

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**AN INVESTIGATION OF AUDIENCES'
INTERPRETATION OF RADIO/TELEVISION
MESSAGES PROMOTING
ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPY (ART)**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ART; Anti Retroviral Therapy

ARV: Anti Retro Viral

HAPCO: HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office

HIV: Human Immune-Deficiency Virus

PLWHA: People living with HIV/AIDS

UNAIDS: United Nations Joint Program for HIV/AIDS

UNESCO: United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organization

UNFPA: United Nations Fund for Population Activities

UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

Abstract

A number of media campaigns including educational programs, radio phone-in-programs and discussions on ART have been produced and delivered to the public to inform them about the service and to minimize the stigma attached to those who use the drug. Though producers of the programs assume their messages to be interpreted exactly the same as they transmitted it, scholars argue that it is not. It is, thus essential to study how audiences receive such messages.

Based on reception theory, this study was conducted to explore audiences' interpretation and response to radio and TV messages promoting ART and the factors that account for such reception

To generate the appropriate data, qualitative approaches mainly focus group discussion and individual interview were used.

The study elicited important insights into the understanding of how different audiences make meaning out of radio/TV messages promoting ART and how they respond to them. Accordingly, it was observed that participants' source of information regarding ART, their media use, and the people they discuss with after watching/listening to such messages, are all related to how they drive meaning out of the messages.

Moreover, participants having different educational background, profession HIV status and gender were found to have similar understanding of ART messages. They, however, were observed to differ in their response to the messages.

The distrust some participants have over media, the setting participants are in, the way the programs are presented and the influence of 'significant others' were identified as factors for the poor watching/listening habit of participants which in turn results in incomplete understanding of the whole messages and finally to their rejection of the messages.

Religious institutions' outlook of HIV in general and its medicine in particular, participants' involvement in the media and the sender of the message were also found to be factors contributing to how participants interpret the messages and to their rejection/acceptance of the messages.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

HIV/AIDS is one of the major crises observed in today's world that significant part of the developing world have already been hit by this pandemic.

The African continent particularly the sub-Saharan African countries are the most affected regions of the world. As of Dec 2005, it was estimated that 24.5 million people are living with HIV in Africa, accounting for 64 percent of all people living with HIV in the world (World Bank 2007).

Ethiopia is one of these countries that are highly affected with over 1.5 million people affected by the disease. Research indicates that the prevalence rate in Ethiopia is high in the age groups 15 to 24, and as this group represents the bulk of the working force of the country, it makes dealing with this issue a national priority (UNICEF, et al. 2003:5).

In the absence of a cure, many countries including Ethiopia have focused on informing and educating the people in order to bring about behavior change. Regarding this Meseret (cited in Kassa) said, "since no cure is available for AIDS the only mechanism for prevention and control of HIV/AIDS is intensifying information education and communication strategies for behavior change" (2004:34).

In Ethiopia, health messages have long been addressed in different ways including the mass media, as the mass media in such situation is one of the important strategies in communicating behavior change. It can be used to educate, raise awareness about a topic, and can enhance appropriate utilization of health services (Vidanapathirana, et al 2005).

Especially in working on prevention and control, the mass media have a potential role in changing people's perception and attitude towards the epidemic (Vidanapathirana et al. 2005).

Studies have also revealed that exposure to mass communication on AIDS plays a vital role in attitude formation towards HIV and in decision making on HIV testing, which has emerged as a bridge between prevention and care, support and treatment (Vidanapathirana et al. 2005).

Knowing one's status is the first step towards taking some actions like maintaining positive mental state, eating more nutritious foods and seeking treatment. It is also the first in using anti-retroviral therapy {ART}, which has now turned the course of the epidemic for most people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA).

In Ethiopia where the pandemic is increasing, much can be expected of the mass media in terms of sustaining interest in AIDS issues, formation of positive attitude towards people living with HIV/AIDS, and ART use, which is very recent in the country

Recently many AIDS control programs in Ethiopia rely heavily on the mass media particularly on the electronic media to inform the public about the pandemic. The electronic media is being used as the main vehicle of health care information including HIV/AIDS as majority of the people in Ethiopia are exposed to the electronic media than to the print. This is because most of the population in Ethiopia is illiterate. Illiteracy rate for men is 34% and for female is 44% and newspaper circulation outside the capital city is small (UNFPA and Population Reference Bureau 2005).

Realizing its potential to reach the majority in Ethiopia, radio is already being used to inform the public about HIV issues including ART (Cherie cited in Mergia 2006).

However, a recently conducted research reveals that the knowledge about ART among the general population and PLWHA in Ethiopia is still poor. Myths and misinformation about

ART contribute to inappropriate beliefs and discrimination against those with the disease (Lijalem et al. 2005).

1.2 Statement of the problem

It has been more than two decades since AIDS education was initiated through the promotion of HIV and AIDS prevention messages using various communication methods (Mergia 2006).

Once ART was introduced into Ethiopia, different governmental and nongovernmental organizations have shifted their attention from working on modes of transmission of the pandemic towards informing the society about ART.

A number of media campaigns including educational programs, radio phone-in-programs and discussions on ART have been produced and delivered to the public to inform them about the service and to minimize the stigma attached to those who use the drug. Scholars of the field advise that if mass media are to be effective in promoting health issues like this, there should be understanding of the audience, pre testing the messages and evaluating impact (Hubley 1993).

Media producers in Ethiopia are, however, often blamed for assuming their messages to be received exactly the same as they transmitted it, which actually is not the case (Staiger 2005).

Adding to the importance of this study, much of the literature surrounding audience research is written from a western perspective and little or no research has been conducted in Ethiopia on how audiences perceive and make use of media messages. Particularly, on ART issues, no study has been conducted, to the researcher's knowledge, to know how audiences interpret messages produced towards its promotion and the factors shaping audiences' interpretation.

