,

“children will be punished if they are disobedient, go for play when they are supposed to work, be irresponsible while herding cattle, fail to deliver what they are sent for, sell the family or neighbors coffee with out consent, steal, insult others, be late from school, split water in the house, touch things that they are not allowed to touch, making noises in the house, refusing to keep cattle, refusing to stay in the house, messing up the house are also considered as wrong deeds and can bring punishment.” (Focus group discussion with young mothers: annex1).

Young female participants also give us additional lists of behaviors or acts which are punishable. These are:

- *Breaking (it might be my mistake) things while doing something*
- *complaining about the food that is given to her/ him*
- *playing when sent to herd cattle*
- *bringing something by mistake when he /she is asked to bring something else*
- *not washing ones own plate after eating*

- *spiting his milk or food when he eats or drinks because he was not careful*
- *arguing with brothers and sisters*
- *making mistakes repeatedly*
- *doing something else when ordered to do another thing*
- *talking back to an adult when rebuked*

(Focus group discussion with female youngsters: annex 1).

Thus from the above list of things which make children liable to punishment we learn that disobedience, making mistakes as well as non-conformity to the will and desire of parents are the most important reasons for punishment.

As I mentioned already parents were also asked how they punish their children for minor and major offences, nonetheless the judgment about which offences are minor or major offences is left to them.

Table 20: Punishment for minor offences

Punishment for minor Offences	N	Percent	Rank
Will be punished by using small stick	53	27.3%	2
Will be given advice	65	33.5%	1
Will be scolded	21	10.8%	3
Will receive threats and warnings	18	9.3%	4.5
Will be passed unnoticed	6	3.1%	6
will be pinched	18	9.3%	4.5
other	11	5.7%	
Total	194	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Table 21: Punishment for major offences

Punishment for major offences	N	Percent	Rank
Chained and beaten	37	20.9%	2
Pinching	25	14.1%	4
Beating by using "dobe"	4	2.3%	6
Repeated punishment	7	4.0%	5
Beating by alenga	33	18.6%	3
Beating with small stick	47	26.6%	1
Other	24	13.6%	
Total	177	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

As can be seen from the above table parents said that they will try to advise their children for their minor offences (33.5%), or will use a stick to beat them (27.3%) or scold them (10.8%) or will simply use threats and warnings (9.3%). Some parents also said that they might just ignore the minor offences of their children and concentrate on more important ones for punishment (3.1%).

Concerning major offences, a serious beating with a small stick is the most common type of punishment, followed by chaining children and beating them, (20.9%), and beating them by "Alenga"(18.6%). Pinching is used to punish all kinds of offences. Beating (burning) them by using "dobe" is also another form of punishment which is used by different number of parents on children who commit a major offence(see Tale 20)

According to focus group discussants:

For minor offences the child might get a pinch or be beaten by a stick. If the offence is serious like theft of cloth or money the child might be chained and left to stay like that or he will be chained and be whipped. Stealing clothes and other things to sell them outside is considered a serious misbehavior. Stealing coffee from the family farm, driving livestock to sell them for outside market without the knowledge of parents are such offences which are serious offences resulting in serious

punishment. Advice is used when physical punishment fails to bring about the desired outcome (focus group discussion with Young fathers: annex 1)

Additionally, both fathers and mothers said that if the child is unable to learn and if we cannot handle him we will present his case to the adult members of the village and the relatives of the family. The counsel will try to advice the child to behave or chain him and punish him.

According to an interview with W/o Eshete, “Parents punish their children by threatening them verbally. They threaten or scare their children by warning them like they will throw them out of the house or throwing them in to a gorge and the like to scare them” (Interview: Eshet Yemam, teacher: annex 1)

The other question which is posed to the subjects concerning punishment was the question of “who punishes children most of the time?” Accordingly, the major punishment figure in the house is the father as mentioned by 39.9% of the respondents followed by those who said it is the mother (24.7%).

However 25.8% of the subjects said that both parents are involved in punishing children and so are older brothers and sisters; as mentioned by 5.1% and 3.4% of respondents respectively are involved in the punishment of children.

Table 22: Who punish children?

Who punish children?	N	Percent	Rank
<i>Their mothers</i>	44	24.7%	3
<i>Their fathers</i>	71	39.9%	1
<i>Older brothers</i>	9	5.1%	4
<i>Their older sisters</i>	6	3.4%	5
<i>Parents</i>	46	25.8%	2
<i>Other</i>	2	1.1%	
<i>Total</i>	178	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

The issue of punishment has also been emphasized in the focus group discussions.

According to mother participants, punishment is handled by both parents, "If children are younger the mother will be the one who punishes them as small children spent most of their time around the mother in the house, as they grow up(after 10/12) the father will take up the role." This is because, according to female adolescents, children particularly boys do not fear their mothers thus fathers are the most important feared figures of punishment. The female and male adolescents with whom the group discussions are conducted also agreed to this view and said that at times older brothers also punish younger ones. Generally participants agreed that fathers are the most important figures of punishment especially after children reaches a certain age. This is because older children may refuse, escape or become unruly for their mothers to punish. The father thus is supposed to be the feared authority of the house. According to elderly mothers mostly fathers punish children since mothers feel sorry for their children.

According to the discussions with young fathers, before using physical punishment against children they first advise them to refrain from unacceptable behaviors and may tell them the good and bad. However, when children refuse to obey orders and listen to their parents they are beaten by using small stick to discourage their bad behavior. Respondents argued that advice is more important than physical punishment as too much physical punishment is believed to make the child more unruly, makes him/her hate home, and drives him to assume more antisocial/unaccepted behaviors. According to participants children who display bad behavior could also be punished through the refusal of parents to buy them important stuff like clothes.

Elder women and female adolescents identified interesting lists of common punishments used against children. These are:

- refusing food
- reducing a share of the food
- by refusing to do things which parents promised for the child before the child committed the offence

- by making the child jealous of the privileges that other siblings are enjoying
- Throwing the child out of the house for sometime
- Chaining the child in the house for a day
- Beating the child after making him naked with a "sama"- a plant which feels hot if administered on a naked body

Therefore, children are punished mainly through corporal punishment (Interview: Alemitu Zewede: annex 1). The cause of all this is the attitude parents have on children. Parents themselves are raised up in an environment where they were beaten when they make mistakes or did something wrong. Parents are still coercive who believe that children should be punished physically to correct a certain behavior. Other methods to improve unacceptable child behavior like giving advice to children are not frequently used by parents even if one cannot deny their existence (Interview: Aster Bulta, A school directress}. When beating is proved to be ineffective parents are said to resort to giving advice to the child according to female adolescents. Getting children advised by their favorite person or relative or neighbor is believed to be the last resort according to most of the female adolescents. Elderly women on their part believe that sending children to Church so that they become morally upright and good, and convincing them and placating them to assume a certain behavior would help in this regard.

4.3.5.2 Reward

Concerning rewards the subjects were asked to report what kind of behavior of children are encouraged and rewarded and the kind of rewards children receive for showing these behaviors. The answers are indicated in the following table.

Table 23: Behaviors to be rewarded and the reward type common in your area?

What are the behaviors that which make children liable to encouragements and rewards?	Response	N	Percent	Rank
	When they help family and accomplish tasks without much follow up	58	39.2%	1
	When they obey their parents	7	4.7%	5
	When they make their parents happy	17	11.5%	2
	When they are good in their education	11	7.4%	4
	we never did	12	8.1%	3.5
	when they obey and be good at their education	12	8.1%	3.5
	other	30	20.3%	
Total		148	100.0%	

3 6 7
1 16
2 5
4 12
6 28
3 16 22
3

	Buying clothes, livestock, sheep	45	33.8%	1
	Giving them good food or sweets	25	18.8%	2

3 40
12

What kind of encouragements and rewards do children receive?	Thanking them, praising them and blessing them- "mereqat"	24	18.0%	3
	there is no such a thing	18	13.5%	4
	good food and blessing	10	7.5%	5.5
	other	10	7.5%	
	Total	133	100.0%	

1
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520
4499
6 95 Δ
1 mis

As table 24 shows, the first conduct of children which is mostly rewarded by parents is when children help in work and accomplish tasks by themselves without much follow up from others (39.2%). Making their parents happy is also another behavior mentioned by 11.5% of the respondents as a behavior which makes children liable to reward. 7.4% of the subjects replied that when children are good in their education they get rewards. The same is true with those who obey their parents (4.7%) and who show respect to adults according to 7% of the respondents

However from the total sample 8.1% of the respondents said that they never reward their children for any behavior.

When we see the kind of encouragement or reward parents give to their children the first thing which comes on the list is material gifts which are given in the form of clothes, shoes and livestock depending on the age of the child (33.8%). Food which is different in quality and quantity from the usual time and sweets are the second common reward types mentioned by 18.8% of the respondents. Almost the same number of respondents (18%) also said that they try to reward their children by thanking, praising and blessing them. There are also 7.5% of the respondents who said that they reward their children both by giving food and also by blessing them. Here too 13.5% the subjects said that they do not reward their children with anything.

To encourage good behavior parents buy different stuff like clothes, balls etc to encourage conventional behavior. Young fathers in a focus group discussion have the following to say on this

“We encourage good behavior by buying something that makes the child happy. We give such rewards when children excel in their education and when they are obedient and listen to what we tell them.”(Focus group discussion: annex1)

Mothers on the other hand concentrate on non-material encouragements probably because they are not income generators. They said

“We praise them, we make them promises, we treat them preferentially (we give them good food or sometimes only promises), we show the more love and acceptance than other siblings, and bless them and tell them that they are our favorite children when they make us happy by doing things fast and obey us” (focus group discussion with young mothers: annex 3)

4.3.6 Training

The last issue of discussion in relation to parental treatment of children is the training of children for different skills and roles. Respondents were asked to answer how they train children for different kinds of work. Their answer is summarized in the table below.

Table 24: How do you train your children for work?

Work training(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
By letting us work side by side with us/	96	50.0%	1
By giving them simpler tasks	23	12.0%	3
By making them see how we do things	56	29.2%	2
By telling and advising them	15	7.8%	5
Other	2	1.0%	
Total	192	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

As can be seen from the table more than half of the respondents (50%) said that they train their children by letting them work side by side with themselves so that they learn the skill from their parents. 29.2% said that they make their children watch and learn when they themselves work. Giving children simpler tasks till they acquire the skill is the third common way of training which is mentioned by 12% of the samples while verbal orders and advices are the fourth type of training reported by 7.8% of the subjects.

4.4. Infant and child care

The New Born

According to the information which is found in the focus group discussions when a child is born, the umbilical chord will be removed and then the baby will be washed by the birth attendant. The first person to hold the baby after helping the mother give birth is the birth attendant and she is the one responsible for cutting the umbilical chord. But some mothers may give birth by themselves, they will remove the umbilical chord and hold and wash the baby by themselves. At times the birth attendant may be the mother in law of the mother or other female relatives of the mother's husband. If a birth attendant helps the mother give birth she will handover the baby to the mother after performing these tasks (cutting the umbilical chord and washing the baby).

After these tasks are performed, the baby will be given *Amessa* (traditional oil extracted from herb), together with the breast milk. There is also a form of *amessa* which people use the roots of. The root of the herb will be boiled before it is given for the baby to drink. It is believed to give the baby strength and makes its muscles strong. It may be given to the baby until 6 months. Sometimes people also cover the body of the baby with the oil of *amessa* because it helps to make the bones strong

There are other many different things which are done for babies including the above mentioned. Some major aspects of these care systems for babies are discussed henceforth

4.4.1 Feeding

Concerning the feeding of the newborn and infants, the first question has to do with what the newborn is given for the first time after it came to see the light of day. The respondents gave different answers to this question. Though *Amensa*, water, butter and other herbal medicines are mentioned, 91% of the subjects said that the first thing to be give to the infant is his mother breast.

After the infants are introduced to food, what they are fed and how they are fed is also focused in this paper. Subjects were asked what they believe is the best food for the infant and how infants are fed. Their answers are summarized in the tables below.

Table 25: What is the first food given for the new born?

Response	N	Percent	Rank
Mother breast	163	90.6%	1
Butter	4	2.2%	2
Mother breast and water	3	1.7%	3.5
Mother breast and amensa or herb	3	1.7%	3.5
Other	6	3.3%	
Total	179	100.0%	

Table 26: What is the best food for the infant?

Response	N	percent	Rank
Mother's breast	118	65.6%	1
Cow milk	14	7.8%	3
Soft food	3	1.7%	5.33
Porridge with butter	4	2.2%	5.33
Amensa	16	8.9%	2
Mother breast and amensa	12	6.7%	4
Mother breast and cow milk	4	2.2%	8
Mother breast and other	2	1.1%	5.33
other	7	3.9%	
Total	180	100.0%	

The above table summarizes the two aspects of feeding, which are the type of food which are believed to be the best for the infant and how parents feed their babies. For the first question 65.6% said that the mother’s breast is the best food for the infant. Breast milk with *amensa* (6.7%), with cow milk (2.2%) and other traditional medicines (11%) are also mentioned as the best foods have been the best thing to give to the infant. Other than

the mother breast and its use with other food or medicine, cow milk and *amensa* are also listed by 7.8% and 8.9% of respondents respectively as the best food for infants.

The above food types can be fed to infants by different methods. From the three kinds of methods which are mentioned by the respondents feeding by hand is the major one which is mentioned by 51.1% of the parents, while 33.9% of the samples reported that care takers use bottle to feed their infants, while 2.8% said they use cup to feed their infants. Meanwhile 10% of the sample population said that they use both hand and bottle to feed their infants -depending on their convenience.

All Young mother informants in the focus group discussions said that the first thing the infant will feed on is the mother breast milk. After a month or even sometimes a week a juice of "*amensa*" (a herb) will be given to the infant to clear his stomach. There is a belief that if the infant does not drink "*amensa*" it will fall sick and it won't have immunity from disease. (FGD with young mothers: annex 1). However in the discussion with the elderly women they mentioned butter and herbal juices as the first thing to put in the infant mouth (FGD with elderly women: annex 1)

4.4.2 Breast feeding

As Breast feeding is the most important means of feeding emphasis is given to the subject. Hence respondent were asked what they would do if the mother's breast does not yield milk; in what kind of circumstances the mother breast-feed the infant and what are believed to be the uses of breast feeding for the infant

Table 27: Alternatives if there is no breast milk

If no breast milk(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
Cow milk will be given	68	34.3%	1
<i>Amenssa</i> will be given	26	13.1%	3
Porridge will be given	26	13.1%	3
Water will be given	10	5.1%	5
It is impossible for the mother not to have Breast milk if she fed well	56	28.3%	2
Other	12	6.1%	
Total	198	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

As it can be seen from the table in referring to the different alternatives parents use when the mother does not have milk the respondents mentioned about five different alternatives. Cow milk is the first option mentioned by 34.3% of the respondents while 13.1% said *amensa* and porridge each as alternatives to feed the baby. More importantly a significant number of subjects (28.3%) believe that there is no such thing as a mother not being able to bear milk.

If the breast of the mother is unable to bear milk, according to women focus group discussion participants, First the mother will be made to eat very well and depending on the capacity of the family the mother will be given good food like porridge or meat. But if the breast cannot yield the baby will be given cow milk or porridge (a traditional mix of various grains given to mothers or babies to give them strength). (FGD with young mothers: annex 1).

However, in most of the focus group discussions when the participants asked about what they would do if the mother cannot produce breast milk my informants are not sure if that is at all possible. Only one woman said that she heard such a case that a mother not

having enough milk to feed her baby. But the others said that it is very unlikely since it can easily be reversed by feeding the mother very well. However, they mentioned that giving cow milk to the infant is a common practice even if she has breast milk.

Respondents were also asked what importance the mother's breast will have for the baby. In view of that, the most important use of the breast milk is, as mentioned by 78.4% of the subjects, to give the baby strength and make the baby healthy. Though this is the answer of the majority, 8.3% of the respondents also said that it is the only permanent food that the infant gets. On the other hand some respondents (6.9%) said that it is good for the babies mind while 5.4% said that breast milk makes babies happy.

The participants in the focus group discussions, especially the young mothers explained that the baby must be breast fed at least for the first six months. Breast milk is the most crucial meal for the baby as it is the one very important meal which gives the baby strength and helps him/her to develop immunity from various diseases.

With regards to the time on which infants are breast fed it appears from the responses that there is no fixed time as to when the baby gets fed with the mother's breast. 23.5% of the respondents said that mothers feed the infant whenever he/she cries or whenever the infant demands (18.4%). Moreover 20.1% of the respondents said that mothers feed the infant all the time. The other conditions on which the baby is fed with the mother's breast according to respondents is when the mother gets a break (3.4%), whenever the infant wakes up from sleep (2.2), and whenever the baby is hungry (2.2). Some of the respondent of the respondents gives us time intervals to feed the baby like , every hour, (6.7%) 2 times a day (2.2%) or three times a day (15.6%). See the table below

Table 26: breast use and schedule of breast feeding

	Response	Count	Percent	Rank
When (at what circumstance) does the mother breast-feed the infant	When s/he cries	42	23.5%	1
	Three times a day	28	15.6%	4
	Every hour	12	6.7%	5
	All the time	36	20.1%	2
	Whenever the infant demands	33	18.4%	3
	When the mother gets back from wherever she gets back	6	3.4%	6
	Whenever the infant wakes up from sleep	4	2.2%	7.3
	2 times a day	4	2.2%	7.3
	When the baby is hungry	4	2.2%	7.3
	When the baby is hungry and cry	3	1.7%	10
	Other	7	3.9%	
	Total	179	100.0%	
Breast use	As food	17	8.3%	2
	Gives the baby strength, makes him healthy and builds his body	160	78.4%	1
	It is good for the mind	14	6.9%	3
	It makes the baby happy	11	5.4%	4
	other	2	1.0%	
	Total	204	100%	

According to the reports of the focus group discussions, the baby is given breast milk whenever he gets up from sleep or when he cries. There is no specific or definite schedule to feed a child, according to the mothers. A mother might feed her child when he cries, when he is hungry, between intervals of her house hold works as well as at

night time. Elderly women also have the same view to when a baby should be fed, they said the following.

“There is no specific time or interval to breast-feed a baby. The mother breast feeds her baby whenever the baby cries and as long as it is convenient for her. If a baby cries it means that he/she needs to be fed.”
(Focus group discussion with elderly mothers: annex 1)

4.4.3 Weaning

Subjects were asked when infants are weaned. As table 28 shows, 34.4% said that children are weaned after three years, while 22.0% said that two years is the time of weaning. 11.7% said whatever the age of the infant is weaning will take place ones the mother gets pregnant. Other age limits which are given by the respondents are 4 years (14.4%), Five years (1.1%), and also as early as 1 year (3.9%). According to 4.4% of the respondents the child will be weaned ones he started eating on his own.

Table 28: Weaning age

Weaning age	Frequency	Percent	Rank
After 2 years	39	21.7%	2
After 3 years	62	34.4%	1
After 4 years	26	14.4%	3
When the mother conceives	21	11.7%	4
When the baby grows up and begins to it on his own	8	4.4%	5
When the baby starts feeding on additional food	4	2.2%	7
After 5 years	2	1.1%	8
After 1 year	7	3.9%	6
When the mother conceives and gets sick	1	.6%	9
Other	7	3.9%	
Total	180	100.0%	

At whatever age parents wean their children they definitely use different methods of weaning (As table 29 shows). Consequently the respondents mentioned different kinds of weaning methods. The most common type (50.9%) is putting sour stuff on the mother's breast. Next to that another relatively common method according to 12.4% of the respondents is putting hot stuff like pepper on the mother's breast. Sending children away for a while is also mentioned by 9.7% and also threatening and scaring the child is another method parents use to wean their children according to 9.3% of the total population of samples. Additionally, 6.6% of respondents indicate that they try to wean the child by encouraging him/her to eat additional food whereas 3.5% said that they try to wean their children by soothing and giving them sweets

Table 29: methods of weaning

methods of weaning(a)	N	Percent	Rank
To put sour stuff on the mother's breast	115	50.9%	1
Putting hot stuff on the mother's breast	28	12.4%	2
Encouraging the baby to eat other food	15	6.6%	5
The baby will stop on its own	9	4.0%	6
By soothing them	8	3.5%	7
By sending them away to relatives or separating their bed	22	9.7%	3
By scaring the child to stop feeding on the breast	21	9.3%	4
other	8	3.5%	
Total	226	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

According to FGD participants babies are most of the times weaned when a mother is pregnant with another baby which happens most of the times two or three years after the first baby is born. But if she is not pregnant with another baby the baby will not be stopped feeding on his mother's breast. If it is a must to wean the child, to discourage the

practice they put something sour or pepper in the nipples. With this view elderly mothers also agree. My elderly women informants said the following about weaning “Putting bitter juice on the nipples and scaring the child by telling him/her that a hyena will eat him/her if one keeps on asking for the breast”. (FGD with elderly women: annex 1).

In the same way respondents also gave different reasons for weaning children. As can be seen from table 27 mostly children are weaned when their mothers get pregnant as 53.4% of the subjects reported. Another condition of the mother which results in the weaning of the child is when the mother gets sick or loose weight for some reason (24.4%). Furthermore, a child might be weaned because parents believe that if a child keeps on feeding on the breast milk, then he/she loses appetite for additional food as mentioned by 9.7% of the respondents. They (6.8%) also said that weaning is done after children start to feed on additional food. More interestingly subjects (9.7%) also disclose that a child might be weaned when the mother wants to get pregnant. On the contrary, 5.1% of the sample population said that they will not try to wean their children until the child stop breast feeding by himself or her self.

4.4.4. Eating Independently

Respondents were asked about issues which are related to feeding children starting with the question of who feeds the child after weaning. The major figure in feeding the child is the mother (85.7%) followed by the sister (17.9%).

When it is the time for the child to start eating independently and how he learns to do that is also raised in relation to child feeding. Regarding the first question two years is the first one in the list mentioned by 24.4% of the sample followed by three years which is mentioned by 23.8% and four years which is mentioned by 17.9.7% and 5 years which is mentioned by 8.9% of the subjects. Some of the respondents even mentioned an age as early as one year as a time for the child to begin to eat on his own. According to 4.2% of the subjects children said to start eating independently after he/she begins to walk upright.

Table 30: when to start eating independently and how to train the child

		Count	Percent	Rank
When does the child start eating independently?	Immediately after he stopped feeding on his mother's breast	1	.6%	7
	After he started walking upright	7	4.2%	6
	After 1 year	12	7.1%	5
	After 5 years	15	8.9%	4
	After 4 years	30	17.9%	3
	After 3 years	40	23.8%	2
	After 2 years	41	24.4%	1
	other	22	13.1%	
	Total	168	100.0%	
How does he learn to eat on his own?	By eating together with him	4	3.5%	6
	By watching others eat	6	5.3%	5
	The mother trains him how to eat by using the hand	20	17.5%	4
	By giving him food on his own on a plate	24	21.1%	3
	By making him grab and hold food in his hands	27	23.7%	1.5
	By putting something sweet in his mouth	27	23.7%	1.5
	Other	6	5.3	
	Total	114	100.0%	

Respondents identified different methods of training widely used in their area to teach children to eat independently. Making children hold food in their hands to eat and sometimes even to play with it is one of the mechanisms of training mentioned by 23.7% the respondents. Another 23.7% said that putting sweets in his mouth or “*magures*” will teach children how to eat by themselves. Another group which consists of 17.5% of the sample population believes that mothers will teach children to use their hands to eat while another group (21.1%) said that by giving him food in his own plate and letting him eat in his own way eventually bring the desired result, i.e. learning to eat independently. The rest said that children learn to eat by themselves by watching others do it (5.3%) and also by eating together with adults (3.5%).

