

**Analysis of the Nature and Magnitude of HIV/AIDS  
Coverage in Ethiopian Newspapers:  
The Case of *Addis Admas* and *Addis Zemen***

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## Table of Contents

<b>Contents</b> .....	<b>Page</b>
Acknowledgments.....	i
Table of Contents.....	ii
List of Tables.....	v
List of Figures.....	v
List of Appendices.....	v
Acronyms.....	vi
Abstract .....	vii

### Chapter One

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1. Background of the Study .....	1
1.2. Problem Statement .....	2
1.3. Research Questions .....	4
1.4. Objectives of the study.....	5
1.4.1. General Objective .....	5
1.4.2. Specific Objectives .....	5
1.5. Significance of the Study .....	5
1.6. Limitations of the Study.....	6
1.7. Definitions of Important Terms .....	7

### Chapter Two

<b>2. Review of Related Literature</b> .....	<b>8</b>
2.1. The Role of the Media in Combating the Spread of HIV/AIDS.....	8
2.1.1. The Educative Role of the Media .....	9
2.1.2. The Advocacy Role of the Media .....	10
2.2. Reporting on HIV/AIDS .....	13
2.2.1. Portraying People Living with HIV/AIDS(PLWHA).....	16
2.2.2. Language Use in Reporting HIV/AIDS Related Issues.....	19

2.3. Use of Sources in Reporting HIV/AIDS Stories.....	20
2.4. Studies on Press Coverage of the HIV/AIDS Pandemic in Different Countries ...	22
2.5. Agenda-Setting and Framing Theories of the Press and Media Coverage of HIV/AIDS Pandemic .....	25
2.6. Theories of Newsroom Organization.....	27
2.6.1. Social Control Theory.....	28
2.6.2. Gatekeeping Theory.....	29

### **Chapter Three**

<b>3. Study Design.....</b>	<b>31</b>
3.1. Method of the Study.....	31
3.2. Subject of the Study .....	31
3.3. Sampling Techniques and Sample Size .....	32
3.4. Method of Data Collection.....	32
3.4.1. Coding Categories.....	33
3.5. Unit of Analysis .....	36
3.6. Intercoder Reliability .....	36
3.7. Data Analysis Method.....	37

### **Chapter Four**

<b>4. Presentation and Analysis of the Study .....</b>	<b>38</b>
4.1. Presentation of Findings .....	38
4.1.1. The Frequency of HIV/AIDS Coverage .....	38
4.1.2 Type of Story .....	39
4.1.3. Theme of Story .....	41
4.1.4. Source of Story .....	43
4.1.5. Origin of Story .....	44
4.1.6. Length of Story .....	45
4.1.7. Placement of Story.....	46
4.2. Discussions .....	47
4.2.1. The Extent of HIV/AIDS Coverage and the Space Provided.....	47

4.2.2. Type of Story .....	48
4.2.3. Theme of Story .....	50
4.2.4. Source of Story .....	56
4.2.5. Origin of Story .....	59
4.2.6. Placement of Story.....	60

## **Chapter Five**

<b>5. Conclusions, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies.....</b>	<b>64</b>
5.1. Conclusions.....	64
5.2. Recommendations.....	67
5.3. Suggestions for Further Studies .....	68

References

Appendices

## List of Tables

<b>Table No.....</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Frequency of HIV/AIDS Stories.....	38
2. Length of Story by Newspaper .....	45

## List of Figures

<b>Figure No .....</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Type of Story by Newspaper .....	39
2. Theme of Story by Newspaper .....	41
3. Source of Story by newspaper .....	43
4. Origin of Story by Newspaper .....	44
5. Placement of Story by Newspapers .....	46

## List of Appendices

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Content</b>
A	Coding Sheet and variables to be coded
B	Type of Story, cross-tabulation
C	Theme of Story, cross-tabulation
D	Origin of Story, cross-tabulation
E	Source of Story, cross-tabulation
F	Placement of Story, cross-tabulation
G	Length of Story, cross-tabulation
H	Interview Questions for Editors
I	Cartoon

## **Acronyms**

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

AWMC: African Women's Media Center

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

CNHDE: Center for National Health Development in Ethiopia

HIV: Human Immune Deficiency Virus

IPS: Inter Press Service International Association

IWMF International Women's Media Foundation

MoH: Ministry of Health

MoI: Ministry of Information

NGOs: Non-governmental Organizations

PLWHA: Persons Living with HIV/AIDS

SJC-AAU School of Journalism and Communications- Addis Ababa University

UNAIDS: Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

## ***Abstract***

*This thesis sought to assess and examine the nature and magnitude of HIV/AIDS coverage in two Ethiopian Amharic newspapers: Addis Admas and Addis Zemen.*

*Content analysis was employed as a main method. In-depth interviews were also made with the editors of the newspapers. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analyze the data. A chi-square test was also employed to see whether there was a significant difference between the two newspapers.*

*To gather data for the content analysis, six months' editions of the two newspapers spanning from 11 September 2004 to 2 March 2005 was taken as samples of the study. All HIV/AIDS related stories found were collected and content analyzed. The analysis was made based on the type, theme, source, length, origin, placement and length of stories. The data found from the interviews were used to back up the analysis.*

*In light of the growing impact that the HIV/AIDS pandemic poses in the country, the findings reveal that HIV/AIDS issues were languished with very little coverage in both newspapers. Also, the contents of the articles were found to be insufficiently comprehensive and thorough to help the readers get practical and important information. Most of the HIV/AIDS stories were found to be spot news dealing with statistics, speeches of officials, launches and inaugurations of new programs and organizations working with HIV/AIDS. Moreover, the sources used were mainly official ones. People living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and other vulnerable groups were scantily used as sources. Above all the newspapers failed to give prominence to HIV/AIDS stories. Many of the stories were found to be in the inside pages.*

*In terms of quantity, the chi-square test shows that there is a significant difference in the distribution of all categories between the two newspapers. Addis Zemen was better in the frequency of coverage almost in all categories except in the placement of story. However, no significant difference was observed in the quality of coverage.*

*Overall, the results of this study show that the two newspapers gave poor coverage for the HIV/AIDS related issues.*

# Chapter One

## 1. Introduction

*This chapter deals with the introductory part of the study. The background, problem statement, research questions, objectives, significance, limitations of the study and definitions of some important terminologies are presented.*

### 1.1. Background

Over two decades have passed since the outbreak of the HIV/AIDS pandemic was first reported. Since then, HIV/AIDS has become a highly complex and constantly evolving pandemic that poses an unprecedented threat to global health, development and security. Nowhere is this truer than in sub-Saharan Africa where an estimated 25 million people who make up more than two thirds of all people with HIV/AIDS are living (UNAIDS, 2004). The spread of HIV/AIDS in this region has a profound impact not only on the health sector but also in the socioeconomic development of the region in general.

Ethiopia is one of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa which is hardest hit by the pandemic. Recent data from the Ministry of Health indicate that an estimated 1.5 million Ethiopians are currently living with HIV/AIDS and over 1.4 million have already died since it was first reported in the country in 1984. The national HIV prevalence rate is 4.4% (MoH, 2004). This shows that the spread of the virus continues to escalate, touching all corners of the country and affecting the lives of countless individuals and communities. According to the Center for National Health Development, Ethiopia has been reported to have the sixth largest number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world (CNHDE, 2005).

It is clear that the broader social impact of the pandemic has been extending far beyond what the numbers can tell us. HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia is much more than merely a health crisis. Unlike other social problems, the pandemic is deeply embedded in the social, cultural and economic structures of the society. It has brought widespread social ramification that goes far beyond the health sector. It has also reversed hard-won gains in the area of improved health and better access to education.

Because HIV/AIDS tends to strike the young and sexually active, AIDS deaths have distorted the age and sex profiles of the population. The average life expectancy is 46 years (MoH, 2004). The fact that Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world (with an estimated annual per capita income of US \$100 according to MoH, 2004) only makes the situation worse. Moreover, the recurrent drought, undernourishment, low education level, inadequate health care and various infectious diseases have caused HIV to develop rapidly to AIDS. Above all, the unavailability of antiretroviral drugs in many parts of the country, until recently, makes the situation even worse.

Although the HIV/AIDS pandemic is transmitted in various ways, the rapid spread of the virus in Ethiopia has been largely attributed to unprotected sex, which accounts for 87% of the infections (MoH, 2004). Hence, in order to halt the spread of the virus for the foreseeable future of the country, multi-sectoral involvement is essential.

In all programs in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic, there is a general consensus that information and education remain the backbone. To disseminate information, the mass media can play a significant role. However, whether the Ethiopian media play an important role in disseminating essential information about the pandemic is a largely unanswered question. It is, therefore, timely and important to assess and evaluate the coverage of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Ethiopian media.

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

In a bid to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic and its threats, medical experts, researchers, various governmental and non-governmental organizations and the mass media have been galvanized in efforts aimed at teaching and informing the public about the seriousness of the disease.

As a potentially influential communication agent, the mass media in particular have an important role to play in combating the spread of the virus and mitigating both the health and social impact of AIDS. Different sectors of the media are in a position to stem the tide of the disease as they can reach different segments of the population with a single stroke.

Emphasizing the role of the media in altering the future course of the pandemic, Dr. Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director, said: “The media have the unparalleled ability to save millions of lives by providing them with vital life saving information on AIDS and creating a supportive environment for social change” (UNAIDS, 2004:1). Research findings have also indicated that communities with the highest media penetration show the strongest signs of behavioral change. For example, studies on media coverage of AIDS in North America prove that much of society’s understanding of the disease, who it affects, and its future outcomes, comes from the media (Emke, 2000; see also Kelly, 2000).

However, whether the media are using their roles effectively remains a subject of scholarly debate. Various commentators have claimed that the media have been an underutilized force in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Osborne, for example, argues:

Both international and national mainstream media have, by and large, not approached their unique response to HIV/AIDS with a clear proactive strategy. And this largely reactive 'business as usual' approach results in an ever-increasing feeling of fear, mistrust and confusion (2004:20).

In a special meeting held at the United Nations Head Quarters on January 15, 2004, Dr. Drew E. Altman, President and CEO of the Kaiser Family Foundation and Dr. Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director, also pointed out that the media have been an underutilized force in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic when they could play a huge role in breaking the silence and mobilizing society to confront the epidemic (UNAIDS, 2004).

Moreover, a considerable number of studies of news media coverage of HIV/AIDS conducted in various parts of the world have shown that scant coverage and distorted portrayal of the HIV/AIDS pandemic are almost the rule of the day (see for example Linda, 2000; Kasoma, 2000; Mchombu, 2000; Lear, 1990; and Rogers et al., 1991). Likewise, some other studies prove that media coverage, with some notable exceptions, is dominated by a particular interest group and perpetuate inaccuracies (Cullinan, 2001; Stein, 2001; Shepperson, 2000).

Though there are no in-depth local studies to the researcher's knowledge, examining media coverage of HIV/AIDS, it is likely that the situation of the Ethiopian media is not different from other sub-Saharan countries. The print media in particular have been criticized for having limited effects in creating awareness about HIV/AIDS. A recent report of the study on the assessment of the media coverage of HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia which was conducted by School of Journalism and Communications at Addis Ababa University in 2005 shows that both the government and the private print media's contribution has been very limited (SJC-AAU, 2005). However, this study is broad and less focused. In addition, the samples are limited. Thus, there are reasons to investigate the media coverage of HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia.

This thesis endeavors to examine the coverage of HIV/AIDS related issues in the Ethiopian print media. The thesis specifically focuses on two Ethiopian national Amharic newspapers, namely *Addis Zemen*, a government newspaper; and *Addis Admas*, a private newspaper. The two newspapers have the largest circulation in Ethiopia (MoI, 2005). One will also expect that the two newspapers have frequent and comprehensive coverage about HIV/AIDS issues.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

In an attempt to examine the two newspapers' coverage of HIV/AIDS related issues, the study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent did the two newspapers cover HIV/AIDS related issues?
2. How much space was given for HIV/AIDS related issues?
3. What types of stories were featured?
4. What themes or aspects of HIV/AIDS issues were featured?
5. What sources were used in reporting about HIV/AIDS related issues?
6. What origins were used in the coverage of HIV/AIDS related issues?
7. How HIV/AIDS related stories were placed in the newspapers?

## **1.4. Objectives of the Study**

### **1.4.1. General Objective**

Generally, the objective of this study was to assess and evaluate the nature and magnitude of HIV/AIDS coverage in two Amharic language Ethiopian newspapers; *Addis Admas* and *Addis Zemen*.

### **1.4.2. Specific Objectives**

Specifically, the purposes of the study were:

- to assess the nature and magnitude of HIV/AIDS coverage in terms of type of story, theme of story, source of story, origin of story, placement of story and amount of space given for the story in the two newspapers.
- to examine the strength, weakness, and gaps in the dissemination of information in terms of nature and frequency of the coverage of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the two newspapers.
- to check whether there is a quantitative and qualitative difference in the extent and nature of HIV/AIDS coverage between the two newspapers.

## **1.5. Significance of the Study**

Despite being limited in urban areas, newspapers play a significant role in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Hence, assessing and evaluating the magnitude and nature of the HIV/AIDS pandemic coverage of newspapers will contribute a lot to the available stock of knowledge on media and HIV/AIDS. Accordingly, the finding of this study may help:

- journalists and media organizations to see whether or not they are giving the deserved attention for HIV/AIDS related issues.
- Media organizations, press associations and concerned governmental and non-governmental organizations to be aware of the challenges of journalists in particular and media in general in communicating the HIV/AIDS pandemic. On the basis of this, they could take remedial actions. For example, by designing training for journalists, editors and other stake holders.

- different organizations working with HIV/AIDS in pinpointing the importance of the media in spreading information about HIV/AIDS related issues.
- to remedy the gap of in-depth studies concerning coverage and reporting of HIV/AIDS related issues in the Ethiopian news media.
- other researchers as a benchmark in future studies of media and HIV/AIDS.

### **1.6. Limitations of the Study**

This study mainly focuses on assessing the nature and magnitude of the HIV/AIDS coverage in *Addis Admas* and *Addis Zemen* newspapers. To achieve this goal, a content analysis method was employed. By its very nature, this method has shortcomings. One of the limitations is that it does not tell how the coverage influences the audience. Hence, the effectiveness of the messages in the sample issues conveyed has not been addressed in this study, as it needs an in-depth and independent study by itself.

It would have been preferred to include more newspapers in the study, both private and governmental. But given the limitation of time and resources it was unfeasible to extend the sampling. Therefore, the findings of the study might not be generalized.

Editions over a six-month period were used as samples for the study. The result might be different if a longer period of time was used. In addition, to make the samples convenient and comparable only one edition of *Addis Zemen* was taken from the seven editions of a week while the only edition of the weekly *Addis Admas* was taken. This might also be the limitation of the study.

Lack of local research findings and well-documented material in relation to the topic of the study may be another limitation.

Nevertheless, the finding of this study will potentially have important implications for journalists, editors, press associations and media organizations with regard to HIV/AIDS issues coverage.

## **1.7. Definitions of Important Terms**

**Coverage:** Refers to the presentation of stories on HIV/AIDS in the media.

**Magnitude:** The degree of frequency to which HIV/AIDS stories happen or are repeated.

**Nature:** Basic qualities of the HIV/AIDS stories.

**Pandemic:** A serious disease, in this case HIV/AIDS.

**Agenda-setting:** To put an issue in the media agenda and make it the subject of public discussion.

## **Chapter Two**

### **2. Review of Related Literature**

*This part attempts to present a brief theoretical framework in relation to the study. Research findings, theories and the views of different scholars, which are pertinent to the study, are explained in this chapter.*

#### **2.1. The Role of the Media in Combating the Spread of HIV/AIDS**

Many people are dependent on the media not only to be informed about current events in their surroundings and the world, but also to receive information about less newsworthy issues such as health and education. Studies have also indicated that the mass media serve as a major source of information, metaphors, and values in a mass society, influencing customs, taste and morality in a wide range of areas including politics, religion, family and sexual life, science and medicine (Clarke, 1992, cited in Valenta, 2002). A research by Mollyann et al (2006) also shows that 72% of the US public gets most of the information about HIV/AIDS from the media. It is likely that much of the information that the public gets about HIV/AIDS has come from the media.

The Gender, HIV/AIDS and Rights Training Manual for the Media which is prepared by Inter Press Service International Association (2003) points out that many people do not have access to medical journals, neither are they able to attend HIV/AIDS workshops and seminars, or even have informal chats with medical practitioners or scientists to get valuable information about HIV/AIDS. The media as a vehicle of health care information are therefore vital instruments in raising the public's awareness about the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

In developing countries like Ethiopia, where HIV/AIDS is rampantly spreading, ignorance poses the greatest danger. The media in such countries have an essential function to educate the public about key elements of the pandemic. They can disseminate facts about HIV/AIDS to the public. They can also propagate practical information like how the virus is transmitted and how it is not, what steps reduce the risk of contracting the virus and where to seek guidance and so on.

The role that the media play in the halt against the HIV/AIDS pandemic can be seen in two ways: the educative role and the advocacy role. It is, however, difficult to set a clear distinction between the two.

### **2.1.1. The Educative Role of the Media**

There is general consensus that media have an important influence in educating the public about the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In the World Summit of Ministers of Health, which was held in London in 1998, it was stated that while the vaccine or cure for HIV/AIDS remains elusive, the single most important component of national AIDS programs is information and education. “The most powerful role of the media is thus defining the challenge of HIV/AIDS for the general population especially given that the way a problem is defined determines the way people try to solve it” (Stein, 2001:5).

