



Addis Ababa University
School of Journalism and Communication
Graduate Program

**AUDIENCE RECEPTION ANALYSIS OF LTV SHOW AMONG ADDIS
ABABA RESIDENTS**

By:

Selamawit Worku

**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Journalism and
Communication Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
the Degree Master of Arts in Faculty of Journalism and Communication.**

Thesis Advisor: Anteneh Tsegaye (PhD)

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

JUNE, 2019

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
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List of Acronyms

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
II	Individual in-depth interview
LTV	Private satellite TV channel in Ethiopia
EBC	Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation
OBN	Oromo Broadcasting Network
Walta	Media and communication corporate in Ethiopia

Acknowledgements

At first, I am grateful to God for giving me strength in doing this research. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor Dr. Anteneh Tsegaye for the guidance, assistance, suggestions and constant support during this study. My sincere gratitude goes to all LTV and Kebele employees, especially the one who participated in the in-depth interview and document analysis. In addition to that my appreciation goes to Ato Abate Feyissa, editor in chief in LTV. Additionally, my gratitude goes to all my colleagues and family who have been supporting me morally and professionally.

ABSTRACT

The main focus of this research is how Addis Ababa residents make sense of the messages transmitted on the LTV show. Undertaking the study, 42 hours hard talk which aired from March 1st, 2018 – March 13th, 2019 were selected. A qualitative research method is mostly considered appropriate in audience reception studies, thus this study followed qualitative research methods such as, focus group discussion and individual in-depth interview. In order to achieve the research objectives qualitative research methods were used as mentioned above. Systematic sampling and Purposive sampling techniques were used to get participants of this research. The data found from the respondents and key informants were triangulated with the interviewees of producers of LTV show and other hard talk hosts. The findings showed that majority of the discussants create meaning depending on what is relevant to their daily life. Audiences discussed with the messages of the program and took the important lessons relating to their experience and culture of the society they are living with. Among the respondents most of them believed that LTV Show is relevant to audiences in creating awareness of hard talk and the current stance of the politicians and government officials. Audiences explained the opportunities the hard talk created for them and challenges they have faced. Accordingly, they gave their suggestions which help to shrinkage the weaknesses of the show. Finally, LTV Show producers and participants have agreed that LTV show needs to work in creating awareness of hard talk, analyse the criticisms, work on the nature of the hard talk and in giving opportunities to the audience's.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

Television is one of the largest gifts of modern science. The whole world comes to our homes and we can see the live telecast of the news of politics, science, inventions, sports and other important events of the world. It introduces us with the whole world's civilization, culture, trades and commerce, weather, sports and recreation. Television has widened the horizon of sending news and views to the general masses from one country to another in an attractive and lucid way through satellite TV channels. Television programming has been a predominant source of entertainment for decades (Belch, Kerr, and Powell, 2009; Sharp, Beal and Collins, 2009).

TV show has been in the media starting the 1960s in the western countries. According to Manga (2000) "... a show as a distinctive television genre originated with the Phil Donahue show in 1967". The revolution has vastly changed potential television viewing experiences. Today, digital television enables consumers to record and watch live television via an array of hand-help devices (Sharp, et al, 2009).

With the existing global flow of information Ethiopian media has incorporated the new genre into its component. However, TV shows date half a century in other countries, it is only thirteen years old in Ethiopia. Radio and television licenses were only issued to individuals and groups that are trusted by the Ethiopian government. Government communication officials were reluctant to provide information to the private press that could be controversial and instead rely on government channels and some government-affiliated media. Nowadays many private media houses are free to broadcast different programs (Yilema, 2007).

In developing countries like Ethiopia such media program like LTV show motivates the public discussion. It can also be seen as one way of communication model. However, this does not imply that participation is limited to interviewer or the interviewee. Audiences at home will also listen to the discussion and take their own stand on the topic. This does not mean that they will take in every message they get from the show and use it. We prefer to think of audiences as active readers rather than passive recipients. We see the meaning of media texts as something that these active audiences construct rather than something that is prefabricated by media producer. Audiences have the power to accept or reject a media message. This brings in light to

what Ethiopian audiences are seeing this new genre of media that is the TV show (Corteau and Hoynes, 2003).

Though there are different TV talk shows, hard talks are not aged in Ethiopia comparing to other countries. Journalists and TV stations have not worked on hard talk scenarios. Hard talks can help in decision makings and in improving ideas if they are heard effectively. Moreover, hard talk teaches the skills necessary to foster open dialogue around topics and with people who are ‘difficult’. By learning to hear and be heard effectively participants can then surface the best ideas, improve the decisions they make and see these executed effectively. They can overcome difficult tactics and effectively respond to emotions of their own and others, so that audiences can initiate and maintain productive conversation even in complex situations with difficult counterparts (Hiebert& Gibbons,2000).

Regarding the purpose and significance of audience research, McQuail (2002) states the main goals as: measuring actual and potential reach for purpose of ads, manipulating and channeling audience choice behavior and evaluating media performance in a number of ways improving communication effectiveness

As a result, LTV Ethiopia is a private satellite TV channel airs on Ethiosat polarization 11512H-27500316 in Ethiopia; owned and started by Dr.Gemechis DesetaBuba. It was created for the purpose of spreading the Ethiopian culture to the world through its programming and to fill the lack of private channels in Ethiopia. According to the producers, it works on creating the importance of a hard talk in media for the society .The show discusses different political, religious and economic issues.

Thus, the Ethiopian television audience, with its diverse culture and values and social make-up may react to the messages of LTV Show in a quite wide-ranging manner. This study will attempt to see how audiences make sense of the message transmitted on LTV with respect to their needs and interest. In addition, the thesis, will try to discover the factors that may influence audience reception.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Media is a powerful tool that can be used to change the course of a development of any country and even abate and resolve conflict (Katz et al., 1973). There are different theories about understanding audiences. The uses and gratifications theory strives to understand what people do with media outlets and the reasons behind their decisions and actions. Katz and Blumler describe the concept as, “the social and psychological origins of needs which generate expectations of the mass media and other sources which lead to differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities) resulting in needs gratifications and other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones” (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). An audience member’s role is to select certain media that fulfil their needs and requirements and the media outlet, in turn, provides this content. The public relations field, just like the uses and gratifications theory, requires the understanding of an audience’s motives, thoughts, and behaviours.

LTV Ethiopia is a private satellite TV channel in Ethiopia owned and started by Dr. Gemechis Deseta Buba. It was created for the purpose of spreading the Ethiopian culture to the world through its programming and to fill the lack of private channels in Ethiopia. The show discusses different political, religious and economic issues as to the producers.

According to LTV producers, LTV plays a big role in helping social development and improvement. According to the producer, LTV show has the intention of bringing attitudinal change in the society. The show has 75000 subscribers on YouTube and the researcher is one of them. Many hate speeches, loathe and negative comments are seen on the channel under every video. From the comments section, one can see that the hard talk gets active audiences and how they perceive the message. The show is different from other TV shows as it deals with current political situation of Ethiopia and brings new faces. As misunderstanding creates conflict, a message perceived well and, or constructed well can minimize misunderstanding. However, audience’s response towards the hard talk shows that the hard talk created ambiguity.

This study grounded on the theoretical framework of the Uses and Gratification approach which underscores that media researchers, ought to be studying human needs to discover how much the media do or do not contribute to their creation and satisfaction (Katz et al., 1973). Thus, it is important to know how the audiences make sense of messages of the hard talk. Therefore,

drawing on the uses and gratification perspective, the following research questions were formulated for this study.

1.3. Research Questions

In order to investigate the problem, the current study attempts to answer the following research questions.

1. How is LTV show relevant to audiences?
2. How do Addis Ababa residents react towards LTV show TV program?
3. What is the nature of LTV show in relation with audiences?
4. What are the opportunities that the hard talk creates?
5. What are the challenges of LTV show?

1.4. Objective of the study

1.4.1. General Objective

The general objective of the study is to find out how audiences of ‘LTV show’ specifically Addis Ababa residents make sense of the messages transmitted in the LTV show.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

More specifically, the current study attempts to:

1. Examine how LTV show is relevant to audiences.
2. Identify the reaction of the audience in Addis Ababa on the contents of “LTV Show” TV program.
3. Analyze the nature of LTV Show in relation with the audiences.
4. To examine the opportunities of the show.
5. To analyze the challenges of the show

1.5. Significance of the Study

This is a study conducted on one of the unique television program which has targeted general audiences. Producer of the ‘LTV Show’ television program may consider the outcomes of the study; its recommendations could help the producer tailor her program formats and contents in a way that meets the needs of the audience. Although the findings may help, people who work in other media houses as a producer for TV shows. As Folkerts and Lacy (2001) point out, media

organizations need such researches on audiences in order to identify what the audience want so that the media organizations could produce contents that better suit their audiences. It is also believed that the study has the significance of sparking insights for other similar researches in the area of audience research endeavors.

Audiences of the program may also benefit in a way that the study sets forth what they think of the way the TV program - that has specifically targeted them – is performing. In addition to that, the study may reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the TV program leading to an improved quality in the program contents and presentations.

1.6. Scope of the study

The study is limited to LTV, particularly the program aired from March 1st, 2018 – March 13th, 2019. Denoting to the sampling, the study covered a year and two weeks of air time. The area, content and data analysis engrossed on audience reception analysis.

The study includes participants from ten different sub cities in Addis Ababa. The researcher also involved ten focus group discussions with a total of 65 respondents to be able to study how messages from LTV Show are received.

1.7. Definition of Terms

- **Hard Talk:** -In-depth interviews with hard-hitting questions and sensitive topics being covered as famous personalities from all walks of life talk about the highs and lows in their lives.
- **Ambiguity:** -The quality of being open to more than one interpretation; inexactness.
- **Audience:** -The people who watch or listen to a television or radio programme.
- **Show:** -A film or television program presented on a screen for viewing.
- **YouTube:** - A video-sharing website where someone can upload and watch videos.
- **Phone-ins:**- A radio or television program during which the listeners or viewers telephone the studio and participate. OR denoting something conducted by people leaving answers or messages by telephone.

- IBID: Shows in the same source (Used to save space in textual references to a quoted work which has been mentioned in the previous reference).
- Reception : The act of receiving
- Perception : Conscious understanding of something

1.8. Limitations of the Research

The first and main challenge undertaking this research was organizing group of respondents for the focus group as participants were reluctant to sacrifice their time for a study. Resource constraints and getting appropriate study subjects as required were also great challenges to undertake the study.

The study focused on the residents of Addis Ababa. The themes of the study were selected using systematic and purposive sampling techniques. Therefore, the subjects are not representative. For this reason, the conclusion drawn cannot be generalized beyond the respondents' realities.

1.9. Organization of the Thesis

This research consists five chapters. Here is an overview of the content of each presented under each chapter: Chapter one introduces the problem, gives an overview about the study and describes the theoretical framework. This chapter also discusses the scope of the study, the significance and its objectives. Chapter two covers the literature review which is the previous related works that been done before. Moreover, this chapter represents relevant information for understanding the study more. Chapter three explains the details of the selected methodology that used in the research. Chapter four discusses about data presentation and analysis and the last chapter discusses the summary, conclusion, recommendations and future works to improve this study.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

2.1. Introduction

This study examines the relevance of LTV show to the needs and interest of audience. Concepts related to audience reception, theoretical framework and models used in the study are presented. The study also analyses the perception of Addis Ababa residents among LTV show hard talk.

2.2. Television and Society

Television is one of the powerful electronic medium of mass communication, which invented in the year 1920. Television impact on a society has been profound. It has changed the life-style of people and become a major influence in the culture. Unlike printing, which took hundreds of years to influence the culture, television's impact was almost instantaneous (Mustafa, 2012).

People are emotionally engaged by television; they talk of television meeting personal identity needs such as the legitimating of their values or gaining insight into themselves; they feel television keeps them connected to the rest of the world through a shared imagined community, through knowing what is happening in other places and through having common topics to discuss with others in their everyday lives. They even enjoy being critical of television, working out the production processes behind the programs, speculating about the real lives of the actors, laughing at the conventions, and decoding complex advertisements designed to tease them (Liebes & Katz, 1995).