Moreover, a study conducted in 2005 estimated that in 2003, there were about 24,000 PLWHA in Ethiopia who are in need of ART. The study concluded, though the service is free, only few Ethiopians had started to use the drug (Lijalem et al 2005).

The small number of people who have started the treatment as compared to the number of people, who are in need, would indicate that there is a need to know how messages are being interpreted by the target audiences. And this is one step towards possible solutions and to narrow the gap between those in need of the treatment and those started using it.

This study, thus, focuses on investigating the way audiences interpret radio/television messages promoting ART, the extent to which individual interpretation of the programs vary based on different factors and the extent to which receiving of the message takes place within the limits of the intended message.

1.3 Objective of the study

The main objective of this study is to explore audiences' interpretation of messages promoting ART through radio and television.

1.4 Research Questions

The specific objectives of the research are spelled out in the following research questions.

- 1 How do audiences interpret and use messages promoting ART through the radio/television?
- 2 What is audiences' response towards ART messages through radio/television?
- 3 What are the factors that shape audiences' interpretation of ART messages?
- 4 What experiential knowledge and frame of interpretation do audiences bring in their use of media content about ART?

1.5 Significance of the study

Findings of this study and its possible recommendations are expected to contribute at least in giving the general picture of how people perceive and use media messages related to ART.

- 1 It will also help journalists and media organizations to understand how audiences perceive their messages so that they can produce appropriate messages.
- 2 It will contribute to the available stock of knowledge on media and HIV/AIDS
- 3 It can be used as a baseline study to help other researchers on the area.

1.6 Scope of the study

The scope of this study is confined to the exploration of how selected samples of audiences interpret radio/TV messages promoting ART and how they respond to them. It also investigated the factors that shape audiences' interpretation of the messages. However, it did not look at the contents of messages on ART in detail.

1.7 Organization of the paper

This thesis contains five chapters. Chapter one presents a general background to the study. It outlines the research problem, the significance of the study, objectives, and methods of the study. Scope of the study and limitations encountered during the course of the study are also dealt with

Chapter two looks at the theoretical considerations underlying the study. It presents a review of literature on theoretical arguments surrounding audiences and the media. It also gives a brief background to the situation of HIV in Ethiopia, the issue of ART since its advent in the country, challenges related to it and the role of the media towards combating the problems.

The third chapter focuses on the methods, procedures and techniques employed in the study.

The chapter explains and justifies my preference of qualitative techniques as ways of data collection for the study. Also covered is why the study employed focus group discussion and in-depth interviews as data collection tools.

Presentation and analysis of the findings are the focus of the fourth chapter. Finally, chapter five suggests some broad conclusions of the study.

1.8 Limitations of the study

This research is a qualitative research project and is limited to a small group of audiences. Therefore the results may not be generalizable to the wider population. However, it could provide some important insights in to the understanding of how audiences interpret media messages. The population of the study is only limited to Addis Ababa due to the shortage of resources. The study would have been more detailed if more samples from other parts of the country were taken to compare the factor of location into consideration.

Had there been more time and financial resources, more data could have been collected by using both qualitative and quantitative research methods that would make the result more generalizable.

1.9 Definition of key terms

The following terms are defined as they are used in this study.

Audience: refers to viewers and listeners of media messages.

Message: refers to the text or content of radio or television programs

Interpretation: refers to the process of receiving and interpreting media texts

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This study is based up on media reception theory to investigate the relationship between media messages and audiences. It explores how audiences of different backgrounds interpret and make use of media messages promoting ART. This chapter presents a review of literature on theoretical arguments surrounding audiences and the media. It also gives a brief background to the situation of HIV in Ethiopia, the issue of ART since its advent in the country, challenges related to it and the role of the media towards combating the problems.

Divided into eight sections, this chapter begins by discussing the earlier theoretical aspects which gave rise to the contemporary audience theory. The second section defines the audience reception theory and the main assumption of the theory including its criticism. The third section looks at active audience theory together with its criticism. Then follows a section entitled ‘Interpretation of media messages’ which looks at how messages of media are interpreted by different audiences and the factors which are believed to shape audiences’ interpretation of media messages. The fifth section presents a brief background of HIV/AIDS and ART in Ethiopia. The sixth section defines ART. The seventh looks at challenges related to ART and the last section discusses about the role of the media in combating the challenges discussed above.

2.1 Theoretical underpinnings

In an attempt to explain the potential relationship between the content of the media and individuals’ thinking and behavior, several media theorists have put forward a “range of

different and often contradictory findings” (Williams 2003:165).

In the 1920s, looking at audiences as passive and the media as powerful was a dominant view in explaining the relationship between audiences and the media.

This view was reflected by the traditional effect theories known also as the hypodermic needle theories or the “magic bullet and transmission belt theory” (Defleur and Ball Rokeach cited in Williams 2003). Whatever their name, they refer to the same notion that “media messages are received in a uniform way by every member of the audience and that immediate and direct responses are originated by such stimuli” (Williams 2003:206). The Hypodermic model theorists emphasize the power of media in determining how audiences think and behave. They assume that consumers accept the intended meaning encoded in media messages passively and the relation between media producers and consumers is predictable (O’Shoughnessy and Stodler 2005).

However, the Hypodermic model quickly proved too clumsy for media researchers seeking to explain more precisely the relationship between audience and text. Thus, the direct effects theory could not survive in its pure form after scholars started to caution the idea that media have a powerful effect on its audiences. The magic bullet theory came under sustained attack in the 1960’s and 1970’s for denying “the audience any capacity to interpret, discount or distort the media messages they receive” and ignoring the fact that people engage with media messages from their own idea, prejudice and preconceptions (Williams 2003:173). Williams again notes that one of the shortcomings of the magic bullet theory is that it does not “address the influences that intervene between the messages from the media and the opinion and attitude people hold” (2003:173).

Similarly, several theorists argue that the theory is unsophisticated, simplistic and unscientific. Hall, for instance, criticized the traditional effects theories for their narrow conception of effects (cited in Williams 2003). In their studies of the effectiveness of propaganda and communication, again, Laswell and Howland (cited in Williams 2003) proved that the effect of a particular item was not a simple consequence of the content of the

item.