4.4.6. Toilet training and Bed wetting

Concerning toilet training the respondents were asked to answer when children are expected to stop bed wetting, how they train the child and what will be done if the child failed to learn so. The tables below present the answers

Table 31: age limit to stop bed wetting

Response	Frequency	Percent	Rank
After 2 years	48	26.7%	2
After 3 years	54	30.0%	1
After 4 years	23	12.8%	3.5
After 5 years	14	7.8%	5
Other	23	12.8%	3.5
Missing	18	10.0%	
Total	180	100.0%	

As the above table show children are expected to stop bed wetting at age two as 26.7% of the respondents indicate. Although two years is the earliest year mentioned by subjects other age groups are also mentioned as a time children are expected to stop bed wetting, these are three years (30%), four years (12.8%) and five years (7.8%). As can be seen

from the frequency distribution age three is the most common year mentioned by most of the respondents.

Table 32: How to toilet train a child

	Response	frequency	percentage	Rank
Toilet training	By taking them off bed and putting them on the floor	32	24.8%	2
	By showing them where to pee and excrete	47	36.4%	1
	The mother will train the baby	26	20.2%	3
	The baby will learn by himself	10	7.8%	4.5
	By rebuking them when they bed wet	10	7.8%	4.5
	By pinching them	16	12.4%	6
	Other	9	7.0%	
	Total	129	100%	
What happens if a child bed wets after he passes the age limit				
	Receives punishment-beating and pinching	153	86.0	1
	will be threatened	21	11.8%	2
	Will be advised to discourage the behavior	16	9.0%	3
	Receives scolding	11	6.2%	4
	Receive more training	1	0.6%	6
	Nothing will be done	8	4.5%	5
	Other	2	1.1%	
	Total	178	100%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Toilet training, which sometimes involves punishment, starts in the early years of the child in which the mother after studying his body movement will put him in the floor to pee or defecate, which is described by 24.8% of the respondents. 36.4% said that they toilet train children by showing them where to pee. some of the subjects (20.2%) give the responsibility of the training to the mother by saying that the mother will train the baby while few others (7.8%) give the responsibility to the child itself by saying that the child will learn to use the toilet in his own time. on the contrary 7.8% said that rebuking the child every time he bed wets will help whereas 12.4% said that children can be trained and learn quickly to use the toilet if they are pinched every time they bed-wets.

Though parents have different age limits about when their children should be toilet trained, there are some time limits in which the child is expected to master the training. Having this in mind the other question which is presented to the informants concerning toilet training is 'what would be done if the child bed wets after he grew past the age limit'. 86.0% of the cases implied that children will receive beating and pinching if they continue to bed wet after some time. Children might be threatened or receives scolding if they continue to bed wet after the parents have trained them not to, said 11.8% and 6.2% of the subjects respectively. Trying to advice or talk to the child is also another suggestion made by 9% of the subjects to deal with the children with this problem. However there are also some respondents (4.5%) who said that they will do nothing about it.

Similar views were expressed by focus group discussants. The young mother as well as elderly mother FGD participants said that the time when the mother starts training differs from one mother to the other. However, the common practice is since the mother is accustomed to the body movement of the child, she will pick him/her from the bed and put him/her in her lap comfortably for the release. After a year, according to the informants, the child will know the place to go for elimination which is shown to him/her either by the mother or older siblings. The fathers in the FGD said that children start eliminating by themselves after 3 years. Mothers teach them by taking them outside. If they wet their beds after 3 they will be pinched or beaten to discourage the behavior.

Elderly mothers said that “we scare them with stories or beat them by using a stick showing the place where they should have used”. (FGD with elderly women: annex 1)

4.4.5 Sleeping arrangement

The sleeping arrangement of children was also one of the topics which were covered in the questionnaire. As result important information about where and with whom children sleep is found and summarized in table 33

Table 33: For how long does the baby sleep with his mother?

Response	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Until 2 years	12	6.7%	6
Until 3 year	41	22.85	1
Until 4and half years	26	14.4%	4
Until 5 years	34	18.9%	2
Until a new baby is born	31	17.2%	3
until the child get used to other members of the family	3	1.7%	7
Until the child becomes independent	14	7.8%	5
When the baby stop breast feeding	2	1.1%	8
Other	14	7.8%	
Missing	2	1.1%	
Total	180	100.0%	

As it can be seen from the table respondents said that children sleep with their mothers only until the age of two (6.7%). The age of three, age four and five are also mentioned by 22.8%, 14.4% and 18.9% of the subjects as the age limit for children to stop sleeping with their mothers.

Some of the respondents also gave different reasons, other than age, which involve the sleeping arrangement of the child. As a result 17.2% said that children sleep with their

mothers until a new baby come , or until the child stops breast feeding(1.1%) or else until the baby becomes independent (7.8%).

The other concern regarding the sleeping arrangements of children is with whom they sleep after they stop sleeping with their mothers. Respondents, 43.3% answered this question by saying that children will sleep with their sisters and brothers while 26.7% said that children will sleep with their fathers after they stop sleeping with their mothers. Children might also sleep with their grand parents according to 4.4% of the respondents while 14.4% said that either the father or older siblings are the ones the child sleeps with after he/she departed from the mother.

In the focus group discussion, similar findings about the sleeping arrangement of children have been made. According to discussions with mothers as well as fathers babies sleep with their mothers so that they can be fed on the breast at night other wise they will not get the strength. Babies are not prevented from sleeping with their mothers until the mother becomes pregnant with another child. If the baby is very young with 1 or 2 years it stays with his/her mother during the day time. But whenever the mother needs some rest the *awuto* (traditional baby sitter who can be the elder sister of the baby or relative of the father) take over the responsibility of tending and caring for the baby. But after the baby reaches 2 years and above he/she will play with other young kids and stay with them during the day time.

4.4.6 Crying

One of the topics which come under the title of infant and child care is crying. Subjects were asked to report the common reasons why children cry and their answers are presented in table 30. Accordingly 39.5% believe that children cry when they are hungry while 25.9% said that children cry if they are sick. 16.0% also reported that children cry if they do not get what they want. In the contrary, 12.5% of the subjects believed that children cry if they are difficult and bad natured

Table 34: why do children cry?

Why cry(a)	Responses		Rank
	N	Percent	
When they are hungry	104	39.5%	1
When they are sick	68	25.9%	2
When they do not get what they want	42	16.0%	3
When they are afraid	3	1.1%	5
When they are difficult and bad natured	33	12.5%	4
Other	13	4.9%	
Total	263	100.0%	

a Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

To see the method of care for babies in such traditional societies the willingness of parents to sooth a crying baby whenever he/she cries is asked. The answers to this question are confined to yes and no. Hence 151 subjects or 85.3% of the total sample population responded that children should not be soothed whenever they cry while only 14.7% of the sample population responded that they do not have to be soothed whenever they cry.

When we come to the reasons why those who said “No” to the above question (should infants always be attended whenever they cry?) 47.6% said that they should not because if children are soothed whenever they cry they will be difficult to handle in the future, another 28.65 said that children should not be attended whenever they cry because this would spoil them it. Another 19% said that if babies are not soothed whenever they cry they will learn to stop crying by themselves.

4.4.8 Common sicknesses

The common sicknesses of children in the area are identified by respondents as follows. The majority of respondents said that common cold is the most common type of all diseases affecting children, this constitute 32% of the sample population. 29.5% said that it is diarrhea and stomach ache while 13.8% and 12.5% said that fever and coughing are

also common ones. Other insignificant percentages of the sample population mentioned diseases like malaria. For detail see the table below.

Table 34: common sicknesses in their area and their believed causes

common sickness	Response	Case	Percent	Rank
	Common cold	102	32.0%	1
	Coughing, "Berd", "tek tek"	40	12.5%	4
	Diarrhea and stomach ache	94	29.5%	2
	Malaria	15	4.7%	5
	'Amessa'	11	3.4%	6
	Fever	44	13.8%	3
	Other	13	4.1%	
	Total	175	100.0%	
	Lack of hygiene of the mother	6	3.0%	6
	change in the weather	27	13.4%	2
	Lack of nutritious food in the prenatal stage	4	2.0%	6
	Because of lack of clean drinking water	15	7.4%	4
	lack of nutritious food	9	4.5%	5
	Evil eye	1	.5%	7
	other	26	12.9%	3
	Total	175	100%	

The parents' belief about the causes of sickness tells us a story about the attitude of parents towards disease as well as what are the causes of these sicknesses. As a result a large majority of the sample population (56.4%) answered that lack of hygiene is the major cause of sickness. The next high percent is 13.4% and these parents think that change of weather is the cause of the common sicknesses of the area. 7.4% of the sample population believes that lack of clean water is the cause while 4.5% said that lack of nutritious food is the cause of the common diseases of the area. A cumulative of 7.3% of the sample population thinks that lack of nutritious food of the mother during pregnancy, evil eye and lack of the mother's personal hygiene are causes of sicknesses in the area. For detail refer to table 34.

4.5. Roles and responsibilities of children

4. 5.1. Helping parents in domestic work

Children are said to start helping their parents after a certain age, according to respondents. However, different respondents gave different answers referring to the age of children. The answers are diverse and it seems that respondents had different types of work activities in mind when they gave these answers. 18.9% of respondents said that children start assisting their parents since age 5 while age 6, 7, 8, 10 are also included in the answers. In any case as can be seen from table 35 respondents agree that children start assisting parents after they are 5 years.

Table 35: When do children start helping their parents?

Age	Frequency	Percent	Rank
After 4 years	6	3.3 %	6
After 5 years	34	18.9 %	1
After 6 years	27	15 %	2
After 7 years	18	10.0 %	4
After 8 years	24	13.3 %	3
After 10 years	16	8.9 %	5
After 12 years	4	2.2 %	7
After they are self conscious	27	15.0 %	2
After they started walking	3	1.7 %	
Other	11	6.1	
Missing	10	5.6 %	
Total	180	100.0 %	

Information from different focus group discussions with mothers, fathers, elders, and adolescents show that children have roles they assume and responsibilities they are expected to execute in the society.

Children have responsibilities of helping their parents in various activities such as fetching water, picking wood, and serving as messengers and so on. Children are expected to be obedient and do what their parents tell them to do (FGD with young fathers: annex 1)

4.5.2. Boys' vs. girls' roles

The roles of children are divided along sexual lines and here we are going to see what roles are defined and culturally accepted as 'boys' roles and as 'girls' role. According to a vast majority of the sample population which constitutes 42.7% of the population a boy is someone who takes care of the farm. 26.5% of the respondents said that splitting wood logs is a boy's role. Herding and providing fodder for cattle is also considered as a boy's duty by 15.9% of the sample population while 8.2% said that helping in the construction of the house is the duty of the boy. See the responses in the following table.

Table 35: Boys and girls task

	Response	case	percent	Rank
Boys task	Helping in the farm	161	42.7	1
	Splitting wood logs	100	26.5%	2
	Helping his father	8	2.1%	5
	Herding and giving fodder to animals	60	15.9%	3
	Helping in constructing a house	31	8.2%	4
	Going to school	7	1.9%	5
	Other	10	2.7%	
	Total	179	100.0%	
Girls task	Taking care of different house hold chores, especially preparing "enset"	177	83.95	1
	Assisting her mother	13	6.2%	2
	Going to market	7	3.3%	4
	Looking after young siblings	9	4.3%	3
	Other	5	2.4%	
	Total	180	1005	

According to almost everyone in the sample population taking care of household chores is a girl's reserve, 83.9% of the sample population gave this answer. 6.2% said that assisting the mother is a girl's role. Looking after and taking care of the kids is also considered as the girls role by 4.3% of the sample population. See details in the above table.

The responsibilities they are expected to execute are based on gender lines. Boys are taught skills like herding, working on the farm and the family garden, while girls are encouraged to concentrate on household chores like tending younger siblings, assisting their mothers, working on onset, preparing injera, preparing coffee, keeping the house clean, fetching water and looking after younger siblings and carrying them on their backs (FGD with Male elders: annex 1, FGD with female adolescents: annex 1, an Interview: Aster Bulta, school directress:annex 2).

The things boys and girls do at this early age gives them different exposure to boys and girls. The roles of girls is confined to the house while the roles that boys are given gives them the opportunity to go outside of the home and allows them to discover their environment.

The roles and responsibilities of the child before 18 years of age is limited generally to herding, looking after their young brothers and sisters, and looking after the house in the absence of their parents. Girl children are expected to fetch water (boys as well), prepare coffee, clean the house, wash clothes, serve as messengers, go to the market and so on. While boys engage in herding animals, assist in the farm, fencing, splitting wood logs and the like which are considered difficult tasks for girls to accomplish as they are believed to require muscular strength. Boys are given such tougher tasks needing some physical strength when they reach the age of puberty i.e. between 12 and 15 (FGD with Male adolescents: annex 1).

The roles of a little older child extend beyond the execution of mundane tasks. They are also expected to assume the role of the parent especially in the absence of parents.

Punishing younger brothers and sisters when they make mistakes, taking care of them and protecting them from harm in the absence as well as presence of their parents, carrying them, giving them food, are responsibilities of especially older sisters. The second mother- the nanny of the new born baby who assists the mother in caring for the baby as a substitute while the mother is in maternity and stays at home or after she finishes her grace period is traditionally called *awuto*. *Awuto* is an equivalent of a baby sitter (nanny). The *awuto* is usually the older sister of the new born. She is entrusted with the huge responsibility of taking care of the child whenever the mother is not around, busy or after the mother completed her maternity period. The *awuto* clean the young, give them food, and wash their clothes (FGD with female adolescents: annex 1).

Older siblings, as mentioned, are assumed to take part in child rearing. How they take part in child rearing is a question worth being answered to our interest in this paper. Respondents gave answers to the question and this is summarized briefly below.

47% of the respondents said that older siblings assist their parents by giving children food, washing them and carrying them on the back. 15.7%, 13.8%, 12.6 % have said that older siblings assist their parents by playing with younger ones, by teaching them how to behave and advise them and by taking the role of parents respectively.

Table 35: how and when children takes care of their younger siblings

		Case	Percent	Rank
caring for siblings	By taking the role of the parent	25	12.6%	4
	By giving food, by washing them and carrying them on the back	93	47.0%	1
	By playing with them and by soothing	31	15.7%	2
	By teaching them how to behave and advising them	27	13.6%	3
	by helping them with their education	6	3.0%	5
	other	16	8.1%	
	Total	164	100.0%	
When do siblings take up the responsibility of taking care of children?	After 7 years	6	3.5%	8
	after 11 years	7	4.1%	7
	Until the children grow up	8	4.7%	6
	Always	15	8.7%	5
	As long us they live with their parents	17	9.9%	3.5
	After 12 years	17	9.9%	3.5
	When they are old enough to take such responsibility	22	12.8%	2
	When parents are not home	45	26.2%	1
	Other	35	20.3%	
	Total	172	100%	

Older siblings take care of children and thus help in child rearing as we have seen above. To see the level of their involvement in child rearing and in helping their parents the question when they do assume this role is asked. To this question different answers were given by respondents.

Some of the respondents (25%) said that older siblings assume the roles in the absence of their parents while 12.2 % said that after they are old enough to carry the responsibility. Where as 9.4% of two sets of responses indicate that they assume the role after they hit 12 years and as long as they live with their parents while 8.3% said that they take care of their younger ones all the time. 19% of the respondents are included in the other list while there are those who gave answers of little significance to discuss in here. But details are provided in table 35.

4.6. Contribution of neighbors and relatives

In a communal society like that of the Sidama neighbors are assumed to have at least some role in helping parents raise their children. The question is how? How do they contribute in child rearing? This question has produced different answers from respondents. These answers are shown below in table 36.

Table 36: Roles of neighbors and extended family

Contribution of neighbors	Response	N	Percent	Rank
	None	48	24.6%	1
	By taking care of children when the mother is not around	36	18.5%	3
	By teaching children good manners and by advising them	46	23.6%	2
	By helping in looking after sick children and by taking them to hospital	13	6.7%	5
	By telling on children's bad deeds and by scolding them	17	8.7%	4
	By advising parents in different matters	2	1.0%	6
	Other	33	16.9%	
	Total	174	100.0%	

contribution of relatives	None	39	16.9%	2
	By fulfilling children's material needs like clothing, educational materials	71	30.7%	1
	By raising children when the parents cannot	7	3.0%	5
	by helping them to go to school and by providing school materials	36	15.6%	3
	by advising and teaching the children	31	13.4%	4
	other	47	20.3%	
	Total	172	100%	

Respondents which constitute 24.6% of the respondents said that neighbors do not anymore have a role to play worth mentioning in child rearing. Nevertheless, a significant number of the respondents 23.6% said that neighbors have some roles to play and one of these roles according to this group is teaching children good manners and giving them valuable advice. 8.5% also said that neighbors help by taking care of children when the mother is not at home. 8.79.8% And 6.7% of the respondents agreed that neighbors are relevant in child rearing said that they try to correct the wrong behavior of children by telling on them for their parents as well as by looking after sick children when their help is needed. For more details see table 36.

According focus group discussants neighbors also help parents in rearing their children in different ways: they look after babies as well as children when the mother goes out for market until she gets back. They also have the role of advising children and telling on the bad behavior of the child to parents. Participants said that neighbors do not usually dare to punish children as such an act would put them in trouble with the parents of the children who wants to reserve the right of punishing their children to themselves (FGD with Elderly Women: annex 1, Male Adolescents: annex 1, female adolescents: annex 1).

In a society like the Sidama no doubt relatives play their own part by helping parents in raising their children. The question is rather in what way? The set of answers to this question are summarized as follows.

From the total respondents 30.71% of the respondents of the questionnaire said that relatives help parents in child rearing by fulfilling some of the basic needs of children, such as clothes, educational materials as well as covering their school expenses. The help also comes in the form of providing materials for children to go to school according to another substantial number of respondents which constitute 15.6% of the total sample population. Giving advice and teaching children different skills is also another way by which parents get the help of relatives according to 13.4% of the sample population. Another substantial number of respondents however feel that relatives have no contribution whatsoever in child rearing and they do not provide any help in this regard. This sample population account for 16.9% of the respondents. See table 36 for more details.

According to discussions with various members of the community, relatives and neighbors take their own parent in helping parents in rearing their children among the Sidama. Relatives assist parents by giving out money especially if they are well off, they also take care of children as guardians especially when parents are unable to provide for them. Relatives are also instrumental in providing advice to children and smoothening relations between children and their parents among other things. They give advice to children and encourage good behavior and at times punish children when they display unacceptable behaviors. Relatives may also get together to cuff a recalcitrant child and inflict physical punishment if the child has gone out of the control of his parents. This practice is called *sera* and is one of the methods which is believed to be a more effective way of punishing an unruly child. This happens with the consent of his parents. Relatives also assist parents by educating their children and covering their expenses. Such kind of familial help is exchanged among relatives especially when parents are needy and the relatives are well off by the standards of the area. On the other hand, relatives could also help in child rearing by supporting parents by buying clothes for children. (FGD with Elderly Men, FGD with Young Fathers, Young Mothers, annex 1).

However, according to young mothers and male adolescent relatives or neighbors are not usually at liberty to especially punish children physically as since it can get them in trouble with the child parents, but still they can rebuke the child, report the wrong deeds of the child, and get him punished, especially neighbors. However, if it is a grandparent, it is ok for them to punish the child.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

Child rearing embraces various dimension of societal life. The culture, the family and how they function, religion, values, attitudes, interaction between members of society are all factors affecting child rearing (Dosnajh & Ghuman, 1997: 29). That is why we have used the ecological systems approach to be able to analyze child rearing and understand how these factors affect the practice. According to Vygotsky "development is mainly about matching a child's demand with the requirements of his/her culture"(Miller, 1993, pp.372). To him the child is social and operates in context (i.e. society) and is an active member of this context (ibid: 375). What made Vygotsky different from his contemporary developmental theorists is his belief that development cannot be understood by conducting a study of an individual in isolation. The development of the child is understood only through the examination of the external social world in which the individual operates. For Vygotsky learning occurs as the child interacts with his/her environment, people and objects and the major agents of learning for the child are none other than the care takers/parents. Thus the study of the cultural practices in which a child operates is the most important media which helps us to understand the development of the child, how he/she is reared by parents and what effects the various elements of the culture-the family by which the child is raised and other agents has on the child. That is why we have ventured into this task of trying to understand the psych and culture of the Sidama family and parenting to understand the child rearing practices of the family as an institution as well as its unique patterns which are reflections of the Sidama culture.

In this section an attempt will be made to understand in light of the findings of this research the value Sidama parents give to children and what beliefs they have about children, what parental treatment mechanisms they use to discipline their children, how they care for their infants and children and what roles and responsibilities are children expected to assume in this culture. To account for cultural variations in understanding the

child rearing practices of the Sidama I have emphasized on contextualist theories of child development. These theories make it necessary to look into empirical data from the society/culture under study. This way such theories enrich the study of child rearing at the family level, particularly by taking parents as the major agents of child rearing, by making up for new information to understand child rearing in a specific cultural, societal and environmental setting. And this is going to be my attempt, understanding the nuances of the culture, describing them by looking into different aspects of it.

5.1. On the values of children

Why do people have children/what values do they assign to having children, what are their preferences with regard to the size of the family, these are important questions worth considering in trying to understand what values parents attach to children, or what are the values of children to a particular society (Lackland Sam and et al, undated: 1). A study conducted in South Africa to identify the reasons why parents want to have children demonstrated that economic- (to ensure better economic life and get economic security when they reach old age, emotional (happiness, joy and companionship that parents feel towards having children) and social (societal expectations of having a child-like wanting to have a son or a daughter to continue ones lineage) are the major reasons for parents wanting to have children (Ibid, pp. 2 and 7).

Scholars who did research on Ethiopia described the values parents give to their children saying that children are "gifts of God" who are considered as assets having economic values. Children are considered assets who are born to help their parents in different work activities. Children are considered as the vital means to continue ones lineage and parents with children earn better respect as opposed to those who are childless (Rahel, 2005, pp. 12).

The findings of this research show that economic reasons are the major reasons why parents want to have children. In other words parents value children mainly for their economic values. Children are considered assets to their parents. Their economic values as helpers of work activities of parents, as providers during old age as well as their social-

economic value as heirs of the life time achievement or property of parents are expounded by participants of different focus group discussions. The highest percentage of the respondents stated that they want to have children because of the valuable labor they contribute to the work activities of the family, in-house or outside of the house. These respondents constitute 28.6% of the sample population. The next highest response which is opted by 16.8% of the respondents is the value children have as providers of old age. This one too shows another economic purpose children have for parents. The focus group discussions especially those with young mothers, also show that participants give more emphasis to the more immediate worth of children for their parents. Children are needed because they run errands, because they support the family economically especially if the father is deceased. They are valued also because they guarantee old age economic security/old age care and support and inherit property as well as preserve the names and history of their fathers. Other studies in Africa also render economic reasons as the most important goals for having children. A research done in South Africa shows that in less developed and rural parts of the country the value parents attach to having children tends to be related more to their economic values. Having children is concomitant to investing on their own future for parents living in such societies (Lackland Sam and et al, undated, pp. 2).

The ideal number of children parents want to have- which is an average of 5- is related to mainly economic reasons. The greatest number of respondents of the total sample population said that they want children to contribute in the economic life of the family/parents in different endeavors and benefit and assist them. In almost all the focus group discussions that are held with different groups in the study area participants confirmed that economic reasons are among the most important values parents attach to having children.

Seen in light of the importance attached to having children childlessness is one thing that is pitied by the society. They are pitted because they do not have heirs to provide for during old age. For Sidama parents without children are considered as unrecognized by the future. As the Sidama saying goes “a family into which a child is not born will be inherited by strangers”.