Nothing has influenced the lives of modern men as the mass media have (Dominick, 2013). They play a strategic role in reinforcing dominant social norms and values that legitimize the social system. Media contribute to a transformation in the cultural and social values of the masses. Media bring about a transformation in the attitudes and beliefs of the people. The persuasive nature of the content presented over media influences the thoughts and behavior of the general public. It helps in molding ideas and attitudes. (Jandt, 2004).

2.3. Defining Audience

In media studies audience is in the main used as a way of talking about people either groups or individuals. It used to refer to large groups of people, like the mass audience for television news,

newspaper readership, the general public, or even people attending a major sporting event or a rock concert Ross and Nightingale (2003).

In addition, Ross and Nightingale (2003) stated the term is used to refer to groups of people who are linked by means of ties of extra enduring socio- cultural significance. These ‘audiences’ may be described as subcultures, taste cultures, fun cultures, ethnic diasporas, indigenous or religious communities, and even domestic households. In one of the pioneering models of mass communication as developed by Wilbur Schramm(1955), audiences are designated by the term ‘receiver’ with the role of taking in messages dispatched by a source McQuail (2000).

In the earliest media theories too, audience meant the congregated ‘mass society out there’ passively receiving media contents. However, McQuail finds it convenient to put the notion of audience in distinct and overlapping ways, i.e., “by place (as in local media audience) by people (specific age belief groups) by the type of channel by the media content, .i.e., the subject matter and by time (prime time)” Ibid. Farmers, industrial workers, house wives, teenagers, and doctors will all have preferred listening times which will vary according to local circumstances as McLeish (2001) puts it.

With regard to audience availability and program items: The fairly superficial news or information and current affairs plus music type of continuous program where all the items are kept short, may be suitable for the general audience at times when other things are happening such as meal times or at work. But the timing of the more demanding documentary, drama, or discussion program can be critical and will depend on individual circumstances.

Ross and Nightingale (2003) contend that the audience comes into being where a group of people engage with mediated information. This means that audience ship not only requires the physical presence of people but rather the active engagement of those people with the mediated message. According to (Corteau and Hoynes , 2003 p.266-9), “this notion of ‘active audience’ is, in reception theory, intended for embracing three concepts that complement each other. The first one refers to the rejection of the passivity and gullibility of audiences. It means that audiences engage themselves to fetch about their knowledge and experiences as they make intellect of media contents. The second one facts at the claim that reception and interpretation of media outputs is not strictly individual; it is also a social activity. Individuals share a number of

elements common in their social setting and their lived life brings about factors which influence the way audiences make sense of media contents. The third view embedded in the 'active audience' notion is the 'collective action' people could occasionally take in response to certain media program contents". All the aforementioned discussion shows that are in fact different viewpoints hold by different scholars, from which the view of 'audience' is seen.

The entire scholars on the above said that , this study uses the concept of 'audience' to refer to people as a group or individuals who actively receive media messages and mark sense of them in relation to the context of their daily life. This also assumes that the way audiences interpret media messages is influenced by the 'identities' (factors such as gender, race, age...) associated with the 'reading communities' they (audiences) belong to.

2.4.Audience Participation

For Corteau and Hoynes (2003), audiences are individuals with live accounts and social networks. These people are 'active readers' of media messages and not passive recipients of them. Audiences actively engage themselves with the media contents they access and construct meaning in light of the context of the everyday life where in they are situated. Apparently, audiences may partake in different medium which they are engaged in. Nevertheless, McLeish (2001) stated that radio is not a good medium by itself for establishing a genuine two way contact. Listeners may feel that the broadcaster comes to their home and they may even get the impression that they know an individual. However, this is at best a substitute companionship rather than genuine personal interaction. The broadcaster / listener relationship or perhaps that of the station/listener can be made more real through the broadcaster's ability to allow and encourage listeners to take part in the program making activity. According to Ibid audiences participate through letters and e-mails, texting, and phone call.

2.4.1. Phone-ins

Phone-ins are likely to require more personnel than a single producer-presenter, especially if the callers are to be screened before they are put to air, (Starkey ,2004). Ideally, every caller who is permitted to speak in the program will have been spoken to beforehand, either by the producer or by a researchers who should attempt to identify those who sound more exciting, have something

relevant to say, and not be too much of liability in terms of potential issues of libel and taste and decency as Starkey (2004) puts it. In line with Starkey's point of view McLeish contend that through public participation, the aim of a phone-in is to allow a democratic expression of view and to create the possibility of community action. Therefore, LTV show may take some phone calls to flavor the hard talk and to give opportunities to the society.

2.4.2. Texting

Stations that motivate text messages through mobile phones in general set out to attract the audience. According to McLeish (2001) as cited in Worku (2011) when giving out a special number and code to ring, there may be a program assistant ready and available to take the messages and if needed to respond to callers. However, incoming texts can come straight to the presenter on-screen, like e-mails for reference on air- an ideal way of handling brief computation answers.

2.4.3. Letters and Emails

To maximize viewer's involvement, several pieces of correspondence can be dealt with in a single spot. A letter is not simply program provender, but deserves the same level of consideration that its sender gave it. This becomes increasingly important for broadcasts.

2.5. Brief Concept of Audience Research

In media studies, audience is mostly used as a way of talking about individuals or groups of people (Ross and Nightingale, 2003, p.4). It usually refers to large groups of people, like the mass audience for television news, newspaper readership, the general public, or even people attending a major sporting event or a rock concert. In addition, the term is used to refer groups of people who are linked by ties of more enduring socio- cultural significance. These 'audiences' may be described as subcultures, taste cultures, fun cultures, ethnic diasporas, indigenous or religious communities, and even domestic households (Ibid).

In his book "Audience Analysis" McQuail (2000), states the word 'audience' has long been familiar as the collective term for the 'receivers' in the simple sequential model of the mass communication process (source, channel, message, receiver, effect) that was deployed by

pioneers in the field of media research. This definition has been utilized in everyday discourse to refer to that which is, in reality, a diverse and complex principal subject, associated with numerous and often conflicting theoretical approaches. Also most audiences of the mass media are not observable, apart from in fragmentary or indirect ways conceptualizing the audience remains problematic due to its abstract character (Ibid).

Furthermore, McQuail (1997) argued that audiences are both a product of social context and a response to a particular media provision and these often overlapping spheres which influence media use are further compounded by an individual's 'time use, availability, lifestyle and everyday routines'. Thus, the term 'audience' is ostensibly clear in its definition. Also, McQuail (2000) stated, an ambiguous concept defined by variable and intersecting factors such as: by place (as in the case of local media); by people (as when a medium is characterized by an appeal to a certain age group, gender, political belief, or income category); by the particular type of medium or channel involved (technology and organization combined); by the content of its messages (genres, subject matter, styles); by time (as when one speaks of the 'daytime' or the 'primetime' audience, or an audience that is fleeting and short term compared to one that endures).

Karen Ross and Virginia Nightingale (2003) identify five elements of media events that are sources of audience research interest, 'the audience participants as individuals; the audience actions of the participants in the media event; the media time/space of the event; the media power relations that structure the event; and the mediatized information with which people engage. They further suggest that 'In all audience research, certain assumptions are made about what aspects of the media event are acting on audiences and about whether or not such "influence" is likely to benefit them the researchers' (Karen Ross and Virginia Nightingale, 2003). Accordingly, Ross and Nightingale claim that any consideration of the media and audiences will be partial rather than comprehensive. Thus, in order to understand how audiences have been conceptualized, it is necessary to consider the various theoretical paradigms employed in audience analysis.

2.6. Audience Reception Theory

Audience reception theory is a humanistic approach of audience study which has come to be widely used as a way of characterizing the wave of audience research, which occurred within communication and cultural studies during the 1980s and 1990s (Singhal et al., 2004). The main proponents of reception theory Iser, 1980; Holub, Robert C. (1984, p.2) outline the central proposition of reception theory in comparing with reader-response criticism as:

Reception theory refers throughout to a general shift in concern from the author and the work to the text and the reader. Similarly, reader-response criticism also refers to a general shift in attention from the author of the work to the text-reader pole. However there are important features that separate the reader-response criticism from reception studies. Reader-response criticism theorists have had very little contact with or influence on one another. Holub further indicates that reader-response criticism theorists are not participating in any critical movement and are responding with their methods to quite different predecessors and circumstances. In contrast, reception study must be understood as a more cohesive, conscious, and collective undertaking. Reception study emerged as a group effort on both the institutional and critical levels involving a productive exchange of ideas among its advocates. Furthermore, reception studies may be separated from reader-response criticism on the basis of lack of mutual influence. Also reception studies are ultimately superficial and too abstract of merging (Holub, 1984).

In relation to a driving force for audience research Kitzinger (2005) states four broad spheres:

First, Market Imperatives; a research concerned primarily with measuring audiences, identifying their socio demographic distribution, and tracking issues such as attention flow and channel loyalty (Millard, 1992). Second, Concerns about Morality and Sex 'n' Violence; a research concerned with the potential corrupting influence of the media. Third, responses to technological developments; a research asks questions about the implications of new media and communication devices. Finally, questions about Culture, Politics, and Identity; the impetus for research inspired under this rubric is a concern with the media's role in the public and domestic realm.

According to the above points, Culture, Politics, and Identity impetus examines how the media might frame public understandings and citizenship and how people use media texts.

In addition to the above, Livingstone et al note four theoretical developments that have led to audience reception research. Firstly, “research is increasingly interdisciplinary, with a convergence across a range of approaches to audience research.”(Livingstone et al, 1994) It is important to see all the angles when doing a research and it is not enough to use only one method or discipline especially when it comes to media studies. Secondly, “it can no longer be assumed that audience reactions and perceptions are predictable from the textual analysis of media content” (Livingstone et al.,1994) .

The message in the text may not reach the audience as it was intended due to different situations that different audiences are in. Thirdly, “the supposedly mass audience can no longer be seen as passive and mindless in their engagement with television, but rather as active interpreters of what they see, sometimes even as resistant or subversive audiences” Livingstone et al (1994) . Audiences can interpret a message that is polysomic in nature and they can form meaning depending on their prior experiences. Fourthly, “mass media also are not homogeneous there is no general audience reaction to television as a whole.”(Livingstone et al, 1994) before the audience research came to focus, scholars concentrated on studying the effects of media. And they believed that media has a total and direct effect on the audience. One of these theories was the Magic Bullet theory.

According to Biagi(2001) it is “the assertion that media messages directly and measurably affect people’s behavior. The theory holds that the media could inject ideas into someone the way liquids are injected through a needle” .This theory has been used by different names like hypodermic needle and transmission. Williams (2000) states “whatever its label, the basic idea is simple, media messages are received in a uniform way by every member of the audience and those immediate and direct responses are triggered by such stimuli”. Though this theory does not exist in its initial definition, it did not disappear totally. In the 1960s and 1970s scholars started believing that media has limited effect on its audiences and later cultivation theory emerged. The theory involves the cumulative impact of media, which was developed by Gerbner as “Television viewing cultivates a commonality of perspective among otherwise different groups with respect to overreaching themes and patterns found in many programs” (Williams ,2000).

Finally, one can simply indicate that reception theory has undoubtedly had a tremendous impact on the way in which media studies are now conducted. It is very important for the mass media to know what kind of audience is targeted because every text assumes to convey meaning to the

audience. So, if the text is not designed to accommodate how the audience might respond towards it, the audience can interpret the text's meaning in a destructive way. Therefore, reception theory can be said to have changed the understanding of production of meaning in text.

2.6.1. Reception Analysis Model

The history of reception studies begins at the moment speakers' attempts to figure out what listeners might understand about messages. Staiger(2005) Reception analysis started developing around 1980s and deals with how audiences understand popular media, the entertainment. McQuail (2000) describe reception study as "It emphasizes media use as a reflection of a particular social-cultural context and as a process of giving meaning to cultural products and experiences in everyday life." The most researched type of popular media was the soap opera. Ang in 1985 studied an American soap 'Dallas', and how women viewers make meaning. She found out that women were interested in the soap not because it was the exact copy of the reality but because it appealed to their emotion (cited in During, 1994). Such reception studies introduced the notion of pleasure into the discussion of what audiences obtain from popular media and cultural forms. "These gain of pleasure and as a whole lead to what the notion of reception analysis refers to, the ability of audiences to appropriate the meaning they wanted form popular culture"(Williams, 2000).