Media can also play a pivotal role in demystifying some of the erroneous notions that the public has about the pandemic. In many African countries, for example, misinformation and misconception still exists on how the virus is transmitted and how it is prevented. Citing a recent survey from over 40 countries, a UNAIDS report (2004) states that more than half of young people most at risk - those aged 15-24 - have serious misconceptions about how the virus is transmitted. In addition, many people do not still have the habit of discussing issues related to sexuality. In the rural areas of Ethiopia and many other African nations talking about sexuality is still culturally considered as a taboo.

Since the media have the potential to reach various segments of the population, they can rectify the state of affairs by disseminating accurate and sensible information about the pandemic. They can also contribute to change the attitude of the public by persistently referring to the transmission and prevention methods of HIV/AIDS. In relation to this Stein states:

The critical role of the media for conveying information about HIV/AIDS ...can in part be attributed to the persistence of strong social taboo on the discussion of sex related topics which results in a relative lack of discussion about HIV within those social networks which generally operate to convey health and other information. (2001:4 - 5)

According to this view, the mass media can remove myths and misconceptions that blur people's perceptions of the disease.

### **2.1.2. The Advocacy Role of the Media**

Apart from what has been mentioned, the media can play an advocacy role in relation to HIV/AIDS. However, the advocacy role of the media is somewhat contentious. From various literatures it becomes evident that there are two differing views on this. On one side there is a belief that the media should not engage in any social activities or have any social agendas. This is often tied in with the fourth estate view of the media. For example, Lander's (1988) study from the USA found that media workers argued that it was not the job of the press to do public health advocacy work (cited in Emke, 2000).

On the other side, the media are expected to be partaker in social and community development. A study conducted with South African journalists which is written by Stein (2002) and documented under the title "What is News: Perspectives on HIV/AIDS in the South African Media", underscores this point. The study shows that most journalists argue that the media as a whole should play an advocacy role vis-à-vis HIV/AIDS. They believe that the media have a moral responsibility to inform the public about AIDS, to be critical when appropriate and to advocate constructive approaches to dealing with the pandemic. Stein (2002) added, though it was argued that news reporting must remain as neutral as possible for the most part the advocacy role of the media vis-à-vis HIV/AIDS, was not seen to contradict the media's responsibility to remain neutral and objective.

Scholars like Riyadi (2000:1) also support the abovementioned view. According to him advocacy journalism on HIV/AIDS is relevant. He suggests, "To contribute effectively to AIDS prevention and care, the media have to change their role into an advocacy role and promote the dignity and rights of people with AIDS and other marginalized groups". As the Guidelines of Reporting on HIV and AIDS for South African Media make clear, it is important for journalists to be self-regulating and to guard against twisting the facts (Journ-AIDS, 2004).

However, Falobi and Bamigbetan (2000) believe that media are not doing well in relation to HIV/AIDS advocacy. They argue that journalists have tended to shy away from taking a proactive response to HIV advocacy for the reason that they must remain ‘unaffected’ and stand-aloof commentators on the issue.

Nevertheless, media can play an advocacy role. For example, they can play a significant role in avoiding AIDS based stigma and discrimination. As affirmed by the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS 27 June 2001, “Stigma, silence, discrimination and denial, as well as lack of confidentiality, undermine prevention, care and treatment efforts and increase the impact of the epidemic on individuals, families, communities and nation”. UNAIDS (2004: 12) also argues that “stigma and discrimination are the greatest barriers to preventing further infections, providing adequate care, support and treatment and alleviating impact”.

In this dimension, a Panos (2003: 51) publication states that, “For HIV/AIDS, where stigma, gender and other forms of inequality play such key roles, the media ideally can provide a forum where a plurality of voice is heard, and discrimination based on prejudice or socio-economic status is set aside”. This indicates that the media can play a critical role by presenting facts about the pandemic in an accurate, realistic and non-discriminatory way. This in turn improves the public’s knowledge about HIV/AIDS and reduces stigma and discrimination.

Media can also play a pivotal role in challenging government policies and providing a forum for discussion. Concerning this, Panos’ (2005) study state that the media can play a role in holding policy-makers to account and contribute to debate and change. Foreman (2000) argues that media can play a significant role in highlighting deficiencies in the response to HIV/AIDS. According to him,

These include such issues as bureaucratic incompetence that prevents adequate medical supplies from reaching hospitals and clinics, and corruption within government departments and NGOs that prevents funds reaching those who need them. By reporting such issues in a manner which maintains the confidentiality of those who bring them to the media’s

attention and confirms that the facts are correct, the media can play a key role in ensuring a proper response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic (2000: 30).

Summarizing the role that the media play in public awareness, discussion, and debate, the African Women's Media Center Manual has the following points:

- The media can generate public and policy discussion of HIV/AIDS, which further encourages public awareness and leads to action by political, financial, and other leaders. Accurate news coverage of HIV/AIDS can generate public and political support for fighting HIV/AIDS.
- The media can influence public opinion and attitudes about HIV/AIDS, including attitudes towards people with HIV/AIDS. An analysis of media coverage and public opinion over several decades concluded that there is a strong relationship between them. When the media focus on a particular issue, there is a higher degree of public awareness and support to tackle that issue. Attitudes affect how people respond to HIV/AIDS and how people with HIV/AIDS are treated or cared for by their peers, employers, families, communities, the health care system, and the justice system.
- Similarly, the media influence the language of HIV/AIDS, which in turn helps shape how people think about and deal with HIV/AIDS.
- The media can also point to healthy behaviors – for the prevention of HIV/AIDS, the protection of those who are most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, and for the care of people affected by HIV/AIDS (AWMC, 2002:2).

On the other hand, the media can play a negative role in portraying the HIV/AIDS pandemic. As various scholars have argued, public understanding of how the virus is prevented and treated is still varied in many parts of the world. This misunderstanding and misconception of the public is largely attributed to the negative character of the media in the representation of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. “The diffusion of misleading and even false information has increased negative attitudes towards PLWHA and has produced fear and confusion in the American public regarding the spread of HIV/AIDS”(Arredondo et al, 1989 cited in Stein 2001). Similarly Boeker (1993) and Birchmeier (1989) state:

Media have done a poor job of educating the public about the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Switzerland and Germany, have tended to spread rather than curtail rumors and misinformation, and have acted to reproduce, rather than counter, culturally received prejudice about illnesses punishment (cited in Stein 2001: 6).

Although different sectors of the mainstream media - newspapers, magazines, radio and television - have been playing a major role in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic, “their role in determining individuals’ attitudes to AIDS is quixotic and often varied” (Netter and Brown, 1992, cited in Shepperson, 2000:10) According to Stein (2001) this may partly be due to the tendency of the media to tune out information not in line with people’s existing beliefs.

The suggestion is, in other words, that although the regular media play a pivotal role in mitigating the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, they alone do not provide the necessary and sufficient means to change behavior.

## **2.2. Reporting on HIV/AIDS**

The existence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, its devastating effects on individuals and societies and its link with human behavior such as sexuality are all characteristics which have contributed to making it an issue worth reporting (Sciortino, 1994). Though this is the case, HIV/AIDS remains a difficult issue to report. The reasons for this as Usdin et al argue:

is not least because of the sensitive nature of the pandemic. Fear, prejudice, ignorance and denial, and a reluctance to discuss sex openly, in addition to AIDS related politics and economics are all powerful factors that complicate the reporting process. And other conflicts, such as those between the public interest and the individual interest, are not easy to resolve. There is also the challenge of keeping the issue of HIV/AIDS newsworthy and topical, rather than repetitive (2002:20).

However, accurate and timely reporting of HIV/AIDS related issues have the potential for preventing the pandemic and reducing the stigma and discrimination associated with the virus. Like many other issues, there are a variety of angles which could be taken to report the HIV/AIDS pandemic. HIV/AIDS issues do not have to be presented only as health stories, but can also be reported as art, science, culture, sexuality, religion, celebrity news, business and politics. HIV/AIDS can possibly be reported in all of those contexts in the local, national, and global media.

According to Stally (2003: 5), meaningful media coverage of HIV/AIDS needs to look not only at the epidemic itself, but also at the underlying causes and outcomes. The following are some issues that the media may look at from different angles to provoke debate and help mobilize positive response.

### **HIV/AIDS Issues and Angles to look at**

<b>Issue/Problem</b>	<b>Angle</b>
How does AIDS impact on the family, the community, the health system, and the society at large? Who carries the burden of the epidemic?	Journalists can take an investigative look at the impact of AIDS at household level its implications for the immediate family and community, who is responsible for care, medical expenses, the demands, treatment and how the person with AIDS is viewed in society
How can negative attitudes be challenged whilst supporting traditional values?	The reporters can look at existing research and carry out interviews with relevant opinion-makers and the public on cultural attitudes, i.e. issues that block sexual behavior change and opportunities to open the debate on male sexuality, machismo and female sexuality; and also traditional practice that increase HIV risk.
What can be done to eliminate blame, stigma and discrimination?	Myths and misconceptions about having AIDS or being HIV/AIDS can be investigated e.g. fears about casual transmission (mosquitoes), social contact, reducing negativity and giving HIV/AIDS a human face. Respect confidentiality.
How can society cope with the growing number of orphans, and with increasing deaths among employees?	The journalists can investigate coping strategies for orphans, widely distribute the Code of Employment and other drafted policies for the work place; and cover worker seminars on HIV/AIDS.
How can we insure that our children grow up free from infection?	Sex education should be introduced in schools ; the important role it plays should be highlighted. Coverage of discussions /debates could center on issues such as easy condom access for youth.
Are current preventions, care and support services sufficient? Are we addressing this issue at the right level?	The journalist should look at marginalized groups and how can they be reached; the issue of commercial sex can also be investigated.

In the study *Journalists and the Presentation of AIDS in Zambia*, Kanene (1994: 49-50) also suggests that the media could cover HIV/AIDS as an economic, agricultural and labor issue.

- As an economic issue: poor countries already crippled by debts may have few resources to mount the health and education services that would help combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. How would structural adjustment programs play a role in this?
- As an agricultural issue: as AIDS affects more and more farming families how will this influence food production? Will they have bad harvests due to labor shortages during the agricultural cycle? Will they begin changing the types of crops which they farm?
- As a labor issue: as more people suffer from HIV-related opportunistic infections and AIDS, how will this affect manpower in manufacturing business and companies?

There is widespread agreement that careful and accurate reporting of HIV/AIDS issues from different angles help influence the public's beliefs about the pandemic and promotes assistance efforts. However, the literature shows that the media's presentation of the HIV/AIDS pandemic as a plague, marked by sensationalism, alarmism, inaccuracy, misinformation and blame, have been common trends (see for example Kanene, 1994). Similarly, Internews HIV/AIDS advisor Liz Gold states, "In many parts of the world, sensationalist and often misleading reporting of AIDS-related issues continue to fuel fear and misconceptions among the general population and promote stigmatization and discrimination of those living with HIV" (Internews, 2005: 1). This sensational approach, as Usdin (2002: 21) state, "fails to analyze issues and inform readers of complexities. It also makes it harder to deal with the epidemic and fosters a culture of fear, silence, prejudice and discrimination, and can adversely influence the setting of national priorities and resource allocation."

Steele (1998) argues that the accusation that the public makes towards the mass media is not wrong. He claims that journalists must share the blame for failing to challenge policy makers and authorities. "If a mandate of journalism is to inform and educate the public in a timely and compelling way about significant issues, then journalists truly failed to adequately inform the public about AIDS and its profound implications" (Steele, 1998: 2).

In covering HIV/AIDS issues, it is always recommended that journalists should be careful not to be sensational. They need to give attention to the quality of their work and about the impact and consequences that it may cause. Apart from this, to change people's attitude and behaviors towards the pandemic, journalists are expected to bring to the surface practical issues of HIV/AIDS when writing their articles (Kaunda cited in Hampande, 2005).

According to the Resource Guide on Reporting on HIV/AIDS prepared by African Women's Media Center,

Journalists who understand the public policy implications and the medical facts of HIV/AIDS and who are also aware of the myths that surround the disease will be more likely to write and produce stories that hold governments accountable, educate the public on how to cope with the disease and help discredit stereotypes associated with the HIV/AIDS virus (International Women's Media Foundation, IWFM, 2001: 2).

### **2.2.1. Portraying People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA)**

As communicators, educators and information providers, mass media in general and journalists in particular are in a unique position to shape the public image of PLWHA. Hence, in a bid to halt the HIV/AIDS pandemic, mass media and practitioners are expected to engage in efforts to help reduce stigma and discrimination against PLWHA. Kripalani et al. (2005) underline that media can play a role in combating stereotypes, treating PLWHA with respect, and giving accurate and up to date information. These will contribute to de-stigmatizing the pandemic and overcoming cultural barriers that hold back in bringing about change.

Nevertheless, it has been observed repeatedly that the media have failed to cover PLWHA in a positive way. Instead of encouraging honest and straightforward communications about the realities of the pandemic and PLWHA, the media sometimes exacerbate the pre-existing unfair treatment of PLWHA. Particularly in the 1980s, facts about the pandemic and PLWHA were found misrepresented in the media (Alcorn, 1988; Portor, 1998; Sontag, 1989; Watney, 1987; and Weeks, 1989, cited in Beharrell, 1993). "The earliest

representation of HIV/AIDS as a 'plague' suggested that AIDS was being made to carry a heavy burden of meanings and connotation quite extraneous to the virus itself and more to do with unresolved fears about sexuality and social order" (Beharrell, 1993: 211).

Even in recent years the media tend to represent PLWHA as patients who are in need of care. Research has also shown the alarming extent to which the voices of PLWHA have been marginalized by the mainstream media (Hallett and Cannella, 1994; Schoofs, 2000; Sergeant and Ariss, 1993; Treurnicht, 2000, cited in Stein 2001). Emphasizing the negative role of the media, Gevisser (1995) states, "The media often kills people with AIDS long before they are ready to die, fuelling the public misconception that if you have it, you might as well be dead". Such actions of the media add force to stereotypes and bring out divisions in the general public.

This indicates that the media take part in shaping certain opinions about HIV/AIDS, and in turn the social attitudes towards those affected by the disease have not yet been adequately changed.

Moreover, media are often criticized for exaggerating facts, sensationalizing reports and using inappropriate terminologies. Citing a survey conducted by the Indian Network of PLWHA, Shiveshwarkar (2001: 2) confirms that, "The stigma and discrimination created by exaggerated and often outdated statistics, understatements and sensationalized reports resulted in the affected shying away from the media for fear that they would lose what little support they had if they disclosed their status". Stressing the negative impact that the media may cause towards PLWHA, Foreman (2000: 26) states, "A doctor who betrays the confidentiality of an individual's HIV status generally harms only that patient; a newspaper which betrays that confidentiality not only harms that patient but feeds into the cycle of discrimination and stigma".

Such problems of the media are frequently attributed to lack of professionalism on the side of the journalists. Many journalists lack the ability to report on HIV/AIDS issues accurately because of their limited background in health issues and lack of access to

reliable sources. Reporters need both knowledge and skills to do satisfactory stories on sensitive issues like HIV/AIDS. This may contribute positively so that people do not turn away from those affected. According to Morrison,

Improving the portrayal of people living with the virus in the media and presenting positive affirmative images would enormously help to sensitize the public to get over irrational fears of contagion and impending danger and assist people living with HIV/AIDS self-acceptance and reduction of stigma (2004:21).

Similarly, Stally (2003) points out that giving emphasis on issues that bring hope, that highlights positive and healthy living as well as successful coping strategies, can contribute to fostering an enabling environment for people living with AIDS and those who are affected. The *African Women's Media Center Manual* underlines the same point: "Guarding the privacy of these people and refraining from reporting confidential information, avoiding placing blame and perpetuating stereotypes, and refraining from treating them as victims are essential for ethical, just and constructive coverage of HIV/AIDS"(AWMC, 2003:15).

Although the above studies show the negative roles that the media play, some other studies suggest that the portrayal of PLWHA is improving. In North America, for example, a wide range of media like publications, telephone hotlines, posters, fax, video, television and radio have been used to mobilize those infected with and affected by the pandemic. These media also challenge misconceptions concerning the disease, provide practical and valuable information, and transform power structures, which slow down an effective reaction to the HIV/AIDS pandemic (Juhasz, 1995). Likewise, Lupton (1996) notes that current representations of PLWHA in Australian press have emphasized more positive themes such as the possibility of long-term survival (cited in Gillett, 2003).

Overall, in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic people living with HIV need to be portrayed as important partners in prevention and care efforts.

### **2.2.2. Language Use in Reporting HIV/AIDS Related Issues**

Although the aim of this study is not to do an in-depth analysis of the language use in newspapers, it is worth noting the importance of language use in covering HIV/AIDS related issues.

It is generally assumed that the language that journalists use when reporting HIV/AIDS help the public be aware of the dangers of HIV/AIDS and encourage them to take appropriate safety measures. However, words, expressions and images that journalists use sometimes miss the intended messages. In their study of the analysis of newspaper's coverage of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Zimbabwe, Uzoaru and Woelk (2000) note that newspaper journalists used improper or sensationalist language. Such language may even prove counter-productive and creates an insensitive portrayal of PLWHA that adds force to stigma and discrimination.

Usdin et al. (2002) argue that using value-loaded words like “scourge”, “dreaded disease”, “plague” and so on contribute to a climate of fear which has been shown to perpetuate stigma and make it far more difficult to speak openly about the disease. As Foreman (2000:28) states, “such words are often used without comment in this way the media unintentionally or reluctantly add force to the existing stigma and discrimination”.