The findings of the study show that the sex preference of parents is tuned by the reasons why they want to have children in the first place. Though only 5.6% of the respondents said that they prefer boys over girls, with 88% saying both, the most important reason why these percentages of respondents want to have boys is mainly because of their contribution for the betterment of the family's economy. This has also been confirmed by the focus group discussions with young mothers. They stated that boys are preferred over girls as the later are not allowed to inherit the property of their fathers. Sex preference and the goals of having children differ from one culture to the other. Preference for boys is very common custom in many traditional cultures. This can be because of many reasons according to various cultural needs of parents. Among Indian families for instance a boy child is needed for religious reasons and like in many other cultures boys are preferred over girls because parents need a provider when they reach old age. Boys as opposed to girls have a better chance of getting a better job as they are considered to be fit for many jobs (Dosnajt and Ghuman, 1997, pp.36)

Apart from the economic reasons social reasons like the continuance of ones own lineage and the preservation of the names and history of the family are also among the valued reasons for parents stimulating them to have children. Another 18.6% said that they want to have children to get social acceptance, respect and prestige in the society they live in. Apart from the economic reasons why parents want to have children as heirs, the issue of inheritance/having an heir also has this social dimension/social need of affirming ones position in society now and ensuring that ones deeds and name will survive the generations to come. On the contrary not having a child is very much feared by parents as it makes one heirless. The 28% of the sample population which constitute the highest number of respondents who responded to the question what happens if you did not have children stated that they fear of being heirless. Respondents also stated that not having children also has a lot to do with not having respect in the society and would destabilize marriage. In the focus group discussion with young mothers too participants stipulated that childlessness may cause disruption of marriage. Parents without children are perceived as people who are not recognized by the future and as the Sidama saying goes "even a tree without a seed is worthless let alone a father without a child" "A father without a child is as good as dead." Children are thus considered as embodiments of the

history, name and deeds of their father's / parents. Bareness is perceived as a great loss on the part of parents. As another Sidama saying goes "a village /a family into which a child is not born will be inherited by strangers" signifying that ones lifetime efforts will not be inherited by a deserving heir- but a total stranger.

Another social reason that respondents mentioned for wanting to have children is the reason that parents attach to the usefulness of children in properly mourning them and burying them when they die. This response constitutes 6.8% of the parents from the total population sample. A focus group discussion with elderly mothers shows that this reason is given an important place in parents' desire to have children. These participants put emphasis on the usefulness of children mainly related to the occasion of death as they are responsible for the very important social event of mourning the death of their parents and carrying out their proper burial.

The third major reason why parents want to have children according to this study is the more emotional reason of seeking the company of children. 12.4% of the total population of respondents said that want children because life without children makes one lonely.

The goals and methods of child rearing vary from one society to another or within a society over time. Cultural/social difference means difference in the ideas of what values children have. It also affects beliefs about what a child should be, how he/she should act as well as the goals of rearing a child influence the child rearing practices parents employ and the methods they follow to rear their children. For instance American mothers consider their goal of rearing children to be casting their kids into becoming active and independent beings while Japanese mothers consider the goal of child rearing as making them quiet and well-behaved (Rahel, 2005, pp. 5-6). In our case the goals of having children tend to be more focused on the economic benefits as well as social prestige children give to their parents. Economic factors have the utmost precedence in parents goal of having children while other reasons like the social reasons of continuing ones lineage has a substantial significance in this regard. Emotional reasons like wanting to have children as company also count even if they are less significant compared to the economic or social reasons discussed above.

5.2 Beliefs about Children and Childhood

Studying the beliefs of parents about children is vital in understanding the attitude parents have about children and child rearing. So the focus is made on parents rather than children to understand the roles of parents and the effect these attitudes and roles have on the rearing practices. The contextualist theory emphasizes on the primacy of socio-cultural forces in child rearing and development, which values and cultural beliefs are part of. The vital role in this regards is played primarily by parents (Alex Kozulin and et al, undated, pp. 2). Thus parental beliefs as well as attitudes towards children influences the way parents treat and handle their children. Cultural values about the best method of child treatment thus affect how parents treat their children (Hurlock, 1981, pp.495)

Child rearing differences from culture to culture is because of cultural differences on what is believed to be the nature of children and the beliefs and theories of cultures and parents how children could be shaped and trained to become adults with acceptable virtues. American mothers for instance tend to see the infant as helpless and see their task as shaping the infant into an active independent child by teaching independence and frequently encouraging him or her. The Japanese mother on the other hand sees the infant as 'having some inherent dispositions' and the mother sees her job as making the child dependent on her and the family (Musen, P. H., Conger, J.J. and Kagan, J. 1980, pp.112-114).

Traditionally among the Sidama the date on which a child is born is believed to determine the fate of children and their community. Discussions with elderly people shows this had been a belief very important in the past but having some credence even at present. However, with the erosion of cultural values and beliefs with the advent of Protestantism and influences of modernity such beliefs are not widely held by the majority even if they affect the psych of the people as has been shown from the answers on beliefs about children that we get from the responses of the sample population.

Another aspect which reflects the belief of the community about children is the celebration of the occasion of the birth of a child. The celebration becomes more if the baby is a boy a successor of his father and inherits property unlike girls who do not enjoy this right. Boys are believed, unlike girls, will remain part of their own family even if they get married, they will be regular partakers in the day today family business of their parents even after marriage.

Who are children, who are considered children and treated as such is another question which demonstrates the belief of parents about children. Taking age into consideration 52% of the respondents said that those who are less than 5 years are considered children. This brings into picture the Sidama classification of age. Among the Sidama children can be both who do not differentiate between good and bad and not conscious of danger and those who understand things and know what is good and bad. Generally those below 5 years are considered unable to understand what is good or bad or what is worthy or unworthy while those above 5 years are expected to know such things. Those above 5 are even though they are called children, taken seriously and are assigned by their parents with tasks starting from this age onwards. As can be seen from the findings for children the year 5 is largely considered as a year of transition from a consumer status to a productive status since kids begin to run errands and do small tasks starting from this age on.

5.2.1 Good vs. Bad children

The most important qualities used to describe 'good' or 'bad' children are obedience and respect as we learn from the findings of this study. The first most important feature of a good child according to 39.9% of the respondents is obedience and saying "yes" to his/her parents. Obedience refers to the willingness of the child to work and also listen to what his parents say. The second highest response, which is given by 17.2% of the total sample population, indicates that respect to ones parents and adults is another character of good children.

Disobedience is the most unacceptable behavior as the findings of this study shows (27.8%). A child who is not respectful and insults and quarrels with adults is also condemned as a bad child according to 8.3% of respondents. Thus the good and bad characters of a child are defined mainly from the vantage point of obedience and respect to adults and their expectations of him/her. whom they approve as good basically is if the child is under their control and at their beck and call, doing everything they tell him/her to do and saying “yes” to whatever they say. Any child who fails to do so is referred as a bad child.

The focus group discussions also show similar views. Good children are those who are obedient, hard working, those who accept instructions from their parents while bad children are those who are disobedient, lazy, those who do not assist their parents and neighbors in various work activities, those who do not listen to their parents and go against their will.

In Ethiopia, in different cultures children are considered as having human qualities less than adults. Disobedience or lack of respect for parents and other adults is considered a serious offence and is usually dealt with serious punishment, like corporal punishment (Rahel, 2005, pp.12) This study also suggests similar traits among the Sidama, here too the importance that is attached to obedience and listening to adults extends to issues beyond the “good/bad child” dichotomy. One of the reasons (10.5%) why children are believed to be bad natured is because of their failure to listen to their parents despite the rightness or wrongness of the issue. Generally speaking therefore this type of child rearing encourages obedience, conformity, and unconditional acceptance at the expense of inquisitiveness, independence and assertiveness of the child to express his/her ideas. This shows us how ‘authoritarian’ parents among the Sidama can be and their demand for absolute obedience from their children.

Though the bad behavior of children is mainly blamed on parents who failed to provide the proper guidance, control and advice to their children there are also other reasons reported as causing bad behavior of children (See also Good/Bad parents in the previous chapter). Children are believed to learn more things through modeling others as the

findings show. Thus the company children have and the times they spend with other children is an important reason which affects their behavior are considered as the most important factors causing bad behavior of children according to 20.5% of the respondents. Among the medias through which children are reared modeling and imitation have been very important in many cultures and the same is true for the Sidama as the findings of this study show.

However the reason for the bad behavior of children is by no means always caused by what parents or children do or not do. It may sometimes be caused by “ the nature of the day the child is born” or the inconspicuous consequences of nature which causes children to be bad natured. However, no matter what the causes may be the majority of respondents which comprise 85% of the total population sample said that it is possible to change the bad behavior of children mainly through advice according to 51% and/or through beating and scolding according to 18.4% of the respondents. This shows us that bad behavior of children is liable to change according to most parents irrespective of the method they use to change it. Moreover, as this is a multiple response question parents do not necessary opt for only one method to improve on the behavior of children. Rather two or three methods can be used by a single parent or couples to get the desired outcome, giving advice along with beating for instance.

The focus group discussions also demonstrate similar findings. Among other reasons the inability of parents to provide basic material needs of children are said to result in bad behavior. Parents, especially fathers who are unable to fulfill the basic needs of their children like food and clothing by default encourage their children to go around in search of food to satisfy their needs which reduces the say and influence of the parent over the child. Those parents who guide and monitor their children get good children and those who don't get bad-natured children. Thus in this regard another dimension to the cause of bad behavior is added, economic capacity. This can be related to the effects of socio-economic status on child rearing which I will be discussing in one of the upcoming sections in this chapter. In short socio economic status has been found to be an important variable that affects child rearing. Those children raised in well off families tend to be

more active, more relaxed than their counterparts raised in low economic status families according to research done in Western countries.

The other issue which comes out very clearly with regards to beliefs about children is the sex based differences of boys and girls which are believed widely to exist. Most participants- 81% said that children of the two sexes are expected to display different sets of behaviors. Generally, therefore, girls and boys are believed to have distinctive behaviors and each is expected to behave consistent with these behavioral qualities. Girls are expected to be more reserved, less out spoken, more respectful to parents and elders. They are also expected to be more responsible and less playful. Boys as well are expected to be obedient to the wills of their parents; however boys have the liberty to have more time for play especially during their very early years. Girls are also described as naturally empathetic and familial as opposed to boys who are more independent and less emphatic, and also girls are described as more responsible, more caring and less into play. Girls are thus in greater pressure and criticism than boys. They are subjected to greater discipline, work and responsibility.

As we have seen above in the previous section the evaluation of children according to their sexes is highly influenced by the value the society gives to its children, which is mainly economic and the behavior of children of the two sexes is seen from this light. The first and foremost quality that both girls and boys are expected to have is the quality of hard work which makes up 37% and 34% of the total number of respondents respectively.

Obedience and respect to parents and adults are other important qualities that both of the sexes are expected to have. There are also other specific behaviors which are mentioned by respondents as distinct qualities of girls and boys. A girl is expected to be quite, polite and should walk with her chin down while a boy is expected to be tolerant, and should not pick a fight. These two behaviors are additional ideal traits of a boy and a girl child.

But as can be inferred from all the focus group discussions as well as the questionnaire responses though both girls and boys are expected to be obedient and respectful the

expectations of the society on the girl are much more elaborate and more demanding, a lot more obedience, a lot less extroverted character and a lot more work burden is expected of the girl child. They are expected to be more reserved, less outspoken, more respectful to parents and elders. They are also expected to be more responsible and less playful. Boys as well are expected to be obedient to the wills of their parents but they have the liberty to have more time for play especially during their very early years as they are not expected to assume much of household responsibilities as early as girls do. Girls are also described as naturally empathetic and familial as opposed to boys who are more independent and less emphatic. Girls are described as responsible, more caring and hard working while boys are always more in to play, can be disobedient and their behavior as such is at times justified. Girls are thus exposed to greater criticism for 'mistakes' done. Accordingly it is considered a very bad thing if a girl acts like a boy and does things, which are considered manly (boyish). Thus the sex differences of child rearing among the Sidama are very much evident with of course implications on the self-esteem and future of children of the two sexes. A much stricter discipline is expected of her and she is also demanded by her parents to be busy with household work and spent less time in play.

5.2.2 Beliefs about Childhood

According to this study childhood among the Sidama is said to have been mainly about plays and happiness. Even if the highest percentage of the sample population which is 43.5% defined childhood as a period of plays and happiness another big percentage of parents also responded that assisting family and parents should be an important preoccupation of children. This seems self-contradictory but what parents would like to emphasize is that children should be allowed to play after work or school while adults are not expected to (as this is believed to be contrary to their nature). It is as a result of this that the majority of respondents-56% said that children should not be allowed to play for so long a time as they have to work or assist their family. Most of the parents who gave the reason why they should not said that long play will spoil them. The justification that children should not be allowed to play for long because long play will spoil them is just a myth- created to justify the keeping children at bay for household and other work activity as this reason happens to be the most important reason why parents want to have children

in the first place. The *qaqo* on the other hand who are below 5 have longer time for play and generally boys have more time to play than girls.

Stories are and used to be another vital element in the life of children and families among the Sidama which show their beliefs about children. They are instruments in the society to pass important information and advice to children even if a certain section of the respondents rendered them as no more an important integral element in their life. In any case in the families where the culture of telling stories still exist fathers are the major story tellers in the family. The contents of the stories are more about transmitting the Sidama culture, their history, their stories of origin, the lineage story of the family and advices to children. The contents of the stories that are told and retold to children of different generations are very much fixed in the past and transmitted with a deep sense of continuation/inheritance aimed at passing stories of the past to the generations to come. Family history, ethnic culture and history as well as stories of human origin, ones own deeds and history are important aspects transmitted through the instrument of stories.

Another aspect which shows the value and importance the society attaches to children are the participation of children in holidays. All participants of the FGD agreed that the holiday of “ Fiche” or “Chambalala” is the major Sidama traditional holiday in which children take active part. In this holiday that commemorates the commencement of the Sidama New Year a feast to celebrate the advent of the New Year is launched by villages. Enset is prepared mixed with abundant butter and is given to children who go house to house singing “ Je ji Je ji.....chambalala” wishing happy holiday for adults. The second day of the celebration is that which is devoted to children. Children sing fitché: by moving from one household to the other. They are given food and fathers take over the responsibility of herding cattle replacing children so that the later could celebrate the holiday and go round singing house to house. In a way this is a holiday which embodies the coming of the future and children who are the future receive it from their parents on the second day and continue it in their own future.

5.3 Infant and Child Care

5.3.1 Infant care

As it has already been discussed the coming of a new baby is a much celebrated occasion in Sidama culture, with the delivery taking place in the house of the mother it becomes a more important social occasion than a delivery occurring in a modern hospital.

Among the Sidama after the baby is born the cutting of the umbilical chord of the baby and bathing are rituals that has to be attended. The baby may experience its first exercise if its parents decided to mold its head to give it a “proper” look. In the past butter used to be given as the first food for a new born baby. But this practice is not anymore important.

Attachment is an occasion by which infants develop a special emotional relationship with those who care for them, interact with them and tend them regularly (Musen, P. H., Conger, J.J. and Kagan, J. 1980, pp.112). Infants develop a great deal of attachment for their mother especially because of feeding. The feeding experience of an infant especially when it is of the breast of the mother involves a lot of touching, cradling and caring. The infant gets comfort both from the feeding which relieves it from hunger as well as the touching and caring. During feeding the infant tends to be less active as the mother takes care of it and feeds it. Thus such an association is bound to foster the attachment of the infant with the mother. But by no means the attachment is one directional. The mother too feels very much attached to the infant because of the touching, feeding and caring (Ibid, pp.121 and 124).

Breast feeding – as can be expected is the most important of all the rituals which of course has a lot of practical implications on the growth as well as strength of the infant. This study shows that 65.6% of the sample population mentioned it as the best food an infant could get (followed by *amensa* which is opted by 8.9% of respondents). According to Hamar (as discussed in the first chapter) just after babies are born the mother’s breast was not believed to produce milk enough to satisfy the baby and the baby too was

considered as unable to suck from the breast. This does not seem to be anymore the case at the time when I conducted the study. Rather most respondents as well as focus group discussants stated that the first food of the baby is breast milk. It is believed that it carries important nutritious values which are vital for the growth of the infant. It is also believed that as we have seen in the literature review that it makes the baby happy and is good for the mind. Moreover breast feeding is also used as a pacifier to lure a crying baby and the baby is given the breast every time it cries or whenever he/she demands. The infant is given the breast but at times he/she gets additional food in the form of cow milk or *atmit* (a drink which is a mix of different grains) also. When additional food is given to the baby the mother feeds them they mainly use their hands - *Megat*. The focus group discussion especially with young mothers and elderly women demonstrate similar views on the feeding of babies. Again unlike what Hamar found out before 3 decades this study did not find butter to be a significant first food of the baby.

If the breast of the mother is unable to bear milk first the mother will be made to eat very well any good food available to help her produce milk. Most participants said that not having milk for the mother is very unusual and an unlikely thing to happen since it can easily be reversed by feeding the mother very well but if it happens the baby will be fed cow milk. There are also other places in Ethiopia where the absence of breast milk is considered unusual. If the mother does not have breast milk the baby is given cow milk, porridge, water and sugar as substitute. This is most of the time associated with bad omen, God's scourge. And thus is dealt with prayer or by the performance of some other religious ritual (Dargie, 1986, pp. 9).

To keep the hygiene of the baby the mother, who is the main care taker, 'wash' the infant three times a day. However it is clear in the area that children suffer from lack of hygiene and this same reason is mentioned as the main reason of sickness as discussed in this section below. But parents reported that they try to keep the hygiene of their infants by using pieces of cloth as dippers and by washing them three times a day and by changing the place where the infant sleeps to keep the baby clean. Here it has to be noted that if infants are washed 3 times a day why then is the reason for them and other children suffering from lack of hygiene. The answer to this question is made clear by focus group

discussions held with various community members. The participants stated that the mother places the baby on her lap and puts water on it by using her hands to clean parts of the body like the head, neck and buttock area. This way babies are 'washed' three times a day. After babies are washed they are wrapped up with a piece of cloth. From this we learn that the washing is not a serious one, as the washing is more ritualistic.

Another issue in child care is the issue of how parents deal with their crying infants. The meaning attached to crying and soothing a crying baby is culture specific in many cases. In some cultures it is believed that, not soothing crying infants help them to grow strong while in other cultures children are soothed whenever they cry. The findings of our study show that babies cry mostly if they are hungry or sick 65.4% or when they do not get what they want. Sickness and hunger are not the only reasons which cause children cry, as some of the participants indicated. Crying may be a result of bad nature of children according to a number of respondents.

Depending on the cause of the cry and other beliefs, the respondents said that children should not always be attended whenever they cry as this is believed to spoil them and they grow up being difficult. This is also the view of participants of the FGDs. This shows us that babies are discouraged from crying and they are expected to handle things independently without bothering their parents. The fact that parents fear that children will be spoiled if they are soothed every time they cry shows us that parents begin to interact with their children since early age. Disciplining children by showing them their limits has its root in at least the later years of infancy. Unlike among the Sidama the belief that it is better to leave an infant on his/her own when he/she cries is not widely accepted in the West. Consistent soothing is not believed to spoil the baby rather this is seen as a mechanism that helps both the infant and the care-taker develop bond/attachment (Musen, P. H., Conger, J.J. and Kagan, J. 1980, pp.120-121).

5.3.2 Child-care during early childhood

Weaning – Another important developmental issue in childhood is weaning. Starting from three years onwards children begin to be weaned, it is also possible for children to be weaned a year earlier or later. Actually for most cases the reason for weaning is not the child but the condition of the mother unlike in Western cultures. The major reason why children are weaned in the time when they are is due to pregnancy. Respondents reported that the coming of a new baby or the pregnancy of the mother is the major reason causing weaning, not the readiness of the child or his/her parent's keenness to wean the child as it is the case in the West. But unless otherwise such circumstances happen, weaning would not usually occur except that the mother gets sick or losing weight.

According to FGD participants babies are not weaned unless the mother is pregnant. The baby will not be stopped feeding on his mother's breast unless this happens. Another study among the Amhara ethnic group in northern Ethiopia also shows that weaning takes place between 1 and 3 years and it occurs when the mother is pregnant with another baby and when the baby grows the front teeth (Dargie, 1986, pp.8).

Though there is reluctance in weaning on the part of parents unless there is very serious reason, when the mother decides to wean a child she uses different methods like putting sour or hot stuff on the mother's breast (50.9%) or sending children away to relatives and scaring them (9.3%) are the common methods of weaning.

5.3.2.1 Sleeping arrangement

The findings show that children sleep with their mothers until at least the age of three. After they stopped sleeping with their mothers they sleep with older siblings, fathers or grand mothers according to the findings. More important for us to note here though is the fact that children are safe even during the night, and enjoy the protection of their mother as they sleep with them. This has significant implications on the attachment of the baby with his/her mother and the kind of safety and protection. The strength of the baby and its

safety are considered more useful than independence training for instance that is usually considered more important in the West.

Studies conducted in non-western cultures show that unlike in western cultures babies are made to sleep in the same bed with their mothers. A study conducted in the UK reveals the contrast between white families in the UK and Indian immigrants shows that 91% of Asian babies as opposed to 61% of white families sleep in the same room with their parents. In another study conducted among Asians living in the UK nearly all Asian mothers in a sample responded that their babies sleep with them on the same bed. Such sleeping arrangement helps babies to feel safe and protected as well as feed when they want at the night time (Dosnajt and Ghuman, 1997, p. 39).

In this research similar findings about the sleeping arrangement of children have been made. According to discussions with mothers as well as fathers babies sleep with their mothers because if they don't they will not get the strength and they will go hungry during the night. Babies are not prevented from sleeping with their mothers until the mother becomes pregnant with another child. This in a way is also a reflection of the low economic status of families in the study area which find it difficult to provide nutritious additional food for babies and children and that they have not much of a choice other than using the mother's breast after the baby grows past the age. Thus breast feeding continues through infancy and goes to early childhood not always in consideration of the health and strength of the baby but also because there is little alternative food substituting breast milk for the child.

If the baby is very young with 1 or 2 years it stays with his/her mother during the day time. But whenever the mother needs some rest the *awuto* (traditional baby sitter who can be the elder sister of the baby or relative of the father) take over the responsibility of tending and caring for the baby. But after the baby reaches 2 years and above he/she will play with other young kids and stay with them during the day time. A mother stays with her new born baby until 3 months. Exclusively thus ideally for 3 months the mother does not perform other household activities except caring for her baby. She starts doing other household work or go to the farm 3 months after the birth of the baby. However, in

reality pressing economic needs that require the mother to resume household and field work makes it hard for mothers to stay with the baby devoting their time only for it. This has implications of work burden on older siblings especially sisters and the *awuto* since the first months of the baby which are entrusted with the responsibility of taking care of the baby. This early involvement of these actors in tending the baby increases the attachment of these actors in child rearing which widened the social horizon of the baby.

5.3.2.2 Toilet training

In some cultures toilet training is often a very contentious/difficult moment in the interaction between parents and children. The adult expects some responsibility from the child and the child is uneasy to assume this role (Musen, P. H., Conger, J.J. and Kagan, J. 1980, pp.159).

In our case toilet training is a little different. Respondents gave a range of 2 years – 4 years, with an emphasis on 3 years (30%) for toilet training to start to take place in their culture. In Sidama culture, “toilet training” starts as early as the infancy period. As mother participants of focus group discussions expressed the mother knows the body movement of the baby and picks him up when he wants to eliminate and puts him/her on her lap or holds him/her in her hands comfortably for the release. Because of this practical knowledge of the mother which gives her leverage to detect the interest of the baby for elimination the mother starts to sit the baby for the process as early as infancy which makes it natural for the baby to eliminate outside a dipper and makes the transition of going to the toilet on an exterior environment very smooth. Mothers are largely responsible for training the baby to eliminate by putting him on their lap, which is comfortable and playful for the baby who begins into learning toilet training enjoying the warmth of its mother and playing with her. Eventually the mother will put the baby on the ground, in the same environment where the baby sleeps, eats and plays, and later the child will be sent out of the house to pee and the mother will show the child the place to use as a toilet. As a child turns 2 or 3, he/she will begin to use the toilet (outside) with the guidance of older siblings. This way a child will go through the tense time of toilet training very smoothly and steadily.

It is thus easy for the mother to show the baby to toilet outside or tell others to take him/her whenever she decides to start toilet training her child. Thus toilet training like weaning, also happens mainly with the convenience of the mother and her decision is what matters more than the readiness of the baby as the baby has been groomed to be able to do it since early months of his/her life. On the occasion of children bed wetting repeatedly after the training they will get punishment mainly in the form of beating and pinching according to 86% of the sample population. Such intolerance of parents towards bed wetting after the child is toilet trained is probably justified given the long time training and grooming of the child starting from the period of infancy.