2.6.2. Critics on Active Audience Theory

Active audience theory has been criticized by scholars of the field. The major critic is that active audience theory has given more power to the audience that question the notion of media power. Williams's states:

Active audience theory by stressing the ability of audience to make their own meanings form what the media pump out, to use media technologies for their own purposes and to take their own pleasures form what they see, hear and read undermines or even invalidates the concept of media power (William, 2000).

As cited in Williams (2000), Braker and Brooks criticize the view of celebrating resistance of media messages. If audiences reject messages of campaigns that encourage safer sex or discourage violence against women it is not something to encourage. They also question the term activity in that sometimes audiences become passive with choice by giving examples of people

who watch movies just be scared or to have a good weep. According to Kitzinger pointed out the lack of clarity on what the word 'meaning' refers to. She identifies a difference between how people react or respond to a media text and their interpretation of the meaning of that text people can agree on the meaning but simply refuse to accept or believe what is conveyed she concludes diverse response cannot be equated with diversity of meaning .Another point that audience theory is accused of is the method that it uses critics comment on the subjectivity of interpretation that can be too narrow to rely on, Stevenson as cited in Williams (2000).

On the contrary, active audience research took another direction to media and attempts to look at audience in a closer and elaborated way than previous theories. It looks at audience in a closer and elaborated way on than previous theories and tries to understand the factors that affect the interpretation media texts.

2.6.3. Encoding and Decoding Model

Encoding and decoding model is the first model to diverge from the formerly established effects theories. This theory has been re-constructed by many scholars, but it was originally constructed (Hall,1980). The model states The lack of fit between the codes has a great deal to do with the structural variances of relation land situation between broadcasters and audiences, but it also has somewhat to do with the asymmetry between the codes of 'source' and 'receiver' at the moment of transformation into and out of the discursive form. What are called 'distortions' or 'misunderstandings' arise specifically form the lack of equivalence between the two sides in the communicative exchange (cited in During, 1994).

Hall categorizes the different meanings formed while decoding media messages. This category is the preferred reading theory, which differentiates three kinds of meanings; the dominant, negotiated and oppositional. The dominant or hegemonic reading accepts the preferred meaning encoded in the text; the oppositional reading occurs when people appreciate the preferred reading, reject it and decode meaning according to their own values and attitudes, and a negotiated reading is where people rather adapt than entirely reject the preferred reading(Williams,2000). Hall elaborated more on the television codes that are bound to different meanings by using the concept from linguistic in which words have the literal denotative meaning and the deep connotative meaning. "... the so called denotative level of the television sign is fixed by certain, very complex (but limited or 'closed') codes. But its connotative level,

though also bounded, is more open, subject to more active transformation, which exploit its polysomic values”(Hall cited in During ,1994).

Rivers and Schramm states, A person who accepts a message will interpret it as his stored –up experience and his built-in values dictate, for he can interpret only in terms of the responses he has learned. We tend to interpret new experience, if possible, in ways that fit with old experience and accepted values. This, of course sometimes leads to distortion-often to selecting the parts of a message that fit comfortably and discarding the rest. (cited in Casty ,1973) But Hall emphasize that social background rather than individual self-determine the formation of meaning out of media messages.

Morley tested Hall’s preferred theory by taking and analyzing the corrected ‘Nationwide’ television news magazine and interviewed people from different social background to see how they make sense of the encoded preferred meaning. But the outcomes were different from Halls theory. Morley discovered that social background and experiences did not necessarily determine peoples understanding of the content of the media. Social class alone was not an adequate explanation for diverse audience responses. Respondents who shared a similar class background sometimes produce different responses (Williams , 2000).

Cantril as cited in Biagi (2001) also states “high critical thinking was the key to have a different interpretation of a message after she studied how people from different background interpreted a show” war of the worlds”... broadcast of Oct 30, 1939 “people with diverse personality characteristics interpreted the broadcast differently a show ‘war of the worlds””. Thus it can be argued that the message alone does not stand as the factor for audiences to accept it. Other causes like the social background, personality, class has to be integrated when one tries to look at audiences and the meaning they take from a media.

2.7. Factors in Reception Process

In studying mass communication as reception, there is a need to consider essential factors in reception analysis. These factors, according to Jensen (1989) cited in Nigussie (2013), are situational, media, audience and analytical factors. The following sub-section discusses each factor.

2.7.1. Situational Factor

Media researchers see reception as getting the target audiences with the intended media message. They consider media reception as the meeting between medium and its audiences. As to Lesswell (1948), the context in which reception occurs is an important concern in the media study. The reception situation is embedding in socioeconomic and historical context that stakes out particular social uses of communication. “In studying media reception, the reception situation should be constructed methodologically as a complex of specific social factors. And the situation should not be divorced from its context” (Jensen, 1989).

Audience figures of a medium may not provide sufficient information on the significance of the medium text. The figure may over-state the audience's involvement in the process. Jensen (1989, p.24) states “The audience experience of a particular medium and its content cannot be separated from how it is used. To understand the lived reality behind media experience, we need to turn to the context where reception takes place.”

Jensen also argues that listening to a media out-let may work simply as an atmosphere generator. It is the act of listening or not listening that constitutes important and recurring variables of family life, and the specific media program is another important aspect for assessing the meaning of listening to a particular mass medium.

Jensen (1989) explained the active social nature of the interpretation between medium and audience needs to be seen from wider social contexts and related factors. Beyond the meeting between medium and audiences, reception situations should be seen as a complex of social and cultural factors. And the reception of communication cannot be separated from the wider every day and political contexts where the context acquire relevance for the audiences.

2.7.2. Media Factors

Media researchers argue that audiences engage media products in reception. Therefore, special attention should be paid to these products. The combined analysis of program structures and audience responses can become the bases of a more comprehensive approach to reception. One central aim of uses and gratifications research (Blumber and Katz, 1974) has been to characterize the experience or gratifications that are associated with the use of a particular medium and types

of media products. Audiences need to gratify a variety of social and aesthetic needs from the mass media.

Demographic categorization of respondents may not well explain certain variations in decoding. As to (Lewis, 1983; Morley, 1981), the demographic definition of recipients may be used as preliminary categorization in practical work with audiences, but it is a category that cannot register the ongoing processes.

The social and cultural identities of the audience are established in the social communities and they are the source of those codes of understanding media text that audiences apply in interpreting media codes. It may be essential in reception analysis to think audiences in terms of codes or discourses rather than socio economic categories. For instance, recipients have their codes of understanding (Jensen, 1989, p.27).

2.7.3. Audience Factors

In the elaboration of the decoding model, Morley (1981) argues that the audiences' ability to decide the various genres of media content should be accounted for as a generalized textual competence. The notion of interpretive community, Jensen (1989, p.28) is useful in studying media audiences. "Interpretive communities and their members are defined both by their social placement and functions and by the cultural traditions, conventions and meanings that unite them." In studying media audiences' interpretations of a particular medium text, it is indispensable to keep in touch with the background scenarios of the recipients.

The role of recipients in mass communication should be explained with reference to their specific social and cultural background: they have been formed or formulated within community of interpretations. The interpretive communities serve to differentiate the audience along lines of interests and usages. Different interpretive communities also seem to rise and fall with changes in society (Jensen, 1989, p.28).

2.7.4. Analytical Factors

The mass media can be taken as sources of meaning. According to media researchers, this is to say we understand media content with constant reference to social realities as it is lived and perceived in everyday affairs.

Jensen (1989) argues that meaning is the stuff that the world of everyday life is made of, and individual instances of communication make no sense before they have been interpreted in the total context of the audience's life world. While the context is not universally ignored, it is assumed for an analytical purpose that communication can be categorized into its constituting elements. In a technical sense, the elements make a difference for the communication, in social sense, have implication in society.

Within the reception analysis, the relationship between medium and audience can be conceived as a linear model of communication, it is a singular instance of meaning transfer. However, meaning attached to media codes need to be looked vis-à-vis interpretation given from different social spheres. Jensen observes the analysis of media reception in qualitative communication model traces the process of establishing the units of meaning. It does so by the inter play between the media codes and audience codes, and in a wider sense, by interpreting the origins of those codes in different sectors of the social context. In sum, Jensen displayed that “meaning is approached as it is being produced.”

2.8. Audience and Construction of Meaning

In many respects, audience is an unfortunate term. It evokes the image of a mass of passive receivers ingesting their daily dose of media products (Croteou and Hoynes, 1997). The above statement is usually true when producers of media messages want to constructs a message that can address a mass people. But this is not the case usually. Williams states “audiences can be defined by the kind of media products they use, by their social type and other divisions that are usually used to categorize a society. Such factors also apply to categorize media audience (William, 2000).”

Croteou and Hoynes state that audience is active and this state of being active can be expressed in three ways. That is through, individual, social and active political action. They describe the individual interpretation of media products as:

This interpretative activity is crucial because it is in the process of audience reception that media texts take on the meaning. Producers construct complex media texts, often with a very clear idea of what they intend to say but this intended message is not simply dumped into the minds of passive audiences. Instead, audiences interpret the messages assigning meanings to its various components. (1997)

This is since media messages tend to have multiple meanings. And understanding of media messages does not stop at the individual level people talk about the program with their friends, families and try to send a message on how they understood or assumed the message. And further, people can demand together to change or improve a media message.

(Croteou and Hoynes, 1997) Hobson states “the message is not solely in the text but can be changed or worked on by the audience as they make their own interpretation of a program (cited in Nigussie 2013).”

On this regard Hall described this difference of derivation of meaning as:

To clarify a ‘misunderstanding’ at the connotative level, we must refer through the codes, to the orders of social life, or economic and political power and of ideology further,... Rules of competence and use, of logics-in-use which seek actively to enforce or prefer one semantic domain over another and rule items into and out of their appropriate meaning-sets (cited in During, 1994)

Williams states “Audiences interpret media messages and their ability to do this is determined by a range of individual, social and cultural factors. They are no longer seen as an undifferentiated mass of passive recipients of messages but a multitude of different groups with their own histories, habits and social interactions” (2000). This interpretation of media message is wide. Interpretation includes the way an audience understand what is spoken or written by the media, how they relate with the people involved in creating the message. In other words interpretation

requires a way to receive a message in accordance with one's prior experience. This calls for the notion of subjectivity in interpreting media messages.

One way of understanding our subjectivity is that it is composed of the variety of discourses that we use to make sense of the social domains that constitute our social experience. Because our social experience has varied, and does vary, so much, our subjectivities are likely to be composed of a number of different, possibly contradictory discourses, each bearing traces of a different scientific ideology (Fiske, 1987). Thus, each one interprets a message in accordance to his/her subjectivity. But this does not mean there is no common meanings that can be derived from a message. Some meanings will be easier to construct because they draw on widely shared cultural values and sets of assumptions about the way the world works. Other meanings will be less commonly derived because they require substantial rethinking or depend on the use of alternative informational resources. As a result, meanings may be actively constructed by audiences. But in most cases one interpretation is likely to be most common and fit with the underlying values of the culture (Croteau and Hoynes, 1997). But there seems to be a point where interpretation is commonly based on a certain factor.

As the researcher mentioned earlier social class has been regarded as one factor. "... social position affects interpretation. It acts as a central mediator of the interpretative process not as a determinate of meaning but as a key provider of the resources we use to decode media messages" (Croteau and Hoynes, 1997). Interpretation of a media message can be seen as making sense of programs.

Regarding audiences of talk show, making sense is seen as. "An attempt to fix representation and privilege certain understanding as unproblematically true" (Manga (2000)). Classifying can be a form of classifying the shows in one way or rather than another is a function of the discourses available. The discourse provides the terms through which one can make sense. Audiences use the discursive resources as in Croteau and Hoynes (1997) the language, concepts and assumptions with a particular subculture or political perspective to help them classify shows in a certain category.