They argue that audiences are not that passive to take the kind of effect these theories say that media has on its audience, but are individuals who can interpret what they see and hear inline with their pre established beliefs. Their result then eroded the idea of the magic bullet theory and gave rise to what is named “the limited effects theories” which gives much emphasis to social relations as important determinant factors in affecting audiences understanding of media messages.

The emergence of this theory, though not free of criticism, reflects a shift from focusing on the message makers to the message receivers, the audience.

In line with the limited effects theory is also the uses and gratification theory which emerged in the 1970’s. This theory gave emphasis to the previously ignored role of audiences in making sense of media messages. It assumed that audiences bring their own needs and desires to the process of making sense of media messages. In Watson’s words, the theory worked from the premise that,

there is a plurality of responses to media messages; that people are capable of making their own minds up, accepting some messages, rejecting others using the media to a variety of reasons and using them differently at different time (Watson 2003:62).

The uses and gratifications theory was also characterized by its basic assumption that audiences “actively involve in selecting messages to gratify individual needs” (Pitout in Mergia 2006:26).

The uses and gratifications opened up the way for other theories that shifted attention from the message makers to the message receivers. It, however, was criticized for its much emphasis on the individuals as a unit of analysis. By concentrating on audiences, it “loses sight of social dimension altogether” (Williams 2003:179). The theory also faced another criticism from Grossberg, Wortella and Whitney quoted in Mergia (2006). They argue that it provides “no understanding of the connection between our individual, psychological needs

and the influence of cultural and social contexts on our media use and interpretation of media messages” (in Mergia 2006:26).

Though criticized by a number of scholars, the uses and gratifications theory paved the way for more recent researchers who argue that audience are not just passive consumers brainwashed by media products rather are active participants making meaning of their own out of media messages (O’Shaughnessy and Stodler 2005).

2.2 Encoding and Decoding

Encoding-decoding model is the first to diverge from the previously established effects theories. This theory was introduced by Hall in 1980. In his influential essay, Hall argues that audiences should be seen as active decoders who will not necessarily accept the positions being offered by the text (cited in During 1994). Explaining the relationship between texts and audiences, Hall further suggests that the text is encoded by the producer, and decoded by the reader, and there may be major differences between two different readings of the same message (Williams 2003). Hall’s model, Williams argues, represented a shift in the effects debate by making the influence of media dependent on people’s interpretations and thought process.

Hall advanced his preferred reading theory according to which the text has the power to propose or suggest particular ideological readings. According to him, the meaning of the reading will be affected by individual circumstances like gender, class, age, ethnicity (see Watson 2003: 52) and the viewer is free to the extent that he/she can resist the dominant ideology and end up with oppositional reading (Assefa 2004). Hall was totally critical of the traditional effects study in that he believes “any understanding of modern media culture must focus on the fit between the discursive construction of the message and the interpretative understanding of the audience” (Stevenson in Williams 2003: 195).

Hall’s model does not focus only on the individual’s media usage. Rather it gives emphasis to how different social contexts and backgrounds influence individual’s meaning making

(Williams 2003).

According to his model, readers can accept the whole message presented without question, what he referred to as a “preferred reading”, they may accept part of the message and ignore the rest, a “negotiated reading”, or they may completely oppose what is presented in the media, an “oppositional reading” (Hall cited in During 1994).

Morley was the first person to test Hall’s encoding/decoding model in his study of the, *Nationwide audience*. His result was in line with Hall’s argument that people are not passive and different groups make sense of a message in different ways based on their social background (Williams 2003).

It, however, came to be a critique of Hall’s seminal essay at some point. In criticizing Hall’s encoding decoding model, Morley argues that it is not only class background which could affect the way audiences interpret media messages as he found out people from the same socioeconomic background generating different interpretation of the same media content. He, therefore, suggested that in addition to what Hall found out, “social variables such as age, gender and ethnicity are often as relevant as class background in shaping the way in which people decode media messages” (Williams; 2003:197). Morley also noted out that people’s competence to actively engage in making sense of the media is also paramount in shaping their interpretation of the message (Cited in Williams 2003).

Thus, focusing on ART programs, the main thrust of this study is to investigate how these social backgrounds may determine audiences’ access to possible readings of the texts

These theories discussed above informed those contemporary media theorists who “moved away from examining how particular messages influence people to exploring the nature of media audiences” (Williams 2003: 190). The next section will cover one such theory and its criticism.

2.3 Audience Reception Theory

Reception theory is a more humanistic approach as compared to the previous audience study traditions. Emerging in 1970's, it refers to the ability of audiences to appropriate the meaning they wanted from popular culture" Williams (2000: 199)

It is more concerned in understanding and explaining the way individuals receive and interpret a text, and how their individual circumstances including gender, class, age, and ethnicity affect their reading. Reception scholars believe that audiences can also resist media messages for different reasons. Related to this Mills cited in Casty (1973:187) listed out three ways in which audiences may resist media messages

- 1 If media is not monopolized- one can resist a message by comparing contents with the messages from the other media
- 2 The individual can compare what is said with his own personal experience and direct knowledge of events
- 3 Individuals may gain points of resistance against the mass media by the comparison of experience and of opinions among themselves.

2.4 Critics of Active Audience Theory

The active audience theory was criticized by writers like Curran who argued that the theory "ignores the constraints which limit people's ability to interpret media messages" (1990). Despite its practitioners' claims, Curran, dismissively referred to new audience research as the 'new revisionism which shows how many, much earlier, studies have demonstrated that audiences construct highly individual readings of media texts (1990).

A number of authors, among them Budd, Condit, Evans, Gripsrud, and Seamann also argue that the emphasis on the openness or polysemy of the message and on the activity of the audience, within reception analysis, has been taken too far, to the extent that the original issue of media power has been lost sight of, as if the text had been theoretically dissolved into the audience's multiple readings and resistances to it (cited in Morley undated).