Hence, while reporting HIV/AIDS stories journalists are encouraged to use language that creates a straightforward and constructive view of the pandemic and people with HIV/AIDS. They are also expected not to use words that carry disproportional value judgments. The languages can be inclusive rather than creating a ‘them/us’ or ‘innocent/guilty’ mentality (Usdin et al., 2002). However, doing so requires journalists to have ample knowledge of the pandemic and professional reporting skills.

As mentioned in the *Gender, HIV/AIDS and Rights Training Manual for the Media*, prepared by IPS:

Reporting on HIV/AIDS requires that journalists understand medical terms associated with the disease so that their reporting can be accurate. By correctly defining the terms,

journalists are better able to do research, ask the right questions and interpret data in ways that can help the general public become better educated and informed on HIV/AIDS (IPS, 2003:61).

In relation to the use of language in HIV/AIDS reporting, the United Nations' Development Program (UNDP) has developed a set of guidelines:

- Use language that is inclusive and does not create or reinforce a “them/us” mentality.
- Do not use language that is drawn from the context of war.
- Use language that is value neutral, gender sensitive and empowers, rather than disempowers (for example avoid the term “victims” and instead use “survivors”). The same refers to women, men, girls and boys who face gender violence. A good quote to stick in one’s mind is that of Charlene Smith, a South African journalist who has reported on her experience of being raped by a man who may have been HIV-positive: “We are only victims if we are dead.”
- The journalist should become fluent in HIV/AIDS terminology and then use language that is appropriate for the journalist’s audience.
- Use descriptive terms which are preferred by the persons themselves who are often referred to in reporting on HIV/AIDS (for example “sex workers” instead of “prostitutes”).
- Do not use words like “body fluids” in relation to HIV transmission because some fluids like saliva, sweat and tears do not transmit HIV. It is better to specify the fluids that can transmit the virus such as blood, semen, vaginal fluid and breast milk.
- Use the word “patient” when referring to an individual who is in hospital or the story focuses on their medical treatment.
- Having more than one sexual partner is preferred to promiscuous, which has a negative meaning and attaches a stigma.
- Avoid using the host of acronyms that have crept into the language of HIV/AIDS such as PLWHA (People living with HIV/AIDS) (cited in Foreman, 2000: 33)

### **2.3. Use of Sources in Reporting HIV/AIDS Stories**

People who act as a source of information play a significant role in forming any piece of journalism work. Scholars like Williams and Miller (1995) believe that news is not what happened, but what someone *says* happened or *will* happen. This idea underscores the importance of sources when working out stories.

Ideally, journalists are expected to use a variety of sources to maintain the balance of the story. In contrast to this ideal, a considerable number of studies have shown that journalists mainly rely on official sources (see for example, Williams and Miller, 1995; Valenta, 2000; Shepperson, 2000; Panos, 2005). The American sociologist Herbert J. Gans (1979: 81 cited in Traquina 2004: 102) states, “The economically and politically powerful can obtain easy access to, and are sought out by, journalists; those who lack power are harder to reach by journalists and are generally not sought out until their activities produce social or moral disorder news”.

According to Emke (2000), the reason for this is that journalists believe that official experts are able to make things easier quickly. Similarly, Ericson et al. (1989) make clear that official sources are often used to cite facts with no further research and to give trustworthiness to the reporter’s point of view. Tuchman (1978, cited in Valenta 2000) also explains that journalists believe that the information conveyed by officials and experts provides a sense of security because they offer what are perceived to be the most knowledgeable solutions to problematic issues.

Reporting HIV/AIDS is not much different. Despite the availability of various sources, including the people affected, journalists tend to use official sources and government announcements when reporting HIV/AIDS issues. In relation to the use of sources, Foreman states that this may hinder well reporting. He elucidates:

Some rely too much on optimistic and misleading press releases, others on the statements of the government ministers or others community leaders which reflect “official” attitudes to the disease that are far removed from the reality that most of the population face some reporters without any evidence distrust non governmental organizations or people who are open about their HIV positive status, suspecting that their primary goal is to attract funding... (2000:27).

Powers and Fico (1994) found that the journalists’ judgment was the most powerful influence on source selection. Their research shows that “news content was most powerfully shaped by journalists’ own orientations toward key source qualities, with the most influential variables being source credibility, source accessibility, and time pressure.

... Pressures from within the newsroom also affected source selection”. They further suggest that journalists’ choices to use official sources might be influenced by concerns other than audience needs or adherence to professional principles.

## **2.4. Studies on Press Coverage of the HIV/AIDS Pandemic in Different Countries**

The mass media have the potential to set agendas for public discussion and policymaking on AIDS, thereby improving general awareness and understanding of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In spite of this contribution, studies in the field show that press coverage of HIV/AIDS are not uniform in various parts of the world. “The media have both reflected and molded the often-confused response to AIDS, sometimes spreading fear and hostility, sometimes providing cool and accurate analysis” (Boafo and Foreman, 2000: 3).

A considerable number of studies of news media coverage of HIV/AIDS conducted in different parts of the world show that early concern of the media concentrated on the sensationalism of much of the HIV/AIDS coverage and the problem of widespread misinformation about the transmission of the pandemic. Especially studies conducted in the late 1980s showed that the portrayal of the infection was limited and distorted (Albert, 1986; Baker, 1986; Naylor, 1985; Watney, 1987; Welling, 1988, cited in Miller and Williams, 1993). Similarly, Rogers et al. (1991) show that the initial stage of HIV/AIDS coverage was characterized by denial, bafflement, and general ambiguity about how to report on this unknown disease. The reason behind this, as Miller and Williams (1993) suggest, was two-fold: firstly that media representations of HIV/AIDS were dominated by ‘official’ definitions and perceptions of the disease; secondly that the workings of the media resulted in inaccuracy and sensationalism in the reporting of HIV/AIDS.

Looking to Africa, various researches give evidence that the practice of the African media is not much different. According to Lear (1990), the African media, much like the rest of the world’s media, has moved through the usual stages of denial, scapegoating and blame, before responding constructively to the epidemic. One reason for such actions of the media

according to Bofo and Foreman (2000: 3) is that “all too often the media have reported uncritically the statements of government, non governmental organizations and individuals”.

Even in recent years studies conducted in some African countries show that media coverage of HIV/AIDS is sporadic and superficial. Despite the fact that there are some notable exceptions, media coverage of HIV/AIDS has often been found to be dominated by a particular interest group and perpetuate inaccuracies (Cullinan, 2001; Stein, 2001; Shepperson, 2000).

Research on newspaper coverage of HIV/AIDS conducted by Linda (2000) shows that Ugandan newspapers gave little coverage to the pandemic. The finding indicates that Ugandan newspapers have a tendency to be preoccupied with statistics while neglecting to highlight the needs and problems of the AIDS patients. Another study conducted by Mchombu (2000) in three Namibian newspapers, *Namibian*, *New Era* and *Republiken* and the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) Radio, shows that the coverage of HIV/AIDS was generally low, superficial, and not sustained long enough to create the necessary impact in terms of awareness and change of behavior.

The reason why this coverage is limited according to Mchombu (2000) is that many organizations are not using mass media extensively enough. He also revealed that the media is often unwilling to address this contentious issue in an in-depth manner. According to Gibson (1994, cited in Visser et al. 2003:4) “the African media offered poor coverage of HIV/AIDS often under the pressure of national governments that feared adverse economic effects of negative country image.” Some of the other main constraints to effective media coverage of the epidemic include:

Limited resources for investigating stories; management reluctance to cover AIDS or allocate resources to it; lack of sponsorship for programming on AIDS; management’s fear of offending local audience; lack of access to up-to-date, accurate information; lack of internet access; difficulty of selling “doom and gloom” to the audience, among other constraints (Gold and Falobi, 2001: 2).

Similarly citing the West African Gatekeepers meeting which was held in 1997, Foreman points out five areas where the participants consider the media were failing in their responsibility to cover the HIV/AIDS pandemic. These are lack of involvement in the issue, often the result of lack of training and lack of awareness of health issues; sensationalism; avoidance of key topics such as living with HIV; lack of preparation or transparency; and lack of a collaborative approach (Foreman, 2000).

Not all studies have come to a negative conclusion about the media coverage of HIV/AIDS related issues. Despite their limitations, some studies show that media coverage of HIV/AIDS is increasing. A study conducted by Uzoaru and Woelk (2000) on Zimbabwe newspapers from 1997-2000 shows that though there were clear gaps in the coverage, ranging from a paucity of counseling and care stories to the use of misleading or inaccurate terminology, the coverage of HIV/AIDS by Zimbabwe's Herald is laudable as it shows ample discussion about this topic during the study period.

Odhiambo's (2000) study in three Kenyan national daily newspapers and their Sunday magazine editions, namely *Daily Nation*, *Sunday Nation*, *East African Standard*, *Sunday Standard*, *Kenya Times* and *Sunday Times*, shows that the pandemic has been moderately well covered in terms of how informative, balanced and technically competent the articles have been. However, this conclusion was drawn only on basis of the two newspapers' coverage – *Nation* and the *Kenya Times*. The Standard was significantly below par in its treatment of HIV/AIDS related stories. According to Odhiambo (2000: 106), "moderate performance is not good enough for a life and death issue such as HIV/AIDS that demands clear understanding and appropriate behavioral response".

## **2.5. Agenda-Setting and Framing Theories of the Press and Media**

### **Coverage of HIV/AIDS Pandemic**

Before elaborating on how the agenda-setting theory is related to this study, it is worth noting what the concept means. According to McQuail (2000: 426), agenda-setting is “a process by which the relative attention given to items or issues in news coverage influences the rank order of public awareness of issues and attribution of significance. As an extension effects on public policy may occur”. Agenda-setting has also been defined as “the ability of mass media to transfer the salience of items on their news agendas to the public agendas” (McCombs and Shaw, 1994: 395). Despite varying in the choice of words, the above definitions of agenda-setting are fairly similar. They both attribute agenda-setting to the way the media set order of importance of current issues.

Today agenda-setting is generally viewed as working from two levels. According to McCombs(1994), the first level of agenda-setting is object salience, which is concerned with the central theme or object of a public issue/news story; while the second level is attribute salience, which is the salient characteristic of the theme or object as emphasized by the media.

The concept of framing is related to agenda-setting. Different scholars have defined framing as it involves the concept of selection and salience. For example, for Entman (1993, cited in Griffin 2006: 402) framing is “selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”. To Tankard (1991, cited in Griffin 2006: 401) framing is “the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration”.

McCombs also suggests that agenda-setting and framing describe similar phenomena. If the first level of agenda-setting is the transmission of object salience, then framing is related to the second level agenda-setting; that is the transmission of attribute salience.

McCombs specifically defines framing in relation to second level agenda-setting. To him, framing is the construction of an agenda with a restricted number of thematically related attributes in order to create a coherent picture of a particular object (McCombs, 1997, cited in Griffin, 2006).

Although the above explanations of framing give an idea that agenda-setting is more or less akin with that of framing analysis, which entails how newsrooms choose to highlight specific issues, Scheufele (2000) does not agree with this idea. He argues that framing should not be subsumed under the broad concept of agenda-setting. According to him “framing is related to the concept of prospect theory which believes on the assumption that subtle changes in the wording of the description of a situation might affect how audience members think about this situation” (cited in Hester and Gibson, 2003: 74).

The agenda-setting theory of the press has arguably an important role to play in the coverage of HIV/AIDS in the media. As the definitions shows, this theory suggests that media concentration on particular issues and subjects leads the public to distinguish those issues as more important than other issues. Kiai (2000: 42) points out: “The main strength of the media has been viewed as that of agenda-setting, meaning that the sustenance of topics for long in the public forum will lead to extensive and hopefully intensive discussion that spur some actions on a given topic.”

As Dearing and Rogers (1996) point out, this proposition has been supported in more than 200 studies conducted in various parts of the world over the past 25 years. This shows that the media can also have the power to increase levels of importance assigned to HIV/AIDS related issues.

Thus, by featuring the HIV/AIDS related issues more prominently mass media can make the issue worthy of discourse. Singhal and Rogers (2003: 86) state that “once the media started giving heavy news coverage to the epidemic after the mid 1980s the public began expressing concern about AIDS and policy makers began to increase appropriations sharply for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and research”.

In relation to newspapers, factors such as the number of articles, news types, location in the paper, and length of stories are important to put media agenda issues onto the public agenda (Rogers et al., 1991).

Media steer the readers in this regard to understand the importance of the news issues in different ways. Apart from consistently reporting the issue, newspapers give prominence of the report on the pages. The pages on which the report appears, the use of letterheads and fonts, the size of the report, the use of photographs to support and the period of prolonged reporting are the main ones (Gideon de Wet, 2002:7).

In their study on agenda-setting and AIDS, Rogers et al. (1991) found that media influence not only the public, but also other news media and policy makers. They suggested that the concepts of framing and priming therefore should be applied in the coverage of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. They further affirmed that reporters have framed HIV/AIDS by seeking out ways in which the story can be told with the conventional news “values”: sensation, conflict, mystery, celebrity, deviance, tragedy, and proximity to the readers (Rogers et al, 1992).

All these suggest that the agenda-setting and framing theory of the press provide important implications for news coverage of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Hence, this study was conducted towards the backdrop of these theories.

## **2.6. Theories of Newsroom Organization**

In an attempt to explore factors influencing media content this study goes beyond the content analyses and tried to investigate what is happening in the newsrooms. In order to back up this part it is essential to review some theories of newsroom organizations. Therefore, apart from the aforementioned theories this study bases itself on two theories of newsroom organization; social control and gatekeeping theories. Although some researchers may have considered these theories as they are out of date, they are still important to explore how things work in the newsroom.

### **2.6.1. Social Control Theory**

Literatures suggest that Warren Breed's (1955) "Social Control in the Newsroom" theory is pioneering example of the scientific study of the news making process. Breed concentrates on the question of how publishers, the chief executive officer of a newspaper, gets the journalists to follow "policy," even though that policy is very seldom written down. According to Breed, newspapers' top leaders construct a "policy" for their organization that establishes a "more or less consistent orientation shown by the paper, not only in its editorial but in its news columns and headlines as well." and this policy is usually followed by the staff. Other researchers also highlighted that social forces within the newsroom influence what becomes news. Although journalists can impose their individual values on their work, researchers suggest that organizational forces ultimately win out because the organization has the ability to hire and fire workers who do or do not follow acceptable practices (Shoemaker, 1991 cited in Dailey et al, 2003).

As Breed and other scholars argued, ideally, there should be no need for a "policy" other than the famous "all the news that's fit to print." This suggests that what becomes news is a function of what happens, not of policy. But in many cases there is a difference between the news that happens and the accounts of that news that gets published or broadcast. This is because news policies influence the relationship between the news that happens and the accounts thereof. Most of the time journalists do act in accordance with those policies.

For the society as a whole, the existing system of power relationships is maintained. Policy usually protects property and class interests, and thus the strata and groups holding these interests are better able to retain them. For the larger community, much news is printed objectively, allowing for opinion to form openly, but policy news may be slanted or buried so that some important information is denied the citizenry (Breed, 1955:193)

It is not only ownership and its policies that shape and control the media message; media routines also influence content as well. Shoemaker and Reese (1991) illustrated, that the longer people work for a media organization, the more socialized they are to the organization's policies, both stated and unstated.

### **2.6.2. The Gatekeeping Theory**

The concept of gatekeeping was first applied to communication and journalism researches by White (1950). As literatures indicate White's study implied that news is what the editors/gatekeepers says it is. Shoemaker (1991 cited in Barzilai-Nahon 2005:3) defines media gatekeeping as "it is the process by which numerous messages are filtered and reduced to the few we are offered in our daily media outlets – it is an essential part of the news gathering and dissemination process, because every potential news item cannot be gathered, and from among those items gathered, they all cannot be disseminated". Barzilai-Nahon underlines that gatekeeping comprises more than a selection process. According to him Gatekeeping is a "process of controlling information as it moves through a gate. Activities include selection, addition, withholding, display, channeling, shaping, manipulation, repetition, timing, localization, integration, disregard, and deletion of information" (2005:7).

The above definitions one way or another illustrate that media content passes through different levels of organizational processing. In this process the original message is filtered in many ways before reaching on the audience. For example, the length may be reduced; the style may be changed, the idea may be censored, and so on. Each step in the process can be considered as a gate through which the data must pass on its way to the consumer, each gatekeeper will have had an effect on the content and style of the story. Each person will have added to or subtracted from the original data, and in his or her own way each person will have helped to formulate. Hence, in this process the reporters, copy tasters, sub-editors, editors and, to a lesser extent, media owners are all gatekeepers. This in turn shows that the selection of news items is determined by these all parties. The decision is therefore made based on some set of standard principles of news values, organizational routines, input structure and common sense (Happy Fun Communication Land, 2003).

Citing the works of different scholars like (White, 1950; Shoemaker and Reese, 1991; Breed, 1955) Dailey et al (2003) discuss the four important areas of gatekeeping comprehensively. The following part will summarize these four points:

**Individual journalists:** the extent to which differing news values of individual journalists affect decisions made in cross-media partnerships. In most cases journalists decisions on which stories to run were “highly subjective” and based on their “own set of experiences, attitudes and expectations” of what is news (White, 1950).

**Established media routines:** researches show that journalists' need to establish routines in an effort to sift through the hundreds of messages they receive each day and must process in a short period of time. Routines determine which stories will pass through the gates and which elements of the story will be emphasized (Shoemaker and Reese, 1991).

**Organizational constraints:** This is related to the social control theory (see 2.6.1). According to Breed (1955) social forces within the newsroom influence what becomes news. Although journalists can impose their individual values on their work, researchers suggest organizational forces like policy which are admitted or not affect news selection.