Thus, recent research has begun to focus on this type of audience activity of making meaning that suits their purpose. The manner in which people actively impose meaning on content and

construct new meaning that serves their purposes better than any meaning that might have been intended by the message producer (Burran and Davis, 2006).

2.9. Methods of Audience Reception Research

Reception studies make no absolute distinction between the analysis and interpretation of audience experience of media. In regard to this, Jensen & Jankowski (2002) argue that while moving beyond the vague notion of reading as aesthetic appreciation, reception analysis insists that, for most research purposes, an operationalization of categories that establishes aggregated, decontextualized sets of data which only subsequently are interpreted as findings, does not represent a valid approach to meaning as produced by audiences. Instead, the meaning of the constitutive elements of audience discourses should be interpreted with constant reference to context, both that of the media discourses in question and the broad social context of historical and psychoanalytic circumstances (Jensen & Jankowski, 2002).

Textual criticism or discourse analysis is a key constituent of reception methodologies. According to Jensen (1989) “the analysis of interviews and other audience discourses draws on techniques and models from linguistics and literary criticism. Discourse analysis not just for the analysis of interviews it is also for other current discourses and for the diachronic study of media-related discourses.” Jensen (1989) stated the following general principles:

Relevance’s of discourse analysis are; it should be emphasized that, beyond documenting a respondent’s line of thought and argument, it offers a powerful tool for evaluating the interaction between interviewer and respondent. Similarly, discourse analysis offers a set of linguistic criteria for assessing the inter subjectivity of later interpretations, which makes possible reflection and discussion of disagreements, rather than a simple measure of inter-coder agreement (Jensen, 1989).

According to Jensen & Jankowski (2002) “reception methodologies refer to a comparative textual analysis of media discourses and audience discourses, whose results are interpreted with emphatic reference to context, both the historical as well as cultural setting and the “con-text” of other media contents.” Three main elements of this definition may be explicated in terms of the

collection, analysis, and interpretation of reception data. Textual analysis is the earliest and still the most prevalent method in audience reception research (Staiger, 2005).

The collection or generation of data centers on the audience side. The approaches to audience discourses coincide with the general techniques: interviewing (of individuals or groups); observation (with varying degrees of participation by researchers); and textual criticism (of historical sources or other texts). Scholars further argued that each of these methods, of course, poses classic problems of validity and reliability that have begun to be addressed in the context of reception analysis (Jensen, 1989; Kirk and Miller, 1986).

2.10. Contemporary Audience Research Studies

Reception studies came to the media research realm with the belief that audiences are active and can reconstruct meaning not exactly intended by the media producers but as the audiences own life styles, experience and social interactions dictate. Therefore contemporary audience researches focus on inquiring in to “what audiences think and do” in order to understand the influence of the media (Williams 2000). Reception studies prioritize investigating media messages by active audiences (Shroder et al. 2003) as cited in Mustofa (2011).

It would be interesting to find out how reception theory, which according to Holub (1984) was virtually unknown in 1965, could have become so popular over the next decade. Reception theory has proved to be one of the most marketable items that the scholarly community ever produced. Holub (1984) further argues that:

“No one today can seriously question the enormous impact it has had on the interpretation of literature and art, from Marxists to traditional critics, from classical scholars and medievalists to modern specialists, virtually every methodological perspective and area of literary endeavor has responded to the challenge raised by reception theory.”

In reception analysis it is commonly acknowledged that the path breaking work of Dave Morley (1980), while emerging from the British cultural studies tradition, summed up a long prehistory that had pitted two conceptions of communication against each other. The first broadly conceived school is associated with the logos tradition of the humanities, and has approached

texts as the locus of meaning to be extracted by (more or less) competent readers through a hermeneutic act (Jensen & Jankowski 2002, p.136).

The history of reception analysis is short, but turbulent as it's profound theoretical and political implications (Jensen & Jankowski 2002, p.136). But researchers like Stagier insist that "reception studies matter for our individual and our social and political life. It is a practically pragmatic field even if at times reaching specific conclusions is difficult" (Shroder et al. 2003, p.141). Shroder et al. (2003) also support this view that the study of audience reception, with all the shortcomings they exhibit, continue to be an established tradition with formidable theoretical and methodological foundations.

Today reception research is facing many exciting challenges. What does the growth of the new media mean- are the existing methods of reception research sufficient, or do the more interactive and to a certain extent dialogical media demand that the tool box be expanded with new tools (Mayer, 1998; Roscoe, 1999). And what about reception research oriented towards cognitive psychology, whose practitioners believe they can add a new dimension to reception research (Hoijer, 1998; Hoijer& Werner, 1998). And what about the globalization of the media – what does that mean for reception research? Do we need more transnational, comparative studies to look into differences and similarities in the dissemination and use of media in the age of globalization (Jensen, 1998; Livingstone, 1998) Thus, all questions give a direction where reception research is going? When the researcher started planning this research she imagined that she would try to throw a critical glance at all the exciting things that are currently happening in reception research.

2.11. Media and Social Context Paradigm

Afterward, as the criticism of 'use and gratification' for being too concerned with towards the micro level; then, regularly cultural effects theories seek to understand the broader impact of the media on how we understand the society and how we collectively think (Tudor, 1979). Tudor also underpins that "this represents a shift from examining as a source of individual effects to understand them as articulators of culture" (Williams, 2003).

In line with the social context paradigm, McQuail (2000) asserted that media were shown to activate within a pre-existing arrangement of social relationships and a particular social and cultural context. He goes on to advise that these factors took primacy in shaping the thoughts attitudes and behaviors under study and also in shaping media choice, attention and response on the part of audiences (McQuail, 2000).

Williams further emphasized the conceptualization of media in a broader social context; “people exist within groups and their immediate set of social relations was seen as important determinant of their understanding of media messages”(Williams, 2003).

As a result, the shortcomings of the “uses and gratification’ theory motivated researchers, particularly those in United Kingdom, for example the cultural theorists like Stuart Hall, to frame their approaches to audience research within different theory traditions (Ross and Nightingale, 2003).

2.12. Theoretical Framework

2.12.1. Uses and Gratification Theory

What mass communication scholars today refer to as the uses and gratifications (U&G) approach is generally recognized to be a sub tradition of media effects research(McQuail, 1997). Early in the history of communications research, an approach was developed to study the gratifications that attract and hold audiences to the kinds of media and the types of content that satisfy their social and psychological needs (Cantril, 1942). Much early effects research adopted the experimental or quasi-experimental approach, in which communication conditions were manipulated in search of general lessons about how better to communicate, or about the unintended consequences of messages (Klapper, 1960).

Uses and gratification theory may still provide a useful framework from which to begin to study Internet and new media communication. U&G model provides a productive method of examining Internet use at this time. Much of the current activity on the Web involves exploratory behavior, offering an environment in which users can contact thousands of sources, find information presented in a wide range of formats, and interact with many of the sources they

contact. Klapper(1960) emphasized this interactive capacity of computer-mediated communication and suggested a group of U&G statements be used as rating scales to evaluate computer-aided instructional programs.

According to Ross and Nightingale (2003) the uses and gratifications perspective brought audiences to the center stage of media researches by recognizing the cognitive variables in understanding the role of the media in everyday life. Stone et al writes that the use and gratifications perspective is one of a precious few theories that the communication discipline can truly call its own. It examines media behavior from the audiences members view, acknowledging that media users control their own decision (Stone et al.,1999).

Stone et al (1999) also summarizes what the theory seeks to explain abstractly in the following five points: The psychological needs that help shape; Why people use the media and that motivate people to; Engage in media use behaviors to; Derive gratifications to; Fulfill those intrinsic needs, within the confines of a particular socio- cultural environment.

DeFluer and Ball-Rokeach (1989) shares Stone et al view point by stating that The uses and gratifications perspective is a major shift in the description of the role of the audiences in the sense that it emphasized the active role of audiences by focusing on “what they do with the media content rather than what the media do to the people”.

McQuail (2008) who summarizes the basic assumptions of the uses and gratifications theory in the followings four points: media and content choice is generally rational and directed towards certain specific goals and gratifications; Audiences are conscious of the media related needs; Broadly speaking personal utility is a more significant determinant of audience formation than aesthetic or cultural factors; All or most of the relevant factors for audience formation (motive, perceived or obtained satisfactions, media choices background variables) can in principle be measured.

They also added that the theory recognizes first individuals differs a long several psychological dimensions which, in turn, prompt them to make different choices about which media to patronize, and second even individuals exposed to the same media content will respond to it in different ways, depending on their characteristics (1999). As part of its theoretical assumptions,

the uses and gratifications approach implies that individual audiences approach every media program with a sense of purpose. Nevertheless, this has been contested on the ground that audiences not only casually tune to media outputs but they may attend to a particular media program out of appreciation of the way that particular program is composed and presented; watching and listening to a media program may not all the time be goal oriented and seriously purposeful (Williams 2003, McQuail in Stagier, 2005). DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach add to the list of criticisms that the uses and gratifications perspective did little to provide “a systematic explanation beyond a list of reasons for which people claim for the selection and attending to the media” (1989).

Moreover, According to Katz et al as cited in Stone et al (1999) uses and gratifications theory is founded on three basic tenets: Viewers are goal directed in their behavior; they are active media users; and they are aware of their needs and select media to gratify those needs.

The use and gratification theory also indicates that audiences use the media to satisfy their needs. “...there is a plurality of responses to media messages, that people are capable of making their own minds up, accepting some messages ,rejecting others using the media for a variety of reasons and using them differently at different times”(Watson,2003). The theory states audiences use the media for different needs of gratification. That is to divert from their problems, to develop personal relationship with some characters, to experience what others are going through and to get some information (Watson, 2003). McQuail gives the way an audience can be active. By definition, the audience as a mass is passive, because it is incapable of collective action, while any true social group has the means and may have the inclination to be active. Individuals act of media choice, attention and response can also be more or less active in terms of degree of motivation, attention involvement pleasure, critical or creative response, connection with the rest of life (2000). Thus it is the individual action of each audience that can collectively become active still with different degrees.

2.12.2. Weaknesses of the Uses and Gratification Theory

To begin with, according to Raynax, Wall and Kruger (2003) , the uses and gratification theory is the idea that the mass audiences make active use of what the media offer. The overall idea of the theory is that people are using the media to fulfill their needs (psychological and social) the theory have some limitations, such as its highly individualistic nature. It only takes into account

the individual psychological gratification derived from individual media use. The social context of the media use is ignored. For example: the environment as well as the state of the media user. Despite the wide range of choices available to users, they have no control over the media and what it produces. What they consume is solely prepared by gatekeepers and may include their influences and perception. These gatekeepers add to, subtract from and organize issues, subjects and stories devoid of the control from the users.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1. Overview

To find out how audiences of LTV show make meaning out of the messages of the program qualitative research method is appropriate for the study. This chapter defines the qualitative research methods that give the reasons for choosing the methodology for this study and the chapter also focuses on the sampling procedure and the methods of data collection. The chapter also highlights the data analysis procedure.

This study proposed to find out how audiences of ‘LTV Show’ perceive the message transmitted in the show. The show deals with political, religious and economic issues in Ethiopia. This research used qualitative tools such as focus group discussion (FGD) and in-depth interview as main tools of data collection. This chapter also provides a detailed account of the parameters within which qualitative methodological tools were used to collect data, as well as an outline of the frameworks for analysis.

3.2. Qualitative Research Design

To achieve the objectives of the research, qualitative method was used. Interpretation is not a simple procedure of accepting/ rejecting media texts. Rather, audiences interpret in agreement with their past experiences, individual characteristics, cultural practices and socio-cultural context (Mcquail,1997).The customs, practices, beliefs, languages, values and attitudes of a particular society strongly influence reception research (Hebert & Gibbons,2000). Addis Ababa city community was chosen as the location of this research as it is currently the epicentre. In addition to this, Addis Ababa is the capital city of Ethiopia, most populated and culturally diverse city. The researcher was curious to find out how the residents perceive and make meanings out of the show.