Related to this argument Williams also states

Active audience theory by stressing the ability of audience to make their own meanings from what the media pump out, to use media technologies for their own purposes and to take their own pleasures from what they see, hear and read undermines or even invalidates the concept of media power (2000:207).

Critics of the theory caution the extent to which audiences could be free in interpreting media messages.. They comment on the subjectivity of interpretation that can be too narrow to rely on. Stevenson as cited in Williams (2000:207) .

However, proponents of the theory insist that “people actively and creatively make their own meanings and create their own culture, rather than passively absorb pre-given meanings imposed upon them” (Ang in Assefa 2005:6).

2.5 Interpreting Media Messages

According to Croteau and Hoynes (2003), audiences can actively interpret media messages in three ways. Each particular audience interprets the message individually through routine act of interpretation. Concerning this individual interpretation of media messages Croteau and Hoynes say

This interpretative activity is crucial because it is in the process of audience reception that media texts take on the meaning. Producers construct complex media text often with a very clear idea of what they intend to say but this intended message is not simply dumped in to the minds of passive audiences. Instead audiences interpret the messages assigning meanings to its various components (2003: 267).

Audiences also engage with others to interpret media texts. Croteau and Hoynes (2003) believe that audiences engage with media in social settings, discuss about media messages with family and friends which have an input in how each individual audience interprets a message. Moreover, audiences organize collectively to make formal demands on media producers, the third way, which is an indication of audiences to be far from passive receivers

of media messages.

In any one of the above three activities audiences are assumed to have power and freedom in their use of the media. They are also seen as being active at the individual, social and political level. This assumption of audiences as active undermines the idea that media texts have a singular meaning. If audiences actively interpret media messages, it is likely that there will be multiple interpretation of the same text as audiences bring in their own social experience to the text when decoding it.

This may lead us to conclude that audiences interpret a message in accordance with their subjectivity. But this doesn't mean there is no shared meaning that can be derived from a message by different audiences

Some meanings will be easier to construct because they draw on widely shared cultural values and sets of assumptions about the way the world works. Other meanings will be less commonly derived because they require substantial setting or depend on the use of alternative informational resources as a result meanings may be actively constructed by audiences but in most cases one interpretation is likely to be most common and fit with the underlying values of the culture (Croteau and Hoynes 2003: 213)

Though the capacity of audiences to produce diverse interpretation of what they see, hear and read is cautioned by some critics who questioned the extent to which people differ in their reading of media messages, proponents of the theory insist that due to the polysemy nature of texts and different backgrounds of audiences, the same text is likely to be interpreted in a number of ways (Williams 2003: 166).

Regarding the factors outside the media that shape the meaning audiences make out of media messages, Croteau and Hoynes have said that, "our age, viewpoints, marital and parental status, race, gender neighborhood, educational background and the like help structure our daily lives and our media experience" (2003: 273).

Watson (2003), supporting their position, also points out that audiences respond to messages according to their difference in culture, education, profession, age, race and their tastes and

values,

Although media messages themselves have a contribution in how audiences interpret them, Croteau and Hoynes argue that social location of audiences takes the highest share as “it shapes whom we talk to about different media, what we perceive to be our best interest and most important concerns and what kind of interpretative framework we bring to the mass media” (2003: 273).

From the above literature, it can be argued that knowledge of media messages alone can't tell about the media's effect on audiences. To understand what effect the media have on audiences, studies should be conducted on how the target audiences interpret the message, what factors outside the media have influenced their interpretation,

Hence how do different audiences interpret media messages and what factors outside the media influence them to interpret messages of ART the way they do is the main question that this study aims to answer.

In order to investigate the ways in which audiences interpret messages of ART, it is important to discuss some points about the situation of HIV in Ethiopia, the issue of ART since its advent in the country, challenges related to it and the role of the media towards tackling the problems. The next section therefore deals about these issues briefly.

2.6 HIV/AIDS and Antiretroviral Therapy in Ethiopia

AIDS affects every region in the world, but it is in sub-Saharan Africa that it poses the greatest threat to life and development. The UNAIDS report revealed that rates of infection are still on the rise in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2005 alone, an estimated 3.2 million people in the region became newly infected and 25.8 million people are living with HIV (AIDS Epidemic Update cited in Lijalem et al. 2006)

Ethiopia is among the countries strongly hit by the pandemic. Currently there are about 1.5

million out of approximately 69 million Ethiopians who are infected with HIV (HAPCO et al 2005). The Ministry estimates that about 114,696 Ethiopians died of AIDS in 2003, escalating the number of children who have lost one or both parents to AIDS to over half a million.

In the early days of the pandemic, almost all countries in the developing world focused on educating the people about modes of transmission and means of prevention. These days, however, interest has largely shifted from prevention to treatment (Green 2003). Citing Charles and Bolye, Green (2003) reveals that there is a new way of thinking about AIDS prevention which entails a complete shift from prevention to treatment, from educating on behavior change to informing the public about Anti Retroviral drugs (ARV) as officials had largely given up on prevention.

HIV/AIDS tends to affect every aspect of lives of people infected and the people who are close to them. The emergence of the drug is, however believed to dramatically enhance the quality of life for most people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) (McKee et al. 2004).

The government of Ethiopia has therefore launched free ART program starting from January 2005. It is estimated that in 2003, in Ethiopia there were about 24 thousand PLWHA in need of ART (Lijalem et al 2006). Out of these the government had plans to provide the treatment to 100, 000 PLWHA in 2006.

2.7 What is Antiretroviral Therapy?

Singhal and Rogers define Anti retroviral drugs as “kinds of chemical miracles in that they reduce an individual’s viral load tenfold within eight weeks, in six months an individual’s viral load will be so slow that it couldn’t be detected” (2003:127). Thus, the onset of AIDS and the opportunistic infections that come with it are delayed if a person living with HIV/AIDS takes the drug for the rest of his/her life (Singhal and Rogers 2003:127).