5.3.2.3 Feeding

According to the findings of this study children are expected to eat independently mostly after two or three years (48%) in which they are trained to eat by themselves playfully by letting them grab food in their hands and helping them to model mothers or other adults and older siblings to use their hands. The other mechanism by which children are trained to eat on their own is by putting sweets around his mouth so that the child begins to eat by himself. After Additional food is introduced to the child the mother will feed the child with nutritious and soft food depending on their availability. As Vygotsky said children grow up learning skills by using the experiences of their 'capable elders'. Likewise in our case too children learn to eat on their own through imitating their parents and older siblings. Those who supervise the child might use "prompts, clues, modeling, explanation, leading questions, discussions, joint participation encouragement and so on" to help the development of the child depending on the culture (Miller, 1993, p.381). This way the child has a lot of opportunity to learn from adults and eating independently is thus trained by helping children see what parents do to eat and imitate their actions or through *gursha*.

5.3.2.4 Sickness

The common sicknesses in the area of study affecting children are common cold, diarrhea, and fever. The causes of these sicknesses are said to have been mainly related to lack of hygiene according to the majority of respondents who constitute 32% of the sample population. According to respondents most parents said they will take their children to hospital if they fall sick 81.7%. However other options like giving them traditional medicine and *amensa* also exist.

According to Ato Gonse, the health representative of the Bultuma PA Diarrhea, fever that is accompanied by coughing which occurs in the form of epidemic and tuberculosis are the diseases common to the area. The causes of diarrhea are unclean water, poor hygiene and poor environmental sanitation, which are caused mainly by lack of latrines. Latrine pits are now being dug to solve this problem. Tuberculosis unlike diarrhea is not that frequent. The fever that affects children mainly affects those below 7 years old and is caused mainly by climatic change. Generally, thus, diarrhea appears to be more frequent than any one of the above mentioned sicknesses. Everyone in the kebele use water springs to get drinking water and there is no pipeline and tap water in the kebele. Out of the 24 spring waters available in the kebele only 11 are developed springs with cleaner water supplies the rest is water coming from unprotected water springs which obviously is a source of water borne diseases including diarrhea which affect mainly children.

Another sickness which is kind of unique for the area is a sickness what they call “*amessa*” is a kind of sickness that makes the baby weak, thin and drains its immunity to other diseases. It is believed that if the baby is not given an herb called *amensa* immediately after birth the baby will catch this sickness.

5.4 Parental treatment

When we talk about parental treatment we are particularly referring to the mechanisms used by parents to guide, discipline and train their children to acquire certain sets of behaviors acceptable to them and skills useful to the context in which they live. Thus how parents guide their children, how they encourage them to be productive personally and socially and their use of reward and punishment to tame the behavior of children are some of the points to be discussed here.

5.4.1 Guidance and Communication

As the findings of this study demonstrated the majority of parents use advice and monitoring the whereabouts of their children as the most important mechanisms through which parents guide their children. This shows that rather than exposing children to various experiences and letting them learn and explore new things parents tend to control their behavior through instruction, by setting codes of conduct, by defining what is useful and what is not useful. Limiting the acquaintances of the child to those whom they approve of is also another mechanism parents ensure behavioral control and conformity.

Children agency is not encouraged and parents are the ones to set what is right and what is wrong. This is seen from gauging the willingness of parents to let their children express their opinions. As the findings show the vast majority of parents do not allow their children to express their opinion and expect their children to accept whatever they say without question. Focus group discussions also showed that parents think that letting children sit and talk with adults/parents will spoil them. Children are thus generally ordered to stay outside of adult gatherings. Rather they are told to do this or that and they are expected to accept instructions and advices passively without questioning. Thus discussions are meant to ensure conformity from children and not at all meant to encourage them to express their own opinions or learn through questioning.

As we learn from the findings of the study independence training and parental stimulation of children is not the priority of parents in raising children. The contents of discussion that parents engage in with their children tends to make children passive as it is focused largely on parents lecturing on either good conduct or do's and don't (See table on *Discussion*). The study clearly shows that children must listen to their parents' ideas no matter what. The majority of parents hold this view with regards to what the communication between parents and children should be like. It is meant to be one way, which places the parent as the source of knowledge and the child the passive receptor of knowledge. Nor does the ideas of the child are listened to while the parent makes decisions concerning the child. Parents get clothes or other staff for their children mainly by their own without the consent of children. Only 16.7% said that children are also involved in the choosing. But even this percentage qualified their statements by saying that they choose when they are old enough.

When we examine the attributes of a "good" parent in the attitude of the Sidama the study showed that the economic factor is the most vital in determining whether one is a "good" or a "bad" parent. The economic capacity of parents is given the most important priority in defining whether one is a good parent or not. Thus looking at the other side of this argument we learn that if parents are able to provide for their children it is considered that they are successful parents. Success in parenting is largely equated to parents' ability to fulfill the basic needs of children. Little emphasis is given to other aspects of child rearing apart from providing for them. Parents do not worry much about how their children will grow up- they give very limited attention to what they should do to make their children have a quality life (Interview: Aster Bulta, A school directress)

It is this centrality of socio economic status in child rearing that we observe similar or common features of child rearing in the different cultures of the Ethiopian region. Cultures having similar socio-economic status tend to have similar child rearing practices (Rigness and Gander, 1970) Other than ethnicity and culture socio-economic status is found to be an important factor in affecting child rearing. Difference in economic class has deeper and more pronounced effects on the way parents rear their children in the West (Rahel, 2005, pp. 5-6). This factor has its own effect on child rearing even in poor

rural communities like that of the Sidama. As the economic status of people living in rural communities like the one where this study is conducted child rearing patterns appear to be similar across households. The study suggests no significant difference in the patterns of child rearing based on income differences. This is may be a result of similar livelihood patterns of families living in the study area and the common setting in which these families rear their children, a rural setting.

5.4.2 Discipline and Training

Discipline

Another aspect that establishes a unique pattern of relationship between parents and children that demonstrate the kind of child rearing pattern of the Sidama family is discipline. How children are discipline and what demands parents put on their children when they bring them up are issues of great importance in understanding child rearing in our subject people. From the list of things which are mentioned by participants of the FGDs as well as the responses of the sample population that make children liable to punishment we learn that disobedience, making mistakes as well as non-conformity to the will and desire of parents are the most important reasons that cause punishment. The relationship between parents and children, especially between fathers and children is authoritative. Parents always dictate the environment so everything happens in their terms. Children are always expected to accept instructions while parents are always at liberty to order and give instructions to them. Whether they are convinced or not children are expected to listen to and do as their parents say. Giving instructions is more important than discussions in the relationship between parents and children. As a result children are not confident and outgoing-they rather tend to be timid and shy. They do not speak freely with adults or their parents. They are shouted at, beaten, rebuked very frequently. As almost every mistake is liable to punishment children don't grow up understanding their rights, they are mainly told about their obligations. Thus parents interact with their children coercively. As a result children tend to be shy and they are afraid of talking to adults especially girls. This relationship is however changing over time and with

education and modern thinking. (Interview: Eshet Yemam, a teacher; Aster Bulta, A school directress)

Training children with conventionally acceptable behaviors in most cultures begin with the year two. Parents train their children at this time mainly by telling them 'don'ts – do not bed wet, do not touch things in the house, do not disturb etc.

Thus teaching discipline to infants even in Western cultures begins at this age. This is done both through a mechanism of punishment and reward as well as observation (imitation and modelling) (Musen, P. H., Conger, J.J. and Kagan, J. 1980, pp.157-158). Likewise in our case too as the findings of the study (more than 50%) demonstrate children begin to be punished before they are five. The greatest percentage of respondents also said that children are punished since they turn three.

The pattern of parental handling of children is nothing but a function of the beliefs parents have about children and childhood. As we have seen earlier obedience and respect to parents are the most central of attributes children are expected to possess. These are the marks of the good child, girl or boy. Thus children who act otherwise are coercively handled according to the findings. But as the punishment age of children is different from parent to parent. So is the kind of a punishment administered to the different degrees of offences a child may commit. Hence, parents were asked to report the kind of punishment they administer for a minor offence and for a major offence. Although there are parents who report that they try to advice and talk to their child to correct their wrong deeds most of the parents seem to choose largely physical punishment. Beating and burning the skin of children with *dobe* are common punishments used against such behavior.

Mothers punish children of tender years as they mostly spend their time with their mothers in the house. But as they grow up children are said to start challenging the authority of the mother. In this case thus the father takes the major role in punishment. This fact that the father is considered the major punishment figure of the house shows by itself the importance given to physical punishment. The logic is that children may escape or refuse their mother especially after they grow up. The fathers are chosen to assume the

role as they are believed to be physically able to exercise power over children, which is the characteristic feature of punishment children receive in our subject people.

Almost every mistake that children make is punishable. But at the same time not every mistake is punished through physical punishment. There are also other ways of punishment. These styles of punishment include refusing food, reducing the amount of food given, chaining and beating, throwing the child out of the house, making the child jealous. Such austere control and repeated punishment of children for almost every mistake are meant to make children submissive than assertive, fearful than confident.

5.4.3 Training

Training children different skills, values and norms is also something related to disciplining them. On the other hand disciplining children is a means to another end. This end is the training and the subsequent outcome of their training which is most of the times in all cultures is related to their success in later life. Children as the findings show are expected to display character based on gender lines. They learn these characters mainly from their parents according to the majority of respondents. And parents teach the different skills by letting children work side by side with them to learn their parents' skill (50%) while the rest said that they teach their children different skills by letting them watch how they do things and also by giving them simpler tasks.

5.4.4 Reward

Reward is also another way of parental support system in which parents try to encourage their children to act in a certain manner. The findings of the study show that the most important behavior which brings reward to children is hard work and assistance to parents. As already been mentioned a child who helps his/her parents and does tasks with out much follow up (39.25%) is the one who gets rewards from his parents.

The system of reward indicates the attitude of parents towards children. For them hard work, assistance offered to parents in their work activities are more important qualities

than for instance expressiveness or creativity. In a way, thus, children are encouraged to invest on their parents thorough the provision of help other than investing on themselves. Such a system of reward by parents is also related to the value parents attach to children. As mentioned above children among the Sidama are mainly valued for their economic purposes, they are considered assets. Parents want to have children among the Sidama for pragmatic reasons.

When we look into the kind of rewards parents give for their children we generally see from the finding that rewards are given in the form of material such as cloth, livestock, food, sweets, and verbal rewards such as praise and blessing. Interestingly enough it is evident from the focus group discussions that while fathers tend to reward their children with cloth, livestock mothers reward their children mainly by praising and blessing them or by giving them food and sweets. Their focus on non-material encouragements is probably because they are not income generators and cannot pay for clothes for instance.

5.5 Roles and Responsibilities of children

Children as part of the society play different roles which are vital for the functioning and economic life of the family as an institution. Among the Sidama like most other cultures children assume roles and responsibilities which are specialized along gender lines. Boys are taught skills like herding, working on the farm and the family garden, while girls are encouraged to concentrate on household chores like tending younger siblings, assisting their mothers, working on *enset*, preparing *injera*, preparing coffee, keeping the house clean, fetching water and looking after younger siblings and carrying them on their backs (FGD with Male elders; FGD with female adolescents; Interview: Aster Bulta, school directress). The things boys and girls do at this early age give them different exposure to boys and girls. The roles of girls is confined to the house while the roles that are given to boys provides them the opportunity to go outside of the home and allows them to discover their environment.

Therefore, the difference in the amount of work done by children of the two sexes is not as important as the different exposure it gives boys and girls. While the girl is expected to

grapple with all sorts of domestic responsibilities in addition to preparing *enset* the boy is expected mainly to work in the field and take care of herding. More important thus is the things the kind of exposure the boy has gives him compared to the girl child. Boys are involved in skills which are income or livelihood generating. They are involved mainly in farming which is the occupation that puts food on the table for the family. This same role exposes boys to the outside world at early age while the roles of girls confine them to the worries of the household allowing them to experience little exposure to the outside world. The roles of boys make them outgoing and gives them the impression that they are more useful for the family as they help in livelihood or income generation. Moreover, the society or more importantly the family considers what boys do as more important and more productive. While girls are expected to be in and around the house boys are allowed to go out and experience the external world which gives them loopholes to play and be on their own without close parental control. They have the niche to be more adventures.

Boys thus have better opportunities to spend time with other children and learn skills or face challenges from them. The findings of the study also show that boys are expected to be more successful in their education as it has been demonstrated by FGD participants.

The other issue worth discussing is the question when do children start to assume these roles in the family. As many other age related questions it is difficult to speak definitively about as different parents have different answers. In any case the most common age group which is mentioned by 18.9% of the respondents said that mostly children start to assume roles in their families beginning from the age of five (or a year earlier or later).

The roles of elder siblings/ children extend beyond the execution of mundane tasks. They are also expected to assume the role of the parent especially in the absence of parents. Punishing younger brothers and sisters when they make mistakes, taking care of them and protecting them from harm in the absence as well as presence of their parents, carrying them, giving them food, are responsibilities of especially older sisters. The second mother- the nanny of the new born baby who assists the mother in caring for the baby as a substitute while the mother is in maternity or while she wants to rest is traditionally called *awuto*. *Awuto* is an equivalent of a baby sitter (nanny). The *awuto* is usually the

older sister of the new born. She is entrusted with the huge responsibility of taking care of the child whenever the mother is not there, or when she is busy or after the mother completed her maternity period. The *awuto* cleans the young, give them food, and wash their clothes.

As a result of the work burden especially girls are subject to, at early age they have little time left for play, have fun and explore their environment. They play at most until they reach 10 years old as the domestic chores after this year become intense and they are expected to assume serious responsibilities at home. Boys on the other hand spend much more time playing and play almost as much as they want mainly because their roles and responsibilities are much less than their girl counterparts (FGD with female adolescents) Thus before children come to school (i.e. before they reach 7 or 8 years} they spent much of their time helping their families in house work. (Interview Eshet Yemam, school teacher).

Though the responsibilities which are expected from the children seems too much and hard it also has its own advantage. Most of the parents this way try to groom their children to the adult life which awaits them and which demand hard work and discipline. Though the trainings seems less child friendly as it down play the other developmental needs of children(as literature indicate) still it is also tuned to the interest of the children in the future. It gives then the discipline, the knowledge and the skill which they need for their adult life. After all is it not the goal of a good child rearing the success of the child in later life?

In addition to this the economic situation of the parents also dictates the way they raise their children and their focus of attention

Research in different places of the world has also shown that socio economic status is one very vital factor in influencing child rearing especially in the more developed world. Parents with lower economic status are found to be much less engaged with the personal growth of their children in education and other aspects and are said to be passively related to them. The relationship between parents and their children tend to be that of the parents ensuring conformity and acceptance from their children. On the other hand those parents who are well off tend to be a lot more concerned with the personal development of their children and tend to be more stimulating and encouraging to their children to be

keen to achievement and success in life (Grace F. Brody, 1968:660). This is because of the economic pressures the low income getting families face in life which makes the personal development of the child less a priority compared to the higher income families which have the economic security to think about and make the personal development of the child their priority.

Participants, fathers, mothers as well as adolescents, of the different FGDs also confirmed that parents' economic capacity to fulfill the basic needs of children such as food and proper clothing is the most important aspect as well as challenges of child rearing in the study area. Economic problem is the cause of bad parenting according to them. One mother puts her concern this way "We used to have blankets and clothes for a very low price for our babies but not any more. Because of that, it becomes harder to keep the hygiene of our babies. We use our dress as blanket for our kids and later wear it ourselves to go out of the house, it is not easy to wash that every time". Another informant said, "Since we are busy to keep our other children from hunger we do not have enough time to look after the babies properly even to breast feed them. Some of us spent our days in the market and have only got time to feed the kid in night time, even the after a lot of house hold chores"

Other women participants also mentioned that the reason for some mothers to leave their infants and their house earlier than they are supposed to is just because they have to go back to the field to work on the farm so that they will be able to feed their children. As most of the fathers expect their wives to work on the farm a women mothers leave the baby a month after her delivery. "A mother who stays for one month in her house to look after her infant must be well to do or must have a very good and strong husband" they said. Moreover, whether families let children for longer times, forced them to work, and other treatment of the parents, including their rewards and punishment, are highly related to their economic status. Therefore in short this is to show that economic capacity is thus considered the most essential aspect in determining whether parents are successful in child rearing.

5.6 The role of relatives and neighbors

In a traditional and communal society like the Sidama relatives and neighbors are bound to have some roles in child rearing, at times these roles can be very vital. In the Sidama culture neighbors and relatives used to be very significant in the life of the child and still are in some degree. But their role is declining from time to time. The reasons may be multifarious but declining cultural values and lack of economic capacity are certainly among these reasons.

The linkage that parents as well as children has with other members of society, members of extended family, older siblings as well as neighbors has been found to influence child rearing. The so-called 'informal support system' that members of extended family members, relatives or even neighbors give for the parent or child either influences the parenting style of the former or directly impacts on how children should behave in various respects. Bronfenbrenner even argues that the linkage that parents and children have with the outside environment may either constrain or enhance interaction with one another (Stevens, 1988, pp.635). For instance the influence of relatives, children in one's neighborhood impacts on the mind set of children and this may lead to conflict between children and their parents.

The roles relatives play appears from the findings of this study more important than that of neighbors. More than 70% of the sample population said that they are relevant and assist in child rearing. The study shows that while neighbors play roles like looking after the kids while the mother is away and teaching good manners to children through advice, the roles of relatives extend as far as buying them clothes, covering the educational expenses of children and so on. This shows the importance of kin ties among the Sidama which also has its implications in child rearing. The focus group discussions also show similar views.

Even if neighbors and relatives play such roles and assist in child rearing their role when it comes to punishing children is very minimal unless they are part of the household in

which children are reared. Only grandparents and at times uncles are given the liberty to punish children without necessarily asking for the consent of parents.

The study also shows that the roles of especially relatives in child rearing increases with declining parental ability to raise children on their own. The influence of kin and relatives in child rearing therefore increases when the economic capacity of parents is low to provide for children and fulfill their needs. However, even if material help is considered as the most valued contribution both neighbors and relatives make important contribution especially in providing advice both to parents and children and encouraging good behavior of children. Research has also shown that advice and provision of important information on how to deal with and rear children offered by other members of society like relatives and neighbors to parents is found to be more important in affecting child rearing by parents more than the material or emotional support. A study which was conducted on White and Black American parents showed that the 'social ties' that parents have with "significant others" who are willing to provide child rearing information have a very important influence on 'parenting behavior' (Stevens, 1988, pp.635). Moreover, many studies outside of Ethiopia have shown that adult or other people's interaction with infants is very vital for their cognitive development. Infants, who are talked to, played with interacted to tend to develop cognitively as they learn a lot of things from the play, facial expression or voice of the adult/elder sibling. Infants who do not get individualized conversation, who have limited interaction with adults are found to be less cognitively developed to those who have such interactions. They fail to develop at a slower rate because of lack of stimulation. But equally important here is the quality of stimulation not the quantity of stimulation. Individualized interaction is thus very important in fostering cognitive development of infants (Musen, P. H., Conger, J.J. and Kagan, J. 1980, pp.132-136).

A note on Harmful Traditional Practices

According to information obtained from the Health Representative of the PA as well as focus group discussions with the young and parents harmful traditional practices affecting the lives of children are present in the Kebele even if they are not the most important problems of the Kebele. Practices like wife inheritance, female genital mutilation, ovulectomy, tonsillectomy and milk teeth extraction, as well as *neqisat* (tattooing) are present in the kebele. Parents at times can also get reluctant to send their girls to school and marry them off to someone at their early age which of course forces children to quit school (*Informants: Alemitu Zewdie, Gonse Sansammo and Eshet Yemam*) These practices used to be prevalent in the area in the past. Polygamy also used to be one other practice which is now considered as a harmful traditional practice and an 'unchristian'. In a kebele where there are more than 880 households- a total population of about 5000, there are only 20 polygamous families (*Informant: Gonse Sansammo*) The decline of such harmful traditional practices in the area community members generally attribute to the teachings of religious institutions as well as the government in this area, which discourage such practices. However, in the highland parts of the Sidama zone such practices are more prevalent than in this Kebele. Community members noted that such practices are declining because their communities are also getting awareness education to fight such practices. In addition, the strong influence of Protestantism is also another very important factor leading to the steady decline of such practices, which are considered traditional and un-Christian (FGD with Male adolescents: annex 1, Young mothers: annex 1). Ovulectomy and milk teeth extraction and tonsillectomy compared to other such practices are more prevalent because people believe that if the tonsils and teeth are not cut off and extracted it may gash and contaminate their mouth parts and kill them (FGD with Young mothers: annex 1).

The issue of urbanization which is affecting such traditional forms of child rearing and eroding their originality. Urbanization and industrialization in the 20th century have been putting a lot of pressure on non-modern societies to change their traditional ways. Such cultures have found it almost quintessential to rear their children and socialize them in

such a way 'that they will be able to survive in a society that is increasingly alien to the traditional order. For these cultures, modernization has been accompanied by the implicit demand for change in child-rearing practices and ideology' (Frankel and Bornstein). This aspect of modern life is common to most traditional cultures in Ethiopia or elsewhere, and the Sidama are not an exception. Thus it is worth taking note that child rearing among the Sidama is affected by such aspects of modernization and the child rearing practices of the traditional Sidama polity are bound to be influenced by such changes. Protestantism and modern education are such components of change affecting the strength of traditional values and norms among the Sidama and brings about important changes in the way children are reared.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusion

The major objective of the study is identifying the patterns and various features of child rearing among the Sidama. In this study the child rearing practices of the Sidama are considered as culture bound and culture is central in understanding child rearing. The care taker mediates between the child and the culture and the nuances of the culture are transmitted in the form of knowledge, skills and behavior to the child. But the context/culture where the learning takes place is divided into systems and the family setting which is loomed as the most essential element of child rearing. However, this setting in turn is influenced by settings outside it such as the existence of relatives, values systems such as those which define the sex roles of boys and girls and the sex based behaviours defined by the culture, socio economic make up of the family as well as the beliefs about children which establishes a certain relationship between parents and their children and the values children have in the society.

The study found out that the major reason why parents want to have children is economic. Their role in domestic work and the assistance they offer in other work activities is among the most important reasons why parents want to have children. The findings also show that old age economic security is also considered among the most important reasons why parents want to have children.

The goodness and badness of children is gauged according to the level of obedience and hard work. The sex distinctions of children show that girls are subjected to more pressures of socialization and conformity than boys and they are expected to be less playful and more responsible, they are also found to be subject to more criticism than boys with regards to their behavior.

Infant and child care practices among the Sidama have different components such as the ones indicating the level of attachment of babies to care takers. Mothers and next to them

elder sisters or the *awuto* are found to be the figures to whom children are attached to. The food infants take is mainly the breast milk of their mothers until they reach 2 years but after that children are fed with anything available in the house, most of the time *enset*.

When we see the weaning and the toilet training process they are focused more on the convenience of the mother and they appear to be issues not so important in creating tension between the parents and the child. This is mainly because weaning happens only if another baby is on the way and the baby will not be forced to wean unless otherwise a pressing issue like pregnancy occurs. When we come to toilet training the baby is toilet trained since the time of infancy as he/she is helped to eliminate outside of a dipper and as a result the weaning experience tends to be smooth and gradual avoiding tension between parents and children.

Parental treatment among the Sidama tends to be that which demands strict discipline from children where children are expected to be obedient, say always 'OK' and accept the advice as well as guidance and instruction of their parents without question. Girls are furthermore expected to be quite, humble, one who walks chin down. Children who felt short of the expectations of their parents or children who make mistakes of almost any kind are dealt with through punishment which is mainly corporal. This shows the belief, despite the responses of parents and consistent with interviews with teachers, that corporal punishment is considered as the most effective way to improve bad behaviour. This is precisely the reason why the father is the major punishment figure. Fathers are supposed to be strong and handle physical punishment of children better than mothers do. Punishment by the mother is administered mainly when children are smaller and less unruly which again attests the importance of corporal punishment. It can be concluded that the act of punishment is very much associated and at times it is even used exchangeable with physical punishment.