Thus, in endeavouring to generate empirical data on the reception of audiences on LTV show, this study trailed a qualitative research design. As can be anticipated of a reception study; the study mainly focused on interpretations of a definite media message; how do audiences make sense of the hard talk. Similarly, as Mytton (1999) theorizes the advantages qualitative method

brings onward in audience research as “in qualitative method researchers have found very useful ways of understanding human behaviour, discovering how media messages are interpreted.” The data gathered through FGD, in-depth interview and document analysis were analysed using qualitative method.

Accordingly, this chapter deals with the methodology chosen to convey out the research and discusses the research design, sampling process, the numerous methods of data collection and data analysis.

3.3. Sampling Method and Data Collection Procedures

3.3.1. Sampling Method

The researcher employed systematic sampling and purposive sampling methods to meet the objective. As to Schoder et al (2003, p.109) “A reception study always initiates with curiosity about how people experience a media invention, the answer to the question of who to recruit is almost given in advance.”

As the purpose of this study is to explore how audiences make sense of LTV show on LTV, the researcher implemented three different stages to be collaborated with one another and with the theoretical framework. The three stages include; focus group discussions, individual in-depth interviews and document analysis.

3.3.2. The Population and Sample Size

The researcher purposely selected the study area and population. A total of targeted 65 respondents were selected from Addis Ababa, for in-depth interview and focus group discussion (FGD). The researcher embraced a series of different approaches for this study. The systematic sampling includes 56 respondents with Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and 9 respondents, with whom in-depth interviews was conducted purposely. Among 600 received calls from Addis Ababa the researcher selected 63 callers from ten sub cities. However, 56 of them were available.

3.4. Data Collection Instrument

As Barker and Morley (2006) states audience’s understandings, perceptions, feelings, motivations, and desires are investigated with qualitative methods such as document analysis, focus group discussion and individual in-depth interview data collection instruments will use for the qualitative research design.

In spite of the above statement, the researcher considered the program of LTV show TV program aired between the periods of March 1st, 2018 to March 13th, 2019. That covered a span of a year and two weeks which roughly gave forty two hours programs production. Given the schedule set to complete this study, it was believed that the satisfied analysis of the year and two weeks programs would suffice to serve the research objectives and to gather the desired level of knowledge and ideas on the program contents. In line with this, the researcher also found out that during this period there was not any special occurrence that enforced to change the content of the hard talk aired. However, some interviews were repeated and some days were also missed. Therefore, during March 1st, 2018 – March 13th, 2019 , 42 hours interviews were aired and selected for this study.

3.4.1. Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group discussion (FGD) was used to collect important data on audience reception of the message of LTV show. The focus group discussion as itemized by Hansen et al (1998, p. 261) is governed by “the design to examine through a more ‘natural’ setting and frame than that of the survey or experiment, how media audiences relate to, make sense of, use , negotiate and interpret media content”).

In addition, Patton sees the group interview as,

Highly efficient qualitative data collection technique (which provides) some quality controls on data collection in that participants tend to provide checks and balances on each other that weed out false or extreme views and it is fairly easy to assess the extent to which there is a relatively consistent, shared view among the participants (cited in Flick , 2002).

The population of the study was residents of Addis Ababa. This was because there are around six televisions set per thousand households Ong(2005) and there is more television set in the capital and also more viewers in the city. To insure the objectivity, the sampling method has to be purposive. This study used two sampling techniques which are Purposive sampling and Systematic sampling.

The researcher implemented the approach known as systematic since systematic sampling is a type of probability sampling where each element in the population has a known and equal probability of being selected. The probabilistic framework is maintained through selection of

one or more random starting points .Accordingly every 10 of the callers from each sub city have been contacted.

This research relied on Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as a main source of data. The study would have applicable group demonstrative and group size based on the idea forwarded by media reception researchers. According to Hansen et al, (1998) the number of focus groups will depend on the aims of the research and on available resources. The more homogenous a group in terms of background or social characteristics, the fewer the researcher needs. Hansen et al, (1998) added more focus group studies to obtain group representative of the general population in media research have rarely sought. Media researchers recommended that participants for focus group discussions should be drawn from naturally existing groups or communities-people, who already lived, worked or socialized together. Thus, the researcher held ten focus group discussions, where the participants were taken from 10 different sub cities found in Addis Ababa.

According to Flick (2002), “The number of groups to be directed depends on the research question and on the number of different population subgroups required.” According to this, ten focus groups have been used to help answer the research questions and represent the subgroups. However, the availability of participants affect the expected number of discussants that need to be in the group.

The ten focus groups that were assumed to have different background like age, profession and gender which may lead respondents decode different meanings from the hard talk, yet this is not the only factor that can distress meaning differences among audiences. Livingstone et al (1994) on their study of audience discussion programs state “Age is a major stratifying variable for the television audience and it is known that amounts of viewing and broad program or genre preferences vary greatly in relation to age”. Since most of the episodes involve the economic, social, political and religious issues, status of occupation that is being employed or not may have an impact on how they interpret such message. Accordingly age, profession and gender classification is presented under the analysis part. Moreover, McQuail (2000) ` conditions that “one can say in summary, that differently gendered media culture, whatever the causes and the forms taken, invokes different responses, and that differences of gender lead to alternative modes of taking meaning from the media”. Thus, the researcher assumed that the three factors, occupation, gender and age affect meaning differences among audiences.

Systematic sampling is a type of probability sampling where each element in the population has a known and equal probability of being selected. The probabilistic framework is maintained through selection of one or more random starting points. Accordingly every 10 of the callers from each sub city have been contacted.

Based on the above explanation, the ten groups were from the ten sub cities in Addis Ababa. There were 600 calls from Addis Ababa residents based on LTV's data. Among 600 the researcher decided to take every 10 of this through systematic sampling and took 63, in fact only 56 were available. From the document in LTV three sub cities residents had less number of people that gives call to the TV station comparing to the rest seven sub cities.

Furthermore, as Schoder et al.,(2003) elaborate, the flow of natural discussion is likely to be impeded if people cannot begin a degree of common ground and a mutual wave length. He further goes on to argue that cultural taste is still, to a large extent, an area characterized by segregation, in spite of the levelling developments of the postmodern age Schoder et al (2003).Accordingly, people that live in the same sub city tend to have the same kind of understanding or way of perceiving message due to their common environment.

In this study, the respondents were further screened by whether they had seen at least half of the hard talk. The number of respondents in each group varied from six to eight depending on the number of people available in the group. The age of the respondents varied from 21-65 and the researcher selected the respondents with Systematic Sampling.

The invitation for the discussants were given one week prior to the discussion date, thus they can watch or revise some of the shows which were aired on LTV. The researcher used a semi-structured discussion guide to see whether the participants are responding to the points the researcher was intending to find out. The researcher was the moderator of the discussion, with two assistants to help her with noting down important ideas and keeping the discussion on the contents. The discussions were conducted in Amharic since it is the mother tongue of the respondents, and the interview guide was also translated into Amharic.

In addition, the researcher had also tried to avoid settings and environments that might create discomfort. The researcher carefully selected locations that would make the informants feel at 'home'. The majority of the discussions were also held in suitable rooms with a TV set.

The respondents were asked to write their age, educational status, gender and their occupation prior to the discussion as for the research to understand who is speaking on the recorder. They were not asked to mention their names to make them feel free of any ideas or thoughts they wanted to raise. However, some were not reluctant to mention their names.

The approximate time for the duration of the interview was about an hour to an hour and half depending on the mood of the participants. In spite of availability, among the discussants 2 from Addis Ketema, 3 from Lideta, 1 from Arada and 1 from KolfeKeranio could not make it due to personal reasons. Most respondents were very interested and engaged in the discussion.

3.4.2. In-depth Interview

The researcher conducted 9 in-depth interviews with purposively and appropriately selected informants in Addis Ababa. Participants who work in LTV and similar hard talk hosts in different media were selected purposively.

In-depth interview was also used to collect data from the producers of the show to [catch](#) out what their reasons for selecting the hard talk. Thus, by using the in-depth interview, the producers could give out reasons and methods for encoding the preferred meaning.

As Wimmer and Dominic (2003, p.127) "Intensive and well accomplished in-depth interviews provide meticulous background about the reasons why respondents give specific answers. It explains data concerning respondents' opinions, values, motivations, recollections, experiences, and feelings." Following this, in-depth interview is effective in a smaller sample, thus only few people in this category were selected.

3.4.3. Document Analysis

Document analysis is a systematic procedure for revising or evaluating document- both printed and electronic (Computer –based and Internet-transmitted) material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis involves that data be surveyed and inferred in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and change empirical knowledge. Documents that may be used for systematic assessment as part of a study take a selection of forms. They enclose advertisements; agendas; attendance registers, and minutes of meetings; manuals; background papers; letters and memoranda; radio and television scripts and countless public records. (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Rapley, 2007).

Based on the above the researcher reviewed the analysed document which was provided at the TV station. The researcher also revised the recording book the TV centre uses to record calls and backgrounds of the callers and some cell phone codes to help her identify the sub cities. The TV station had some action researches done with their employees to help them diagnose some problems and search solutions and mainly to improve the quality of the program. In result, the researcher has reviewed the action researches. Based on the recording book, the researcher uncovered meanings, developed understanding and discovered insights relevant to the research problem.

Documents can be investigated as a way to substantiate findings or corroborate evidence from other sources. Sociologists, in particular, typically use document analysis to verify their findings (Ambrosiano & Mays de Perez, 2000). Thus, there were number of people calling from one sub city and less from the other one, going through the document assisted the researcher in analysing number of population and choosing the right sampling method.

3.5. Data Gathering Techniques

The researcher had also tried to transcribe every meaning and sense that was made by participants to ensure exactness as much as possible.

As Flick (2000) explains that using machines for recording makes the documentation of data independent of perspectives those of the researcher as well as those of the subjects under study, the researcher used hand written notes and audio taping for data gathering during the interview and discussion session.

In order to prevent single participants or partial groups from dominating the interview, two assistant moderators have also worked together with the researcher during the discussion time. Table 3.1 shows the sub cities in Addis Ababa, calls received and callers in percentage and every 10 of participants taken according to systematic sampling.

Table 3.1

Sub cities in Addis Ababa	Number of received calls	Every 10 (according to Systematic sampling)	Research Participants
KolfeKeranio	69	7	6
Arada	67	7	6
AkakiKaliti	38	4	4
Yeka	59	6	6
Lideta	84	9	6
NifasilkLaphto	59	6	6
Addis Ketema	72	8	6
Bole	50	5	5
Kirkos	58	6	6
Gulele	44	5	5
Total	600	63	56

3.6. Data Analysis and Interpretation Processes

As discussed earlier, the research employed qualitative data gathering techniques. The data was analyzed based on appropriate qualitative research methodologies. Data analysis is the central stage where researchers begin to realize their findings in light of their research targets (Bisit, 2003).

All the interviews were directed in Amharic and for the perseverance of the thesis were translated into English by the researcher herself. All interviews were transcribed in ‘word’ format (in Amharic) and wide-ranging notes were also taken during the discussion. Interview transcripts and written notes were considered systematically through iterative and repeated re-reading of them. This made it potential to gain an increasingly profound understanding of each interviews, of complex contextual factors emerging from the above-mentioned interviews and of the many relationships between the relevant concepts. The data were gathered from 56 participants though 63 participants were targeted for Focus Group Discussion. The data gathered were analysed through descriptive method.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

The researcher first present a written informed consent form describing the nature of the research project and the purpose of one's participation in it. Furthermore, respondents were informed that, they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Only those who are voluntary to participate in the research were approached. The researcher also assured that the names of respondents will not be revealed in the study. The researcher is committed to report the research findings in a complete and honest fashion, without misleading others about the nature of the findings. Under no circumstance, the researcher fabricated data to support a particular conclusion.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

4.1. Overview

This chapter includes and discusses the foremost findings of the study. The analysis was based on the major objective of the study, which was designed at studying audiences' reception analysis of 'LTV show' on LTV.