**Forces:** The relative strengths of the different forces that determine whether a news item passes through the gate and reaches the news consumer. Positive and negative forces on either side of a gate determine whether an item passes through the gate. Hence, identifying the strength and conflict of various forces becomes a critical factor in cross-media partnerships in determining which stories will pass through to the audience (Shoemaker, 1983).

The above explanations of the theories of newsroom organization provide important assumptions on how content is shaped in the newsroom. These theories were used as background for the second part of this study.

## **Chapter Three**

### **3. Study Design**

*This chapter deals with the design of the study, under which the method and subject of the study, sampling techniques, data collection and data analysis methods are discussed.*

#### **3.1. Method of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the magnitude and nature of the HIV/AIDS pandemic coverage in selected Ethiopian newspapers. The reason why newspapers were selected is because it is believed that they can be effective tools in covering HIV/AIDS related issues widely. Since they are also available for future use, stories can be read many times so readers can confirm their understanding of what they read.

In terms of method, content analysis approach was employed as a main method. This method was employed because it aims at systematic analysis of communication content, which is also the aim of this study. However, content analysis by its very nature has got a shortcoming. It tells only the 'what' of the content studied and leaves out the 'why'. In order to fill some of the gaps in-depth interviews were held with reporters, editors and designers of the two selected newspapers.

#### **3.2. Subject of the Study**

It was unattainable to cover all Ethiopian newspapers in this study. Therefore, two newspapers were selected, both of which are in Amharic: *Addis Zemen* and *Addis Admas*. The earliest, founded in 1941, is a daily government newspaper, whereas the latter, founded in 1992, is a weekly private-owned newspaper. The two newspapers were selected because of their relatively large circulation and wide geographical coverage. The average circulation of *Addis Zemen* and *Addis Admas* is 17,740 and 31,000 respectively (MoI, 2004). The two newspapers mainly circulate in urban areas of the country because of low literacy rate in the country.

A total of six persons, two editors, two journalists and two designers; one from each newspaper were also the subject of this study.

### **3.3. Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

In order to select the samples -the time span and the number of newspapers -of this study, purposive sampling techniques was employed.

Six months editions spanning from 11 September 2004 to 2 March 2005 of the two newspapers were chosen as samples of this study. The time span was purposively selected because the World AIDS Day is celebrated during this period; and the media give much coverage to the issue around this time. The different editions during the time span gave chance to compare and contrast the coverage at different times. Also, the period was selected to avoid the extraordinary period around May 2005 when the national elections took place.

It was cumbersome to cover all issues of the daily *Addis Zemen* in the sample. Hence, in order to make the two newspapers comparable, only one edition of the daily *Addis Zemen* was taken from the seven editions of a week. Here the researcher tried to include all weekdays by selecting Monday in the first week, Tuesday in the second week and so forth. Since *Addis Admas* is a weekly newspaper, all editions of the given time span were used. Editors, journalists and designers were also chosen using purposive sampling technique.

### **3.4. Method of Data Collection**

The contents of individual articles related to HIV/AIDS issues in all the selected editions of the newspapers were collected and examined. Coding lists were prepared to find the extent of the coverage in the newspapers, to detect the types of stories, to classify the themes they featured, to identify the amount of space they gave and the sources and origin they used, and to make out the placement of stories (See Appendix A).

The coding list is almost similar to the ones used in previous studies by Kasoma (2000) and Odhiambo (2000) in Zambia and Kenya respectively. By using the same design, it is

attainable to compare the findings across different African countries. The procedure for coding included: type, themes, source, origin, placement of stories and amount space given for stories. The researcher and one other coder who is an MA student at School of Journalism and Communications did the coding.

### **3.4.1. Coding Categories**

The following are brief descriptions of the categories:

**Type of story:** Refers to the genre that the story belongs to. HIV/AIDS related articles were coded as news, features, letters, editorials, advertisements, commentaries and others.

**Theme of story:** Refers to the central message or the dominant theme of the stories. The themes of HIV/AIDS coverage were coded under the following categories: prevention and control, transmission, impact (political/economic/social), medicine, PLWHA, donation, HIV counseling and testing, children and HIV/AIDS, women and HIV/AIDS and others.

**Source of story:** Refers to the dominant source of the story. This was coded as health centers/health workers, NGOs, medical journals, government organizations, meetings and workshops, celebrities, individuals, people living with HIV/AIDS and others.

**Origin of Story:** Refers to the basis of the story. Two categories were used: local and foreign.

**Length of story:** Refers to the amount of space devoted to HIV/AIDS related issues. The lengths of the articles were measured by square centimeter (cm<sup>2</sup>).

**Placement of the story:** Refers to the places in which HIV/AIDS stories are placed. Two categories were employed: front page and inside page.

The categories under *type of story* are defined as follows:

**Hard news:** Stories which highlight new happenings or events. These stories answer most of the basic questions: who, what, where, when, why and how. They also focus on a conflict or problem and the attempts to resolve it.

**Features:** Stories which are descriptive, often to the point of painting a picture for the reader. In-depth stories with background information and stories which tend to be longer and their scope extend beyond that of the straight news story.

**Letters:** Letters written by any professionals were coded under this category.

**Commentaries:** Any article which is a criticism, discussion or explanation of ideas, opinions or facts.

**Editorials:** Commentary article which shows the stand of the newspaper. It is written by the editor and has got its own column.

**Advertisements:** Notice or pictures which are used to announce a product or service.

**Others:** Any article which is other than the above mentioned ones or a story which is not clear to categorize under the above categories was coded under this category.

The categories under *theme of story* are defined as follows.

**Prevention and control:** This category was used when article focused on the controlling mechanisms or measures taken by different bodies to prevent the pandemic.

**Transmission:** Articles which dealt with the transmission methods of HIV/AIDS were coded under this category.

**Impact:** Articles which stated economic, social, political and cultural impact of HIV/AIDS. This category was first coded in three parts. These are political, cultural and social, and economic impacts but, to make the analysis easier, these three categories were collapsed in to one.

**Medicine:** This category was used when articles focused on the epidemiological aspects of HIV/AIDS, research in relation to HIV/AIDS, medication, ant-retroviral medicine etc.

**Donation:** Stories dealing with donation of money, medicine and different materials to fight against HIV/AIDS were coded under this category.

**PLWHA:** This category was used when the focus of the stories was to issues related to people living with HIV/AIDS, coping with stigma and discrimination.

**HIV counseling and testing:** Articles dealing with HIV/AIDS counseling and testing were coded under this category

**Children and HIV/AIDS:** Articles focused on children affected or infected by HIV/AIDS were coded under this category.

**Women and HIV/AIDS:** Articles dealing with women from different walks of life were coded under this category.

**Others:** This category was used if a story had a theme other than the above mentioned ones or if story did not have a clear theme.

The categories under *source of story* are defined as follows:

**Health Centers/Health Workers:** This category was used when articles were sourced from different organizations like Ministry of Health, HIV/AIDS Secretariat, health posts, hospitals, and clinics. It also included medical specialists like doctors and nurses.

**Medical journals:** This category was used if articles were sourced from medical newspapers and journals.

**Government organizations:** This included all official agencies or public persons excluding health centers, doctors and nurses.

**NGOs:** This category included local and international non-governmental organizations.

**Meetings and workshops:** This category was used when articles were mainly sourced from meetings, seminars and workshops.

**Research findings:** This category was used when the articles were sourced from research findings.

**Celebrities:** Articles sourced from famous persons like politicians, artists, athletes etc were coded under this category.

**Individuals:** Articles sourced from individuals from different walks of life and who did not belong to any organizations were coded under this category.

**PLWHA:** This category was used when people living with HIV/AIDS and AIDS patients were identified as sources.

**Others:** This category was used if a source could not be classified as any of the above. Multi-sourced articles were also coded under this category.

### **3.5. Unit of Analysis**

Individual article which dealt with HIV/AIDS related issues was the unit of analysis for this study.

### **3.6. Inter-coder Reliability**

Two coders - the researcher and a master's student - from the department of Journalism and Communications did the coding. A thorough explanation was given for the student before the coding. All the 108 articles were taken for the inter-coder reliability check. The inter-coder reliability was performed using the holsti method, which is one of the most widely used methods in communication research (Lombard et al, 2005). The 52 editions yielded a total of 108 stories. A total of 648 judgments were made. From the total, 17 disagreements were found and resolved by double coding. An overall inter-coder reliability

coefficient exceeded .97(97.37%). This number is believed to be more than adequate because as a rule of thumb most published content analysis typically report a minimum reliability coefficient of above .75 when using *pi* or *alpha* or about 90% in percentage agreement.

### **3.7. Data Analysis Method**

After coding all HIV/AIDS related articles using the aforementioned categories, critical analysis was made using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods. A computer program called SPSS was used to analyze the quantitative data. To examine the quantitative difference of the coverage between the two newspapers, a chi-square test was employed. The data gathered from the editors through the interviews were analyzed qualitatively.

## Chapter Four

### 4. Presentation and Discussion of the Study

*In this section, the key findings of the study are presented and discussed. First, the frequency of the HIV/AIDS pandemic coverage of the two newspapers is presented using tables, bar graphs and description. Secondly, the two newspapers' magnitude and nature of the HIV/AIDS coverage are discussed based on the findings of the study.*

#### 4.1. Presentation of Findings

##### 4.1.1. The Frequency of HIV/AIDS Coverage

A total of 52 newspapers (26 editions of *Addis Admas* and 26 editions of *Addis Zemen*) spanning from 11 September 2004 to 2 March 2005 were collected and examined. These editions yielded 108 HIV/AIDS related articles.

**Table 1. Frequency of HIV/AIDS Stories**

Type of Newspaper	No of HIV/AIDS Related Stories	Percentage
<i>Addis Admas</i>	46	42.6
<i>Addis Zemen</i>	62	57.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

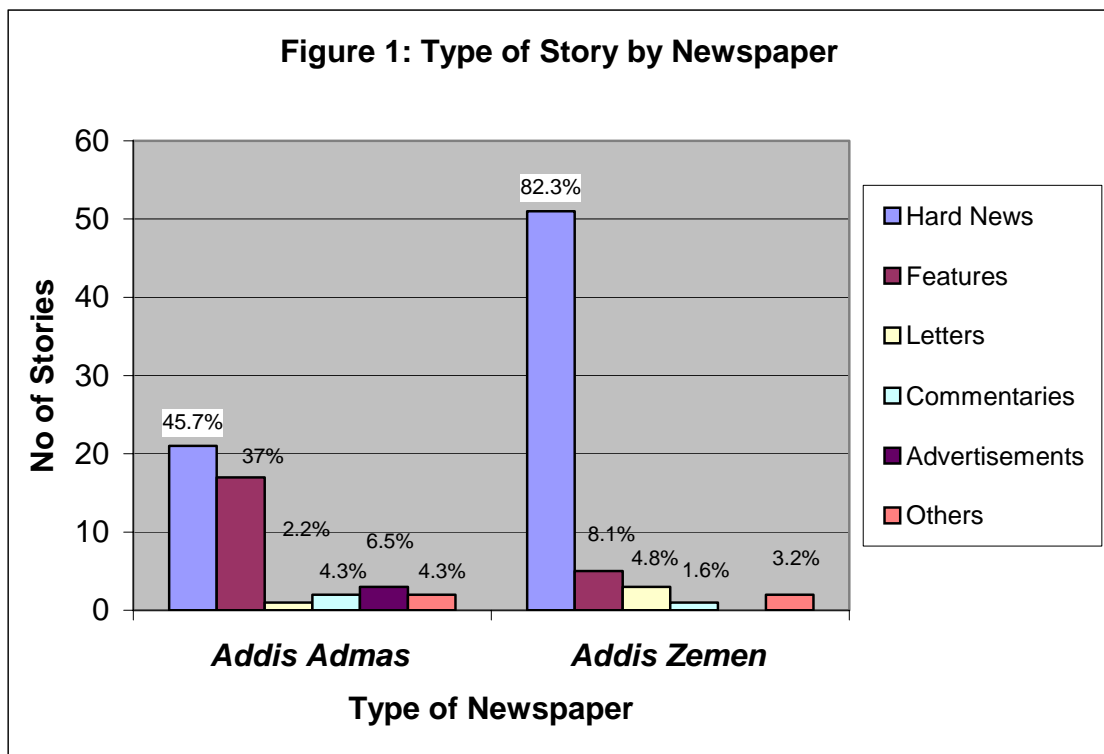
The findings concerning the number of articles on HIV/AIDS are summarized in Table 1. As indicated in the table, out of the total 108 (100%) stories, *Addis Zemen* published 62 (57.4%) stories, while *Addis Admas* published 46 (42.6%) articles on HIV/AIDS. On average, *Addis Zemen* had about 10 HIV/AIDS related articles per month, which is relatively more than the ones on *Addis Admas*, with about 7 articles.

*Addis Admas* did not have any HIV/AIDS related stories in its 25<sup>th</sup> September 2004, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> January 2005 and 5<sup>th</sup> February 2005 editions. *Addis Zemen* also ignored HIV/AIDS related articles in its 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of December 2004, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2005 and

14<sup>th</sup> of February 2005. The quantity of coverage in *Addis Zemen* rose in November and December in which the World AIDS Day was celebrated. 10 articles were found on 2 December 2004. Almost all the articles dealt with the celebration of the World AIDS Day in different regions of the country. *Addis Admas* did not give a relatively higher coverage in this period.

*In the next part, the numbers and percentages in the bar graphs signify the data from individual newspapers but in the description part percentages represent the total figure. The reason why the figures in the bar graphs were not used in the description part is with the intention of avoiding needless repetitions.*

#### 4.1.2 Type of Story



The most common type of story in both newspapers was hard news. Out of the total 108 (100%) articles, 72 (66.7%) were found to be hard news. Of this number, 21 (19.4%) were published in *Addis Admas*, whereas 51 (47.2%) were published in *Addis Zemen*.

As regards, the two newspapers' coverage of hard news items, *Addis Zemen* published relatively more stories than *Addis Admas*. However, though the coverage of *Addis Admas* was limited, hard news got better coverage than the other types of stories that it published.

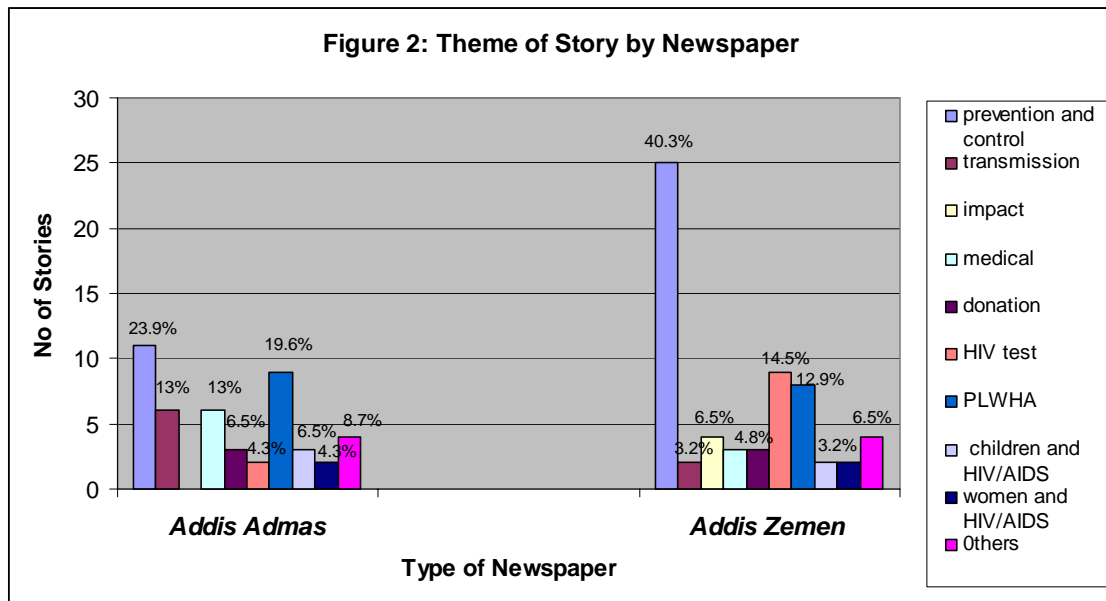
The second largest number of story type is a feature article. The two newspapers published 22 feature articles. Out of the total 22, which account for 20.4% of all articles, *Addis Admas* published 17 (15.7%) features while *Addis Zemen* published only 5 features, which account for 4.6% of the total articles. All the 5 feature articles were found from four Tuesday editions, which were included in the sample. On this day, there is a column in which HIV/AIDS related issues are treated.

Surprisingly, no single editorial was published in all the 52 editions of the sample newspapers. Letters and commentaries were also scantily found in both newspapers. From the total 108 (100%) articles, only 4 which accounts for 3.7 % of the total were found to be letters. *Addis Admas* covered only 1, which accounts for 0.9% of the total stories; while *Addis Zemen* had 3 (2.8 %) letters out of the total. Regarding commentaries, out of the total 108 (100%), *Addis Admas* published 2 (1.9%) while *Addis Zemen* had only 1 (0.9%).

Out of the total 108 (100%) articles, only 3 (2.8%) advertisements were published. All of them were found in *Addis Admas*, and it was the same advertisement of the Sensation Condom, which appeared in three different editions. *Addis Zemen* published no HIV/AIDS related advertisement at all in the period.

In order to see whether there is a significant difference between the two newspapers or not, a chi-square analysis was made. The statistical test shows that there is a significant difference in the quantitative distribution of type of stories between the two newspapers ( $X^2=21.48$ ,  $df =5$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

### 4.1.3. Theme of Story



Out of the total 108 (100%) stories, 36 (33.3%) were dominantly about prevention and control. *Addis Admas* had 11 (10.2%) of these, whereas *Addis Zemen* had 25 (23.1%).