The introduction of anti-retroviral treatments (ARTs) is considered a remarkable step

forward in the whole set of HIV/AIDS responses serving both as a means of prevention and a provision of care, and creation of conducive environment for PLWHA. However, it can't be considered a cure. Moreover it has side effects. It also promotes drug resistant viral strains (McKee et al 2004). ARV drugs, though proved to dramatically change the quality of life of PLWHA, are not free from challenges which should be considered during implementation, especially in African countries (Green 2003).

Communication, as argued by McKee et al. (2004), therefore, should play a role in tackling these challenges, educating the general public about these drugs, promoting the concept of living positively, motivating patients to take the medication regularly, and assisting them to cope with side effects and changes in drug regimen,

2.8 Challenges related to ART

McKee et al have identified two major challenges related to ART which need effective communication for the medication to work effectively (2004). The first problem is behavioral disinhibition.

There is a belief with the, widespread availability of ART, that "HIV is no longer a death sentence and as a result people are taking fewer measures to protect themselves against HIV than the older generation" (McKee et al. 2004: 155).

The possibility of this life sustaining treatment has given rise to a new sense of what he called "treatment optimism" accompanied by complacency about HIV and its prevention. This trend named "behavioral disinhibition" has led to a new rise in HIV transmission. The problem has gone to the extent that "some young people in US and Europe want to belong to HIV positive groups where they receive more attention, social and health service" (Dream out Loud productions cited in McKee et al. 2004: 55).

According to McKee et al. (2004), it is only through effective communication that this

problem of behavioral disinhibition can be countered. New strategies and approaches are needed to help people understand that ARTs are not a cure for HIV.

The second major challenge, McKee et al, point out is the issue of compliance. The effective use of ART needs 95% adherence to the drug regimens. Failure to do so can cause drug resistance that in turn causes mutation of the viral leading to the creation of new HIV subtype that spread through the population” (2004: 219).

However, it is reported that many PLWHA stop the drug after taking it for a short time, assuming that they are cured.

This literature is an indication that the mass media should work on educating the public about the drug. In line with this, also important according to McKee et al. is that “members of the mass media should be fully briefed about ART programs as inaccurate reporting on ART can badly damage the program and negatively affect PLWHA, careful differentiation of the terms treatment and cure is also important” (2004: 222).

2.9 The role of media in Combating HIV/AIDS and tackling challenges related to ART.

In the absence of a cure for HIV/AIDS, it is now widely accepted that mass education of populations about the danger of AIDS is the only realistic way of preventing and controlling the epidemic (UNESCO 2002).

The mass media in this case are very important as they have the potential to reach a large audience rapidly. They can convey information effectively about HIV/AIDS providing effective support for face to face communication (UNAIDS/PENNSTATE 1999). UNAIDS has also revealed that the mass media can play an advocacy role apart from its educative role making policy makers and opinion leaders take the epidemic seriously. In its recent document UNAIDS has also witnessed that the mass media have a great potential to inform and educate the general public as they have a central position in the people’s lives (UNAIDS

2005). They can influence attitudes behaviors and policy making in a number of ways through their coverage of the epidemic in news, drama, documentary and discussion. In line with this, Croteau and Honyes write “Talking about social Life without including a discussion of the role of mass media risks missing an important element contemporary society” (2003:16).

Studies have also witnessed that the most frequently reported source of information on HIV/AIDS is the conventional mass media as opposed to other source of information (Stein cited in Dinku 2005). The situation is also the same in Ethiopia. Citing Amsale, Dinku (2005) states that Television (TV) and Radio are the main sources of information about HIV/AIDS, the latter being very prominent as it is accessed by many.

In the case of Ethiopia, particularly the electronic media have the potential of promoting the treatment as it reaches wider audience than the print, The electronic media as McKee et al have summarized “can serve to establish social norms and to de-stigmatize PLWHA who are on treatment” (McKee et al. 2004: 223) Mass media can also portray positive life styles and the need for nutritional programs for people on ART

Understanding its potential to reach the majority the electronic media in Ethiopia is already being used as important source of information about HIV/AIDS issues since the onset of epidemic. In the last three years it is also being used as the main source of Anti Retroviral Therapy (ART) as the service is implemented in the country.

Many developing countries including Ethiopia have already begun to provide ART to seropositive individuals. However the sixth report of HAPCO (2006) expects the HIV prevalence in Ethiopia to increase as the number of people taking ART increases. The report further explains that if universal access to ART is achieved, the national HIV prevalence will slightly increase from 2.8% with out ART to 3.1% with ART in 2010 (HAPCO 2006).

From the above literature it can be noted that unless the media effectively accomplish its role of informing the public about the drugs and problems attached to it, the drug can do more

harm than good

The media ,therefore, have a great responsibility of educating the general public about these drugs, promoting the concept of living positively, motivating patients to take the medication regularly and assisting them to cope with side effects. The media have also shouldered a great responsibility of educating the people about problems like disinhibition, in-adherence and other problems discussed above which are inherent as ART become a reality in Ethiopia. In doing so, the media can minimize the unintended consequence which may come due to lack of effective communication (McKee et al. 2004).

The mass media are, however, criticized for their assumption that their message will be decoded exactly as they encoded it. Scholars such as Staiger, yet, argue that audiences actively create meanings in response to their environment and hence what meanings are for readers may be quite pertinent to their behavior, attitudes and beliefs (Staiger 2005).

Mass media are also criticized for promoting top down communication (Hubley 1993). Hubley advises that if mass media are to be used for the promotion of health issues like HIV, there should be understanding of the audience, pre testing the messages and evaluating impact.

Knowledge of what meanings audiences make out of media messages and the factors which shape their interpretation of the messages is therefore an important step for media producers to start thinking of who their target audiences are and thus to produce appropriate messages to their audiences. This is where this study fits in.