The analysis was supported by the theoretical frameworks and models presented under the literature review. However, the analysis was not restricted to specific theory or model. The theoretical frameworks and the models were used as a guide in the data analysis

The researcher employed document analysis, Focus group discussion (FGD) and individual in-depth interview as a main data gathering tools. The questions for both methods were designed to analyze audience reception of LTV Show hard talk and the interpretations the audiences made and structures related to audience reception.

The findings discussed, illustrated and confirmed with selected quotations from the document analysis, 9 in-depth interviewees and ten focus group discussions consisted of a total of sixty five interviewees between ages of 21-65 participated in the study.

4.2. Backgrounds of the respondents

As mentioned earlier, the researcher used Focus group discussion, In-depth interview and document analysis. Undertaking this research there were 10 focus group discussions with 56 discussants and 12 key informants with different background. The data were interpreted and analysed in a descriptive way.

4.2.1. Key Informants (Interviewees)

Key informants were interviewed accordingly. Therefore, all informants are from journalism background. Participants who were engaged while the discussion took place were selected purposely. However, some informants were taken by realizing their role as a hard talk host and since they produce similar hard talk. Among 9 interviewees 2 of them were female which accounts 22.2% and the rest were male which accounts 77.8% of the interviewees.

4.2.2. Discussants in Focus Group Discussion

Participants among FGD 1- 10 were classified into three based on the profession, gender and age. Thus, regarding the figure 83.9% of focus group discussants are male whereas as the rest 16.1% are female. Looking at the age of the discussants almost 89.3% of them are aged between 21-50, while the rest 10.71% are aged 55 and over.

Regarding their profession teachers are 14 and it accounts 25% of the population in FGD; Civil workers are 14 and accounts 25%; 5 journalists and it accounts 9%; University students are 8 in number and it accounts 14% of the FGDs population; merchants are 5 and accounts 9%; one politician and accounts 2% and others are 9 and accounts 16% of the participants.

4.3. Relevance of the hard talk to the needs and interest of the audience

As Morley (1986) states that audience responses to certain programs can be affected by their initial reaction to the relevance or irrelevance of the text to them.

All participants of the FGDs (FGD1- FGD 10) agreed with the idea that the issues raised and discussed on LTV show were relevant to audiences.

However, five respondents from different groups explained that the presentation determined the importance of the show rather than the topic. They have explained their opinion in the following manner:

FGD6 (D) – (Anger) “I think she started this program just as an opportunity to present her feeling. If she thinks a certain person has to be on the hard talk, she invites and airs the video. What is important now is bringing peace and preaching togetherness.”

FGD7 (F) – “I am too bored of listening the host mentioning some faults the interviewee made on their social media channels. There is nothing that the audience could learn from somebody’s hate speech on social media.”

FGD1 (B) – “You must be kidding! What relevance do you expect from Ethiopian hard talk? There are lots of things we need to learn from a hard talk on BBC. It should also be live not recorded as well and will be able to see the real reaction.”

FGD8 (A) –“She talks about things that are not in the thoughts of the people and creates ambiguity.”

As the above discussants mentioned the hard talk is not relevant to their needs since the host expresses her feeling rather than being voice to voiceless. As Stone et al writes that the use and gratifications perspective is one of a precious few theories that the communication discipline can truly call its own. It examines media behavior from the audiences members view, acknowledging that media users control their own decision (Stone et al.,1999).

On the contrary, there is a general agreement among the respondents that support the worthiness of the show and they believed that they got option to view on the media. One comment that was raised is that how interesting to see the hard talk when it reveals the truth and shows the true personality of the guests. The participant in FGD6 (E) has also mentioned the importance of the hard talk in clarifying the misinformation in the society.

After the researcher found out the respondents response regarding the relevance, the researcher asked them how they relate it to their reality: whether the problems and the solutions raised in the show exist in reality or not. Each group answered it accordingly:

FGD2 (E) – “The hard talk is so wonderful. I think some of our most popular and honoured television programs should take some lesson on how to present organized talk show.”

FGD3 (A) – “As a teacher, I am always interested to hear this political tragedy happening on TV. I always use the languages (expressions) used on the show to discuss with my students. The host needs to be praised for letting us see critical hard talk like LTV show.”

FGD10 (C) – “The program is fantastic, innovative and thought provoking. However, there has to be an honest look and portrayal of real life.”

FGD5 (C) – “The questions raised are relevant as I sometimes ask myself and see where I am. However, she sometimes tried to convince the interviewees.”

FGD10 (E) – “ The things we need to ask to our politicians are being asked on this hard talk, thus I personally like the show as it is giving answers to the questions that triggered in my mind.”

Interviewee 2 –“Bethlehem (host) knows how to challenge a guest. You can observe an interesting flow of ideas and hard talk happening for real. It is so relevant to watch the show and put it on your prior list.”

Interviewee 4 –“I see relevance in watching the show. It considers the society and the current situation in Ethiopia.”

In addition to the above, FGD1 (C,E& F) – They all agreed on the relevance of the hard talk, yet regarding the issue related to their life they said that it depends on the interviewee . They mentioned how hard it is to give a yes or no response as the reaction differs every time. FGD8(B& D) both compared the hard talk with plenty of shows they see on TV these days and admired LTV show as it opens doors to discuss more after the show in their perspectives. Likewise FGD7 (A&C) believed that the program can change perspectives of people regarding politics and accepted the relevance of the hard talk.

The rest participants forwarded similar ideas on the relevance of the hard talk. They pointed out that they were surprised to view the doubtfulness and fearful apparition the politicians had. These kind of response are the reflection and experience of their life .

Furthermore, as Heeter and Greenburg (1985) states the active audience concept is going credibility with a wider range of source selection and channels of information, individuals are selecting media repertoire in the areas of most interest. In line with this, the participants of both the FGD and in-depth interview agreed with the relevance of the topics of LTV show program to their day to day life. However, though the number of women participants is less, they tend to relate the relevance of the issue to their daily life than the male respondents.

In general, analysing the overall implication of the discussions on the relevance of the hard talk to the audiences needs and interest. The data implied that most of the participants found it relevant. Most participants pointed out how the show helped them to know more about the politician’s stance, their party’s objective and the current political situations in the country.

4.4. Reactions towards LTV Show

LTV show has 75,000 YouTube subscribers. Once the hard talk is aired on LTV on Wednesdays it can be found on YouTube by the next day. The researcher is one of the subscribers. Thus she gets notifications of a new released video through her email. As Livingstone et al (1994) theorizes it is important to see all the angles when doing a research and it is not enough to only use one method or discipline especially when it comes to media studies.

A Douglas (2014) social media is any digital media that can be used to share messages, photos, news, information, music and videos with cyber communities. For this reason, social media heavily relied on mobile applications and websites created for social interactions which allow users to generate, express and share information about themselves or others. The typical examples for social media are Twitter, Blogs, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Wikis, Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram and Flickr Lewis(2009). Some of the YouTube comments from YouTube are:

U E – “The show is based on ethnicity. The host is showing us the true color of the government. I feel bad for journalists as this host from LTV would be considered as one. I wish I get her in person and tell her all my feelings. Anyways this is expected from a person with no journalistic background.”

Alexander P – “You better stay in protestant religion as this is not your place. Do not mess what you do not know. Audiences are not try and errors. “

AbrhamYifter – “Why are you forcing the guests to believe what you know is true. Are your words from Quaran or Bible? Who do you think you are? You need to know that Amhara is first.”

Tia Ahmed – “You are looking for trouble, you keep asking stupid questions.”

Abdul Rehmantuha – “Where have you been when terrorists like the so called Qero terrified people? Why did not you try to confront the leader? Eh?”

PlatinumNania – “Best of the best the show is and the host as well. Thank you for doing good job. Keep up the good work girl.”

SosinaMoges – “Stop accusing and keep on interviewing please.”

P K –“Are you in love with TPLF? Why do not you leave them alone? If you are jealous you can join them.”

Looking at most of the comments the researcher mostly found hate speeches. Except some comments which can be numbered, audiences on YouTube are not writing critical or constructive comments which might help the producer to evaluate the program. The problem on social media is that anyone can create an account and comment without considering the effect beneath any video. Based on the comments from YouTube audiences can also be seen taking parts according to their ethnic group, gender, age and profession. As the new ruling government gives freedom to individuals, people can be seen abusing it and using it for their own benefits.

From the discussions on the issue, on the reaction of the audience towards the show, participants and key informants raised different ideas and some of their responses have been selected and presented below:

FGD9 (E) –“As I am viewer of the program, I can say a lot about each part. The guests are always different unless it is holiday so it is skipped or some hard talks are long and have continual part, you can always see new faces coming. It is true that we need a hard talk and a host like Bethelhem Tafesse who fear no to ask politicians. I have different reactions every time. I got angry sometimes by thinking that better questions would have been asked. Other days with the reaction of the guest as they try to explain or deny truth. As for me, it depends on the situation.”

FGD6(F) –“ I get angry when I see some guests who have created a lot of mess in the country and trying to suggest solutions and give advices on public.”

FGD9 (A, B, F) –Share the same concept though they put it in different words. All three have confessed that they always get embarrassed of the show. They said the show is valueless except for some specific people which need popularity.”

FGD5 (A) –“The hard talk is not interesting and cannot reach the majority of the population. I do not think it is competent with previous hard talks or programs like 'Aynachen'. The program is only delivered through LTV, which is new TV channel. I do not mostly see myself having any reaction or feeling towards the show.”

According to the above discussants viewing the hard talk makes them mad since it does not consider the majority of the population and its accessibility. On the contrary some FGD participants and interviewee revealed their reactions as follows:

FGD 3(B) –“I would like to thank the producers for straightforward questions and report on the situation. The host handled difficult situation and tragic subject in a careful, non-sensationalized way. Well done. The hard talk made a deep impact on me and I plan to share some of the videos to my friends and transcript to others.”

FGD4 (F) –“I found the program to be informative, but also frightening.”

The above respondents explained that the hard talk is informative, though provoking and interesting to watch since it is presented in an impactful way. In fact interviewee 8 explained his thoughts according to profession and ethics of journalists.

Interviewee 8 –“Since I am a hard talk host in OBN,I see audiences reacting in different ways as hard talk is new for Ethiopian people. I believe that negative reaction lasts until audiences know about the relevance of a hard talk in creating peace. As viewer of LTV, I would like to thank the host for being an honest, unbiased and confident. However professional wise, Betty is extremely unprofessional. She is unprepared, argumentative, and rude when she is proven wrong. She makes up facts and attributes them to her guest. Guests mostly come out looking reasonable. She is judgemental. Watching the show for me is a total waste of time. I don't consider it as a hard talk since the objective is not clear.”

As some respondent's mentioned, it is important to consider the core principles of journalism or ethical considerations. Thus, truth and accuracy, independence, fairness and impartiality, humanity and accountability are the basic ones. In line with this, eight FGD participants and one key informant have raised some points. Six are selected and presented below since the rest two have similar ideas.

FGD2 (B) –“I have seen the host taking side, so I do not think she knows the principle. As I took some training on journalism; journalists must be independent voice.”

FGD 3(D) –“How can a person with pharmacist background be a journalist? This can only be seen in Ethiopia where there are people who are just followers and does not know about professionalism.”

FGD4 (B) –“I have seen her accusing especially when it is a person she does not like or want to give a hard time.”

FGD9(C) –“I think a journalist should have put himself/herself in the other person’s shoe; however the host on this hard talk did not confess when she made mistakes like raising some sayings from her guest’s social media and presenting it there wrongly. When the interviewee tried to answer and clarify what he meant by she did not want to be there playing the fool to fool game, yet you can see her trying to get another point to attack without listening the guest. It seems like the program has never considered the audiences.”

FGD10 (A) –“I would appreciate the show if it continues on focusing peace, togetherness’ and the future of our nation. The involvement as public broadcasting is essential in this role and I personally would love to thank the producers whatsoever I need.”

Interviewee 6 – “The host is not mature enough to conduct this kind of dialogues. A person with journalistic background and wise like Meaza Biru should have been chosen.”