In general, therefore, the defining characteristics of parental treatment among the Sidama has a lot to do with parents demanding conformity and acceptance rather than independence of thought and opinion. Discussion between parents and children is centred on parents instructing children what to do or how to act and children are expected to

listen and accept. Thus parenting among the Sidama is that which encourages discipline, dire conformity at the expense of child agency.

The roles that children assume in the society are regimented along gender lines and children of both sexes are involved in one or another task in the household or outside of the household at least after age 5. The roles children of the two sexes assume expose them to different types of experiences which since early age shape their disposition to life. The boys tend to be more outgoing, liberated and have the opportunity to discover the external environment while the tasks girls execute confine them to the worries of the household limiting their outside experience but maturing them earlier than the boys.

Generally speaking, the child rearing practices of the Sidama as the findings of this study show could be characterized as parent-centered and less attention is given to the needs of children either out of lack of capacity or out of lack of attention. According to the findings of the study the most important aspect of child rearing lies in ones ability to provide for and fulfill the needs of children. Other things are considered subsidiary and unimportant in raising children. This shows that the emphases given to parental stimulation, independence training and so on are a luxury in the eyes of parents. This is nothing but a reflection of the low economic capacity of parents and the society under study. The other reason which is equally important in raising children is related to the value children have. Child rearing seen from this angle is a mechanism by which parents groom and bring up children for their own livelihood. Thus in this regards children are raised to help parents and children are the ones who are there for parents and not the other way round.

6.2. Recommendations

In light of the findings of this study the following recommendations are made:

1. Conducting research in different cultural settings and societies is very crucial to identify specific as well as universal features of child rearing practices that occur in different contexts. More importantly studies on child rearing practices of different cultural settings helps us to develop general theories to understand different features and patterns of child rearing in traditional or generally non-western societies. Such studies also help the emergence of developmental and psychological concepts workable to cultural settings of our society as opposed to using concepts and theories developed in Western cultures. Such academic exercises certainly help nourish the development of home-grown theories to understand various aspects of our culture.
2. Although there are many interesting findings in this study which can help us understand child rearing in Sidama culture and other similar cultures more issues can be revealed if more background information like age, sex, socio economic status are included and analyzed in light of the basic practices of child rearing. Thus I recommend for further research which takes into account such issues to better understand the complex features of child rearing practices in different cultures and settings.
3. As the findings of the study show there are different cultural experiences of the Sidama such as the use of *amensa* and *the use of massage* especially when treating first borns and babies which according to the Sidama are very useful practices in child care. A more objective scientific research in the area will be very useful to decide whether such practices should be kept or discarded.
4. The effects of modernization in child rearing in traditional cultures could be an interesting area for future research given the importance of the issue in our society. Examining the effects of modernization on children who live under the influences of both tradition and modernity torn between two worlds could be an interesting aspect of child rearing in traditional cultures which are increasingly subjected to the influences of modern institutions and modernity. How this

dilemma could be solved by care takers and what effect would it have on the way they bring up their children could be interesting aspects of research.

5. There are also issues that need to improve in the lives of subjects of this study. Even if harmful traditional practices like tonsillectomy, female genital mutilation are on the decline the practice of early marriage seems to be still there. Moreover, burden of domestic work weighs heavily on children in general and girls in particular like in most other rural areas in the country. Children are subjected to a lot of domestic work at their early age. These are probably issues of interest to non-governmental organizations which work on the rights of children and the kind of basic entitlements children should have. Given the unavailability of NGOs involved in development one can take note of this issue more seriously.
6. In relation with the heavy burden of work that girls are subjected to at the household level and the many responsibilities they are expected to shoulder starting from early age there is a tendency on the part of the society to disregard the education of girls and girls are far from being encouraged to pursue their education in the area. Even if lack of parental stimulation works for both the sexes the place girls hold in the society on its own has a serious impact on their personal development and limits their exposure outside of the house. The responsibilities at the household level are enough on their own to affect the educational performance of girls. Thus organizations interested in girls' rights would find it interesting to see what contribution they can make with regards to making the lives of girls better.
7. The other very fundamental vice of our area of study is poverty. Children in the area are under fed and their diet is limited mainly to the consumption of *enset*. The problem of poverty is also compounded by population pressure which is a characteristic feature of the area that is known as the *Enset* complex. Problems of land fragmentation, lack of developed water points and many such problems lead to health complication on children and generally affect their normal growth. All these pressing problems thus call for the attention of all concerned bodies, the government and other non-governmental actors.

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Appendices

Annex 1

FGD with female youngsters

Number of participants-12

Place- Bultuma Peasant Association

After introducing the moderator and the translator, the purpose of the discussion is made clear to the participants. The rules of the discussion and the approximate time it may take has also been agreed upon. Moreover, the names and the background information of the participants are recorded.

1. The first question is about the importance of having children
 - ◆ Participants had the following to say about the uses of having a child. The father will have someone to inherit him. Children are the hopes of the future. They are useful for their father, their family and the nation at large. The child carries his father's name for the next generation and inherits his property. Children carry the name of their fathers in the future. Children bury and mourn their parents when they are dead. They also serve their parents at home and perform household chores. They survive their parents in the days to come. They are a living embodiment of their parents. Children help their family in household chores. They also multiply the family and the Sidama ethnic group. Children who are educated serve as a source of money and income for their parents. Children are groomed to help their parents in their old age. Having children is like building an asset for parents. Children are assets who help parents in their old age (later life)
2. What happens to a person who does not have a child?

- ◆ Participants agreed that someone without a child is bound to be lonely- with no one to inherit him and continue his lineage in the future. Strangers will inherit a person without a child while those who have children are inherited their own children. Married or unmarried people who do not have a child of their own and adopt a child to raise him as their own will face different problems. An adopted child is inconsiderate to his guardians he costs them a lot of money. Investing on an adopted child saps the savings of the guardian/s. when the guardian/s is in trouble the child will abandon them. Such a child will not be there for his/her guardians in their time of trouble. Participants also said that if a woman does not have child her husband may bring a second one to the house or may even divorce the childless one and marry another.

3. How do children spend their childhood in your area?

- ◆ Some of the participants said that childhood is a playtime especially until they are old enough to be able to help their parents in various work activities. Most of their time is said to have been spent in play until they reach the age of 7/8. After this age they will be expected to help their parents in various work activities at home or outside. They are involved in activities like picking wood, fetching water and herding.

4. What kind of plays do children play in your area?

- Girls - are involved in the following plays: ገመድ ዝላይ (ጡሶ ጦ ባ)፣ ቲኮ ተኪጆ(ሰኞ/ማክሰኞ)

- Boys- are involved in the following plays: foot ball, a cultural equivalent of chess which is called ሁጌ, a play in which boys play by throwing small spears called ቃሌ, and ካዳማ which is an aggressive play in which boys divide in groups and play by kicking each other.

- ◆ Mostly girls play in the little time they have as domestic chores take most of their time and leaves them little time for fun and play. They play at most until they reach 10 years old as the domestic chores after this year become intense and they are expected to assume responsibilities at home. Boys on the other hand spend much more time playing and play almost as much as they want mainly because their roles and responsibilities are much less than their girl counterparts.
5. What are the qualities of a "good child"? Which are the defining characteristics of a good child?
- ◆ Participants responded that a girl child who is considered as having a good character has the following qualities:
 - A girl who runs errand for her mother and does the job quickly
 - A girl who respects her parents and other adults
 - A girl who assists neighbors in their work activities
 - A girl who does exactly as she is told
 - A girl who does not quarrel with other kids
 - A girl who gets back home quickly from where she is sent
 - A girl who obeys her neighbors
 - A girl who gets back from school as early as possible
 - A girl who does not complain about food which is given to her
 - A girl who is responsible
6. Do a boy and a girl child display the same or different behaviors?
- ◆ A boy has the liberty to explore and do many things as boys are excused even if they do wrong and people say that "he is a boy after all" (people will explain his bad behavior as related to his being a boy) but girls are very much concerned about what people say about them. As a result, girls behave much better than boys do. Boys are said to have been very aggressive while girls are not. Girls are very helpful for their mothers while boys are not. Boys can

do wrong and get away with it easily but if a girl does something wrong it will be taken seriously by her parents as well as others and she won't be able to get away from it. Girls are exposed to other people's criticisms while boys don't face such criticisms as girls do.

- ◆ Some participants also responded that it is considered as a very bad thing if a girl acts like a boy and does things, which are considered manly (boyish).

7. When do boys and girls start to show their behavioral differences?

- ◆ According to participants, boys and girls start showing such difference of behaviors as early as they are below 10 years old.

8. What are the defining characteristics of a "bad child"?

- ◆ The following are mentioned by participants as the defining characteristics of a bad child behavior
 - Disrespect for parents, elders and other adults
 - A child who insults her mother
 - A child who does not get back from where he/she is sent
 - A girl who does things wrong after shown by her mother or elder sisters
 - A girl who avoids order from her mother
 - A girl who is disobedient
 - A girl who is lazy and slow in doing household chores
 - A child who does things badly even if he/ she know how to do the thing right
 - A child who tells secrets of her family to outsiders

9. What are bad behaviors that make children liable to punishment by parents?

- A child who by mistake breaks things while doing something
- A child who complains about the food that is given to her/ him
- A boy who plays somewhere after sent to herd cattle
- A child who brings something by mistake when he /she is asked to bring something else

- A child who does not wash his/her own plate after eating with it
- A child who spills his milk or food when he eats or drinks because he was not careful
- A child who argues with his brothers and sisters
- A child who makes mistakes repeatedly
- A child who is lazy and does not want to work
- A child who does something else when ordered to do another thing
- A child who does things that he/she is not told to do and ends up messing things up as a result
- A child who talks back to an adult when the later reproaches or warns him/her

9. Who punishes children most of the time?

- ◆ Some participants responded that especially during their early years are punished mostly by their mothers. Some others said that because children particularly boys do not fear their mothers fathers are the most important feared figures of punishment.
- ◆ Participants also agreed that occasionally older siblings may be instrumental in punishing small children.
- ◆ Generally participants agreed that fathers are the most important figures of punishment especially after children reach a certain age. This is because older children may refuse, escape or become unruly for their mothers to punish.

10. Are neighbors or relatives involved in punishing children?

- ◆ Participants said that neighbors or even relatives do not usually dare to punish children as such an act would put them in trouble with the parents of the children who wants to reserve the right of punishing their children to themselves.

11. What are the common types of punishments that are used against children?

- ◆ Participants mentioned the common types of punishments used against children and these are the following:
 - Throwing the child out of the house for sometime

- Pinching
- Using a small stick to beat the child
- Chaining the child in the house for a day
- Refusal to keep an earlier promise to the child (like refusal to buy a new cloth)
- Beating the child after making him naked with a "sama"- a plant which feels hot if administered on a naked body
- To make the child envy seeing that promises are kept for other siblings who respected parental authority

12. What kind of punishment is more effective in making a child behave properly?

- ◆ Participants mentioned the following as effective ways of punishing a child:
 - Giving advice
 - If beating proves ineffective placing a child in a place after chaining him is believed to be a very effective punishment
 - If beating proves ineffective, it is better to advice the child or cajole him/her to be good
 - Making a child jealous by doing things out of the ordinary for his brothers and sisters so that he sees that he is not getting such treatment because he is a "bad child"
 - Advising him to be good in relation to other people so that he would refrain from displaying such behavior believing that his behavior will tarnish his reputation with others, adults or otherwise
 - Getting him advised by his favorite person- relative or neighbor

13. How are children rewarded when they demonstrate a commendable behavior?

Children are said to have been rewarded by their parents through blessing, by buying them new clothes, by being more generous with food

14. Are there sex based defined roles for boys and for girls in your area?

- ◆ All participants agreed that there are defined sex roles in their society
 - ◆ Those that are identified as the roles and responsibilities of girls are: preparing enset (workie) for food, preparing injera, preparing coffee, keeping the house clean and tidy
 - ◆ Those that are identified as the responsibilities of boys are: working on the field, preparing fire work, splitting wood logs for fire and energy, herding cattle
15. What is the role of relatives in child rearing?
- ◆ It is indicated by some of the participants that uncle's play more pronounced role in child rearing than other relatives. These roles include giving advice for children.
16. What do you think are the bad practices related to rearing children in your area?
- ◆ Participants indicated that punishing children frequently for minor or bigger offenses and mistakes is one of the bad practices of child rearing.
 - ◆ Scaring children by threatening them that something bad may happen to them if they do this or that
17. What are the things that you think should change in relation with child rearing in your area?
- ◆ All participants agreed that provision of adequate food and clothing very basic for the healthy growth of children is one of the things that should change and that severely affect child rearing.
18. Do parents discuss with their children?
- ◆ Participants agreed that parents discuss with their children especially after the later reach the age of 10. Parents give guidance to their children and tell them what to do and what not to do. The discussion revolves more around that.
19. Are there celebrations/holidays in your area in which children take part in?
- ◆ According to participants children take part in celebrations like Epiphany, Fitch-Chambalala
20. Are there harmful traditional practices affecting children in your area?

- ◆ Participants admitted that harmful traditional practices such as FGM, ovulectomy, tonsillectomy and milk teeth extraction are there even if they are very rarely practiced.

FGD with Elders

1. What does the administrative hierarchy of the traditional Sidama polity look like? What influence does this administrative system has on child rearing?

According to participants among the Sidama those who are primarily responsible for raising and disciplining children are parents. But even if parents are the first entity to give advice, guide as well as punish children a body of village elders and adults do also play their role in advising as well as punishing recalcitrant children. When children transgress the authority of their own parents and family village elders get together to advice or punish them. Village elders could even banish such children who refuse to be abided by the rules and norms of the society. However, children are subject such treatments are those who are usually above 15.

The administrative hierarchy of the traditional Sidama polity has the following structure according to participants. When we start from the bottom and proceed to the top there is a village and a village in which inhabitants live. Every village has a representative elder who is responsible for organizing villagers for important social events such as funerals. This person is also responsible in handing over to authorities people who quarreled over something. This person serves as a traditional security personnel who is at the same time in charge of organizing villagers for important social events. This person is called the *muricha*. The *muricha* is also a representative of the council of village elders, which is a gathering of elders of various villages of the Sadama. Thus, the *muricha* has a dual representation he represents the members of his own village and this council of village elders. The chairperson of the council of village elders who is considered as the highest elderly administrative entity of the traditional Sidama polity is known as *Woma*. He has the final say on important administrative and legal matters regarding the affairs of the

various villages but he enjoys this authority as long as the *Woma* keeps a council of elders from the different villages to makes such important decisions.

According to discussants, the major task of this traditional system is to ensure peace and order among the community of villagers. The members of this administration hand offenders to government bodies or pass judgment against those who commit minor offences like violating the rules and regulations of community based institutions or family affairs needing resolution, minor contests between neighbors and so forth.

When we come to see the effect this traditional administrative system has on child rearing participants of the discussion noted that their role of elders in child rearing that extended to punishing children, chaining them and beating them up to ensure discipline and compliance with societal values is largely the thing of the past. However, elders still have the power to give advice and ensure conformity of a child with traditional norms, rules and regulations. They still gather relatives to influence the behavior of children. They reconcile father and son at time of their quarrel. Their responsibility is now mainly reconciliation and offering advice to influence the behavior of children.

In Sidama culture what are the various age categories people pass through from infancy to old age? Are there celebrations carried out to commemorate the transfer of a person from one age group to another?

According to participants ቃቆ (is someone below 15 years of age within the ቃቆ age group the infants (Ilameno) are categorized) , ቤቶ (those between 15-40) these are the young , above 40 they are called ማንኛ (these are full adults who began to grow grey hair). Thus there are 3 categories of age group.

It is also said that there are rituals or rights that a transferred member of a certain age group takes part in or enjoy. For instance when a child turns 18 (he assumes the status of a Beto) he reserves a right of not to be beaten by his father even if he does something wrong. His bad behavior will be punished if necessary by the sanction of

elders. On the other hand when someone gets transferred from a beto status to mancho he will be circumcised.

Participants also talked about the traditional Sidama Lua system. The Lua system is practiced in the past. The Sidama are divided into 5 Luas. These are the Derara, Hirbora, Mogissa, Wawassa and Fulassa. Derara is the first of all the Luas. All members of the Sidama who are members of a Lua are supposed to be circumcised together. During the time of the circumcision of for instance Lua Derara, members of the other Luas are not allowed to be circumcised. Every Lua gets the opportunity of circumcision every 8 years. Thus the first Lua members to be circumcised are the Derara then after 8 years the Hirbora then after 8 years the Mogissa then after 8 years the Wawassa and then after 8 years finally the Fulassa. Thus every Lua waits for 32 years to get their turn for circumcision. Every male Sidama is born belonging to one or another of the 5 Luas and thus in spite of age differences minors (ቃቆ) or adults may be circumcised at the same time just because they belong to a certain Lua.

Participants defined Lua as blessing and wealth. As a result when members of a certain Lua gets circumcised a celebration with beef meat, enset and butter is prepared by villagers and the Lua members to be circumcised are called to make prayers to solve a certain problem in a certain village/villages. The group of people of a certain Lua for instance could be asked to pray for barren women in a village so that they could become fertile. This is done because this Lua gathering could get their prayers heard as they represent a gathering blessed by god himself.

* Does the time (day) when children are born determine the fate of children?

According to participants traditionally the day on which a child is born is believed to determine the character as well as the fate of the child. It was believed by forefathers that a child born on the day called "Bita" in Sidama calendar is believed to be good for his own success but will be bad for the community. He is believed to bring nothing but scarcity and famine to his community. Another is a baby born on the day of

"Argajma" who is believed to bring death and illness to the community. Thus to set right the bad consequences of the birth of children born in such ominous days a sacrifice will be made and the baby will be washed with blood to cleanse the evil out of him. The placenta and the umbilical chord of the baby will not be buried on the date of birth of such babies as this is believed to bring folly on the community. Thus an alternate date will be set and his umbilical chord and placenta will be buried and his birth will be announced. There are also children born on good days such as "Adula Gucha", "Dulete Ilancho" or "Lumassa". These are good days which bring wealth, prosperity, blessing to the baby as well as the community. According to participants these days are set by traditional astronomers who determine the dates following the arrangement of stars in the universe.

3. What roles and responsibilities do children have in your society?

Children have responsibilities of helping their parents in various activities such as fetching water, picking wood, serve as messengers and so on. Children are expected to be obedient and do what their parents tell them to do.

4. What ceremonies are there to celebrate the birth of a child? Do these ceremonies differ or vary based on the sex of the newborn?

Participants said that there are ceremonies prepared to celebrate the birth of a child. The mother keeps butter for the occasion starting from the time when she knows that she is expecting a baby. And the father is also expected to make preparations for the celebration by buying a sheep or beef to slaughter on the date of the birth of the baby.

The celebration becomes more if the baby is a boy. The animal to be slaughtered and the party to celebrate the coming of new life to the society becomes more pronounced if the new born is a boy. This is because boys are believed to be the successors of their parents/fathers. They inherit property and survive it to the future unlike girls. A girl does not always stay with her family, once she gets married she will

belong to another family and will go away from her own family to live with her new family. Girls do not stay with the family for long which boys will get married but stay with their family even after marriage. Thus a girl does not inherit property and does not always stay with the family thus her birth is not as important as the birth of a boy child.

*What is the use of having a child?

Children are assets-they provide their parents during old age, they continue lineage, they are the ones who bear the names of their parents in the future or when their parents pass.

*parental treatments of children?

Parents agreed that parents teach their children values as well as skills. Children are taught and advised to refrain from disturbing the neighborhood, to obey parents and others, to show respect for elders, to be hard working and to assist their parents in different work activities. They are discouraged from acts of theft, beating younger ones and so on. Boys are taught skills like herding, working on the farm and family garden, while girls are encouraged to concentrate on household chores like tending younger siblings, assisting their mothers, working on enset, keeping the house clean, fetching water and so on.

Participants underlined that the first most important value that is encouraged in a child is to have respect for ones own parents, to listen to what they say as well as do as they say. Obeying parents and respecting them is the most fundamental value that parents teach their children.

*What roles do relatives play in child rearing?

Relatives assist parents by for instance giving out money especially if they are well off, they also take care of children as guardians especially when parents are unable to provide for children.

Relatives are also said to give advice children to encourage good behavior and at times punish children when they display unacceptable behavior. Relatives may also get together to cuff a recalcitrant child and inflict physical punishment. This happens especially when the child becomes unruly to his father and family. Relatives also assist parents by educating their children and covering their expenses.

*What is a good parent? How do you characterize parents who raise their children properly? What about parents who does not?

Parents are considered to be good when they are able to fulfill the basic needs of their children such as the provision of proper clothing, ability to cover the school expenses of their children and so on. Parents should also fulfill the interests of their children. They should for instance be able to provide good nutritious food for their children.

Parents who are insulting, nagging parents who quarrel with their children day in day out, parents who curse their children are considered bad parents.

*What kind of harmful traditional practices are there in your society?

Female genital mutilation, removing tonsils of children used to be prevalent practices in the past. But now these practices are almost a history.

What are the major challenges of child rearing in your area?

Poverty is identified as the major challenge in raising children properly in this area. Land fragmentation, parents' inability to fulfill the basic needs of children is hindrances to proper bringing up of children. Children who do not get nutritious food are likely to be affected by diseases and they are bound to have a retarded physical growth.

FGD with young fathers

1. What is the use of having a child? What happens if someone does not have a child?

Participants responded that it is children who continue lineage of a father or a family. Children inherit the property and lifetime accomplishments and survive their parents. They are the ones who preserve the name and history of their parents. Parents are survived by their children and their children's children. Their names and deeds are recounted in the years to come only if they have children.

People without children have no one to carry their names in the future. They have no one to inherit their property. They are not recognized by the future and as the Sidama saying goes "even a tree without a seed is worthless let alone a father without a child" "A father without a child is as good as dead." Children are thus considered as embodiments of the history, name and deeds of their father's / parents in general.

2. Who are considered children? People of which age range?

Those who are below the age of 15 are considered children according to participants. Those who are up to 8 years are called ቃቆ while those between 8 & 15 are called ቤተ.

* Who are considered to good children and bad children? What are the factors making a child bad natured?

Participants identified the qualities of a good child and the factors that cause children to have unacceptable bad behavior:

- Good children are:

Those who are obedient, hard working, those who accept instructions from their parents without ado (እሺ, ባይ), those who listen to instructions, accept guidance and advice from their parents, those who are attentive and do what their parents tell them to do.

- Bad-natured children are those who:

are disobedient, lazy, those who does not assist their parents and neighbors in various work activities, those who do not listen to their parents and go counter to what their parents or guardians tell them to do. A child who disturbs his parents and neighborhood, who steals and gambles is also considered bad natured.

* Why do children become bad natured?

According to participants, one of the most important reasons why a child becomes bad natured is as a result of his/her friends. If he/she stays with bad-natured lazy friends he/her will learn bad character from them. The other factor identified by participants as causing bad-behavior is the inability of parents to provide basic material needs of children as well as proper parental guidance. Parents(especially fathers) who are unable to fulfill the basic needs of their children like food and clothing will by default encourage their children to go around in search of food and so on to meet their basic needs which reduces the say and influence of the parent over the child. Parental guidance is also important in making a child good or bad. Those parents who guide and monitor their children get good children and those who don't get bad-natured children.

* How do children spend their childhood in your society?

Children are said to have been involved both in helping their parents as well as playing during their early years. Children below 8 support their mothers by fetching water for household consumption. Those who are above 8 are involved in other work activities such as helping in domestic work. However, all children do also play according to participants and their considerable time is spent in playing especially if the kids are very young less than 4 years.

* Are there sex based qualities children are expected to display? If there are what are the qualities a boy child and a girl child should possess?

Girls and boys, according to participants, play together and may spend their time together especially during their tender years. But still there are behaviors that each are expected to display. Girls are expected to be more reserved, less out spoken, more

respectful to parents and elders. They are also expected to be more responsible and less playful. Boys as well are expected to be obedient to the wills of their parents but they have the liberty to have more time for play especially during their very early years as they are not expected to assume household responsibilities as early as girls do.