Conclusion

The literature review above discussed different theories that see audiences as active. Previous theories that gave rise to the new audience theories are also dealt with. It also reviews different scholar's work on audience reception and the critics they encounter. Finally, the situation of HIV in Ethiopia and the issue of ART since its advent in the country is discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

To explore how different audiences interpret radio/TV messages that promote ART, qualitative research methods are appropriate for the study. This chapter deals with the methodology used to carry out this study. It discusses the research design, sampling process, methods of data collection, and data analysis procedures; and the research process. The methodological approaches are discussed in line with the theoretical framework and their relevance to the goals and aims of the study.

3.1 The Research Design

This study used the qualitative research approach as this method “allows one to use different techniques to understand a social phenomenon as well as to look at the phenomenon from the perspective of the subjects themselves” (Assefa 2005: 41). Jansen (cited in Strelitz 2005) also argues that the qualitative methods of data collection are the appropriate tools especially when the purpose is to view through the eye of the subjects. This approach is, thus, seen as suitable for this particular study which looks at how audiences use and make sense of media messages.

3.2 Data collection tools

This study used a two-stage approach; focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews to examine the meanings audiences make out of media messages.

3.2.1 Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussion is among the two data collection tools employed in this study. This method is chosen as it offers opportunities for the researcher to observe how audiences make sense of media messages through conversation and interaction with each other (Hansen et al 1998). Focus group discussion is chosen as a method of data collection as it is appropriate to investigate “how media audiences relate to, use, negotiate and interpret media content and to determine whether different sections of the audience shared, modified or rejected the ways in which topics had been encoded by the broadcasters” (Morley in Hansen et al. 1998: 261).

Participants for the focus group discussions in this study were selected following Hansen’s argument that “sampling of groups in a focus group takes careful note of any particular demographic, occupational or other dimensions which the researcher is expecting or hypothesizing that differences will occur” (1998: 264). Hence, as the aim of this study is to examine how audiences’ interpretation of ART messages may vary according to their HIV status, membership of different groups, and sex, participants were selected so as to represent the mentioned populations. Thus, six focus groups constituting participants who are selected based on specific dimensions thought to be of significance to the way in which people interpret media messages were formed for this study. Consequently, the focus group discussions included people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), both who started using ART and who didn’t, and HIV negative people.

This study used purposive sampling to select participants since as argued by scholars, the primary focus of qualitative research is not to generalize results and thus to have a representative sample is not crucial (Deacon et al. 1999: 50), (Hansen et al. 1998:241). They further note that having representative samples in qualitative research may be neither necessary nor desirable because the objective of the study is simply to test a particular hypothesis and not to generalize ones findings (Hansen et al. 1998). Thus, to select

participants, this study used two non random sampling methods: theoretical and snowball.

Participants of the focus group discussion were selected from “naturally” existing communities in order to explore the ways in which social interaction mediates audiences’ understandings. In line with this Deacon et al write that “the advantage of pre reconstituted groups is that they are more natural and participants may be comfortable in each other’s company” (1999:56).

Thus, PLWHA who started to use the drug were selected purposively from an association of PLWHA, Tesfagoh. The researcher contacted an individual from Tesfagoh who then suggested further people for the researcher to approach. PLWHA who don’t use the drug were selected from Entoto mariam¹ church using snowball sampling technique as it is the appropriate method “where no list or institution exists that could be used as a basis for sampling” (Deacon et al 1999: 53). This method is used since Entoto caters to “informal social groupings, where the social knowledge and personal recommendations of the initial contacts are invaluable in opening up and mapping tight social networks” (Deacon et al. 1999: 53). Thus, the researcher first established contact with the Baptist² at the church who then selected other participants who are living with the virus but not taking ART. This couldn’t have been possible had the researcher herself tried to select the participants.

¹ Entoto mariam, a church found at the Peak of Entoto Mountain in Addis Ababa is a resident of thousands of PLWHA waiting for healing from St. Mary’s holy water instead of the drug.

² A priest who tries (using holy water) to drive out an evil spirit believed to possess a person
All suggested participants were selected on the basis as to whether they had seen at least three programs of ART. This is done to avoid doing an experimental research where respondent’s attitude is measured right after being exposed to the messages.

Entoto church is chosen to select PLWHA who don’t take the drug as the researcher thought it is a place where people having a different look at media messages of ART live in a different social setting. People who are free from the virus were also selected purposively.

Hansen et al (1998: 268) note that the number of focus groups one decides to have depends on the aim of the research and the available resources. Due to time limitation, six focus groups were conducted to collect the required data for this research.

Out of the six groups, two contained PLWHA who have already started to use ART. The other two were PLWHA who do not use the drug. The remaining two were individuals who were tested for HIV and are negative in status. In each of the three divisions, one group was men and the other of women. Women and men were interviewed separately to avoid the dominance of men over women which in turn may affect the data gathered.

There were six to eight individuals in each group as fewer than this number may risk the possibility of maintaining a dynamic and lively discussion (Hansen et al 1998). Thus, a total of about 40 individuals participated in focus group discussions in this study.

Morgan states that the interview site must balance the needs of the researcher as well as the participants (in Strelitz 2005). He suggests the most likely alternative places are the researcher's office, the participants' homes or some neutral site such as the church. Taking these in to consideration, the discussion with people at Entoto was held at the compound of Entoto church because it is a place where the participants and the researcher feel comfortable. Those taking the drug were interviewed at a conference room in Tesfagoh as it is a convenient place for majority of them. The discussion with negative people was held in one of the participants' home.

Before each discussion began, sample programs of ART aired through TV and radio were shown to the respondents as an aided recall followed by a discussion which lasted for one and half to two hours. The length of the discussions and interviews depended on the information provided by the interviews. During the discussion the respondents were asked to identify themselves with the numbers given to them before the discussion. This is done to make them comfortable to say whatever they feel with out the fear of being recognized.