As Hall (1980) categorizes the different meanings formed while decoding media messages the respondents’ comments and thoughts from YouTube and FGDs the following things are also need to be considered. In today’s age of journalism, professional journalists share the social media sphere with tweeters, bloggers and avid social media users. However, there is much backlash over what journalists can say or include on their social media explanations both professional and personal. While many news organizations and media companies encourage reporters to use social media to gather information and create a “brand” for themselves, online comments, tweets or posts can put a reporter in the negative spotlight. We have all seen this in Ethiopia’s recent events over the past few years. These incidents range from journalists expressing partisan opinions, promoting political views, endorsing candidates and making

offensive comments. With that in mind, the ethical challenge is to develop social media guidelines that allow reporters to explore the new digital media world, yet also draw reasonable limits on personal commentary. Guidelines as such are important in integrating journalism with social media in today's age of media. As social media continues to make a huge splash on journalism, it is important for journalists and educators to become social media role models.

In over-all suggestion the participants and key informants reaction is both negative and positive as to the data however, maximum believed that LTV show needs to work on the weaknesses raised from the audiences and consider the criticism. They have also reflected their ideas by raising questions, for example, as to why the producers failed to research the public opinion before broadcasting each parts of the hard talk.

4.5. Nature of LTV show in relation with audience

On the literature review part Rivers and Schramm(1973) states that a person who accepts a message will interpret it as his stored- up experience and his built-in values dictate, for he can interpret only in terms of the responses he has learned. Thus, the discussants have forwarded their view according to the above factor. Looking at their responses:

FGD2 (C) –“It is a hard talk where you can see politicians being doubtful with their own words. According to my knowledge there is no one that I can recall has come out ‘victorious’ from the tough interview.”

FGD5 (E) –“It has some natures of a hard talk, yet it is mostly trying to convince the interviewees.”

FGD5 (F) –“It is an interesting hard talk. You see the guests taking direct insults with grace and choosing instead to remain focused on the answers to the questions. I am always astonished with the patience of the guests.”

According to the above discussants the nature of LTV Show is considered as an interesting hard talk in relation to its audience since it reveals the truth through hard and challenging questions.

FGD6 (A) –“It is a hard talk, but it is not the time to have one's weaknesses brought to the fore whatever reason. It was actually surprising that LTV would want to air such a program, knowing the current Ethiopian situation.”

FGD7 (D) –“For me the truth is that LTV does not, in the slightest influence in political perceptions in Ethiopia.”

FGD10 (B) –“I cannot label the program as a hard talk. If I do not miss the question for me a hard talk is tough interview, yet you can see the journalist in LTV show loose and get angry because of the interviewees response. If Betty is an honest woman, she will admit that she failed in her ultimate objective to rattle her guest. Sometimes it looks like a game of winning and losing.”

Interviewee 5 –“The nature of the program at first was not a hard talk. It wa a discussion led by Bilen, former English News Anchor, on EBC English News. Later on, they brought Bethlehem, a new host and changed the nature, thus what I did observe is that they have not been working with specific objectives.”

Interviewee 7 –“ As a journalist ,who works as a host for a hard talk, I know how it is done. As for me, LTV show is not a hard talk. Before airing ‘Beretu Weg’ on EBC, the team worked very hard in gathering facts and bringing all to the studio as an evidence, thus for every questions I raised for my guests I have supporting documents not rumours from social media like LTV. The other difference in nature is that LTV is mostly about winning the guests, but the nature of ‘BertuWeg’ is typical example of hard talk. We do not stop in the studio, yet we further investigate and brought significant change. The current change of former officials of community police by the prime minister can be one example of this.”

Producer: I joined LTV show’s team after the nature became hard talk. The challenges are a lot. Audiences have different needs and interests, thus meeting all the expectations of all are one challenge. Though we always try to edit and bring the best of the show the view point of our audiences is different. We receive comments through my phone and YouTube subscribers, however some audiences want the show to meet their interest without considering others and some asks us to interview specific politicians or leaders for the next episode as to their need. In a diverse audiences like this, LTV show cannot satisfy all our audiences. The other challenge I have faced was forced to have a physical fight with one of our guests. In addition to this, I and the host always receive warnings/ threats from unknown people.

To conclude, audiences argued with the messages of the program and take the important lesson relating to their experience and culture of the society they are living with. The dilemma was by way of comparing LTV show to BBC's hard talk, the respondents in all FGDs do not agree in its hard talk nature as for them it lacks major things. However some discussants in FGDs were reserved. The data implied that the participants are in between accepting the show as a hard talk and not.

4.6. Audiences opportunity to participate in LTV Show hard talk

According to reception studies and as McQuail (2000) describes media use as a particular socio-cultural context and as a process of giving meaning to cultural products and experiences in everyday life. The use and gratification theory recommends to know the audience in preparing any media content and to work on the gratification of audiences.

Accordingly, audiences of LTV show in Addis were asked about their opportunities to participate in the hard talk. The participants and key informants have put their ideas in the following way:

FGD2 (A) –“I do not like listening to long presentations and staring at the same thing. When I watch LTV show, I sometimes get lost of the ideas and cannot recall what have been said. I would prefer if it is a live show and people call to ask questions so that I will also be part of it. I mostly hear when the host mentions quotes from the guest social media, but have never heard raising questions rose from the audience.”

FGD4 (C) –“The first thing I consider as a teacher for my presentation in the classroom is - that about my student's level and I consider the same for a journalist. I believe that the first step of a journalist should be the audience's perspective. What the audiences be interested in, what they know should always be considered. Especially LTV show producers have to focus on what might help the audiences learn. The answers for these questions can be found on their social media and from the callers. Moreover by asking these questions and by being able to identify answers; they can start to think creatively about their audience's needs and interests as I am part of the audience.”

FGD6 (D) –“The only way you can give comments about the guests is after you watch the show on LTV. By that time it is already late and you cannot call and give your ideas unless you jot them down on a piece of paper and give a call the other day. I sometimes write comments on YouTube channel of LTV, but I have never received any response at least a like button to notify me that they read it. Thus, I prefer live phone call while the interview is happening. I say it has no chance for audiences to participate.”

Interviewee 3 –“LTV show needs to start from creating awareness about hard talk. We have to give brief explanation for each guest, so audiences won't conclude the guests they forward are from the TV stations.”

Looking at the above respondents, involving audience is essential to making an impact. The presentation should pull them in, get their attention and stimulate their thoughts and understanding. This can be done in a number of ways. The way that the presentation is planned should be critical in terms of using language and ideas that the audience will understand. It must also ensure that there is sufficient time for questions and discussion with the guests. The way that presentation is delivered should create a bond with the audience. The use of eye contact, gesture, spoken language and energy should all communicate effectively and enthusiastically with all areas of the room, thus ensuring that the audience receives positive messages about it. Live phone call or raising some question from YouTube might also flavour the hard talk. Therefore, the respondents believed that there has to be a means to the audiences to participate in the hard talk. Therefore, the respondents believed that there has to be a way that audiences participate in the hard talk.

4.7. Challenges of LTV show to the audiences and the producers

Media selection initiated by the individual; expectations for media use that are produced from individual predispositions, social interaction, and environmental factors; and active audiences with goal-directed media behaviour as Wimmer & Dominick (1994). There are some factors which are considered when dealing with challenges to the producers. As audiences are different in demography i.e. age, gender, income, education, location ; behaviour i.e. needs, wants , personality , values , cultures ; expertise i.e. certifications, training and licensed and status i.e. job title, seniority , accolades and awards the challenges are different coming from the above perspectives. The challenges mentioned from the audiences through the FGDs are selected and presented below:

FGD5 (B) –“After I watch the show I mostly had confusions on which one to build my trust on. I am not fan of politics and I watch this show to help me know who is who in Ethiopian politics. In fact, I found myself trying to understand but failed. I am sure that majority of people have faced this kind of doubtfulness if they have no knowledge of politics.”

FGD7 (E) –“The program starts with the host saying that the program focuses on economic, political and religious issues. However I have never heard of any economic or religious issue being presented somewhat political. I can say political issue is the main objective in contrary of the host’s presentation.”

FGD9 (D) –“The show does not create any ambiguity as for me rather it mostly gives the hidden truth and clear ambiguity. If a person wants to know about our leaders, one can learn about them by being an active audience of LTV show. You can hear theories being explained and presented in relation with our reality.”

The producer and a journalist have mentioned some personal challenges they have faced and as part of LTV show team. As these journalists work closely with LTV show, they were the right individuals to be contacted.

Interviewee 1(Producer):- It has been nine years since I work as a journalist, yet I joined LTV recently. Through my experience I have faced many challenges as a person and as part of media house. To stay clear on the topic, I am not now mentioning the personal challenges I have faced so far. As LTV show’s team, the program at first does not have that much followers and audiences. Later on when people who are public figures, start appearing and number of audiences have increased. The issues raised in the interview became very popular on social media. The show is so informative and it creates the chance to think critically. The audiences can draw their own generalizations after watching the show as the show does not have one. Though we have prepared all the best for the best of the show, there is always criticism. Audiences have different preference, thus it is not possible to satisfy all. However the show works on its weakness as much as possible. He has also mentioned that he once had a physical fight with one of the guests of LTV show and that the host mostly gets warning letters from unknown sources.

The above interviewee has tried to answer the question according to his experience. From the things he has mentioned despite of gratification theory, he seemed to believe that the show is targeted to satisfy the audience but failed to meet their expectation accordingly.

Interviewee 2:- Members of my family, some friends of mine and people pass by who knew that I work in LTV give me comments. Evaluating all the comments as a journalist, not all are to be counted to improve the program. Audiences or viewers have different attitudes and that is how they evaluate the show. For a person who likes hard talk LTV show can be the first preference from the list, yet for a person who likes entertainment LTV show cannot be a good taste. Getting sponsor was a challenge at first since the program is new, yet later on companies want to advertise their goods on the show. We upload the hard talk on our official YouTube channel. Number of viewers increases every time. We currently have 75000 subscribers. Ethnicity became an issue recently, and this does affect the audience's perception. Some comments we have received are based on ethnicity, however we always want to satisfy our audiences by all means.

To conclude, hiring an outside consultant to evaluate the program can decrease the challenges both the producers and audiences are facing regarding the producers and the participants. These individuals can look at the show through an objective, third-party lens and give the best idea of what is working and more importantly, what isn't working in the program. The consultant may focus on the appearance of the program's stars or something as seemingly minor as their cosmetic appearance or the consultant may look at the other visual elements that go into a broadcast, such as an out-dated set or graphics package. Some consultants may also work with the show's writers to improve the content relayed to viewers during the program. Taking all this to account may help LTV show to work on satisfying the audience and minimizing challenges for both sides.

4.8. Mechanisms and Strategies to improve LTV Show hard talk

Changing our view on television shows these days makes us overcome the negative parts of shows that make our minds corrupt. Identifying the needs and wants of the target audience by organizing a focus group is one way of improving. Different programs have different “target” viewers; some programs (such as dramas) are geared to women, while sports programming is designed to attract male viewers. These are called “demographics”. One way to identify the

wants of the target demographic is to hold focus group discussions. This can be done online or in person. It involves gathering a small group of people typically from the target audience and asking them what they like or dislike about a certain program. The program's directors can then make changes based on the results of the focus group. Three discussants from different FGDs groups have raised some basic points to improve the hard talk.

FGD1 (D) –“The hard talk does not have many things to improve as for me, but just to mention some: it needs consistency, the host's feeling should not be on her facial expression. Moreover, since it is a hard talk, it needs to take some experience from the well-known BBC hard talk. It also needs to create opportunities for audiences to participate on the hard talk.

FGD 4(A) –“The medium of the communication for the hard talk is Amharic however, most guests use English words and technical terms during the interview. This should be considered to upturn understanding of the concept.”

FGD 8(C) –“It is informative, but boring sometimes. I would like to recommend about the setup of the studio. The studio needs to be attractive. As my personal experience, the hard talk on BBC catches all my attention though I don't understand all.”

Interviewee 9 –“Being a journalist has its own ethics. Journalists' bring fact not speculation. She seems to be blaming the guests as if some are proven guilty by a court of law. Thus, LTV should work on empowering the host.”