* Describe sayings and proverbs said about children in your society?/training

Fathers teach their children their history according to participants. Family history is passed to the child after they grow up to understand its use. The father teaches his lineage, the names of his fathers and forefathers for his children.

- " a village /a family into which a child is not born will be inherited by strangers" " ልጅ የሌለበትን መንደር አማች ይወርሰዋል"

3. What are the things that are done to a first born in your society? Infant (ኤላሚኖ)

When a child is born he/she will have to umbilical chord removed and then he will be washed by the birth attendant. The first person to hold the baby after helping the mother give birth is the birth attendant and she is the one responsible for cutting the umbilical chord. But some mothers may give birth by themselves, they will remove the umbilical chord and hold and wash the baby by themselves. At times the birth attendant may be the mother in law of the mother or other female relatives of the mother's husband. If a birth attendant help the mother give birth they will handover the baby to the mother after performing these tasks (cutting the umbilical chord and washing the baby).

After these tasks are performed, the baby will be given *Amessa* (traditional oil extracted from a certain herb). Together with the breast milk *Amessa* will be given to the baby. This is believed to give the baby strength and makes his/her muscles strong. *Amesa* can be given to the baby in different forms. It may be given to the baby until 6 months.

Amessa is given after it is squeezed in raw and the liquid will be given to the baby to drink. There is also a form of *amessa* which people use the roots of. The root of the herb will be boiled before it is given for the baby to drink. Sometimes people also cover

the body of the baby with the oil of *amessa* with a belief that doing this will make the bones of the baby strong.

* How does the mother wash her baby?

The participants stated that the mother places the baby on her lap and put water on the child by using her hands. This way babies are washed three times a day. Sometimes mothers use soap to wash their babies according to participants. A crying baby is also soothed by washing him/her and covering his/her body with butter or a body lotion if available. After babies are washed they are said to be wrapped up with a piece of cloth.

* How does the mother breast-feed a baby? How frequently she does that. What happens if the mother's breast does not have milk?

A baby is breast fed immediately after he/she is born. The baby must be breast fed at least for the first six months. It is believed that the breast milk is the most crucial meal for the baby as it is the one very important meal which gives the baby strength and helps him/her to develop immunity from various diseases. The baby is given breast milk whenever he gets up from sleep or when he cries. The baby is said to get it whenever he demands it.

If the breast of the mother is unable to bear milk first the mother will be made to eat very well and depending on the capacity of the family the mother will be given good food like porridge or meat. But if the breast refuses to yield the baby will be given cow milk or አጥላጥ (a traditional mix of various grains given to mothers or babies to give them strength).

* Until what age does a baby sleep with his/her mother? With whom babies stay during the day time?

Babies sleep with their mothers because if they don't it is believed that they would not get the strength to grow healthy. Babies are not prevented from sleeping with their

mothers until the mother becomes pregnant with another child. If the baby is very young with 1 or 2 years it stays with his/her mother during the day time. But whenever the mother needs some rest the **አውቶ** (traditional baby sitters who can be the elder sister of the baby or relatives of the baby on the father's line or girls in the neighborhood) take over the responsibility of tending and caring for the baby. But after the baby reaches the age of 2 and above he/she will play with other young kids and stay with them during the day.

* Why do babies cry? Should a baby soothed and tended whenever he cries?

Participants said that babies cry when they are sick or when they are hungry. They cry only if they have a reason. However, could also cry needing the care and attention of their mothers. So mothers should not always sooth or hold their babies whenever they cry because it is believed that this will only make the babies difficult to handle in the future. Moreover, such a treatment is believed to make the babies weak, dependent and would encourage them to cry whenever they want something.

* Who plays with babies?

Participants stated that elder siblings, boys or girls, play with babies. Other kids in the neighborhood also play with babies. Mothers also treat and play with babies but because they have other responsibilities at the house she would not play with babies all the time.

* How long mothers stay at home with their new borns without going outside of home?

According to participants a mother stays with her new born baby until 3 months. Thus for 3 months she does not perform other household activities except caring for her baby. They start doing other household work or could even go to the farm 3 months after the birth of the baby.

* When do mothers wean their babies? Why is weaning necessary? How are babies weaned?

According to participants babies are most of the times weaned when a mother is pregnant with another baby most of the time this happens a year or two after the baby is born. But if she is not pregnant with another baby usually the baby will not be required to stop feeding on his mother's breast. But in any case if the baby refuses to stop feeding on his mother's breast she when gets pregnant a sour thing or pepper will be put on the breast to discourage the baby from further feed on their mother's breast. This is also done by using verbal discouragement.

* When do children start feeding by themselves?

They start feeding by themselves after a year. They learn this because their mothers feed them by using their hands, which helps them to learn that eating by using ones hand is possible.

* When do babies start toileting by themselves? If they excrete after they pass the age limit what happens?

They start going to the toilet by themselves after 3 years. Mothers teach them to piss as well an excrete by taking them to the place where they should excrete or piss. This way they learn to do it by themselves. If they piss or excrete on the bed or on their clothes after they reached 3 they will be pinched as this is seen as a mistake which should be discouraged and an act that makes children liable to punishment.

* What are the major causes of illness of children in your society? What do you do when they fall ill?

Participants responded that major illnesses affecting babies and other children include diarrhea and malaria. Diarrhea affects especially very young children of 1 or 2 years old. Malaria affects children especially when they do not get balance diet.

Diarrhea affects children either when they grow their first milk teeth or when they drink contaminated water. The cause of diarrhea is also said to have been lack of hygiene and sanitation. Participants said that they take their children to the town's health center as they do not have a health center in their locality. So sick children are usually taken to modern health centers rather than to traditional doctors.

4. What roles do fathers and mothers play in child rearing?

A father is said to have responsibility to provide for his children. Provide them with the food they need, the cloth they dress and so on.

Parents are considered to have raised children properly when they provide the child with food, cloth and guidance. Parents have a responsibility to give advice for their children as well as provide their access to education. Those parents who are unable to provide the necessary food, cloth, and advice they are considered as unsuccessful parents who have not executed their responsibilities.

* What are the factors that make a child liable to punishment? Who punishes children?

According to participants, the following behaviors are punishable:

- Laziness, unwillingness to assist family in work
- Unwillingness to accept parental advice and inability /unwillingness to learn from prior punishment
- Disturbing the neighborhood
- Disrespect for the elderly

* What are bad behaviors needing easier punishment and bad behaviors needing more serious punishment?

Stealing food or smaller things are considered as bad behavior resulting in easier punishment while stealing clothes and other things to sell them outside is considered a serious misbehavior. Stealing coffee from the family farm, driving livestock to sell them

for outside market without the knowledge of parents are such offences which are considered serious crimes entailing serious punishment.

* What is done to better a bad behavior of a child other than administering physical punishment?

Advice is another method used to improve the behavior of children. Participants said that it is used when physical punishment fails to bring about the desired outcome.

* What is the positive reinforcement mechanisms used to encourage good behavior in children?

According to participants to encourage good behavior parents buy different stuff like clothes, balls etc to encourage children to keep up a certain behavior. Both the father and the mother encourage such behavior by buying something that makes the child happy. Such rewards are given when children excel in their education and do things, which are up to the expectations of their parents eg. When they are obedient and do what their parents tell them to do.

* Do parents discuss matters with their children? Who do children ask when they have questions?

Participants said that most of the discussion between children and their parents revolve around the parent instructing and advising the child. Parents tell their children in such discussions to do this or that and tried to guide them towards identifying to what is good and what is bad. When children have questions, they ask parents especially fathers and they get answers.

* What are the challenges of raising a child in your area?

Participants said that parents' economic capacity to fulfill the basic needs of children such as food and proper clothing are the most important challenges of rearing children properly in their area.

* What harmful traditional practices are there in your area?

Practices like **እንጥል ማስቆረጥ** wife inheritance are there but they are said to be much less prevalent and very meager than they used to be because of the strong influence of Christian values among the Sidama of Bultuma peasant association.

* What kind of plays are children engaged in your area? List and describe

Children are engaged in different plays and participants of the discussion identified the following as the most important ones:

- **ማቶ** (mato) is a riddle play that fathers engage with their children
- **ፊቺ፡ ጨምባላላ** —→ is a celebration to commemorate the advent of the Sidama New Year. The second day of the celebration is devoted to children. Children sing **ጨምባላላ**: by moving from one household to the other. They are given food and fathers take over the responsibility of herding cattle replacing children so that the later could celebrate the holiday and go round singing house to house.

5. What is the role of relatives in child rearing?

According to participants relatives help in child rearing by giving advice to children but at times they may also involve in punishing them. When a child becomes very difficult for parents to handle relatives get together cuff the recalcitrant child and beat him. But nevertheless relatives are mainly involved in giving advice to children to improve their behavior that is said to be the most important role they have in child rearing.

Focus group discussion with elderly women

1. Why do you want to have a child? What is the importance of having a child?

Most of the participants said that children run errand for them and help in little household chores. They also can be a helper and a shelter in old age and more importantly, they will mourn and give a proper burial for the parents. Because of these reasons, any person want to have children said the participants

2. What will happen to a person if he/she does not have a child?

According to the participants, if one does not have a child there will be no one to run errand and to help that person. If couples do not have any children, their old age will be full of misery as there is no one to take care of them besides there will be no one to mourn for them and to bury them properly. In addition if one has no child it means, as one informant put it "what they have been doing all life will be gone to strangers with no one to inherit them"

3. Who are considered as good children and as bad children?

A good child , according to the a participants, is one who will return quickly form where he/she is sent off, who does things exactly as he/she is told and generally who respect his/her parents and their orders. In the other way children are considered as a bad one if they are disrespectful, not willing to do house chores and to run errand for their family, who are lazy but only want to eat. A child who insult an adult and who steal are considered as the worst type.

4. Why should children have such bad behaviors like you mentioned above?

Bad company, lack of control and instruction from family members are some of the mentioned reasons for indecent behavior of children. Others also said that the kind of a child one has is just luck. As one of the mothers put it" some of the children might be good and some of them might behave badly. All can not be good or all can not be bad".

5. How do children spend their childhood in this area?

The participants said that mostly playing, quarrelling each other and doing all kind of wrong things together

6. Do boys and girls have the same behavior or different behavior?

All the participants agreed that boys and girls have different behavior. According to them girls are more responsible and helpful to their mothers while boys are more in to plays. Girls are also described as respectful and empathetic but boys as in short supplies of such traits

7. What is the first thing, which is going to be fed to the infant?

All the participants said that the mother milk would be the first thing in which the newly born fed on. After a week may be, as some of the informants explained, an "*ameinsa*" juice might be given to the infant to make it healthy and strong
When the participants are asked what will be done if the mother does not have enough breast milk they said that a cow milk will be presented as an optional meal, but they assured that most of the time the mother will have enough milk for her child and if that is not the case then the mother should be fed well.

8. When does a mother feed her baby?

There is no specific time the participants mentioned as a time to breast-feed the child. However, the convenience of the mother is given as a major reason to feed the infant. Another participant also said that "if the child cry it means that he/she needs to be fed," which most of the participants agree with.

9. Why do infants cry?

For most of the participant the crying of the infant is related to either hunger or sickness

10. When does weaning starts?

According the participant there is no need to wean a child if the mother is not pregnant, but when the child is strong enough to be by himself, which is after three years, the mother might want to wean him/her. Mostly, putting bitter juice on the nipples and scaring the child by telling him/her that a hyena will eat

him/her if one keeps on asking for the breast; are some of the methods of weaning mentioned by the participants

11. When a child does starts to feed him/herself? And how?

The participants believe that a child can feed himself after three years. As one participant described "when we eat we put the child together with us and feed him with our hand, we also let the child to grab something to eat and/or to play with it. With this in progress the child will learn to put food properly in to his mouth" According to participants when mothers eat they put their child on their lap and show them how they themselves it. Moreover, the child also is said to learn how to eat because mothers as well as other feed the child by using their hands. So children learn to eat by themselves by imitating their mothers/ parents or by learning that one can eat by using the hands after being themselves fed by their mothers' hands.

12. What food is given to the child after he started feeding by himself?

Participants said that children are given things like fruits, egg, cow milk, avocado after they start feeding on themselves depending on their availability.

13. Are there harmful traditional practices which are done to children at various stages of their life?

Participants said that practices like female genital mutilation used to be practiced in the area in the past but after the strong influence of Christianity manifested itself such practices are declining and they are losing their relevance.

14. When does a child start toileting on his/her own?

Mothers are said to have know when their children want to release. They are said to have known this by watching the body movement of their children. When the mother sees that the child wants to release she will put him/her in her lap if he is very young or take him somewhere to release if he is growing up. Thus the child

is trained to release outside by his mother and he will eventually learn to do it on his/her own after sometime.

15. What happens if the child wets his bed or cloth after he passed the age limit?

According to participants the following measures are taken against a child who does this. Parents would pinch children or scare them with stories or beat them by using a stick showing the place where they should have pissed.

16. Why do children get sick?

Participants responded that children fall ill because of the following reason-

- Lack of hygiene- if their clothes and bed is not clean
- With the change of whether
- If they do not get timely and proper vaccination
- not feeding on their mothers breast
- if they catch cold
- because of “evil eye” especially if the child is fat and beautiful. The symptoms, the food children eat will not be stable in the child’s stomach, there will be rushes in the body
- if the mother attracted the attention of an evil eye while she was pregnant
- if a child is born in an ominous day we believed in the past that he/she is likely to have some defect-would face health complications or would fall sick

17. What kind of a parent is considered as someone raring his/her child properly?

A mother who keeps the hygiene of her child, a mother who frequently changes the clothes of her baby, a mother who feeds her baby her breast properly is considered as a good parent.

18. What kind of a parent is considered as a parent who is not raising children properly?

If a mother does not keep a proper sanitation of her child, his/her clothes and does not give her baby her breast frequently she is considered as a parent who is not fulfilling her parental responsibilities.

19. What are the behaviors which make children liable to punishment?

Participants have identified behaviors that cause parents to punish their children.

These are:

- when children do what they are not told to do
- when children refuse to work
- when they bring what they are sent to bring
- mistakes are also behaviors which make liable to punishment because making mistakes is seen as failure to listen to what is told properly
- children who does not run errands for their parents

20. What are the common punishments used against children who displayed unacceptable behaviors?

Participants identified common punishments used against children. These are the following:

- refusing food
- withdrawing a share of the food that is usually given to the child
- by refusing to do things which parents promised for the child before the child committed the offence
- pinching, beating the child with a stick
- by making the child jealous of the privileges that other siblings are enjoying

20. How do you reward a child who does well and display good character?

Rewards of encouragement are the following according to participants:

- by blessing the child
- praise and telling the child that he/she is the favorite
- by doing something better for the child than other siblings-for instance buying cloth or something different

21. Do parents discuss with their children? Are children allowed to express their opinions in front of adults /parents?

Some participants responded that they as parents discuss with their favorite children and some others said that they believe that it is good to listen to what children has to say.

22. What other mechanisms do parents use to correct the behavior of children other than punishment?

Participants responded that bad behavior could be improved through advice, by sending children to Church so that they become morally upright and good, by convincing them and placating them to assume a certain behavior.

23. Who punishes children most of the time?

Mostly fathers since mothers feel sorry for their children.

24. Are there harmful traditional practices in your area affecting children?

Participants admitted that there are traditional practices like female genital mutilation and uvulectomy of children are still practiced even if the practice is declining a great deal compared to the past.

25. Who carries babies most of the times?

The mother and older siblings are the ones who carry babies according to participants.

26. Is there any preference for a girl or a boy in your society?

Many participants noted that they have no preference for the sex of a child as both are gifts from God.

27. How do neighbors help in raising children?

Among other things neighbors are said to be helpful in child rearing in different ways: they look after babies as well as children when the mother goes out for market until she gets back.

FGD with male youngsters**1. What is the use of having a child?**

The use of having a child is primarily for parents. Parents who do not have children do not have someone to provide for and take care of during old age and at times when they cannot provide for themselves. Children help their parents in various chores as well as farming. Moreover, participants of the discussion noted that without children coming to life one cannot think of the future of a country or a nation.

2. What is the meaning attached to not having a child in your society?

Participants noted that parents without children feel lonely and different from others. Even if they are not discriminated or isolated by the society against them they themselves feel lonesome and different from others who has children. Those who have children of their own earn better respect from the society as they are considered with resources /assets/ and as having better protection. Children thus give their parents prestige and security. In times of conflict people think twice before picking a fight with those who have children.

3. How is childhood perceived in your area?

According to participants of the discussion childhood is a time of play as well as a time to assist one's parents. Childhood is perceived as a time of both formal and informal learning. Almost all participants agreed that childhood is a time when children consider everything like a play. It is a time when children do not realize the worth of things. That is why the Sidama saying goes "children build something in the morning and destroys it in the evening". The participants agreed that there is belief among the Sidama that children are not capable of recognizing the value of things as they are untested in life and as they are mentally undeveloped.

4. Who are considered children in your society? What is the age range?

Some said that those who are considered children are those below the age of 5 and some others said that children are those below 10. However, there was a general consensus among participants that those below 10 are considered children who are not capable of differentiating the good from the bad and the worthy from the unworthy. These are called *qaqo* while those children between 10 and 15 years of age are called *beto*. They are children who are expected to know what is good from what is bad and what is valuable from what is not valuable. This category of children are taken more seriously by adults and they are also expected to assume more important economic roles in the society.

5. List down the proverbs or saying about children in your society?

"Children build something in the morning and destroys it in the evening"

For someone who is not serious in work people say: "You make it like a child's play"

6. What kind of plays children are engaged in your area? List and describe.

In listing down the plays children are engaged in their area participants identified the following plays :

- Foot ball
- "ዕቃ ዕቃ" a play in which children pretend to run a household and cook food by using mud, leaves and water

- **ብይ (ሁኔ)** is a play in which children play by rolling a small ball of mud dried in the sun into smaller pits.
- Sedeqa - is the tradition equivalent of **chess** played by children above 10 years old as well as adults. Children sometimes play this game with adults.
- **ማጣንሾ** → is another play played mainly by girls and is a traditional equivalent of hide and seek.
- **ሱቶ** → **ሻሮዋሻሮ**: is another play played by girls.
- High jump and **ቅልልሞሽ**: are the other plays frequented by girls

9. What are the qualities of a good, well-mannered child in your society?

Obedience, non-resistant to order by parents, are considered as the most important qualities of a good child according to participants. It is noted that a child willing to help his/her parents in various home chores as well as other activities, a child who obeys the orders of his/her parents- an OK child, a child who works hard, thinks for his/her family, a child who does not get involved in unacceptable behaviors such as theft, a child who is attentive and listens to his/her parents and do as they say is considered to be a good child. Thus according to participants fulfilling the will of parents/adults is the hallmark of a 'good child'.

10. Which ones are accepted behaviors of a boy child and a girl child?

According to participants, a girl should have the following qualities to be considered a good well-mannered girl.

- She should not speak loud
- She should be hard working and should be busy rather than spending her time sitting or playing
- She should do domestic chores
- She should be obedient to her mother and help her parents.

A boy on the other hand

- He should be obedient to parents
- He should satisfy the will and interest of his parents

11. What encouragement mechanisms (positive reinforcements) are used to encourage a good child behavior in your area?

According to participants clothes and other material like apportioning a section of a farm so that the child use the spoils to meet his/her needs or giving out a cow which gives milk or buying clothes or books are used to encourage good character in children.

12. What kind of children are considered impolite and bad-natured?

According to participants headstrong children who do not fulfill the will of their parents, who steal, gamble, and fight with other kids, and beat up younger ones are considered bad natured children. A boy child against whom neighbors file complaints against for his parents is also considered a bad boy.

For a girl disobedience is also a major breach, which makes her liable for punishment and leads to having a bad reputation. A girl child who speaks loud, or wear trouser which are things considered manly (boyish) is considered impolite.

Thus behaviors like disobedience to parents, disrespect for neighbors, disturbing peace and order of the neighborhood, laziness-disinterest to help family members in various activities, coming home late, gambling and not accepting instructions from parents and elders are behaviors which make a child liable to criticism and punishment by parents.

13. Who punishes children?

According to participants, both parents punish children. But older brothers also punish. The major punishment figure of children during their early years is the mother. But after children reach a certain age (after 10/12) the father becomes the major punishment figure to ensure discipline and obedience in the family.

14. How are children punished?

Participants agreed that before parents administer physical punishment against children they first advise them to refrain from unacceptable behaviors and may tell them the good and bad. However, when children refuse to obey orders and listen to their parents they are beaten by using small stick to discourage their bad behavior. Respondents argued that advice is more important than physical punishment as too much physical punishment is believed to make the child more unruly, makes him/her hate home, and drives him to assume more antisocial/unaccepted behaviors. According to participants children who display bad behavior could also be punished through the refusal of parents to buy them important stuff like clothes.

18 & 19. What responsibilities children carry in your society during childhood?

The roles and responsibilities of the child before 18 years of age according to participants is limited generally to herding, looking after their young brothers and sisters, and looking after the house in the absence of their parents. Girl children are expected to fetch water (boys as well), prepare coffee, clean the house, wash clothes, serve as messengers, go to market and so on. While boys engage in herding animals, assist in the farm, fencing, እንጨት መፍለጥ and so on which are considered difficult tasks for girls to accomplish as they are believed to require muscular strength. Boys are given the responsibility of assisting in the farm, fencing the house and እንጨት መፍለጥ when they reach the age of puberty (i.e. between 12 and 15).

20. What are the roles of relatives in raising children/child rearing?

Relatives are said to play important roles in raising children. Relatives may be given the responsibility to take care of children, raising them, providing for them and act as their guardians. Such roles are given for relatives especially when they are better off than parents. On the other hand, relatives could also help in child rearing by supporting parents by buying clothes for children.

Moreover, relatives could also be involved in disciplining children; they are at times given the right to administer physical punishment against children. However,

participants also note that such roles of relatives of disciplining the child is now declining.

22. What are the roles of neighbors in child rearing?

Their roles is said to have been limited to giving advice and telling on the bad behavior of the child to parents.

23. What is the role of elder brothers and sisters in child rearing?

These roles are said to have been extended to punishing their younger brothers and sisters when they commit offence, taking care of them and protecting them from harm in the absence as well as presence of their parents. The role of caring for younger siblings-taking care of them, holding them, giving them food, tending them and so on is given especially to older sisters who are given the traditional name called **ደውሎ** an equivalent of a baby sitter (Nanny). They clean the young, give them food and so on.

24. As a result of economic problem children in this area are not given the proper provision they need to have a healthy growth.

25. What harmful traditional practices exist in your area?

According to participants, HTPs like FGM, abduction, **እንጥል መቁረጥ**, **ንቅሣት (የእንቅርት)** are still lingering in their society. But generally speaking such practices are said to have very rare in the society. However, they noted that such practices are declining as their communities are getting awareness education to fight such practices. In addition, the strong influence of Protestantism is also another very important factor leading to the steady decline of such practices, which are considered traditional and un-Christian.

26. Do children discuss with their parents? Do children express their opinions freely with adults/parents?

According to participants children are not allowed to discuss with their parents or other adults in important matters. They are not encouraged to express their opinions when adults gather. They are ordered to stay outside of such gatherings. However, children are allowed to ask their parents questions that matter to them and could get answers. Their interaction with their parents is mainly receiving guidance and order. But during evening time fathers tell stories to children and engage with them by encouraging them to try to get the answer for riddles. This interaction between fathers and their children is traditionally called *mato* among the Sidama.

27. What things do you think should improve in raising children in your society?

Participants responded that the low economic capacity of parents is negatively affecting the healthy growth of children. Food shortage, lack of nutritious food, adequate provision of cloths are some of the most pressing problems of members of their community.

28 In which of the holidays do children involved in your society?

Participants identified holidays that children take part in as major actors. These include holidays like Genna, Hoya Hoya which are not holidays originating in the Sidama culture. All participants agreed that the holiday of “Fiche” or “Chambalala is the major Sidama traditional holiday in which children take active part. In this holiday that commemorates the commencement of the Sidama New Year a feast to celebrate the advent of the New Year is launched by villages. Enset is prepared mixed with abundant butter and is given to children who go house to house singing “Je ji Je ji.....chambalala” wishing happy holiday for adults. Each of the children are given pieces of enset (workie) mixed with butter.