There is one disadvantage of focus group in which one person may dominate the discussion

in a way that might affect the group interaction. But Hansen et al 1998 indicate that this can be minimized by a skillful moderator. And Liebes and Katz point this condition as a more real setting for generating meaning.

Group dynamics are such that opinion and participation are not equally weighted; some people have disproportionate influence. But real life is like that: opinions are not as much the property of individuals as public-opinion polling would have us think opinions arise out of interaction and opinion leaders have disproportionate influence. (Liebes and Katz cited in Hansen et al 1998:263)

In this research, attempt was made to give equal chance to all participants so that one person may not dominate the discussion.

3.2.2 Individual Interview

In-depth individual interviews with selected participants from the focus group discussions were also conducted. The purpose of conducting individual interviews was to further deepen and explore some interesting issues that have arisen in the focus group discussions and not to find out completely new ideas. Wimmer and Dominic argue

In depth interviews provide very detailed information about the reason why respondents give specific answers. It elaborates data concerning respondent's opinions, values; motivations, recollections experiences and feelings are obtained" (1991:148).

Macun and Posel say that data collected in a focus group should be supported with other data collection techniques (cited in Strelitz 2005). Thus, one respondent from each focus group was selected to conduct the individual in-depth interviews in order to clarify and gain more insight into their interpretation of the programs. This way it was able to obtain most of the information required. Participants for the in-depth interview were selected for their active participation and important ideas they raised in the focus group discussions.

Individual interviews were also conducted with one key informant and three religious leaders

from the three dominant religions in the country, Orthodox, Protestant and Islam, to explore religions' view of HIV/AIDS and media messages of ART. Individual interviews were also used to find out how producers of the programs encoded the messages. The interviews with the religious leaders and journalists were conducted in the interviewees' office.

3.3 Selection of media messages

There was a need to get some samples of the media content to be shown to the participants during the discussion sessions. For this purpose, the media materials were selected based on their availability and suitability to the objective and theme of the study.

Thus, out of the available ten programs on ART, four programs, two aired through the Ethiopian television and two aired through radio were selected for their suitability to the objective and theme of the study. Program content, variety of issues covered and focus were taken in to consideration while selecting the programs

The study focused on messages aired only through radio and television cognizant of the fact that majority of the people in Ethiopia are exposed to the electronic media rather than to the print (Cherie cited in Mergia 2006).

3.4 The Interview Guide and the Role of Moderators

To collect the data, an interview guide covering all the issues relevant to the research was prepared prior to the discussion (see appendix I and III). This was done to ensure that the focus group discussions concentrated on the subjects and issues relevant to the research

An interview guide is principally a menu of the topics, issues and areas of discussion to be covered, and it gives a direction to the sequence of issues to be covered, the nature and extent of prompting and probing....(Hungwe cited in Hansen et al. 1998).

Separate interview guides appropriate for each interviewee was prepared for the individual interviews. The interview guides, however, were not followed rigidly during the discussions.

I felt free to probe more deeply when necessary and follow new topics if they arose.

The same interview guide was used for all focus groups so that it is possible to conclude that “what so ever differences occur are the product of factors and characteristics other than the promoting used or manner of moderator intervention” (Hansen 1998:274).

To minimize the risk of steering responses to the direction which fits the researcher’s preconceived expectations, one assistant moderator who is oriented on the contents of the discussion beforehand, worked with the researcher during the discussions.

Our role as moderators was to facilitate and stimulate the discussion. Specifically, to ensure that the issues outlined in the interview guide are all covered and also to make sure that every one in the group got equal chance of speaking.

3.5 Data processing and Analysis

Both the focus group discussions and individual interviews were recorded and notes were also taken during the discussions to further strengthen the recorded materials. The data then was transcribed and translated in to English as all the discussions were first held in Amharic.

The responses then were categorized in to three themes depending on the purpose and objective of the research. In most cases, the responses fell under the categories that were spelled out in the thematic questions as contained in the interview guides. However, the focus group discussions and individual interviews generated some unexpected responses which then were categorized and crosschecked accordingly. The information was then written in narrative form and pertinent quotations from the group discussions and individual interviews which speak to the theoretical assumptions were selected to illustrate the major findings of the study. The quotations are used verbatim so that they could be used as representative illustrations. Concerning the use of verbatim quotations, Schiesinger et al state

...various strategies such as case studies and the presentation of verbatim accounts are often employed. These have the benefit of ‘fleshing out’ and illustrating the significant theme and patterns identified by the researcher (in Hansen et al 1998: 279).

Conclusion

This chapter discuss the methods used to carry out the study. It also presented tools used to collect the required data and the method of data analysis is pointed out. The next chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study according to theoretical assumptions addressed in literature review chapter

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

Based up on audience reception theory, this study focused on investigating how different audiences interpret radio/television messages promoting Anti-retro Viral Therapy (ART).

This chapter presents and discusses the major findings of the study. I will combine findings from the individual in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The findings will be presented, illustrated and corroborated by quotations arising from the in-depth interviews as well as the focus group discussions with the participants. The interpretation and discussion is dictated by the objectives of the study and informed by the theoretical considerations in the literature review chapter. Consequently, three overarching themes pertaining to the objectives of the study have been identified and the data collected is analyzed under these themes.

The first theme focuses on assessing participants' access to the electronic media and how they use ART messages of radio/television. The second theme stresses on how different audiences interpret radio/TV messages promoting ART. And the last part presents different factors affecting audiences' interpretation of messages.

This chapter opens with a description of Entoto, a place where participants who are not taking the drug were selected, before directly immersing in to the discussion of their access to and use of media. The description of the place is deemed important as the setting of the place affects participants' access to the media, their media use and interpretation of messages promoting ART.

4.1 Description of Entoto

Found at the peak of Entoto Mountain, Entoto Mariam is a very ancient church located around 12 Kilometers far from Shiro Meda near Addis Ababa University. Since 1991 E.C this church has become a home of thousands of people living with HIV/AIDS. Five kilometers down to the main church of Entoto Mariam, there is holy water which comes out from a spring eight meters beneath the ground.