YouTube –“For the betterment of the show, the host should stop taking sides and needs to remain neutral and leave the judgment to the viewers. Guests should not also be accused all as liars.”

As a final point, the overall implication of the discussions and the in-depth interview on the hard talk needs to work on the betterment of the hard talk by creating ways to receive suggestions from audiences/ viewers and taking the comments into account.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Summary and Conclusion

Qualitative data gathering techniques: focus group discussion, in-depth interview and document analysis were employed undertaking this study. Using systematic sampling and purposive sampling technique, a total of 65 participants were selected.

Analysing the overall implication of the discussions on the relevancy of the hard talk to the audiences need and interest, the data implied that most of the participants found it relevant. Most participants pointed out how the show helped them to know more about the politician's stance, their party's objective and the current political situations in the country.

In over-all suggestion the participants and key informants reaction is both negative and positive as to the data however, maximum believed that LTV show needs to work on the weaknesses raised from the audiences and consider the criticism. They have also reflected by raising questions, for example, as to why the producers failed to research the public opinion before broadcasting each parts of the hard talk.

Furthermore, audiences argued with the messages of the program and take the important lesson relating to their experience and culture of the society they are living with. The dilemma was by way of comparing LTV show to BBC's hard talk, the respondents in all FGDs do not agree in its hard talk nature as for them it lacks major things. However some discussants in FGDs were reserved. The data implied that the participants are in between accepting the show as a hard talk and not.

Looking at the respondent's response, involving audience is essential to making an impact. The presentation should pull them in, get their attention and stimulate their thoughts and understanding. This can be done in a number of ways. The way that the presentation is planned should be critical in terms of using language and ideas that the audience will understand. It must also ensure that there is sufficient time for questions and discussion with the guests. The way that presentation is delivered should create a bond with the audience. The use of eye contact, gesture, spoken language and energy should all communicate effectively and enthusiastically with all areas of the room. Thus, ensuring that the audience receives positive messages about it. Live phone call or raising some questions from YouTube might also flavour the hard talk.

As a result prevalence data from the FGD and in-depth interview reveal that hiring an outside consultant to evaluate the program can decrease the challenges both the producers and audiences are facing regarding the producers and the participants. These individuals can look at the show through an objective, third-party lens and give the best idea of what is working and more importantly, what isn't working in the program. The consultant may focus on the appearance of the program's stars or something as seemingly minor as their cosmetic appearance or the consultant may look at the other visual elements that go into a broadcast, such as an out-dated set or graphics package. Some consultants may also work with the show's writers to improve the content relayed to viewers during the program. Taking all this to account may help LTV show to work on satisfying the audience and minimizing challenges for both sides.

As a final point, the overall implication of the discussions and the in-depth interview on the hard talk needs to work on the betterment of the hard talk by creating ways to receive suggestions from audiences/ viewers and taking the comments into account.

5.2. Recommendations

The effectiveness of LTV show television program was remarkable as confirmed by the research participants, the program should carry on improving the weakness and limitations discussed and identified. To help increase the relevance and the betterment of the hard talk the following recommendations are proposed.

- Most of the relevance of the show are political oriented, thus the show should include other perspectives of psychological, social, economic, etc. angles. Discussing about the guests private life might also help the audiences to relate it to their daily life and to flavour the talk.
- To improve and decrease the negative reactions towards the hard talk, the organization should consider the criticisms and feedback gathered from the audiences. The TV institution should always give corrections and put their clear purpose as footer, whilst the hard talk is aired.
- The show is in between a hard talk and a talk show, thus the TV station should choose one feature to clear ambiguity on its nature.
- The show should sometimes allow direct phone calls to give opportunity to audiences.

- The program host and the producers should use their maximum effort and talent to balance the interest of the audiences and the institution. The producers should also not rely on one source and get stuck in a rut. The program host should not reveal her feeling with facial expression while the show is being recorded since her reaction might upset the guest's followers.
- The producers should strongly consider the diversified nature of the audiences and focus in minimizing sensitive issues like religious and ethnical.
- All media should work with democratic and social institutions to create awareness and understanding towards a hard talk. Furthermore, the institutions need to work in spreading over freedom of speech in the country.

5.3. Suggestion for Further Study

The present study has found how Addis Ababa residents make sense of the messages transmitted on LTV show. However, the research was limited to assess the audience's reaction in only one region, Addis Ababa. Therefore, it's recommended for future research to undertake the study further taking place different regions around Ethiopia. This research focused on audience reception, thus the researcher suggests other researchers to conduct content analysis of an LTV show and assess other hard talks which are transmitted through different media in Ethiopia in order to give better understanding of hard talk and its relevance and impact to the society.

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Appendix 1A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FGD AND IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH PARTICIPANTS

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW ITEMS (FOR KEY INFORMANTS)

Personal Details

- Name/ Code _____
- Age _____
- Gender _____
- Educational Background _____
- Sub city _____

1. Do you have a television access?
2. Do you watch LTV show?
3. How often do you watch LTV show?
4. Is the transmission day of the week comfortable for you to watch the program?
5. What other time or day do you prefer the hard talk to be aired?
6. How many programs/ shows have you watched so far?
7. How do you explain the nature of LTV show?
8. Do you think it is relevant to watch the show? Please justify your reason
9. What would be your comment on the importance of viewing such show for the society?
10. Does the host ask important questions which needs to be raised?
11. What opportunities and challenges do you think the hard talk creates to the society?
12. How do you evaluate the people/guests/interviewees on the hard talk?
13. What is your reaction after you watch the show?

Appendix 1B

Discussion Points for Focus Group Discussion Participants

Personal Details

- Name/ Code _____
- Age _____
- Gender _____
- Level of Education _____

1. What is LTV show about? (What do you think of LTV show program?)
2. How often do you watch the show?
3. Do you like the show?
 - Why if Yes?
 - Why if No?
4. How do you explain the nature of the show?
5. How do you evaluate the relevance of the show in relation to the society?
6. What would be your comment on the importance of viewing such show for the society?
7. Does the host ask important questions which needs to be raised?
8. What opportunities and challenges do you think the hard talk creates to the society?
9. To whom do you think is the show made for?
10. Why do you watch the show?
11. What is your reaction after you watch the show?

Appendix 1C

Guide for Individual In-depth Interview with the producers of the LTV show

Name _____

Age _____

Gender _____

Position _____

Responsibility in the production of LTV show _____

Educational background _____

How long have you been involved in the production of LTV show?

Have you ever received media related trainings?

1. What initiates you to produce this program?
2. What is the purpose of the show?
3. How long have you done the show? How do you explain the nature of the show?
4. What are the sources of the information/facts on which you base the program?
5. Who is your target audience?
6. What challenges have you faced so far?
7. What is people's reaction towards your program?
8. What are the comments you have received from audiences and guests of your show? What do the comments generally say?
9. Do you think that the program achieved your objectives?

Appendix 1D

Guide for Individual In-depth Interview with the host of hard talks on other **media**

Name _____

Gender _____

Age _____

Position _____

Educational background _____

1. How do people receive the hard talk you host?
2. Have you faced any challenges regarding the hard talk you present?
3. How do you evaluate LTV Show hard talk?
4. What do you think about the society's perspective about hard talk?
5. What is your suggestion towards hard talk in Ethiopia?

Appendix 2A

Research Participants List

Focus Group Discussion Participants Profile

FGD 1- Kolfe Keranio

Date: 17/03/2019

No	FGD Code	Sex	Age	Educational Status	Job	Remark
1	A	M	27	MSC	Teacher	
2	B	M	34	MA	PhD candidate	
3	C	M	29	Diploma	Merchant	
4	D	F	26	BA	Unemployed	
5	E	M	37	BA	High school Teacher	
6	F	M	42	BA	Civil Servant	

FGD 2 - Arada Sub city

Date: 23/3/2019

No	FGD Code	Sex	Age	Educational Status	Job	Remark
1	A	F	45	MBA	Lecturer	
2	B	F	44	BA	College Student	
3	C	M	50	Diploma	Teacher	
4	D	M	37	MA	Journalist (<i>Commn. Specialist</i>)	
5	E	M	21	High school Certificate	University Student	
6	F	M	55	Diploma	Civil Servant	

FGD 3 –Akaki Kaliti Sub city

Date: 24/3/2019

No	FGD Code	Sex	Age	Educational Status	Job	Remark
1	A	M	57	Certificate	Merchant	
2	B	M	36	BA	Civil Servant	
3	C	M	40	BA	Teacher	
4	D	M	40	BA	Unemployed	

FGD 4- Yeka Sub city**Date: 30/3/2019**

No	FGD Code	Sex	Age	Educational Status	Job	Remark
1	A	M	29	BA	Post graduate student	
2	B	M	37	BA	Civil Servant	
3	C	M	62	MA	Retired	
4	D	F	36	Diploma	Merchant	
5	E	M	27	BA	Civil Servant	
6	F	M	29	BA	Civil Servant	

FGD 5- Lideta Sub city**Date: 31/3/2019**

No	FGD Code	Sex	Age	Educational Status	Job	Remark
1	A	M	27	BA	Civil Servant	
2	B	M	47	PhD	Politician	
3	C	M	23	High school Certificate	College Student	
4	D	M	51	BA	Civil Servant	
5	E	M	33	BA	Teacher	
6	F	F	24	Diploma	Civil Servant	

FGD 6 – Nifas Silk Laphto**Date: 6/4/2019**

No	FGD Code	Sex	Age	Educational Status	Job	Remark
1	A	M	48	Diploma	Merchant	
2	B	F	52	MA	Housewife	
3	C	M	40	MA	Journalist	
4	D	M	56	BA	Teacher	
5	E	M	27	Certificate	University Student	
6	F	M	29	BA	Teacher	

FGD 7 – Addis Ketema Sub city**Date: 7/4/2019**

No	FGD Code	Sex	Age	Educational Status	Job	Remark
1	A	M	46	Diploma	Unemployed	
2	B	M	37	BA	Journalist	
3	C	M	28	MA	Civil Servant	
4	D	M	34	BA	Teacher	
5	E	M	26	BA	Teacher	
6	F	F	48	BA	Housewife	

FGD 8 – Bole Sub city**Date: 13/4/2019**

No	FGD Code	Sex	Age	Educational Status	Job	Remark
1	A	M	57	MA	Teacher	
2	B	M	38	BA	Journalist	
3	C	M	62	BA	Civil Servant	
4	D	M	28	MA	Journalist	
5	E	M	25	Diploma	Merchant	

FGD 9 – Kirkos Sub city**Date: 14/4/2019**

No	FGD Code	Sex	Age	Educational Status	Job	Remark
1	A	M	39	BA	Teacher	
2	B	M	58	BA	Civil Servant	
3	C	M	27	BA	Teacher	
4	D	M	27	BA	Unemployed	
5	E	M	29	Diploma	Civil Servant	
6	F	M	26	BA	Postgraduate Student	

FGD 10 – Gulele Sub city**Date: 21/4/2019**

No	FGD Code	Sex	Age	Educational Status	Job	Remark
1	A	M	58	MA	Journalist(<i>External Advisor</i>)	
2	B	M	29	BA	Unemployed	
3	C	M	23	Diploma	Civil Servant	
4	D	M	37	BSC	Civil Servant	
5	E	M	25	BA	Teacher	

Appendix 2B

Key Informants of the In-depth Interview

No	Name(Optional)	Sex	Age	Job	Remark
1	Abate Feyissa	M	38	Production Manager of LTV show	
2	Abel Worku	M	28	Social Media Supervisor of LTV	
3	Selamawit Teshome	F	26	Reporter	
4	Habtamu Wolde	M	29	Junior Editor of LTV Show	
5	Simret Mengistu	F	28	Reporter of LTV	
6	Daniel Megerssa	M	27	Anchor & reporter	

Similar hard talk hosts from three different media

No	Name	Sex	Age	Job	Remark
7	Journalist 1	M	29	‘BeretuWeg’ hard talk host in EBC	
8	Journalist 2	M	31	‘OBN’s ‘hard talk host	
9	Journalist 3	M	33	Hard talk host in Walta	