29. Rituals in your society?

A certain ritual called Lua is identified as a right of passage but the participants do not seem to be clear with the practices associated with it and what it is all about.

FOCUS Group Discussion with Young Mothers

This is the third focus group discussion held in Bultuma peasant association in a place called Hatubega. There are 15 participants with an average age of 24.8 and an average number of two to three children

After the introduction of the purpose of the discussion and the facilitators with the participants the following ideas has been discussed

1. What is the importance of having children? What happens to a person who does not have a child?

Children run errand for their mothers when they are young, help their parents in old age and will inherit their fathers name and land (especially the boys) and will support the family if the father deceased, according to the participants.

If a person do not have child one will be alone and lonely, with no one helping and no one inheriting what she/he had been working. Especially if a woman is childless she is considered as the most unlucky one as she has no helper and more importantly because there is a high probability that her husband might bring a second wife to the house; if she did not leave with her own consent in the first place. When the women were asked whether the husband will force the woman to leave the house they said not really, but the women might leave by her own will if she can not have a child; “what is the point of staying anyway” as one of the participants said.

2. Who are considered children in your area? People of which age range?

The participants describe children by some of the characteristics like, “children are those who do not know what is good or bad or what is dangerous or safe. Those who do not take flee when an ox is running wild, or who walks in to fire and the like”. If the child is not capable of avoiding accidents or danger they said that he is a child. Those below three years are called “*qaqo*”. The “*beto*” which is beyond three years is also considered as a child. But after five years they said the child is old enough to take responsibility and to help around so he/she is not that child

3. What are the behavior of a good child and a bad child?

A good child is according to the mothers, is one who listen to his/her mother orders and do exactly as he/she is told so.

A child who run errand, respect his/her parents, who respond to the parents rebuke, who listen when he is talked to is a good child according to the participants. But failing to respect the parents, stealing and insulting others are the description of a bad child

4. How do children spent their childhood in your area?

Most of the participants said that by playing. They also include that after some time they will run errands for their mothers and do small house hold courses. After reaching 10 years, they can be a real worker, though how good they might be depend on their individual smartness and the training they get from their mothers.

5. Do boys and girls display the same or different behaviors?

All the participants agreed that boys and girls have different behavior. Accordingly girls are described as responsible, more caring, more of help to their mothers while boys are always more in to play ,can be disobedient sometime and are helper of their fathers.

6. What do you feed an infant immediately after birth?

They all said that the first thing the infant will feed on is the mother breast milk.

After a month or even sometimes a week a juice of "*amensa*" (a palnt) will be given to the infant to clear his stomach. There is a belief that if the infant does not drink "*amensa*" it might fall sick.

7. What will be done if the mother does not have enough milk to feed her infant?

The informants are not sure if this is possible. Only one woman said that she heard such a case that a mother not having enough milk to feed her baby. But the others said that it is very unlikely since it can easily be reversed by feeding the mother very well. However they mention that giving cow milk to the infant is a common practice

8. When does the mother breast feed her child and how she does that?

There is no specific or definite schedule to feed a child, according to the informants. But a mother might feed her child when he cries, when he is hungry, between intervals of her hose hold works and at night time.

9. When do you start to toilet train a child?

The informants said that it depends on when the mother start the training. However, the common practice is since the mother is accustomed to the body movement of the child, she will pick him/her from the bed and put it in her lap comfortably to release

her/himself. After a year, as the informants said, the child will know the exact place to go as his mother and his siblings used to accompany him or her to it.

10. What will be done if the child bed wet after being toilet trained?

The mothers said that Pinching him/her and rebuking him/her is common and sometimes a biting might also be administered so that the child will never do that again

11. Why do children get sick?

Most of the participants said that lack of hygiene is the major cause of illness among children. If the child did not drink "*amensa*" there is a probability of getting sick repeatedly, said the informants.

Accidents are also another causes of children sickness which is mentioned by the a participants; "as their siblings carry them or play with them there is a probability that the children may get hurt"

Evil eye is also another cause of sickness, which has symptoms like having rash in the skin and vomiting of any kind of food eaten.

12. What is a good child rearing and a bad one? What should a parent do to raise the child properly? When do you say that a parent does not raise the child well?

As one participant said "if I give him what I eat, wash him every time and feed him every time then I am raising my child properly". Most of the participants agree with this and add that if a parent feed the child before he/she is too hungry, keep the hygiene and sooth him/her every time the child cries, then they are a good parents.

But if a mother is not that attentive to her child and leave him/her on the sun and every where, not washing him/her every time and not feeding him/her properly and letting the child cry for a long time is considered as a bad parenting. More importantly if the mother left her new born earlier than what is expected (which is one month) and get out of her house is considered as being not caring. Because as one participant said, "If the mother get out of the house then it means that she exposed the infant to every danger". But if the

mother stayed for a month with the infant and takes good care of it then it doesn't matter what she will do later, because she has been there with the infant on the critical time.

13. What are the common mistakes or wrong deeds of a child, which are liable to punishment? And how do you punish your children?

Children will be punished if they are disobedient, go for play when they are supposed to work, be irresponsible while herding cattle, fail to deliver what they are sent for, sell the family or neighbors coffee without consent, steal, insult others, be late from school.

split water in the house, touching equipments that they have nothing to do with, making noises in the house, refusing to herd the cattle, refusing to stay in the house, making dirt in the house are also considered as wrong deeds and can bring punishment

For such offences the child might get a pinch, beaten by a stick (its seriousness depending on the seriousness of the offence) or might be chained in the house for some time according to the participants

14. Who punish children?

As the informants explain, if the child is a younger one the mother will be the one who punish him/her as small children spent most of their time around the mother and around the house, as they grow up the father will take the leading role in punishing the child.

However, there is an agreement among the participants that the parents alternate in punishing their children, saying both of them are involved in the act all the time.

15. Do neighbors and relatives also punish children?

The participants said that they cannot physically punish a child since it can get them in trouble with the child parents, but still they can rebuke the child, report the wrong deeds of the child, and get him punished. However, if it is a grandparent, it is ok for them to punish the child.

16. What else you will do if the child behavior does not improve via punishment?

The participants report that if the child is beyond the power of his family then the case will be presented to the adult members of the village and the relatives of the family that the child misbehavior is out of control. The counsel will try to advice the child or even may punish him/her

17. What do you do to encourage the good behavior of your child?

Verbal praises, good promises, partial treatment (e.g. food or sometimes only promises), more love and acceptance than the siblings, blessings and a promise of a good land are some of the mechanism the participants said that they use as reinforcement to the good behavior of their children

18. Do you discuss matters with your children?

No, is the general answer of the informants. They said that it is not good to spoil a child by letting him/her to sit and talk with adults.

19. Is there any change between children of your time and children of this time?-

According to most of the participants, there is a change. One of the mother said, "We do not know what is good or bad till we are old enough but children of this age do that when they are three".

The participants also said that children at this time are al little more disrespectful as one mother said " when our parents or any adult are talking we won't be near around let alone to listen to them, but this days the children would like to sit upfront and question you what you have been talking about".

"They are not as shy as we were," said another informant. As to her, talking to strangers in the street and sitting in the living room when a guest is around was unthinkable. Nevertheless, what mostly worry and surprise the mothers were the openness their children are showing to heterosexual relationship.

20. Is there any problem you face in raising children?

Most of them said that there is and generalized it as an economic problem, which is the source of the other problems. "We used to have blankets and clothes for a very low price for our babies but not any more. Because of that, it becomes harder to keep the hygiene for our babies. "We use our dress as a blanket for our kids and later wear it ourselves to go out of the house, it is not easy to wash that every time" said one mother. The other informant said, "Since we are busy to keep our other children from hunger we do not have enough time to look after the babies properly even to breast feed them. Some of us spent our days in the market and have only got time to feed the kid in night time, even the after a lot of house hold chores"

Other participants also mentioned that the reason for some mothers to leave their infants and their house earlier than expected is just because they have to go back to work to feed their other children. As most of the fathers are not that concerned, and this days a women who stayed for one month in her house to look after her infant must be well to do or must have a very good and strong husband.

21. Are there any kinds of harmful traditional practices around in you area?

The informants claim that it used to be very prominent. especially female genital tradition, but this days because of modern education which they said " people from the cities" provide and also because of the teaching of the protestant church which most of them are members, the practice is diminishing. However, still ovulectomy and milk teeth extraction and tonsillectomy are still practiced in the area because of the belief that it might explode and kill them

Interviews

Interview with teachers

Interviewee background

Name Eshet Yemame
Age 28
Sex Female
Position A teacher
Women teachers' representative
Educational status certificate

The school is one of the elementary schools in the area and it is called Sebecha Primary School. It is an elementary school from grade 1 to 4.

Q1. When do children come to school?

Mostly they will come to school around the age of seven and eight. This works for both males and females.

Q2. Why do parents send their children to school? What is their reason?

As the understanding of the people is changing about education from the past years and as this school is not far from the town, parents send their children to school so that they will get education and be successful and independent in their later life. The example that the success of some of the students set also affect the attitude of parents towards the use of education. Thus, students are sent to school to be educated and be successful and help their parents in their later years.

Q3. This school is only up to grade 4. After they finish do they continue their education?

Most students who finish their education in this primary school continue their education. The only problem we have is with the girls. Their hand is usually given for marriage when they reach 5 or 6 grade around the age of 15 or 16. However, these days with the effort of the school as well as other concerned bodies like the local government the society is developing a positive attitude towards the disadvantages of early marriage the practice is declining.

Q4. What kind of skills do children learn before they come to school?

Mostly before children come to school, they spent their time in helping their families with household chores and herding cattle. But the syllable of our school demands students to have basic knowledge in basic mathematics and ability to identify the alphabet since the school start form grade one. Some of the families send their kids to mosques and protestant churches where they grab such basic skills. But there are also those who do not send their children to such centers of learning whose children come strait to school without being able to identify alphabets or basic mathematical skills.

Q5. What kind of plays do children engage in this area?

Mostly children play when they go out for herding or when they go out to fetch water form the streams. Therefore, in the fields they play football, hide and seek and thus play in the natural environment.

Q6. Do children spend most of their time playing or not? / the roles and responsibilities of children

Especially girls do not have the time to play for an extended period of the day, as they are busy with many household chores. Even at their very young age girls are entrusted with the responsibility of taking care of their younger siblings, fetch water, clean the house. Girls are not allowed to boys even if now things are changing in this regard. Boys to do not have much time for play, when they get back from herding cattle may be sent out to

collect firewood. Therefore, there is little time for children to play as they have household chores and other work activities that they are expected to accomplish as children. However, if the family children grow up in is a little educated, children get better opportunity for play.

Q7. When you say there are a little educated, what is mostly the educational status of such parents?

Most of them are high school graduates and there are also school dropouts which are considered as having some education and thus better in rearing their children.

Q8. How do you describe the character of your students?

I used to teach in another school located within this woreda but a little bit far from here. The students there are very shy, especially the girls. Here it is better compared to the previous school but still the girls even in this kebele are shy and afraid of talking to adults. Parents tell us even if they want their kids to be free when they talk to them children are not generally free because they have already developed this behavior and find it difficult to change.

Q9. What is the common type of punishment that parents use against their children?

The most common type of punishment is physical punishment. Parents beat their children with stick. Parents also punish their children by threatening them verbally. They threaten or scare their children by warning them that they would throw them into the gorge and such so that the kids will be scared.

Q10. As you are originally from this area and as you are still working here, you are quite aware of the culture. Can you tell me what the weaknesses and the strengths of the culture are concerning child rearing?

One of the weaknesses of the culture, which has a negative implication on how parents bring up their children, is early marriage. Girls are forced to marry at their early age, which of course forces them to quit school.

The strength of the culture concerning child rearing is the way parents deal with children with bad behavior. First if a child is so unruly there is a mechanism by which parents will be asked by other community members why their child is not disciplined. Why they let that to happen and what they are doing to change the behavior of the child. If parents admit that the child is beyond their capacity to implore up on and change his behavior neighbors will try to talk some sense into the child. And if neighbors do not succeed they will hand him over to government officials. In the mean time if parent do not cooperate with neighbors and relatives and do not do anything to change the bad behavior in the child "sera" will be done up on them. Sera is a practice by which parents and their family will be isolated from the community and they will have trouble finding people socializing with them and help them in their time of trouble.

Q.11.Is there any change that you observe concerning child rearing in the area?

There are changes. In the past people were not aware of the importance of family planning so they used to have as many children as possible saying that children are God's gifts and blessing. But this days the people become conscious and begin to limit the number of their children. In addition, there used to be a common practice of early marriage which is done against the will of the girl. If the girl refuses to get married, her parents will be very much cross with her or even they might through her out of their house. Her refusal is considered as disrespect to the parents. But this days the parents will ask the willingness of the girl, when some one ask for her hand, whether she want to get married or continue her education. Therefore, there is some change of attitude on this regard.

In addition to this, there was also a strong practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) in the area, but these days because of the legal measures, which is been taken against all

who involve in the practice, there is a considerable change in the attitude as well as in the regularity of the practice.

Interviewee 2

Name Alemitu Zewde
Age 26
Sex female
Educational status certificate
Position Teacher

Q.1 . When do children come to school?

Mostly they come to school around seven or eight years, both the girls and boys.

Q.2. why do parents send their children to school? What is their reason?

The first reason I think is to give a chance to their children to learn something, to gain knowledge. Secondly, they want their kids to be educated and reach to some kind of success via education.

Q.3.This school is only up to grade 4. After they finish do they continue their education?

Yes, some of them go to the town and continue their education but some even drop out from elementary school mostly to help their families economically

Q.4. What kind of skills do children learn before they come to school?

Mostly what they learn is some of the households work which their parents teach them. Any other skill, which is related to education, will start here, in the school.

Q.5.What kind of plays do children engage in this area?

Mostly they play when they are in the field. "*deboin*" in which the kids compete on who knows about their lineage which is told to them by their fathers is one of the plays. Also, they play riddles which are some what the modern version of the traditional "*deboin*".

Q.6. How do you describe the character of your students?

They are well behaved and respectful. They respect their parents; they respect adult and us teachers too.

Q.7. What is the common type of punishment that parents use against their children?

Mostly, the children will be punished by beating with a stick; it is so rare to see parents trying to use advice as means to change the behavior of their children.

Q.8. Can you tell me what the weaknesses and the strengths of the culture are concerning child rearing

Well the Sidama culture has many good thing and bad things. For example, it used to be hard for a girl to continue her education as she is forced to marry at her earlier age; this is the bad side of the culture. But there are also good things in the culture like the teaching of the elders to children about what is good and bad and what should be done in the environment to keep it green

Q.9. Is there any change that you observe concerning child rearing in the area?

Well these days people begin to follow the modern type of childcare, which I think, is a good thing. When we were young people used to say that a child will grow by its own fate. So they won't bother that much to care for babies. Even after the child grows up he/she will be involved in all kind of household work with no time to go to school or even play. These things are changing now and it is good.

**Interview with health office representative of Bultuma Peasant Association
Ato Gonse Sasamo**

After introducing, the purpose of the study we explained to Ato Gonse why we want to interview him. We also told him that we need to record the interview with a tape recorder and asked his consent which he agreed with. Issues related to children's health condition in the area as well as other general issues, which involve around child rearing practices, were raised in the interview

1. How do you describe the condition of children in your area, especially their health condition?

More or less the health condition of children in our area is fine. Children are taking continues vaccination along with their mothers. We have 12 rounds of vaccination programs in a year in which we try to reach all children and mothers in the kebele. Children also take vaccination beginning with 45 days like BCG, DPT (three rounds), polio and measles. Nurses and dressers come form the district health office for the vaccination. So we are quite successful in this endeavor

2. who are the exactly the people who get the vaccination

- ◆ We keep a list of the mothers and the children in our kebele. we know which mothers did take all the vaccination she should or which one did not, so we make sure that every mother get the vaccination and the same for children.

3. Which diseases are most common in affecting children in the kebele?

- Most of the times children are affected by diarrhea, fever which is accompanied by coughing which occurs in the form of epidemic and tuberculosis. The causes of diarrhea are unclean water, poor hygiene and poor environmental sanitation, which are caused manly by lack of latrines. Latrine pits are now being dug with the participation of the community and up until now such latrines are dug in 887 households in the kebele leaving only about 190 households without latrine pits. The problem of tuberculosis unlike diarrhea occurs rare times, it is not that frequent. The fever that affects children mainly affects those below 7 years old and is caused mainly by climatic change. Generally, thus, diarrhea appears to be more frequent than the rest of the diseases.

According to Ato Gonse the problem of clean potable water is not that much of a problem as springs are abundant in the kebele the Kebele enjoys water from 24 spring out of which 11 of them are developed water points.

4. What are the harmful traditional practices that exist and affect children in your kebele?

-Harmful traditional practices in the kebele affecting the lives of children are declining and they are not as prevalent and are not any more an important problems in the kebele. Practices like female genital mutilation, removing the tonsils of children as well as *neqisat* -tattooing occur sporadically in the kebele. Parents at times can also get reluctant to send their girls to school. However, such practices are not at all prevalent and are not practiced and adhered by the majority, these practices are very rare. This is because of the teachings of religious institutions as well as the government in this area, which discourage such practices. The local government tried to raise the awareness level of the community by giving education on the negative effects of such practices as well as by showing that such practices are punishable by law. This is why traditional practices are now almost inexistent compared to the past. However, in the highland parts of the Sidama zone such practices are more prevalent than in this Kebele. Places like Mogissa, Gerbicho are such kebelles where the influence of Christianity in its protestant forms is not that strong.

5. What kind of food do children get in your area?

- Children do not get nutritious food in the kebele or other surrounding kebelles. The ageless food of both children and adults in this kebele is *enset*. Even cereals like maize are not abundant for household consumption in the area and inhabitants of the kebele have to buy from outside to use them as food. Thus, babies until 6 months depend on their mothers' breast and after 6 months porridge which is made of maize floor is given to them. *Enset* becomes the constant meal in their daily diet as they start growing up. Thus children in the kebele do not get nutritious diet, even milk and egg are not frequently available in the daily diet of children. Not only children but also pregnant as well as mothers who just gave birth are not well fed with nutritious food. This is because of the economic capacity of the population to either produce or purchase food that is nutritious and very useful for the healthy growth of the infant. Land fragmentation is probably the most important cause for low household income and depressed livelihood in

the area. Those households who are considered well off by the standards of the area are those who has 2 hectares of land and 1 or 2 livestock with a few sheep. Those who are considered the poor are those who have less than a hectare $\frac{3}{4}$ th of a hectare/

- As a result of the shortage of nutritious food in the area relief program has been underway for the past 3 years and until now about 744 children with chronic food problems have benefited from the provision of flour as well as food oil.

6. What responsibilities are children expected to assume in this area?

- Children have some responsibilities in the area. Those who are above 10 years old are involved in working on the farm and those below 10 assist their mothers by fetching water and picking wood.

7. When do children go to school in this area?

-Children usually go to school when they reach 8 years old.

Important Statistics

- There are 1043 households in Bultuma PA out of which 87 are female headed
- 853 household have access to their own private hand dug latrines while 190 do not have such latrines
- In a family an average of 5 children live
- The total population of the kebele is estimated as more than 3000
- Everyone in the kebele use water springs to get water and there is no pipeline and tap water in the kebele and out of the 24 spring waters available in the kebele only 11 are developed springs giving service to the total population of inhabitants and the rest 13 are not. Moreover, people tend to drink water without boiling with the belief that spring water is clean.
- About 20 households are polygamous, meaning about 20 men have more than one wife

Interview with a school Directress

This interview is conducted with Aster Bulta a 28 year old school directress of Sebecha primary school. She has served the school as a directress since 5 years and is born and grew up in Bultuma kebele.

1. When do children come to school in this area? What are the reasons for their parents to send their children to school?
 - Parents usually send their children to school between age 6 and 7. The reasons why parents send their children to school have long been in the area to avoid them thinking that the school will serve the purpose of keeping them for some time and that they will get time for respite. But lately things have changed and that parents send their kids to school so that they will be economically independent and help them.
2. What kind of skills children receive before they come to school? What kind of plays are children engaged in this area? Which are the most common ones?
 - Children pick certain skills before they come to school. Female children began to help their parents especially their mothers. The skills they learn at this early age include- keeping the house clean, preparing coffee, fetching water and so on. Boys on the other hand learn how to keep herds, pick weed, digging, and picking wood.
 - The kind of plays they are engaged in are largely divided based on their sex, but there are plays that they may play together especially at school. Plays that boys are engaged include- Qale-a play by which boys play by throwing dried mud into small pits; football and so on. Plays that girls are engaged in are those like *qocha*- which is an equivalent of *qeelimosh*. Girls play this sitting in a certain location. *Sedeqa* is an equivalent of chess. *Sedeqa* could be played by parents as well as children. Adults could play *sedeqa* with children.
3. What kind of behaviors do children have in this area? What are the defining characteristics of their characters-are they shy confident, respectful etc? What is

the relationship between the behaviors they display and the kind of parenting they have received?

- In this area children are not confident and outgoing-they rather tend to be timid and shy, who respect people who are older than themselves. They do not speak freely with adults or their parents. The kind of relationship they have with their parents is characteristic of unavailability of freedom. They are shouted at, beaten, rebuked very frequently. They don't grow up understanding their rights, they are mainly told about their obligations. Thus parents interact with their children coercively.

4. How are children punished in this area?

- Children are punished mainly by administering corporal punishment. The cause of all this is the attitude parents have on children. Parents themselves are raised up in an environment where they were beaten when they make mistakes or did something wrong. Parents are still coercive who believe that children should be punished physically to correct a certain behavior. Other methods to improve unacceptable child behavior like giving advice to children are not frequently used by parents even if one cannot deny their existence.

5. How do you characterize the child rearing methods used in the area? What strengths and weaknesses it has?

- The relationship between parents and children, especially between fathers and children is authoritative. Parents always dictate the environment everything happens in their terms. Children are always expected to accept instructions which parents are always at liberty to order and give instructions to them. Whether they are convinced or not children are expected to listen to and do as their parents said. Giving instructions is more important than discussions in the relationship between parents and children. But this relationship is now changing over time and with education and modern thinking.

-Children are not still provided with their basic needs of food. Many children do not even eat three times a day. The provisions children need to pursue their education and not duly fulfilled by their parents. There is the lack of capacity on the part of parents to fulfill the basic needs of their children. But at the same time

there is this attitude of parents that once children are born they will live by their luck. Parents do not worry much about how their children will grow up- they give very limited attention to what they should do to make their children have a quality life.

6. What things have changed in regards to child rearing in this area?
 - Now some things are changing when it comes to the interaction between children and their parents. Now parents are realizing the value of discussion and giving advice to children. This is happening as a result of increased education.

ለአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ትምህርት ፋኩልቲ የሳይኮሎጂ ትምህርት ክፍል

ለወላጆች/አሳዳጊዎች የተዘጋጀ መጠይቅ

ውድ ወላጆች/ አሳዳጊዎች የዚህ መጠይቅ ዋና አላማ በዚህ በሲዳማ አካባቢ የህፃናት አስተዳዳሪ ምን እንደሚመስል ለመረዳት ነው። ስለዚህም አርስዎ ልጅ እንዴት እንደሚያሳድጉ የሚያመለክት ጥያቄዎችን እንጠይቆታለን። በዚህ ጥናት ላይ የማንም መልስ ስህተት ነው ተብሎ አይወሰደም ስለዚህ ለጥያቄዎቹ ትክክለኛውንና የእርስዎን የልጅ አስተዳደር የሚያሳይ መልስ እንዲሰጡን በትህትና እንጠቃለን ይህን መጠይቅ ለመሙላት ጊዜዎችን መስዋዕት ስላደረጉ በቅድሚያ አመሰግናለሁ።

ክፍል 1

የግል ሁኔታ

ወረዳ/ቀበሌ _____ የቤት ቁጥር _____

ዕድሜ _____

ጾታ _____

የጋብቻ ሁኔታ

☐ በትዳር ውስጥ ያለ

☐ በሞት የተለያዩ

☐ የተፋቱ

☐ የትዳር ጓደኛሌላ ቦታ የሚኖር

የልጆች ብዛት:

የወለዱቸው

ወንድ _____

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የሚያሳድጓቸው

ወንድ _____

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የመጀመሪያ ልጅ ዕድሜ _____

የመጨረሻ ልጅ ዕድሜ _____

ሃይማኖት _____

ብሔረሰብ _____

የትምህርት ደረጃ

- ማንበብና መጻፍ የማይችል ☐
- አንደኛ ደረጃ /1-6/ ☐
- መለስተኛ ሁለተኛ ደረጃ /6-8/ ☐
- ሁለተኛ ደረጃ /8-12/ ☐
- ስርተፊኬት/ኘሎማና ከዚያ በላይ ☐

የስራ አይነት _____

በቀን _____ /በብር/

የቤተሰብ የገቢ ምንጭ

በወር _____ /በር/

በዓመት _____ /በር/

/ጠያቂው መርጠው በመለሱት ይቀመጥ/

ልጅ የመውለድ ጥቅም

1. ለምን ልጅ እንዲኖርዎት ፈለጉ?