The second highest theme or aspect of HIV/AIDS issue was PLWHA, which got 17 (15.7%), of which 9 (8.3%) were in *Addis Admas* and the remaining 8 (7.4%) were in *Addis Zemen*. One point worth mentioning here is that *Addis Zemen* tried to inform the public about the seriousness of this topic by dropping a splash about stigma and discrimination on the bottom of the front page from September 11, 2004 to November 16, 2004. The message says, “Let’s stop stigma and discrimination”

Only 11 articles, representing 10.2% of all stories, dealt with HIV counseling and testing. When comparing the two newspapers, *Addis Zemen* gave relatively better coverage. Out of the total 108 (100%) stories, 9 (8.3%) dealt with HIV counseling and testing in *Addis Zemen*, while only 2 (1.9%) in *Addis Admas* were found on this issue. In both newspapers, many of the stories were typically hard news and dealt with the launches of HIV testing and counseling centers in different regions.

The two newspapers also failed to give sufficient coverage for the transmission methods of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Both newspapers published 8 (7.4%) stories about transmission. 6 (5.6%) were in *Addis Admas*, while 2 (1.9%) were in *Addis Zemen*. It is reported that people do not have ample knowledge on how HIV/AIDS is transmitted. It is therefore important to report on this issue.

Medical issues had 9 (8.3%) stories, of which 6 (5.6%) were in *Addis Admas* and 3 (2.8%) were found in *Addis Zemen*.

There were 6 (5.6%) stories which dealt with donation; 3 in each newspaper. All 6 stories were hard news and written in the same way. For example, in *Addis Zemen* 28 September 2004 there is a basic news story, which states that World Vision Ethiopia, UNICEF and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church have donated money and learning materials for PLWHA and orphaned children.

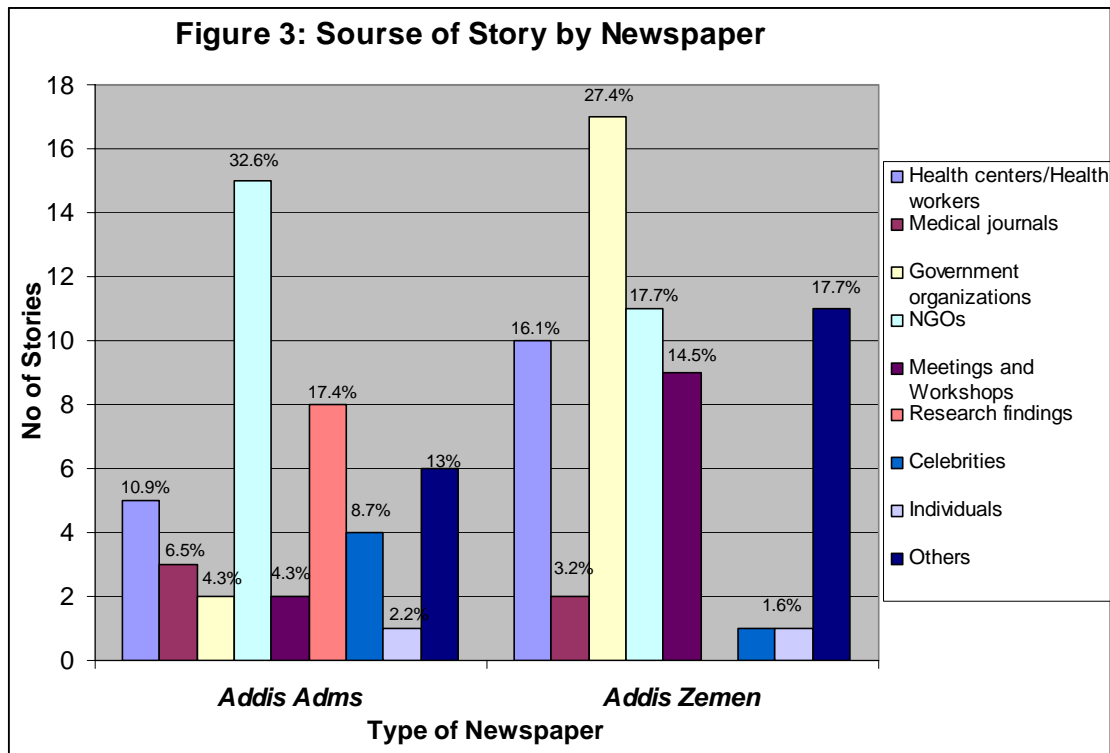
There were only 5 articles in relation to children and HIV/AIDS. From the total of 5 (4.6%) stories, which dealt with this issue, 3 (2.8%) were found in *Addis Admas* whereas 2 (1.9%) were found in *Addis Zemen*.

Only 4 (3.7%) articles were found in relation to women and girls; 2 in each newspaper. The articles in *Addis Zemen* were published near the World AIDS Day and they focused mainly on statistics. The two articles in *Addis Admas* dealt with prostitution.

Out of the total 108 (100%) articles, only 4 (3.7%) were found about the impact that the pandemic causes. All these stories were published in *Addis Zemen*. There was no article written from this angle in *Addis Admas*.

The statistical analysis ( $\chi^2=15.119$ ,  $df =9$ ,  $p < .05$ ) yielded that there is a significant difference in the coverage of different angles between the two newspapers.

#### 4.1.4. Source of Story



NGOs are prominent sources of information used in writing HIV/AIDS related articles. Out of the total 108 (100%) stories, 26 (24.1%) were found from local and international NGOs. 15 (13.9%) stories in *Addis Admas* came from this source whereas *Addis Zemen* sourced 11 (10.2%) stories from NGOs. This gives the impression that the newspapers take steps to smooth the efforts of NGOs in combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Government organizations were the second common source that the newspapers used. 19 stories representing 17.6 % of the total number were sourced from government organizations. Surprisingly, the private newspaper *Addis Admas* sourced only 2 (1.9%) from this source. On the contrary, government-run *Addis Zemen* wrote 17 (15.7%) stories from this source.

The category “others” make up the third. 17 (15.7%) articles were coded under this category. 6 (5.6%) stories in *Addis Admas* and 11 (10.2%) in *Addis Zemen* were found

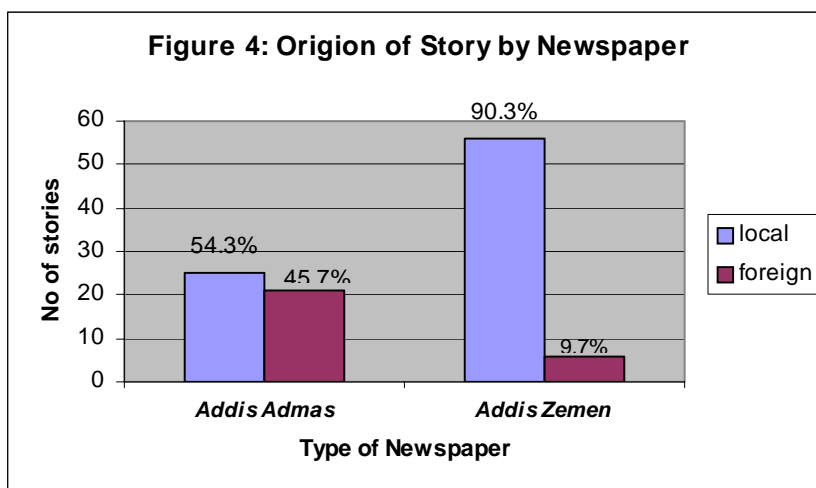
under others. The reason why a number of articles were found under this category might be because multi-sourced articles and/or those articles which did not have a dominant source were coded under this category.

Out of the total 108 (100%), 15 (13.9%) were sourced from health centers/health workers. *Addis Zemen* sourced 10 (9.3%) from this source, whereas *Addis Admas* used this source only for 5 (4.6) articles.

*Addis Admas* was better in using research findings for 8 (7.4%) stories and celebrities for 4 (3.7%) stories as a source, while *Addis Zemen* was better in using health centers/health workers 10 (9.3%), government organizations 17 (15.7%), meetings and workshops 9 (8.3%) as a source of story. The other issue worth pointing at is that the finding shows that almost in all stories newspapers attributed higher authorities as a source. No story was sourced from PLWHA.

To see whether there is a quantitative difference in the use of sources between the two newspapers, a chi-square test was used. The result ( $X^2=28.30$ ,  $df =8$ ,  $p < .05$ ) shows that there is a significant difference in the use of sources between the two newspapers.

#### 4.1.5. Origin of Story



As figure 4 elucidates, both newspapers gave significant coverage to local origin stories. Out of the total 108 (100%), 81 (75%) were found to be local origin stories. In particular, *Addis Zemen* devoted a considerable coverage for local issues. Of the 62 stories representing 57.4% of the total, 56 (51.9%) were local origin stories while the remaining 6 (5.6%) were taken from foreign sources. Though *Addis Admas* gave a considerable coverage for local issues, the difference between the number of stories from foreign origin and local ones that the newspaper covered is slight. Of the total 108 stories, 25 representing (23.1%) of the total were local origins while 21 (19.4%) were sourced from foreign origins. As found out, local journalists wrote most of the articles. It is interesting to find that the newspapers gave significant coverage to local origin stories.

There is a statistical difference between *Addis Admas* and *Addis Zemen* in using local and foreign origin stories ( $X^2=18.22$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

#### 4.1.6. Length of Story

**Table 2: Length of Story by Newspaper**

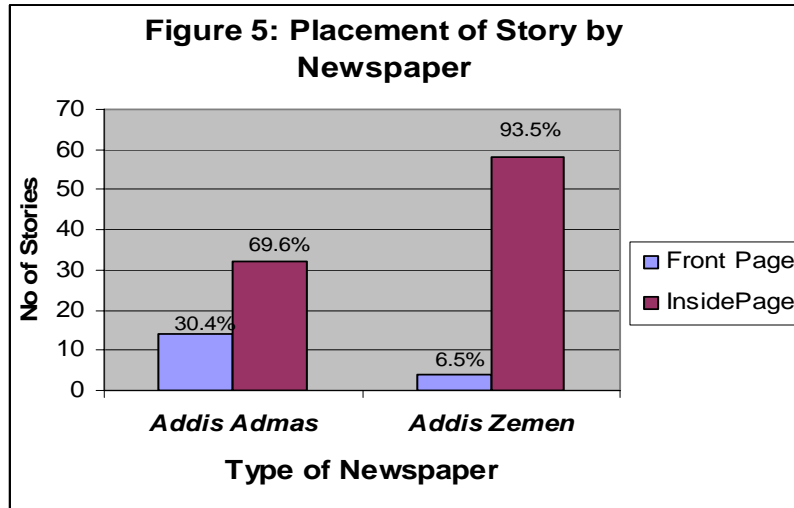
Type of Newspaper	Space in cm <sup>2</sup>	Mean
<i>Addis Admas</i>	10285	165.9
<i>Addis Zemen</i>	18078.5	291.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>28363.5</b>	<b>457.5</b>

A total of 28363.5 cm<sup>2</sup> space was devoted for HIV/AIDS related issues in both newspapers. Of these, *Addis Admas* devoted 10285 cm<sup>2</sup>, while *Addis Zemen* gave 18078.5 cm<sup>2</sup>. The average space *Addis Admas* gave for one story was 165.9 cm<sup>2</sup> while *Addis Zemen* gave 291.6 cm<sup>2</sup>.

The chi-square test ( $X^2=17.94$ ,  $df=10$ ,  $p < .05$ ) shows that there is a significant difference between the two newspapers in giving out space for HIV/AIDS stories. It shows that *Addis Zemen* gave more space than *Addis Admas*. However, this difference might be affected by

the varied paper size. *Addis Zemen* is a broad sheet while *Addis Admas* is a tabloid size newspaper.

#### 4.1.7. Placement of Story



Among the 108 (100%) articles, only 18 (16.6%) appeared on the front page. Out of this number, *Addis Admas* placed 14 (13%) stories on the front page. This number represents 30% of the total stories that the newspaper published. *Addis Zemen* displayed only 4 (3.7%) stories in its front page. 2 stories out of the total 4 appeared on the front page during the World AIDS Day. Only one story was found as a lead story in *Addis Zemen*.

Out of the total 21 hard news which represents 29.2% that *Addis Admas* published, 14 (19.4%) were placed in the front page while the remaining 7 (9.7%) were placed in the inside page. Out of the total of 51 representing (70.8%) hard news items that *Addis Zemen* published, 47 (65.2%) were placed in the inside page. Only 4 (5.5%) hard news items were displayed on the front page. This shows that *Addis Admas* gave relatively better space for hard news items whereas *Addis Zemen* failed to put hard news on the front page

The chi-square test ( $X^2=10.93$ ,  $df =1$ ,  $p<. 05$ ) proves that the two newspapers significantly differ in the placement of stories. *Addis Admas* was found to be better in placing more stories in the front page.

## **4.2. Discussion**

*In this part of the study, the findings are discussed in terms of type, theme, placement, origin and source of story and amount of space given for the stories. The discussion is presented along with qualitative description of some of the articles. The information gathered through the interview was used to back up the discussion.*

### **4.2.1. The Extent of HIV/AIDS Coverage and the Space Provided**

The findings in relation to the extent of coverage can be interpreted in different ways. The 108 stories found in the six months' time period can be considered as adequate or not as there are no clear-cut criteria to judge the extent of coverage based on numbers. For this reason, it is difficult to say either 'enough coverage was given for HIV/AIDS related issues or the coverage was limited'. However, vis-à-vis the impact that the pandemic has on the general fabric of the country, the coverage of HIV/AIDS related issues in *Addis Admas* and *Addis Zemen* in the sample six-month time was limited. To a great extent, the findings in this study are analogous with that of other findings in sub-Saharan African countries. This result is for the most part similar to the findings of Linda (2000) and Mchombu (2000) who found that the HIV/AIDS issues were given little coverage in the Ugandan and Namibian media. It is also similar with the recent research by Media Tenor (2005) on Namibian and South African media coverage on the issue of HIV/AIDS which indicate that the volume of coverage is low.

The findings also show the irregular publishing of HIV/AIDS stories. Out of the total 52 sample editions, no HIV/AIDS related stories were found in 8 publications (4 editions of *Addis Admas* and 4 editions of *Addis Zemen*). This along with the poor qualities of the articles (see theme of stories 4.2.3) shows that the audience is not regularly reminded about the issue. However, in order to increase and uphold public awareness about the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, newspapers are expected to report about it constantly. In line with this, the agenda-setting theory suggests that newspapers can make the HIV/AIDS issue worthy of discourse by giving regular coverage in the media. Internews (2004:1) also states, "Regular, effective local media coverage that humanizes the issue and explores the

many factors driving the epidemic can put AIDS on the social and political agenda and keep it there”.

This spasmodic nature of the HIV/AIDS coverage is also of the same kind with that of the findings of the aforementioned researchers. Mchombu (2000) found that Namibian media coverage of HIV/AIDS was sporadic, showing highs and lows from one month to the next, rather than continued for a long time. Linda's (2000) finding also shows that the Ugandan media failed to remind the public regularly about the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Traquina's (2004) analysis of the news coverage of HIV/AIDS in four different countries (the United States, Brazil, Portugal and Spain) also indicated that the news coverage on HIV/AIDS was rather sporadic with the exception of one newspaper.

Like the extent of coverage, it seems difficult to judge the adequacy of the space provided for HIV/AIDS related issues. Still, the amount of space that *Addis Admas* and *Addis Zemen* gave for the issue seems limited. Though *Addis Zemen* is a broadsheet newspaper, the average space provided for a single story was 291.6 cm<sup>2</sup>. The tabloid size *Addis Admas* also gave an average of 165.9 cm<sup>2</sup>. As HIV/AIDS is still a big threat for the country, the space provided for it was limited. This finding is similar to Media Tenor's study in Namibian and South African media which shows that HIV/AIDS take up a small space.

Regarding the quantity of coverage, the interviews with the reporters and editors of the two newspapers show discrepancy. *Addis Admas'* reporter and editor expressed their belief that they gave enough attention to HIV/AIDS. On the contrary the reporter and editor of *Addis Zemen* thought that they did not give due attention for the HIV/AIDS related issues as they gave priority for other issues in the study period.

#### **4.2.2. Type of Story**

In relation to the type of stories, the finding of this study shows that significant attention was given for hard news. As hard news is one of the major categories that newspapers use to show the prominence of the issue, it is interesting to get more HIV/AIDS related hard news items in both newspapers. Although this finding is in agreement with Mchombu's

(2000) and Kasoma's (2000) studies which show that most of the stories were of the spot news variety, the justifications why newspapers gave priority for hard news show discrepancy. Kasoma's (2000:130) finding illustrates that "the fact that the most popular story was the news story is an indication that the newspapers were more interested in giving people current information and hard facts about HIV/AIDS rather than back grounders". However, the reason for the hard news focus on HIV/AIDS issue in the two newspapers, according to the editors, is that reporters generally have a hard news focus. According to the reporter of *Addis Zemen* there is a tradition of focusing on hard news items. 82.3% of the stories that all reporters report are hard news. The reporter said that the newspaper gets many of its news from the two news agencies: Ethiopian News Agency and Walta Information Center. According to the reporter in the agencies and in *Addis Zemen* mainly focus on hard news items. This goes with Breed's (1955) social control theory in which reporters and editors are governed themselves in an unwritten policy. The reporter said no one told her to focus on hard news item but it has become a tradition.

Editorials show the stand of newspapers in momentous issues. Hence, it is possible to say that editorial is the best place for the newspapers to show which issues it regards as important for the public. Though this is the case, surprisingly, no single editorial was published in all the 52 editions of the sample newspapers concerning HIV/AIDS.