3. ስንት ልጅ እንዲኖርዎት ይፈልጋሉ? _____

ለምን? _____

4. ልጅ ባልወለድ/ባይኖረኝ ምን ሆናለሁ ወይም ምን ይገጥመኛል ብለው ያስባሉ?

5. ሴት ልጆች ወይስ ወንድ ልጆች እንዲኖርዎት ይፈልጋሉ?

☐ ሴት

☐ ሁለቱም

☐ ወንድ

☐ ምንም ምርጫ የለኝም

ለምን?

ስለልጆች ያለ አስተሳሰብ / አመለካከት

ስለልጆች ጸባይ

6. ልጅ የሚባለው

☐ ነፍስ ያወቀ ነው

☐ ነፍስ ያላወቀ ነው

- ነፍስ ያላወቀ ልጅ የሚባለው እስከ ስንት ዓመት ድረስ ያለ ልጅ ነው?

- ነፍስ ያወቀ ልጅ ነፍስ ካላወቀው በምን ይለያል?

7. በዚህ አካባቢ የልጆችን ፀባይ በተመለከተ

ሀ. ጥሩ ልጅና ባለጌ ልጅ የሚባሉት ምን ዓይነት ፀባይ አላቸው?

ጥሩ ልጅ _____

ባለጌ ልጅ _____

8. ልጆች ባለፈ የሚሆኑት በምን ምክንያት ነው?

9. የባለፈን ልጅ ፀባይ ማስተካከል ይቻላል ወይስ አይቻልም?

10. ከተቻለ እንዴት አድርጎ ማስተካከል ይቻላል?

ልጅነት

11. የልጅነት ጊዜ የምን ጊዜ ነው?ይላሉ?

12. ስለ ልጆች እና ስለ ልጅነት የተባሉ አባባሎችን ይግለጹልን?

13. ልጆች በልጅነታቸው ምን ምን ነገር እንዲማሩ ይደረጋል?

14. ብዙ ጊዜ ለልጆች ተረት/ታሪክ የሚያወራው ማንነው?

ተረቶቹ/ታሪኮቹ ስለምን የሚያወሩ ናቸው ወይም ምን ይዘት አላቸው?

15. ልጆች ብዙ ሰዓት መጫወት አለባቸው?

16. መቼ መቼ ነው ልጅ መጫወት ያለበት?

17. በአካባቢው ከሚዘጋጁ በዐላት በየትኞቹ ውስጥ ልጆች ይሳተፋሉ?

የፆታ ልዩነት

18. ወንድ ልጅና ሴት ልጅ አንድ አይነት ነው ወይስ የተለያየ ባህሪያት አላቸው? _____

ከላቸውስ እነዚህ ባህሪያት ምን አይነት ናቸው?

- የጥሩ ሴት ልጅ ባህሪ

- የጥሩ ወንድ ልጅ ባህሪ

19. ልጆች እነዚህን የተለያዩ የፆታ ባህሪዎች እንዴት ይማራሉ?

20. ወንድ ልጅ ብቻ ሊያከናውናቸው የሚገቡ ስራዎች የሚባሉት አንዴት ያሉት ስራዎች ናቸው?

21. ሴት ልጅ ብቻ ሊያከናውናቸው የሚገቡ ስራዎች የሚባሉት አንዴት ያሉት ስራዎች ናቸው?

የልጆችና የአዋቂ ግንኙነት

22. ልጆች ለአዋቂና ለወላጆች አክብሮታቸውን የሚገልጹት እንዴት ነው?

23. ልጅዎ ጥሩ ፀባይ እንዲኖረው እርስዎ ምን አይነት ክትትልና ቁጥጥር ያደርጋሉ?

24. ከልጅዎ ጋር አብረው ይወያያሉ? የሚወያዩ ከሆነ ስለምንድን ነው የምትወያዩት?

25. ለልጅዎ አንድ ነገር መግዛት ሲያስፈልግ የሚገዛውን እቃ ማን ነው የሚመርጠው?/ወላጅ, ልጅ, ሌላ ሰው/

26. ልጆች የወላጆችን ሀሳብ ሁል ጊዜ መቀበል አለባቸው ወይንስ የለባቸውም?

የወላጆች አስተዳደር

የዓራስ ልጅ እንክብኝቤ

27. ዓራስ ልክ ከእናቱ ሆድ ከወጣ በኋላ ምን ይደረግለታል?

28. ህጻን ከተወለደ በኋላ ለመጀመሪያ ጊዜ የሚመገበው ምንድን ነው?

29. ለአራስ ልጅ ጥሩ ምግብ ነው የሚባለው ምንድን ነው?

30. አራስ ልጅ እንዴት ነው የሚመገበው?/ በጡጦ ፣ በእጅ ፣ በማንክያ/

31. የእናትየው ጡት ወተት ከሌለው ምን ይደረጋል?

32. እናት ልጅዋን የምታጠባው መቼ መቼ ነው?

33. የእናት ጡት በመጥባቱ ልጅ ምን ጥቅም ያገኛል?

34. ልጅ ጡት እንዲቀል የሚደረገው መቼ ነው?

35. ህፃን ልጅ ለምንድነው ጡት እንዲቀል የሚደረገው?

36. ጡት ለማስጣል ምንድን ነው የሚደረገው?

37. ህፃን ጡት ከጣላ በኋላ ምን ዓይነት ምግብ ይሰጠዋል? ማነው የሚመግበው?

38. ህፃን ልጅ ጡት ከልጠባም ወደገም ምግብ ከልበላም በሌላ ምን ያደረጋል?

39. ልጅ ራሱን ንጉሥ መመገብ የሚጀምረው መቼ ነው? እንዴት ነው እንዲለፍ?

የሚደረገው?

ጽድቅ

40. አራት ልጅ በየቦንቱ ገዢው ነው ገላውን የሚታጠው? ማን ያጥቀዋል?

41. የህጻን ልጅ ንጽህና እንዴት ነው የሚጠበቀው?/ ለምሳሌ ሽንትና ሰገራውን እንዴት ነው የሚያፀድቅ?

42. ልጅ በምን ያህል እድሜ ነው ራሱ ላይ ወይም አልጋ ላይ መፀዳዳት እንዲያቆም የሚያረገው? እንዴትስ ነው እንዲለምድ የሚያረገው?

43. አንድ ልጅ አልጋ ላይ መሸናት ከቆመ በኋላ ቢሸና ምን ይደረጋል?

የቀን ውለድ መጥታ

44. ህጻን ልጅ ከእናቱ ጋር የሚተኛው እስከመቼ ነው?

45. ከእናቱ ጋር መተኛት ከአቆመ በኋላ ከማን ጋር ይተኛል?

46. ሕጻናት ለምንድን ነው ብዙ ጊዜ የሚያለቅሱት?

47. ሕጻን ባለቀስ ቁጥር ማባበል ይገባል ወይንስ አንዳንዴ መተወ ጥሩ ነው? ለምን?

48. ልጅ በእናቱ ጀርባ የሚታዘልው እስከመቼ ነው? ከእናቱ ሌላ ማን ያቅፈዋል?

ጤንነት

49. ልጆችን ብዙውን ጊዜ የሚያሟቸው በሽታዎች ምንድን ናቸው?

50. የእንደዚህ አይነት በሽታ መንስኤ ምን ይመስልዎታል?

51. ልጅ ሲታመምብዎት ምንድን ነው የሚያደርጉት?

52. ልጅን ብዙ ጊዜ የሚያገኘው አደጋ ምንድን ነው?

የልጆች ስነ-ስርዐት

53. ለልጆዎት ጥሩ ስነ-ምግባሮች አንዱት ነው የሚያስተምሩት?

54. ልጆች መቀጣት የሚጀምሩት ከመቼ ጀምሮ ነው?

55. ልጅዎ ቀላል ጥፋት ሲያጠፋ እንዴት ይተጠታል? ከባድ ጥፋት ሲያጠፋስ?

56. ብዙ ጊዜ ልጅን የሚቀጣው ማን ነው?

ልጅን ማስተማርና ማሰልጠን

57. ልጆች በስራ ወላጆቻቸውን ማገዝ የሚጀምሩት መቼ ነው?

58. ልጆች እንዴት ነው ስራ እንዲለምዱ የሚያደርጉት?

59. ልጅ ሽልማት/ማበረታቻ የሚሰጠው ምን ሲያደርግ ነው? ብዙ ጊዜ ሽልማቶቹ/ማበረታቻዎቹስ ምንድን ናቸው?

ዘመዶች

60. ታላላቅ አህቶችና ወንድሞች ልጆችን እንዴት ነው የሚንከባከቡት?

61. ለእህቶችና ወንድሞች ልጆችን የመንከባከብ ሀላፊነት የሚሰጣቸው ምን ጊዜ ነው?

62. ልጆችን በመንከባከብ የጎረቤቶች ድርሻ ምንድን ነው?

63. ልጅን በማሳደግ ረገድ ዘመድ በምን መንገድ ያግዛል?

እናመሠግናለን!

Addis Ababa University
Department of Psychology

English version of the instrument used

Dear parents and guardians the purpose of this questionnaire is to get information on child rearing practices among the Sidama. Thus we will be asking you how you raise your children and your answers are valued and no answer is considered right or wrong. Your responses are going to be used solely for this research and we promise to keep them confidential. Thank you for your time!

General Information

1. Age _____
2. Sex _____
 1. Male
 2. Female
3. Marital status
 1. Married
 2. Divorced
 3. Separated because of death
4. Number of Children _____
5. Number of male foster children _____
6. Number of female foster children _____
7. Age of first-born child _____
8. Age of last-born child _____
9. Religion
 1. Traditional
 2. Muslim
 3. Orthodox
 4. Protestant
10. Educational Status
 1. Can not read and write
 2. Can read and write
 3. Elementary
 4. Junior secondary
 5. Secondary
 6. Certificate, diploma and above
11. Occupation/ Means of income
 1. Farmer
 2. Merchant
 3. Daily laborer
 4. Artisan
 5. Employee
12. Family income in birr per annum _____

Goals of having children

1. How many children do you want to have?
 - ☐ 1-2
 - ☐ 2-4
 - ☐ 4-6
 - ☐ Above 6
2. Why do you want to have a child?
 - ☐ For lineage/procreation
 - ☐ For their economic contribution
 - ☐ For social status and prestige
 - ☐ They take care of their parents in old age
 - ☐ They are the gift of god
 - ☐ Because barrens imply curse
 - ☐ Because childless marriage can lead to divorce
3. Which sex do you prefer?
 - ☐ Girl
 - ☐ Boy
 - ☐ Both
 - ☐ No preference
4. Do you think that is right to limit the number of children
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

If no, why

Beliefs about Children and childhood

5. How do you describe childhood?
.....
6. Who are considered children?
 - ☐ Those below5
 - ☐ Those below7
 - ☐ Those below10
 - ☐ Those below 12
 - ☐ Those below15
 - ☐ DK
7. When do children start to realize right and wrong?
 - ☐ 3-4 years
 - ☐ 4-5 years

- ☐ 5-6 years
 - ☐ 6-7 years
 - ☐ Starting from 7 years
8. Should children's opinion be taken seriously by adults?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Sometimes
 - ☐ DK
9. A child who is quiet is better than one who talks too much
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ DK
10. It is the responsibility of a child to look after parents at old age
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ DK
11. What are the characteristics of a child?
- ☐ They are naïve/innocent/good hearted
 - ☐ They make lots of mistakes
 - ☐ They must be guided to know the right and wrong
 - ☐ They must be responsible and help their parents
 - ☐ They must be obedient and submissive to the wishes of their parents as well as adults
 - ☐ They must listen to and respect their parents as well as adults
 - ☐ They are a subject of fun and enjoyment for parents
 - ☐ Other
12. Children generally don't do what they should unless someone sees to it
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ DK
13. A child born out of wedlock will encounter social problem
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ DK
14. Children must be carefully trained early in life or their natural impulses will make them unmanageable in their later life
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ Life
 - ☐ DK

15. The most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to whoever is in authority
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ DK
16. Children should be allowed to disagree with their parents if they feel their own ideas are better
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ DK
17. Children begin behaving differently according to sex
- ☐ Right after birth
 - ☐ After they start to walk
 - ☐ At age three years
 - ☐ At age four years
 - ☐ At age five years
18. Children are expected to behave as either boys or girls
- ☐ Right after birth
 - ☐ After they start to walk
 - ☐ At age three years
 - ☐ At age four years
 - ☐ At age five years

Child and Infant care

19. It is very important to wash the newly born infant
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ DK
20. It is common to mold the head of the new born infants to the right shape
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ DK
21. A new born infant should be fed soon after birth
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

- ☐ DK
22. Bottle feeding is harmful for children
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Dk
23. All children should be breast feed
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ DK
24. What is the first food given for the new born?
- ☐ Breast
- ☐ Butter
- ☐ Cow milk
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Herbal juice
- ☐ Others.....
- ☐ DK
25. What is the best food for the infant?
- ☐ Mother's breast
- ☐ Cow milk
- ☐ Porridge
- ☐ Other.....
- ☐ DK
26. When (at what circumstance) does the infant breast fed?
- ☐ When s/he cries
- ☐ In fixed intervals
- ☐ At the mother's convenience
- ☐ Whenever the infant demands
- ☐ Others.....
- ☐ DK
27. If the mother breast has no milk what will be done?
- ☐ Bottle feeding or "megal" cow milk
- ☐ Nursing by another women
- ☐ Other.....
- ☐ DK
28. What additional advantage does the mother breast has for the child
- ☐ It will comfort her/him
- ☐ It is easily available
- ☐ It is safe from germs and bacteria's
- ☐ It will establish an attachment with the mother
- ☐ Other.....

29. If the baby refuses to take the mother breast or any other food, what will be done?

- ☐ Taking the child to modern health center
- ☐ Giving him herbs or traditional medicine
- ☐ Consulting a traditional doctor
- ☐ Doing religious treatments(e.g. Prayer, holy water, scarifies)
- ☐ Other.....

30. When does weaning start?

- ☐ 6 months
- ☐ 1 year
- ☐ 1 year and a half
- ☐ 2 years
- ☐ 3 years
- ☐ 4 years

31. How does weaning done?

- ☐ Putting soar or unpleasant matter on the nipples
- ☐ By sending the child away
- ☐ Through punishment
- ☐ Others
- ☐ DK

32. Children are weaned

- A. Gradually
- B. Abruptly
- C. When the mother conceives
- D. When the mother decided to do so
- E. After a fixed age

33. When is solid food introduced to the baby?

- ☐ 6 months
- ☐ 1 year
- ☐ 1 and half years
- ☐ 2 years
- ☐ Above 2 years

34. What is believed to be a nutritious food given to the child after Weaning?

35. When does the child start eating independently?

- ☐ After 2
- ☐ After 3
- ☐ After 4
- ☐ After 5

36. Why do you think infants cry?

- ☐ When they are hungry
- ☐ When they have stomach-ache

- ☐ When they seek attention
 - ☐ When they feel sleepy
 - ☐ For no reason
 - ☐ Other.....
37. What do you do when an infant cries?
- ☐ Give him/her food
 - ☐ Soothing
 - ☐ Give him/her attention and play with him/her
 - ☐ Leave him/her alone
 - ☐ Give him/her comfort
38. Should infants always be attended when they cry?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
39. If yes or no explain why?-----
40. With whom the infant sleeps?-----
41. For how long the infant sleeps with his mother?
- ☐ Until 6 months
 - ☐ Until 1 year
 - ☐ Until 1 and half years
 - ☐ Until 2 years
 - ☐ Until a new baby is born
 - ☐ Others
42. When do children go to sleep?
- ☐ It is up to children whether they go to sleep or not
 - ☐ Children are allowed to sleep when they like
 - ☐ Children are forced to sleep when their parents decide
 - ☐ Children cannot go to bed without the permission of their parents
 - ☐ I am not sure
43. When does toilet training start?
- A. After 6 months
 - B. After 1 year
 - C. After 1 year and a half
 - D. After 2 years
44. At what age are children expected to stop bed wetting?
- A. After 6 months
 - B. After 1 year
 - C. After 1 year and a half
 - D. After 2 years
 - E. After 3 years
45. What happens if a child bed wets after he grew past the age limit?
- ☐ Receives physical punishment
 - ☐ Receives scolding
 - ☐ Receives teasing and name calling
 - ☐ Other

☐ DK

46. How often the mother baths the infant?

- ☐ Every day
- ☐ Every three days
- ☐ Every week
- ☐ Every two weeks
- ☐ Per month

47. How frequently that the mother cleans the urine and excretions of the infant?

- ☐ Every time he/she urinates or excretes
- ☐ When she finds it convenience
- ☐ At a fixed interval
- ☐ Others
- ☐ DK

48. What are the common health problems of children in your area?

- A. Diarrhea
- B. Stomach ache
- C. Skin rash
- D. Eye disease
- E. Ear infection
- F. Cold/flu
- G. Malaria
- H. Pneumonia
- I. Accidental injuries (e.g. Burning, broken leg or arm, falling.....)

49. What are the major causes of illness for children?

- ☐ Lack of nutritious food
- ☐ Lack of hygiene
- ☐ Evil eye
- ☐ Supernatural punishment
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Others

50. Why do you think children refuse food?

- ☐ Because of stomach ache
- ☐ Because of evil eye
- ☐ Because of other sickness
- ☐ Others.....
- ☐ DK

51. What do you do when children fell ill?

- J. We go to modern health centers
- K. We go to traditional doctors
- L. We do herbal/traditional treatment
- M. We do religious treatments (e.g. Prayer, holy water, sacrifices...)
- N. Nothing
- O. Others

Parental treatment of children

52. Children are carried on the back from birth up to

- ☐ Six months
- ☐ One year
- ☐ Two years
- ☐ Three years

53. When the nursing mother go to field work, market, or any other place what will she do with the baby

- ☐ She carries the child on her back and does her duty
- ☐ She gives the child to elder sibling
- ☐ She gives the child to relatives
- ☐ She gives the child to neighbors
- ☐ Others.....

54. Children are mostly disciplined by

- ☐ Their mothers
- ☐ Their fathers
- ☐ Their older siblings
- ☐ Their relatives
- ☐ All
- ☐ None

55. What is the role of the father in child care?

Describe.....

56. Children are punished by their parents starting at

- ☐ Two years
- ☐ Three years
- ☐ Four years
- ☐ Five years
- ☐ Six years

57. Proverbs and wise sayings

- ☐ Are good to pass time among children
- ☐ Are means of teaching good morals
- ☐ Are means of teaching culture
- ☐ Uncertain

Roles and responsibility of children

58. Children start doing small house hold tasks at the age of

☐ For boys

☐ For girls

59. What will you do if the child refuses to work?

☐ Will be corporally punished

☐ Will be deprived of food as a punishment

☐ Will be made to stay away from the house

☐ Other.....

Extended families

60. Do older siblings take care of younger ones?

☐ Yes

☐ No

61. Describe some of the responsibilities of older siblings in taking care of the child

.....
.....

62. Who takes more care of their younger ones, sisters or brothers?

☐ Sisters

☐ Brothers

63. Who, among your relatives, are also involved in children rearing and what are their major roles?

☐ Aunt:

☐ Uncle.....

☐ Grand parents:

☐ Cousins:

64. Do neighbors help in rearing a child?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If they do, in what ways do they help?

.....
.....

Thank you

Interview

With elders

1. Who names a child? Is it important who names the child and what the name is?
2. In the Sidama society what is the position and importance given to children?
3. Are there tales in your society which have been told about children? Tales told by ancestors, prophecies or message from God?
4. Which are the stages a person passes through until he assumes old age and eventually die? Describe
5. Are there any cultural ceremonies, accompanying these stages? Are individual members of the society expected to demonstrate anything while passing through these stages?
6. Are there any cultural ceremonies to celebrate the coming to life of the new born child?
7. Do these ceremonies vary when it is a boy or a girl baby?
8. What happens if these ceremonies/celebrations are not carried out?
9. Are there ceremonies which are done till the child becomes a full person?
10. Some children are said good ones and some bad children. Could these children are born like that or they learn it from their environment? What shall be done to avert this if they are for example "born bad"?
11. *After children are born healthy and good what can affect them in a bad way?*
12. What are good children and bad children? how do you describe them
13. What values, beliefs, norms and attitudes are the children are expected to acquire? From whom they will learn these things? How?
14. Tell me what is good parenting and bad parenting is?
15. What will be the position of a person in the society if he/she does not have any child, is it different for a man or a woman with out a child?
16. *What is the cause of barrens? Is it a man or a woman who might be barren?*
17. Are there any accepted or unaccepted children in the society? Who are they?
18. What is the role of adults other than parents in raising children?

19. Do elders take part in raising children, like in disciplining, punishing or rewarding children?
20. If parents mistreat their children could elders intervene? What is considered as a mistreatment s of a child?
21. What similarities or differences do you see between the way children are brought up during the older days and the way they are brought up at this time?
22. Are there bad practices which are now abandoned? Are there also good practices which are abandon to?
23. Comparing the current and the old practice of child rearing which one do you think is best for children?
24. What challenges do parents face in raising children in your society?

Health workers

1. who are considered children in the area
2. What are the prevalent health problem affecting children in this area?
What are the causes?
3. From these health problems which ones are more fatal and cause death?
4. Do parents frequently bring their children to modern health centers for treatment?
5. What is the status of essential immunization services in this area? Do mothers receive such services before birth? Do they also bring their babies to be vaccinated?
6. Is HTP practiced in the area? If yes, which are they?
7. Is there any sickness or health complication caused by harmful traditional practices?
8. How do you see the child care and child rearing practices of the area?
9. Do you think babies around here get nutritious food?
10. How do you describe the sanitation and hygiene practice of the area?
11. What are the common problems which are faced by parents in raising children in this area?

12. What has been the contribution of your organization and other governmental and non governmental organization in the area to alleviate the problems affecting the condition of children
13. Do you know any kind of child care practice which is unique to the area?

Teachers

1. Who are children in the area?
 2. At which age are children usually sent to school?
 3. What is the percentage of children who go to school out of the total population of children in the area?
 4. What is the percentage of girls going to school out of the total number of children who go to school in this area?
 5. What is the percentage of drop outs and absentees in schools of this area?
 6. How do you generally characterize the behavior of children in this area?
 7. What are the most important methods that teachers employ to discipline children/students?
 8. What is the response or perception of children/students toward teachers or anyone in authority?
 9. What is the common type of punishment teachers use against children/students?
 10. what do you think is the attitude of (the goal) of parents towards sending their children to school
 11. Which ones in your opinion, boys or girls, which are liberated to explore outside of their home? Who has more role and responsibility in the home? Do this responsibility are different for the sexes?
 12. What skill do children acquire out of the school environment?
- What are the common values, beliefs, and attitude the society gives to the children in the area?

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Declaration

This Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all source materials used for the thesis has been dully acknowledge.

Miheret Ayele

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as
university advisor



Dr. Belay Tefera