According to the editors, the reason why they did not write editorial on the specified period of time was just on account of chance. *Addis Admas'* editor said whenever issues of adversities of diseases are raised; they vividly and distinctly cover the issue in their editorial page in connection with HIV/AIDS. *Addis Zemen's* editor, on his part, said that they had even a policy to publish at least one editorial on HIV/AIDS in forty-five days. He, however, said that they might have given priority for other current issues in the selected period.

Next to hard news, feature articles got the relatively large number despite the fact that there was considerable difference on the coverage of this genre between the two newspapers. *Addis Admas* gave larger coverage in the feature genre. On the other hand, *Addis Zemen*

did not treat HIV/AIDS related issues well in feature articles. According to the editor, the reason that *Addis Zemen* published few feature articles is that they saved feature articles for their HIV/AIDS column, which is called Yezemen Dewel. It literally means ‘call of the time’, and is published every Tuesday. All the feature articles in *Addis Zemen* were found from four Tuesday’s editions, which were included in the sample. Some other feature articles might have been found if other Tuesday editions were included in the sample. *Addis Admas*, however, does not have an HIV/AIDS column but most often HIV/AIDS related feature articles appeared under the Health Column. This implies that the newspapers mainly cover the HIV/AIDS issue as a health issue.

The other genres - letters, commentaries and advertisements - were scantily found in both newspapers. Though this is the case, the editors could not admit this result. They said that this might have been because of chance. Particularly *Addis Zemen*’s editor states that they published commentaries in relation to the unfair treatment of PLWHA, stigma and discrimination and that few people have benefited in the name of HIV/AIDS (only 1 commentary was found in *Addis Zemen*. see appendix B).

#### **4.2.3. Theme of Story**

Regarding the themes or angles that the newspapers used, when covering HIV/AIDS issues, the study reveals that significant attention was given to prevention and control methods. It is interesting to find that the newspapers gave considerable coverage for the prevention and control methods of the HIV/AIDS pandemic as it is still rampantly spreading all over the country. This result is similar with Linda’s (2000) study which shows prevention as one of the most frequent subjects of the articles. However, Odhiambo’s (2000) result is different wherein the social costs of the pandemic were identified as the most emphasized topic.

In spite of a large number of articles in relation to the prevention and control methods, the contents of the articles could not help the readers in giving relevant information on how to prevent the pandemic. Most of the articles were simply spot news, focusing on government announcements, budget allocations of different organizations and some simple facts.

Especially many of the articles in *Addis Zemen* were written in a formulaic manner. Asked about this, both the reporter and the editor of *Addis Zemen* believed that they publish similar stories because their reporters in different regions stick on the existing style. They also said that the news agencies which they get more than half of their stories also stick to the same trend that is writing spot news focusing on the abovementioned issues. This finding is also consistent with Mchombu's (2000) result which proves that the Namibian media focused on local seminars, workshops and speeches given by politicians and other leaders during these workshops. However, researchers suggest that reporting simple facts in relation to the prevention and control methods might not be enough.

The finding regarding the coverage of PLWHA, to some extent, deviates from studies done in other countries. Although the stories were very limited and not in-depth enough to help PLWHA and other readers get important information, in this study no article was found that portray PLWHA negatively. Linda (2000) found that the images associated with HIV/AIDS patients tend to be negative such that infected people become outcasts in society. Although it is an old discovery Wolffers's and Orbay's (1994) study in Turkey's media also shows as reporters on PLWHA not only invade people's privacy and portray them in a criminal light but they also contribute to arousing fears and anxieties related to HIV/AIDS.

As stigma and discrimination is one of the problems in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic, positive portrayal of PLWHA contributes more towards breaking the barriers around the pandemic. Such coverage can also provide successful coping strategies for PLWHA. Even if the two newspapers did not give sensational and negative coverage of PLWHA, their stories did not treat the issues of stigma, discrimination, fear and ignorance that these people are facing in the society. They rather focused on the inaugurations of PLWHA organizations and simple facts and research findings. In this side, the finding is similar with Panos's (2005) study in Namibian media in which the media does not generally and regularly convey information on the subjects of stigma and discrimination.

One good example, among the relatively better ones, is a feature article about stigma and discrimination published on 13 November 2004 in *Addis Admas*. Although this article gave a few recommendations on how to stop stigma and discrimination, most of the spaces were spent on explaining what stigma and discrimination mean, which is a simple fact that everybody knows.

Only two stories in *Addis Admas*, which sourced from research findings, present valuable information to PLWHA. For example, on 23 October 2004 edition there was an article which gave relevant information to PLWHA on how to prolong life by staying with one partner. Similarly, on the 10 January 2005 edition there was valuable information for PLWHA about balanced diet. Although these articles were based on foreign research findings, they help and encourage PLWHA maintain hope and cope with the virus. These stories also convey important messages for the public to help those PLWHA in a positive manner. In relation to this, Stally (2003:2) states that, “Focusing on issues that bring hope, that highlight positive and healthy living as well as successful coping strategies, can contribute to fostering an enabling environment for PLWHA and those who are affected”.

The issue of children in relation to HIV/AIDS is another aspect worth reporting. It is known that Ethiopia is one of the leading countries with a high number of children who are living with the HIV. As stated in the 23 October 2004 edition of *Addis Admas*, 250,000 children are living with the virus. Over 60,000 children were infected in one year; in 2003. It is also estimated that the number of children who have been infected or orphaned by the HIV/AIDS pandemic would escalate. Yet, the two newspapers failed to cover this issue adequately. There were only 5 articles produced in relation to this issue. Regarding the content, the two stories in *Addis Admas* dealt with statistics and facts about the magnitude all over the world. The remaining one stated some basic facts on how to stop mother-to-child transmission. Both stories in *Addis Zemen* dealt with facts from all over the world.

The theme of the World AIDS Campaign in 2004 was about “Women, Girls, HIV and AIDS”. The campaign wanted to give emphasis to preventing women and girls from the HIV/AIDS pandemic. However, the support that *Addis Admas* and *Addis Zemen* gave for

this initiative was very limited. Only 4 articles were found in relation to women and girls. The two articles published in *Addis Zemen* near the World AIDS Day mainly focused on statistics. The other two articles were published on *Addis Admas* on 27 November and 4 December 2004 editions.

A constructive aspect of these articles is that *Addis Admas* provides a forum for discussion for the public, although they are the only ones in the sample period. The articles were commentaries mainly dealing with commercial sex work. They were written by a contributor as a counter-attack for a feature article written by another contributor on the 6 of November 2004 under the title “Why are we pointing out our fingers into sex?” In this article, the writer tried to explain that focusing on sex alone does not help more in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In supporting his argument, the writer used the experience of commercial sex workers in Burundi. He also mentioned Thailand as it has brought up remarkable changes in curbing the spread of HIV/AIDS in spite of a widespread prostitution.

The two commentaries under the titles “We should point out our fingers into sex” and “Commercial sex work and its challenges” opposed the view of the abovementioned writer. The writer of these commentaries strenuously argued that especial emphasis should be given to sex since it is the major means of transmission for HIV/AIDS. The following is translated from one of the commentaries as an example:

...We are living in a country where small boys have started practicing sex at the age of 12. Little girls are standing naked at different squares and waiting for some one who makes sex with them with money. We have repeatedly heard that girls under the age of 10 have been raped by teachers, journalists, higher government officials and even religious leaders.... with all this referring to the experience of commercial sex workers in Burundi and Thailand as a good thing will exacerbate our problem. It is just like adding fuel to the flames (translated from Amharic)

Although these were the only commentaries that dealt with specific women issues, such stories show that this newspaper tried to give chance for public debate and discussion which may in turn help readers get relevant information.

The fact that most of Ethiopian communities follow patriarchal culture makes women and girls more susceptible to HIV/AIDS. Though this can be an interesting angle to cover, as mentioned earlier both papers failed to give due attention for this issue. According to Cullinan (2001), gender inequality is a key social force that drives the pandemic in many African countries even though it has received little attention in the media. This is probably because of the reporters' lack of knowledge and reporting skills from the sociological perspective. The literature also indicates that more media coverage of women is important since they are most impacted by the pandemic. Stally (2003: 7) states, "Media messages or campaigns focusing on HIV/AIDS prevention and support strategies need to recognize aspects of gender vulnerability, and investigate way to address the provision of economic and social support".

In order to control the rapid spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, knowing the HIV status is very important. In this aspect, newspapers can play a key role by publishing articles which help people avoid the fear of undergoing HIV test. However, the two newspapers did not do well in this regard. Only 11 articles representing 10.2% of the overall stories dealt with HIV counseling and testing. Nearly all these stories dealt with the inaugurations of HIV counseling and testing centers in different regions. Reporting the establishment of HIV counseling and testing might be good but not enough as it does not help people dispel the fears of going into these centers. Rather, newspapers can report that knowing the status of HIV/AIDS can make one live longer by taking treatments early. Simultaneously, it can help save others. There is only one exceptional story, published on 2 December 2004 issue of *Addis Zemen*, which dealt with the experience of youngsters who were becoming role models for others by undergoing HIV testing and making their status public. However, in this regard, the total picture shows that both newspapers did not publish substantiate information which helps the public avoid the fear of going into HIV test centers. As the UNAIDS communication framework for HIV/AIDS (1999) points out, HIV testing must be emphasized in all communication programs as a crucial component of effective message and material design.

The finding in relation to the coverage of impact reveals that the issue was not well treated from this angle, though the HIV/AIDS pandemic has political, cultural and economic impacts. There were only 4 stories found in *Addis Zemen* in relation to the impact that the pandemic causes. These stories convey relevant information about the economic impact. For example, on 24 November 2004, there was a story entitled: “HIV/AIDS becoming the main obstacle for development”. This story states that HIV/AIDS is ravaging the younger generation, which is the productive force for a country’s development. It also points out that many countries are spending huge amounts of money to prevent the pandemic.

It is worthwhile of the newspapers to report on the economic impact. Yet, such stories were very limited and the cultural and political impacts were not totally reported. Reporting the threats of the HIV/AIDS pandemic to the socio-economic structure of the country helps readers see the outcomes that it causes. This in turn contributes to curve the spread of the pandemic. Hence, it is relevant to link this serious issue with the impacts that it causes in various aspects of life. This finding is, to some extent, similar with Kenyan media. According to Kiai (2000), it is on rare occasions that the mass media in Kenya critically analyze the impact of HIV/AIDS on the socio economic front.

On the other hand, the finding of this study contradicts with that of Visser et al (2003) who found that HIV/AIDS is predominantly portrayed on the subjects of the social and political impact. In general, when covering HIV/AIDS, journalists need to look not only just at the epidemic itself, but they need to report at the underling causes and outcomes.

Only one short story about HIV/AIDS was found under the art column of *Addis Admas*. This was also the only case where improper expressions were found. The main theme of the story was about knowing the status of HIV. The story was about a man who had learnt the death of his ex-girlfriend while he was reading a graduation bulletin. In the bulletin, the man also found that the cause of his ex-girlfriend’s death was HIV/AIDS. Though there is freedom in using different words and expressions in art and literature, the expressions used in this work is irksome for PLWHA. For example, at the end of the story, there were expressions like “I have learnt that I will die soon when I came to know that she died of

AIDS”. In the story, it is shown that the person who did not know his status by taking an HIV test became hopeless after he learnt that his ex-girlfriend died of HIV/AIDS. Such expressions may convey a message that HIV/AIDS is an immediate death sentence. They may also devalue the importance of HIV testing and may create irrational fears among the readers.

There was also a cartoon used to support this short story (see appendix J). Although cartoons are helpful to create a sense of humor in the transmission of HIV/AIDS related information, the one used to support the short story may convey a message that is not relevant to the issue. It depicts the skeleton of a man who sits down by a table, reading a book. The picture in the cartoon represents the main character in the story while he is reading the graduation bulletin. Even though the story and the cartoon might have provided some information for the public, they may hurt the feelings of those PLWHA. The skeleton of the man may convey a message that PLWHA are the living dead. Such stories may possibly contribute to make PLWHA losing their hope and result in isolation. Hence, the cartoon is too poor to convey the message about the transmission of HIV.

In general, the findings in relation to the theme of stories reveal that HIV/AIDS issues were not reported well from different aspects of life.

#### **4.2.4. Source of Story**

What this research has found about the use of sources is more or less similar with research in other cultural contexts which prove that newspapers mainly use official sources when reporting about HIV/AIDS related issues. In both sample newspapers journalists mainly used higher authorities working in particular institutions as sources. Authorities in NGOs and HIV/AIDS Secretarial Offices were frequently used as sources. Even in cases where PLWHA could be the main source of information reporters ignored them. Consult the example “No scarcity of anti-retroviral medicine in Ethiopia”, published on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2005 issue of *Addis Zemen*. In this news story it was only higher officials who were used as sources, but the news could very well have been written from the perspective of PLWHA, as they have the first encounter with the subject matter.

On the same day, there was also a feature article about the death of the famous Zewdu Getachew, who was among the first PLWHA who came out in the open to teach the public about the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. While reporting Zewdu's death it would have been possible to use his friends and colleagues who are living with the virus as sources, but the newspaper stuck to famous people like Dr. Negaso Gidada, the former president of the country. A number of articles in *Addis Zemen* also used officials from the federal and regional HIV/AIDS secretariats.

It is said that fear of personal repercussions makes PLWHA not willing to make their status public. Today, however, a number of PLWHA have come out in the open but in the sample newspapers taken for this study no single story portrayed them as a role model for others. This indicates that the issue is not reported from different source perspectives - especially lacking is the personal aspect. The interviews with the editors also confirm that they did not give due attention for PLWHA in the specified period though *Addis Admas's* editor said that they have been giving coverage about PLWHA. The editor stated that they have even a contributor who is living with HIV.

This finding is similar to Kasoma's (2000) study which found that most of the news stories were sourced from speeches made by mainly government officials. The current five studies by Panos (2005) in Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe also made the same point that reporting in these countries is mainly based on official sources. This attributed to the lack of voices of people living with HIV/AIDS being used as sources of information in the media. Many other studies by Hallett and Cannella (1994); Schoofs (2000); Sergeant and Ariss (1993); Treurnicht (2000), cited in Stein 2001) also confirm that the voices of PLWHA have been marginalized by the so-called mainstream media.

This trend is also verified in some developed countries. A comparative study by Traquina (2004) between United States, Portugal, Spain and Brazil leading newspapers, for instance, found that news coverage of HIV/AIDS was dominated by official sources and PLWHA were featured in only a small number of the news stories.

In this Ethiopian study one of the explanations why the representation of PLWHA is limited according to the reporters is that they face difficulties in getting PLWHA because some of them are not willing to give information unless they are paid. Editors also feel that there is still fear among PLWHA to make their status public. The justification given in Panos studies is more or less similar with what the reporters said:

The lack of voices of people living with HIV/AIDS being used as sources of information was partly due to people being unwilling and/or unable to speak openly. This situation, although understood, was seen as perpetuating a 'vicious circle' whereby the media cannot produce high quality, person-centered reporting (taken from a rich and varied pool of sources) and, in turn, cannot play its potentially vital role in, for example, combating stigma (Panos, 2005: 11).

The other reason why newspapers mainly used official sources, according to the editors, coincides with Emke's (2000) argument that journalists prefer official experts because it takes less time to retrieve the information that way. It is also similar with Paletz and Entman (1981 cited in Valenta, 2000) who argued that journalists prefer official sources because they are easier to contact and they are judged as being both more informed and more credible than 'people on the street'. The reporters also believed that time, place and access make them focus on official sources. This goes in line with what the gatekeeping theory suggests. According to this theory journalists prefer events that fit a number of criteria related to time, place and potential audience demand. The focus of journalists on official sources also attributed to suitability of these sources for the existing routine process (McQuail, 2000).

According to *Addis Admas's* editor the newspaper also suffers from budgetary and staff constraints to report on HIV/AIDS related issues from a wider range of sources. The editor said that resource constraints restrict the organization from hiring as many staff as needed vis-à-vis HIV/AIDS. In addition, shortage of transportation facilities hindered them to go to remote areas, missing the opportunity to report from orphanage centers, rehabilitation centers and so forth.

A final reason why *Addis Admas* emphasized NGOs authorities according to the editor is that it is difficult for the newspaper to get information from government organizations

(only 2 stories representing 1.9% of the total were sourced from government organizations). The editor says that these reporters time and again complain that getting information from government organizations has become a problem after the Ministry of Health had started playing the role of the sole information dispatch center (interview).

All in all, the findings show that journalists in both newspapers failed to approach different sources. Nonetheless, seeing that people learn from the experience of others, newspapers can help the public learn by using role models as a source of their story. People from different walks of life can be potential sources to report on HIV/AIDS related issues. For example, the newspapers could publish the profiles of those who came out in the open to make a difference. In line with this, Kanene (1994) suggests that in order to give the pandemic a human face and to stop talking about the pandemic in the abstract but show people that HIV/AIDS is a real problem that affects all; it is encouraging to use personal stories. Steele (1998) also recommends that while covering PLWHA, it is important to make stories personal. This is because it gives the pandemic a human face.

#### **4.2.5. Origin of Story**

The gathered data regarding the origin of stories are similar to other studies. Even though no significant difference was observed between foreign and local origin stories in *Addis Admas*, the overall picture reveals that a significant number of stories were found to be of local origin. Out of the total 108(100%) stories, 81(75%) stories were found to be local origins. Local journalists in *Addis Zemen* wrote a relatively large number of stories (see appendix D). This result is similar with that of Odhiambo (2000) and Linda's (2000) findings which indicate that the media in Kenya and Uganda focus on local issues. It is interesting to see that the newspapers gave due attention to local origin stories despite the fact that many of the stories were not comprehensive enough to convey practical information in relation to the pandemic. This may be because local stories are considered more powerful since they are regarded as more reliable than the foreign stories (Chirindo, 2004).

#### 4.2.6. Placement of Story

According to the agenda-setting theory, reporting one issue regularly is one way in which newspapers give people a sense of identifying important issues. Displaying articles on the front page is the other way to show the prominence of the story. This is because articles displayed on the front page of a newspaper tend to have more prominence and suggest urgency rather than articles displayed on the inside pages. Even though HIV/AIDS related stories are important enough to be worthy of prominence and front-page coverage, the two newspapers placed limited articles on their front pages. Among the 108(100%) articles, only 18(16.7%) appeared on the front page. This finding is similar with that of Kasoma's (2000), who found that Zambian newspapers did not give due attention to HIV/AIDS stories; they rarely made it to page one. Traquina's (2004) study also shows that news on AIDS was usually relegated to the inner pages.

According to the editor of *Addis Admas*, HIV/AIDS stories were fewer on the front page because they put aside stories for the inside health column in which HIV/AIDS related issues are treated. Similarly the editor of *Addis Zemen* stated that HIV/AIDS related issues have been covered in Yezemen Dewel, Hiwot, Felege Tena (literally meaning 'Call of the time', 'Life', 'Search of Health', respectively) and other columns. *Addis Zemen's* editor said that it is hard to get HIV/AIDS related issues which meet common news values like proximity, human interest and oddity. The challenge of keeping HIV/AIDS newsworthy and topical is a problem of the media in other African countries (Cullinan, 2001).

Designers were asked on how they display HIV/AIDS stories on the front page. They said that this is the decision of the editorial board. The other point that the reporters and editors of the two newspapers said about the placement of HIV/AIDS related stories goes with the idea of gatekeeping theory in which established media routines determine which stories will pass through the gates and which elements of the story will be emphasized (Shomeker and Reese 1991 cited in Dailey et al 2003). Although the placement of the story is decided by the editorial boards of the newspapers, from experience the reporters know what kinds of news appear on the front page. This can be a good example of established media routines.

Here it is important to see where hard news was placed in the newspapers. Hard news is often placed on the front page, and many people depend on the newspapers primarily by reading the front page. Although the two newspapers gave considerable coverage of HIV/AIDS issues as hard news, the placement of the news varied. Many of the hard news items that *Addis Admas* published appeared on the front page, while most of the hard news items in *Addis Zemen* were seconded to the inside pages.

Nearly all inside stories were found under the health and HIV/AIDS columns. Very few articles were published under the women's column in *Addis Zemen*. These articles also mainly focused on health related issues. However, HIV/AIDS is a broad issue with cultural, political, economic and family consequences, and could have been reported on in a number of columns.

As mentioned earlier the agenda-setting theory of the press suggests that the location of articles in the newspaper is one of the factors contributing to deciding the prominence of certain issues on the public agenda. In this regard *Addis Zemen* failed to put HIV/AIDS news on the front page. Reporting HIV/AIDS as news is one aspect; displaying it in a place where it gets greater visibility is another important aspect. It can hardly be said that the two newspapers exploited their potential agenda-setting role in relation to HIV/AIDS issues.

To sum up, the findings in relation to the overall coverage disclose that HIV/AIDS issues were not reported well from wider perspectives. In order to know why the newspapers failed to report the HIV/AIDS issues profoundly and from broader viewpoints, editors were asked whether the reporters have been trained in HIV/AIDS reporting. The editors confirmed that their journalists have got some short-term training. *Addis Admas'* editor explains that a special reporter, who is a medical doctor by profession, has reported most of the stories about HIV/AIDS. The editor of *Addis Zemen* also states that one journalist often covers the issue. Although the editors state that their journalists had short-term trainings, the articles found in the specified time span indicate that the journalists lack the sufficient skills or/and knowledge in reporting on the issue. Because most of the articles were not comprehensive enough to give relevant information which help readers to bring

about behavioral change. The majority of the articles were basically spot news derived from single sources. This suggests that either journalists might not be able to put what they get from the trainings in to practice or they might have not trained well or the trainings might not be adapted in the countries' cultural context.

The editors rather emphasize that time, financial and manpower constraints, lack of sponsorship, lack of access to research findings and unwillingness of different sources hold back their journalists from effectively reporting HIV/AIDS related issues from a variety of angles. These problems are more often than not similar with what other media organizations stumble upon in African countries. Lack of time and resources, lack of training, management reluctance to cover AIDS or allocate resources to it, absence of broad editorial-level policy, lack of sponsorship for programming on AIDS, lack of access to up-to-date and accurate information, and lack of internet access, are among the constraints that deter effective coverage in Kenyan and Nigerian media (Gold and Falobi, 2001, Stein, 2001).

The other important point, which is worth mentioning with regard to the factors affecting the coverage of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, is the newspapers editorial policy. In the editorial policy of *Addis Zemen*, except some general statements, which deal with covering health issues, there is no statement that specifically deals with reporting HIV/AIDS issues. The same is true in *Addis Admas*. With the exception of the statement which states that priority should be given to HIV/AIDS in the health column, there are no statements which deal with reporting HIV/AIDS. This gives an idea that there is lack of standard guiding principle in reporting HIV/AIDS issues in both newspapers. Though it is believed that lack of clearly stated guiding principles created a problem on the side of journalists in covering HIV/AIDS related issues, the reporters and editors of the newspapers stated that their editorial policies do not have an impact on their overall coverage. On the other hand, journalists in both newspapers believed that some traditions affect their way of reporting. According to the reporters, there are some cultures that they follow while reporting. For example, in *Addis Zemen* as mentioned earlier there is a focus on hard news item. This shows that reporters do not worry to cover HIV/AIDS issues in some other genres. The

reporter and editor of *Addis Admas* said as they usually focused on the internet when ever they believe that there are no local stories which meet news values. Here also the reporter may not go out and search for a story instead he may spend his time translating some articles from the internet. These examples show that there is a tradition within the newsroom which put pressure on the decisions of what is to be covered and what is not. In line with this Breed (1955) pointed out that unwritten policies in the newsroom influence what becomes news.

The reporters and editors of the two newspapers were asked whether or not there are organizations which shape the content of HIV/AIDS coverage by sponsoring newspapers. The editor and reporter of *Addis Admas* said that there are no organizations which provide financial support to run HIV/AIDS related information but some organizations working on the issue seldom pay money for advertisements. The editor and reporter of *Addis Admas* on their part confirmed that the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office used to give financial support to run HIV/AIDS related information. However, according to the reporter this office did not influence in the content selection.

Finally, the two newspapers show significant differences in their frequency of coverage. *Addis Zemen* was found to have a larger quantity of coverage. However, the size of the newspapers should be taken into consideration here. As *Addis Zemen* is a broad sheet newspaper it can cover more stories than the tabloid size *Addis Admas*. In terms of quality, no significant difference was observed between the two newspapers. Although the overall coverage shows that neither of the two newspapers gave in-depth and comprehensive coverage of HIV/AIDS related issues, some of the articles in each newspaper gave insights and provided valuable information about the pandemic. For example, *Addis Admas* was found to be better in giving space for public discussion though the articles were very limited. It also tried to give prominence to the issue by bringing some HIV/AIDS related stories to the front page, while *Addis Zemen* was found to be better in giving higher coverage for hard news. It also reported on the economic impact of the pandemic.

## Chapter Five

### 5. Conclusions, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies

#### 5.1. Conclusions

In order to halt and reverse the rapid spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, citizens need to be informed about the seriousness of the virus and the devastating impact it causes to the nation. In Ethiopia, where citizens do not have access to a wide range of information, newspapers can play a pivotal role by disseminating practical and useful information about the pandemic. However, as far as the researcher's reading is concerned, whether Ethiopian newspapers have been playing a vital role in the combat against the HIV/AIDS pandemic was not assessed and evaluated. Although concluding the role of the media was as such outside the scope of this study, by adding to the perspective, this study sought to examine the magnitude and nature of the HIV/AIDS coverage in two Amharic language Ethiopian newspapers: *Addis Admas*, a private newspaper and *Addis Zemen*, a government newspaper.

The fact that HIV/AIDS is rampantly spreading throughout the country might lead one to believe that the issue has been frequently well covered in Ethiopian newspapers. Nevertheless, this study reveals that the two newspapers under investigation gave scant attention to HIV/AIDS related issues over the course of the six months period studied.

In fact, the overall study shows that the two newspapers did make an effort to provide insights into the readers. Though they are few in number, some of the articles were comprehensive enough which may possibly help readers raise their awareness about the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It must also be understood that the newspapers did not, as far as this study could discern, cover distorted and sensationalized information in relation to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in general and PLWHA in particular.

Despite these efforts, the newspapers' potential to combat the pandemic with the written word has not been utilized. In light of the growing threat that the HIV/AIDS pandemic

poses to the country, the study reveals that the extent of the newspapers coverage of the pandemic is limited. The space provided for this issue is also inadequate. The failure of newspapers to give sustained coverage and adequate space for the issue also means that the audience is not sufficiently and regularly reminded about the pandemic.

In addition, many of the stories in relation to HIV/AIDS issues were not in-depth enough to help the readers get important information that could help them change their behavior. Moreover, for the most part, the stories in relation to HIV/AIDS were not reported from broader perspectives. For example, many of the crucial issues that the society face as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic like poverty, malnutrition and limited health care were not covered well. The stories also failed to deal with the pandemic itself and the devastating consequences that it poses in the society. Rather, the newspapers focused on reporting spot news which dealt with statistics, speeches and inaugurations and launches of new programs. The fact that many of the articles related to the pandemic appeared under health and HIV/AIDS columns also indicates that the issue was not sufficiently linked to political, economic and cultural issues.

The newspapers also failed to publish critical articles about public officials and different governmental and non-governmental organizations working with HIV/AIDS. They also failed to cast a critical light on policy makers to promote decisive actions in relation to the pandemic. This suggests that the newspapers did not play an advocacy role vis-à-vis HIV/AIDS.

The two newspapers also failed to give prominence for HIV/AIDS related issues on the pages. Although the editors said that it was by chance, the finding reveals that the newspapers did not treat the issue in their editorial column, which often is referred to as an agenda-setting column. Also, though *Addis Admas* was better in placing hard news on the front pages, the overall picture shows that many of the HIV/AIDS stories even the hard news were relegated to the inside pages. This decreases the readability of the articles. One can conclude that the newspapers did not utilize their agenda-setting role in this regard.

The study reveals that both newspapers gave priority for indigenous stories in spite of the fact that they failed to draw the attention to alternative sources. Many of the stories were sourced from officials of governmental and non-governmental organizations. The abandoning of unofficial important sources suggests that journalists in both newspapers failed to write well-researched and balanced stories from different angles.

It is also apparent that the newspapers did not cover the views of marginalized groups like PLWHA, orphans, and commercial sex workers despite the fact that they did not portray these groups of people negatively. The limited stories on these subjects did not help the readers become aware of the existing mistaken beliefs in relation to the pandemic as they did not bring to the surface the stigma and discrimination that PLWHA are facing in the society. This illustrates that the newspapers failed to help PLWHA share their stories and knowledge with the general public. The fact that the newspapers gave little coverage for PLWHA and did not provide the support, education and advocacy that these people may seek, suggests that journalists in both newspapers failed to fulfill their duty of giving voices for the voiceless.

For all these malfunctions of the newspapers the reporters and editors pointed out that time, financial and manpower constraints, lack of sponsorship, lack of access to research findings, unwillingness of different sources, routines and some unwritten traditions in the newsroom restrain them from effectively reporting HIV/AIDS related issues from a variety of angles.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

Based on the findings and the conclusions of the study the following recommendations are forwarded:

### **Journalists and Media Organizations**

- Newspapers should give continuous and regular coverage to HIV/AIDS related issues. They should make the issue sustainable by presenting articles that are pertinent to human-interest angles or newsworthy topics.
- As HIV/AIDS is still ravaging many people throughout the country it deserves front-page coverage and a large proportion of space. Hence, newspapers should give the HIV/AIDS issue prominence by providing large space and front-page coverage.
- The approach of the newspapers towards the HIV/AIDS issues should be multi-sectoral. Journalists should link the issue with different aspects of life. The newspapers ought to treat HIV/AIDS issues in different columns.
- There are different sources that journalists can use to get HIV/AIDS related information. Hence, journalists should report the issue from different sources. For example, they can report on the possibility of living with HIV to create understanding for PLWHA.
- Newspapers should reorient its focus from just covering statistics, press releases and official announcements as spot news, to giving more attention to in-depth stories and investigative journalism from broader perspectives.
- To put the above recommendations in to practice, the skills and professional status of journalists need to be upgraded. Newspapers should therefore give continuous and practical workshops, trainings, and seminar, which would help reporters develop their understanding of the pandemic. They also need to assign qualified or experienced journalists to report on HIV/AIDS related issues. To make these all possible, newspapers

should work together with governmental and non- governmental organizations working with HIV/AIDS.

### **Governmental and NGOs and other Stakeholders**

- These organizations should foster continuous training, which goes with the specific media and country context for journalists, editors and other media professionals.
- These organizations could help journalists, editors and media organizations by giving financial and material support. For example, they can establish resource centers, which help journalists go side by side with new developments in relation to the pandemic.
- They should put pressure on journalists and media organizations to give regular spaces for accurate, up-to-date and sustained information about HIV/AIDS.
- General media editorial laws should allow journalists and editors to cover the issue of HIV/AIDS freely. Hence, these organizations should strive to change restrictive and broad editorial laws into more proper laws, which give greater independence for journalists and editors in particular, and media organizations in general.

### **5.3. Suggestions for Further Studies**

This study chose a content analysis method, which allowed a comprehensive look at how two Ethiopian newspapers cover HIV/AIDS related issues. In-depth interview was also used to see why the coverage is limited and why the newspapers failed to provide comprehensive and high quality reporting. But the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS information conveyed by the newspapers was not studied, as this needs an independent study with focus on the readers. Thus, further research can be conducted to find out how the coverage of HIV/AIDS information influences the readers.

The portrayal of PLWHA in the electronic media and a comparative study of the HIV/AIDS coverage between the print and electronic media can also be potential topics worth researching.

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**Appendix A**  
**A coding Sheet for the**  
**Study of Analysis of the Nature and Magnitude of HIV/AIDS Pandemic**  
**Coverage**  
**in Addis Admas and Addis Zemen Newspapers**

**Type of Newspaper:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Coder:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Type of Story</b>	<b>Theme of Story</b>	<b>Length of Story</b>	<b>Source of Story</b>	<b>Origin of Story</b>	<b>Placeme nt of Story</b>

<b>Main Category</b>	<b>Sub categories to be coded</b>
Type of Story	news, features, letters, editorials, advertisements, commentaries and others.
Theme of Story	prevention and control, transmission, impact(political/economic/ social),medicine, PLWHA, donation, HIV counseling and testing, children and HIV/AIDS, women and HIV/AIDS ,others.
Source of Story	health centers/health workers, NGOs, government organizations, medical, journals, meetings and workshops, celebrities, individuals, PLWHA and others
Length of Story	measured by square centimeter (cm <sup>2</sup> ).
Origin of Story	local and foreign
Placement of Story	front page and inside page

## Appendix B Type of Story Crosstabulation

		Type of story							
			Hard news	Features	Letters	Commentaries	Advertisements	Others	Total
<b>Type of Newspaper</b>	<b>Addis Admas</b>	Count	21	17	1	2	3	2	46
		% within Type of newspaper	45.7%	37.0%	2.2%	4.3%	6.5%	4.3%	100.0%
		% within Type of story	29.2%	77.3%	25.0%	66.7%	100.0%	50.0%	42.6%
		% of Total	19.4%	15.7%	.9%	1.9%	2.8%	1.9%	42.6%
	<b>Addis Zemen</b>	Count	51	5	3	1		2	62
		% within Type of newspaper	82.3%	8.1%	4.8%	1.6%		3.2%	100.0%
		% within Type of story	70.8%	22.7%	75.0%	33.3%		50.0%	57.4%
		% of Total	47.2%	4.6%	2.8%	.9%		1.9%	57.4%
	<b>Total</b>	Count	72	22	4	3	3	4	108
		% within Type of newspaper	66.7%	20.4%	3.7%	2.8%	2.8%	3.7%	100.0%
		% within Type of story	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	66.7%	20.4%	3.7%	2.8%	2.8%	3.7%	100.0%

### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.480	5	.001
Likelihood Ratio	22.972	5	.000
N of Valid Cases	108		

a. 8 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5.  
The minimum expected count is 1.28

**Appendix C**  
**Theme of Story Crosstabulation**

		Theme of story											
			Preventio n and control	Others	Transmi ssion	Impact	Medical	Donation	HIV test	PLWHA	Children and HIV/AID S	Women and HIV/AID S	Total
<b>Type of Newspaper</b>	<b>Addis Admas</b>	Count	11	4	6		6	3	2	9	3	2	46
		% within Type of newspaper	23.9%	8.7%	13.0%		13.0%	6.5%	4.3%	19.6%	6.5%	4.3%	100.0%
		% within Theme of story	30.6%	50.0%	75.0%		66.7%	50.0%	18.2%	52.9%	60.0%	50.0%	42.6%
		% of Total	10.2%	3.7%	5.6%		5.6%	2.8%	1.9%	8.3%	2.8%	1.9%	42.6%
	<b>Addis Zemen</b>	Count	25	4	2	4	3	3	9	8	2	2	62
		% within Type of newspaper	40.3%	6.5%	3.2%	6.5%	4.8%	4.8%	14.5%	12.9%	3.2%	3.2%	100.0%
		% within Theme of story	69.4%	50.0%	25.0%	100.0%	33.3%	50.0%	81.8%	47.1%	40.0%	50.0%	57.4%
		% of Total	23.1%	3.7%	1.9%	3.7%	2.8%	2.8%	8.3%	7.4%	1.9%	1.9%	57.4%
	<b>Total</b>	Count	36	8	8	4	9	6	11	17	5	4	108
		% within Type of newspaper	33.3%	7.4%	7.4%	3.7%	8.3%	5.6%	10.2%	15.7%	4.6%	3.7%	100.0%
		% within Theme of story	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	33.3%	7.4%	7.4%	3.7%	8.3%	5.6%	10.2%	15.7%	4.6%	3.7%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	15.119	9	.088
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	16.948	9	.050
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	108		

a 14 cells (70.0%) have expected count less than 5.  
The minimum expected count is 1.70.

## Appendix D

### Origin of Story Crosstabulation

		Origin of Story			
			Local	Foreign	Total
<b>Type of Newspaper</b>	<b>Addis Admas</b>	Count	25	21	46
		% within Type of newspaper	54.3%	45.7%	100.0%
		% within Origin of story	30.9%	77.8%	42.6%
		% of Total	23.1%	19.4%	42.6%
	<b>Addis Zemen</b>	Count	56	6	62
		% within Type of newspaper	90.3%	9.7%	100.0%
		% within Origin of story	69.1%	22.2%	57.4%
		% of Total	51.9%	5.6%	57.4%
	<b>Total</b>	Count	81	27	108
		% within Type of newspaper	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
		% within Origin of story	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%

### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	18.227	1	.000		
<b>Continuity Correction</b>	16.359	1	.000		
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	18.619	1	.000		
<b>Fisher's Exact Test</b>				.000	.000
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	108				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. .0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.50

**Appendix E**  
**Source of Story Crosstabulation**

		<b>Source of Story</b>										
<b>Type of Newspaper</b>			<b>Health centers/H ealth workers</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Medical journals</b>	<b>Governme nt organizati ons</b>	<b>NGOs</b>	<b>Meetings and Workshop s</b>	<b>Research findings</b>	<b>Celebri ties</b>	<b>Individu als</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Addis Admas</b>	Count	5	6	3	2	15	2	8	4	1	46
		% within Type of newspaper	10.9%	13.0%	6.5%	4.3%	32.6%	4.3%	17.4%	8.7%	2.2%	100.0%
		% within Source of story	33.3%	35.3%	60.0%	10.5%	57.7%	18.2%	100.0%	80.0%	50.0%	42.6%
		% of Total	4.6%	5.6%	2.8%	1.9%	13.9%	1.9%	7.4%	3.7%	.9%	42.6%
	<b>Addis Zemen</b>	Count	10	11	2	17	11	9		1	1	62
		% within Type of newspaper	16.1%	17.7%	3.2%	27.4%	17.7%	14.5%		1.6%	1.6%	100.0%
		% within Source of story	66.7%	64.7%	40.0%	89.5%	42.3%	81.8%		20.0%	50.0%	57.4%
		% of Total	9.3%	10.2%	1.9%	15.7%	10.2%	8.3%		.9%	.9%	57.4%
	<b>Total</b>	Count	15	17	5	19	26	11	8	5	2	108
		% within Type of newspaper	13.9%	15.7%	4.6%	17.6%	24.1%	10.2%	7.4%	4.6%	1.9%	100.0%
		% within Source of story	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	13.9%	15.7%	4.6%	17.6%	24.1%	10.2%	7.4%	4.6%	1.9%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	28.300	8	.000
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	33.020	8	.000
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	108		

a 9 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than .5  
The minimum expected count is .85

**Appendix F**  
**Placement of Story Crosstabulation**

		<b>Placement of Stories</b>			
<b>Type of Newspaper</b>	<b>Adds Admas</b>		<b>Front page</b>	<b>Inside page</b>	<b>Total</b>
		Count	14	32	46
		% within Type of newspaper	30.4%	69.6%	100.0%
		% within Placement of stories	77.8%	35.6%	42.6%
		% of Total	13.0%	29.6%	42.6%
	<b>Addis Zemen</b>	Count	4	58	62
		% within Type of newspaper	6.5%	93.5%	100.0%
		% within Placement of stories	22.2%	64.4%	57.4%
		% of Total	3.7%	53.7%	57.4%
	<b>Total</b>	Count	18	90	108
		% within Type of newspaper	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%
		% within Placement of stories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
% of Total		16.7%	83.3%	100.0%	

**Chi-Square Tests**

	<b>Value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</b>	<b>Exact Sig. (2-sided)</b>	<b>Exact Sig. (1-sided)</b>
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	10.936	1	.001		
<b>Continuity Correction</b>	9.278	1	.002		
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	11.124	1	.001		
<b>Fisher's Exact Test</b>				.001	.001
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	108				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.67.

**Appendix G**  
Length of Story Crosstabulation

Type of Newspaper	Addis Admas	Category												
		1-50	51-100	101-150	151-200	201-250	251-300	301-350	351-400	401-450	451-500	501	Total	
Type of Newspaper	Addis Admas	Count		13	7	8	2	7	2	1	1		5	46
		% within Type of newspaper		28.3%	15.2%	17.4%	4.3%	15.2%	4.3%	2.2%	2.2%		10.9%	100.0%
		% within catagory		76.5%	30.4%	47.1%	16.7%	63.6%	25.0%	25.0%	33.3%		45.5%	42.6%
		% of Total		12.0%	6.5%	7.4%	1.9%	6.5%	1.9%	.9%	.9%		4.6%	42.6%
	Addis Zemen	Count	1	4	16	9	10	4	6	3	2	1	6	62
		% within Type of newspaper	1.6%	6.5%	25.8%	14.5%	16.1%	6.5%	9.7%	4.8%	3.2%	1.6%	9.7%	100.0%
		% within catagory	100.0%	23.5%	69.6%	52.9%	83.3%	36.4%	75.0%	75.0%	66.7%	100.0%	54.5%	57.4%
		% of Total	.9%	3.7%	14.8%	8.3%	9.3%	3.7%	5.6%	2.8%	1.9%	.9%	5.6%	57.4%
	Total	Count	1	17	23	17	12	11	8	4	3	1	11	108
		% within Type of newspaper	.9%	15.7%	21.3%	15.7%	11.1%	10.2%	7.4%	3.7%	2.8%	.9%	10.2%	100.0%
		% within catagory	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	.9%	15.7%	21.3%	15.7%	11.1%	10.2%	7.4%	3.7%	2.8%	.9%	10.2%	100.0%

## Chi-square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	17.944	10	.056
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	19.308	10	.037
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	1.061	1	.303
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	108		

a . 12 cells (54.5%) have expected count less than 5  
The minimum expected count is .43

## **Appendix H**

### **Interview Questions for Reporters and Editors**

The purpose of this interview is to gather information for the study “Analysis of the Nature and Magnitude of HIV/AIDS coverage in the Government and Private Newspapers: A Case Study in *Addis Admas* and *Addis Zemen*”.

N.B. These interview questions were prepared after the content analysis of 6<sup>th</sup> months edition (spanning from September 1, 2004 to February 28, 2005) of *Addis Admas* and *Addis Zemen* newspapers were made. The content analysis does not answer the why of the content, so the data gathered from this interview will be used to fill this gap.

1. Why were the HIV/AIDS issues forgotten in the editorial page?
2. Why were the HIV/AIDS stories limited in the front page?
3. Why were commentaries, letters and advertisements in relation to HIV/AIDS very limited?
4. Do you have special reporters who cover the HIV/AIDS related issue?
5. Did the reporters get training on how to report HIV/AIDS related issues?
6. Does the professions and training of your journalists affect the coverage of HIV/AIDS which appears in the newspaper? In what ways?
7. What problems did your reporters encounter in covering HIV/AIDS related issues?
8. How are story ideas generated for your newspaper?
9. Why were HIV/AIDS stories mainly sourced from one source? Addis Admas- NGOs, Addis Zemen- Secretary Office
10. Why did you ignore to use ordinary citizens and PLWHA as sources in relation to HIV/AIDS stories?
11. Do your journalists work together with governmental and non-governmental organizations? (In relation to HIV/AIDS)
12. Do budgetary and staff constraints (for example having limited staff members) affect your editorial decisions in relation to HIV/AIDS coverage?
13. Do covering HIV/AIDS issues affect your sell? How?

14. Many studies in relation to HIV/AIDS shows as the coverage increases near the World AIDS Day but *Addis Admas's* coverage raised on October. What is the reason behind this?

If there are some other things you want to add in relation to the HIV/AIDS coverage would you please write here.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration

## Appendix I Inter-coder Reliability

Categories	No of Coding Decisions	Decisions on which the two coders agree	Decisions on which the two coders disagree	Reliability	
				Percentage of Agreement	
Type of Story	108	104	4	0.96	96.29
Theme of story	108	101	7	0.93	93.51
Source of Story	108	103	5	0.95	95.37
Origin of Story	108	106	1	0.98	98.14
Length of Story	108	108	-	1	100
Placement of Story	108	108	-	1	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0.97</b>	<b>97.37</b>

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2M}{N_1 + N_2}$$

Where M is the number of coding decisions on which two coders agree, and N1 and N2 refer to the total number of coding decisions by the first and second coder, respectively

# አይ ትላንት!

- አጭር ልብወለድ

ደርሰት - ሰበሰብ ይሙ

ከተጋደምኩበት ተነሳሁ። ከተመረጥን ገና ሳምንታቸን ቢሆንም መቀመጡ ከወዲሁ ስልጥቶኛል። ከጠረጴዛ ላይ የነበረውን የምረቃ መፅሔታችንን አነሳሁና መመልከት ጀመርኩ። የተመራቁዎች ፎቶ ለንጻንድ ወህናት አየሁ፤ መጨረሻው ገፅ ላይ ደረስኩ። የሚያስደነግጥ ርዕስ - ፈራሁ! ከስሩ በትልቁ ፎቶግራፍ አለ። አውቃለሁ! በደንብ አውቃለሁ። ለተወሰነ ጊዜ ፍቅርን አብረን አጣጥመናል። የልቦ ምት ጨመረ። ሁለመኖሩ ተረበሸ። «አ... አምላኪ እኔ አላምንም!» ወሰሱ ስለሆነ ስለሆነ ከገደገዳው ጋር አጋጨሁት። «አይሆንም! አይሆንም!» ስለሆነ ተወጠረ፤ ለፈንጻ የተረበሰ መሰለኝ። ተስፋዬ ሰጠኝም። ሕይወቴ በሰልጦት ሲታጠር ታወቀኝ። የሰልጦት ነኩ። ስለሆነ በትውሰታ ማዕበል ተዘፈቀ።

ከንጻኛዎ ጋር ታወራለች። ስትሰቅ ልዩ ምትሁት አላት። የፈገገታዎ ዐጻል ልብን ያሳሳል። ያየሁትን ወቅት አጣጣሚ ሳላደንቅ አይኖኜ ተሰረቁ። ሹራቡን በስተው ለማለፍ ይታገላሉ - እንደ ማለክል ሚና የሾሉት ጠቶቿ። አይኖኜን አማለሁ ልቤን ሰቀሉት። በሁኔታዬ ተገርመው የተሳሳቁ መሰለኝ፤ ጠቶቿ ደረጃ ላይ ሲነጥሩ ያደረግኝ ስሜት ሳይቀዘቅዘ ያለዎ ገላመጠኝ።

«አ... አ...! እንዴት እንግር?» አልኩ።  
 «ምነው?» አለኝ ታዲያሰ።  
 «ትምህርት እንግር ወይስ ውበትን እናሳድ!»  
 «መቻል ነው»

ከመቀመጫዬ ተነሳሁ - ካፈውን ተሰናብቼ ለመውጣት። ከካፈው በር በስተቀኝ በኩል ተማሪዎች ሰብሰብ ብለው ያወራሉ። መሀተኞቹ ሽቦት የወረረቸው ሽማግሌ አሉ - የካፈው ስነ ስርአት አስከፊ ናቸው። «አንተ! እንተ ቁጭራ። እዚህ ካፈ እንጻትገብ ብዬህ አልነበርን?» አለኝ። በገገምታ አለፍኳቸው። ሰውየው ተሳታፊ ናቸው - የተማሪ አባት። ያለ እሳቸው ካፈው አይደሉምም።

እንድ - ሁለት - ስስት - አራት እርምጃ እንደተራመድን አይኔ በውበት ሰበረ። የተሳጠ ብርቅኳን ይመሰላል፤ ያሳሳል፤ ገራሱን ገራሱን ያሰኛል - ጭኝ። ያደረገችው «ሚኒስትር?» በጣም አጭር ነው - ከመቀመጫዎ ትንሽ ገቷ ...

በት - ተረከቡ ልዩ ነው። ቁልቁል የተደፋ የአምቦ ውሀ ጠርመሰ ይመስላል፤ የእግረ ቅርፅ።

ድብልቅልቅ ድምፅ፡ ሳቅጥ ጭብጨባጥ ሙዚቃ፣ ጥይታ፣ መልሰክ፣ የማይታወቅ ጨካኝት በጆሮዬ አስተጋብ የካፈውን በር ደረጃ መርገጥ ስጅምር። ወደ ውስጥ ስገባ ጨካኝቱ ይበልጥ ጆሮዬን አደነቀረው። ቆም ብዬ ካፈውን እንደ ቃኝሁት።

«ትግስ» የሚል ድምፅ ሰማሁ። ድምፁ ወደ መጣበት አቅጣጫ አይኖኜን ላካቸው። የክፍል ጓደኛዬ ነበር የጠራኝ።

«እሺ ታዲ!»

«ምነው» የደባበረሽ ትመሰያለሽ?» አለኝ እጆቼን ለሰላምታ እየዘረጋ።

«በተመሳሳይነት ስለቆየሁ ደክሞኛል።»

«የአይን ሻወር ውስድበት፤ ይሻልኛል» አለኝ።

«ሳይሻል አይቀርም» አልኩና ወንበር ስቢ ተቀመጥኩ።



ታዲን ጨበጥ አደረኩት። «ዋው! ይህን 'ከብራ' እየሽጠው?» አልኩት በአድናቆት ተሞልኬ። እሱም ስሜቱን አልደሰቀንም። «ልዩ ነው! የሁለት ሺህ ጥድል» አለኝ። ተተሉ «አንጻንድ ተማሪዎች ለመማር ሳይሆን - የውበት ትርጉም ለማሳየት የሚመጡ ይመስላሉ። መሽተርተር፣ መካካል፣ ያላቸውን ውበት በአደባባይ ማጋለጥ። የተጠማ ትውልድ። ውበት ያሰከረው ፍጥረት...»

አይኖኜ በላይዎ ላይ ተንከራተኩ። «ውንቀቱ ተሰማት መሰል ወደ እኛ አትጣጡ ዘረቅ። ውብ ገፅታ። ኩል... ዐአዲ ልዩ አይኖች። ተተ ብሎ ወርዶ ከወደ መጨረሻው ተልበሰ ያለው አፍንጫዎ ምላሱን አውጥተው በሰው የሚቀልድ ሕፃን ይመስላል። ጠብብ ሳሳ ብለው የሚያሳሱ ከኖሩት። ልዩ ስሜት አደረብኝ። አይኖኜን ከላይዎ ላይ ማንሳት ተሳነኝ፤ ይሄን በልባ ጭግግው ደረቅን» ሳትል አትተርም።

ካፈውን መቃኘት ጀመርኩ። የተለያዩ ትእይቶች በአይኔ ላይ ተራወጡ። ስብስብ ብለው የሚሳሳቁ፤ አልፎ የተከፈተ ውሃ እንደሚጠጣ ደር ብጥሰጣሽ ወረቀት ወይም ደብተሩን ቃኝት አድርጎ ወደ ላይ የሚያንጋጥ የሚቅበዘበዙ ወጪ ገቢውን የሚቃኙ አይኖች፤ የሚያላምጥ የሚጠጣ... አይኖኜ ትንታቸውን ቀጠለ - የተጠመትን ውበት ለማግኘት። ካፈ ውበጥ ለአይን ማረፊያ የሚሆን

«እንዴት ታደድሱ...? የአንጻንድ ስሜት ለማግኘት የሌላዎ ጠቶች ያፈገገብኛል። መቼስ ምን ይደረግ በማለት ለመተው ስዘጋጅ ሌላዎ በስሰ ፈገገታዎ ታሳሳኛለች።»

«ካልተቻለ መጠክር ነው» አለኝ። ሕይወትን በውበት ካጣጣሚት ነጭ ይሰለጻል። ፊት ፊት ይላል። ተፈጥሮዬ ሆነና ውበትን አይቶ ማለፍ አይቻለኝም። ነገሮች እንኳን ባይሰኩ አይንቁ

ተንቀሳቀሰች። አይኖኜ ተከተሏት። ቢተ መፅሐፍት ገባች።

«አረማመዲን ጠይቀኝ በእናትህ አትለፈኝ» የሚሉ ይመስላል» አልኩት።

«ውበትን ተጠምተህ በውበት እንጻትሞት ከእናትህ ማህን ስትወጣ በውበት መጻፈክት ታጅቢ የወጣ ነው የምትመስሰው» አለኝ ፊቱ በፈገገታ በርቶ።

**Appendix K**  
**Editors Interviewed**

Eyobe Kassa, *Addis Admas*

Wendemkun Alayue *Addis Zemen*

## **Declaration**

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

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Advisor\_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Submission\_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Place of Submission\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_