The Holy water is the main reason that gathers thousands of PLWHA around the church since 1991 E.C. Desperately waiting a cure from the holy water, many people from the metropolis and different corners of the country flock to the church every single day to attend the ritual.

A majority of these people permanently reside nearby the church either in rented shacks or on the street outside the church. Majority of the people are composed of those who have already left their homes, families and children after they have discovered they are HIV positive. Thus for some of them, Entoto is a hiding place from the outside world and for others it is a repent time for the sins they believe have committed which they think is the cause for their being caught by HIV.

4.1.1 The ceremony

The ritual at Entoto church begins at seven .a.m in the morning with a Morning Prayer ushered by priests. After it is completed, every one rushes down to the valley where the showering of the holy water takes place. The ceremony of showering the holy water over the patients begins around nine a.m in the morning and it lasts for about three hours. At the ceremony it is a common experience to see patients shouting and falling to the ground. The priest explains this happening as an indication that the evil spirit of HIV is leaving patients' body .Every patient, then, returns home drinking the holy water on the way up to the mountain. They are supposed to drink an average of five liters of holy water before lunch.

After every one drinks the holy water, it is again time for gathering to attend church teachings. This lasts up to late in the evening when patients get together to chat, discuss

some social issues and lastly to pray. ART is one of the major topics of discussion since majority of them are living with the virus.

As already said above, Entoto is considered as a place where people living with the virus should pray to God to get his forgiveness as they believe that HIV is a disease through which God's rage is manifested. And thus listening to the radio and watching television which is often considered a luxury is "forbidden" at Entoto.

4.2 Access to and Use of Media

4.2.1 Access to Radio and Television

The reason why access to media came to be one of the themes of this analysis while the objective of the study is to explore audiences' reception of ART messages is, because audiences' access to media and what they take as their source of information regarding ART has an influence on how they interpret media messages.

Consequently, majority of the people at Entoto who participated in this study reported that they rarely follow to radio/TV programs as they already detached themselves from the rest of the society. They follow to radio programs rarely after they have completed praying and drinking the holy water. Their limited exposure to the media has an impact on how they use media messages and also on their interpretation of messages regarding ART which will be discussed in the next section.

There were some participants who are not permanent residents at Entoto. They attend the ceremony during the day and come down to town at evenings. There, they do have an opportunity to listen/watch what is on media about ART which they usually share with friends at Entoto.

This lets others who don't have much access and time to follow to media to actually hear the messages making them not to be completely detached from information of the media.

Participants of the focus group discussion say that they often discuss messages from media about ART together as members of the group who have better access to the media raise issues after consuming the media messages. Issues of ART are among their topics of discussion as people usually get in dilemma between taking the drug and the holy water

The FGD conducted with PLWHA who are taking ARV and those HIV negative on the other hand showed that they have better access and exposure to the electronic media as compared to those who haven't yet begun taking the drug but living with the virus. They have greater media consumption on different HIV/AIDS issues including ART.

As members of Tesfagoh (association of PLWHA), we are families of the media. We listen and watch to almost all programs about ART on media regularly and sometimes we are the producers of such programs.

Like the different setting they are in, participants of this study differ in their source of information regarding HIV/AIDS and ART.

4.2.2 Source of information regarding ART

The focus group discussions conducted with participants of this study at Entoto (those living with the virus but not taking ART), showed that they consider the church and the Bible as their main source of information. They indicate that they frequently discuss with religious leaders and “spiritually elders” about different issues including ART. Although, they sometimes listen/watch to media, they said, they don't trust media messages when it comes to HIV in general and ART in particular. As the following excerpt from one participant illustrates, many of them consider only the church and the Bible a trustworthy source of information about different issues including HIV and its medicine.

Church teachings have made us know what the future holds. HIV is one of the manifestations of what this world has to suffer from. Neither radio programs nor school teachers have taught me about HIV as did the church. In fact, the church knew about the disease way before any person or institution. As a result, I believe the cure also comes from the church

From the above testimony it can be seen that media don't have much place as source of information for participants of this study who are not taking the drug.

But when it comes to those who are using the drug and are members of associations of PLWHA, the main source of information regarding ART are health centers, workshops and the electronic media.

For participants who are negative for HIV too, it is mainly the electronic media particularly the television which is their main source of information concerning HIV issues including ART.

As shown above, for some of the participants the electronic media is the primary source, for others it at all is not a trustworthy source of information. This actually has an impact in how they use the messages and how they respond to them which is the concern of the next section.

4.2.3 Media Use

To understand how participants of this study use media messages of ART, it is important to illustrate the social setting participants are in.

It was found out in this study that each participant from Entoto and Tesfagoh wasn't an impersonal individual with out effective social ties to others. The participants were in some ways found to be influenced by their ties with others while they use and interpret media messages of ART and in making decisions whether to act one way or another on the basis of such messages. Participants at Entoto point out that they often consult religious leaders and 'spiritually elders' on issues of ART after listening/watching it on media. In addition, they discuss such messages in groups among themselves. This shows how close social ties can play a part in the flow of information from the media to the mass.

This finding resonates with Croteau and Hoynes's (2003) argument that audiences engage with media in social settings, discuss media messages with family and friends which have an input in how each individual audience interprets a message. It could also be traced back to McQuail's discussion that "media use is most suitably characterized as an interactive process, relating media content, individual needs, perceptions, roles and values and the social context with in which a person is situated (1997: 144).

As can be understood from Croteau and Hoynes's argument above audiences are not simply free of constraints while they confront with media messages. Other people have an influence in how individuals use media and interpret messages. And this was the case with participants at Entoto.

They often discuss media messages about ART and in doing so there is a dominance of the 'spiritually elders' shaping how others think about media messages of ART. To give an example of how individual's meaning making is influenced by group culture, here is what a female participant from the FGD had to say;

If some one among us gets in dilemma between taking the drug and the holy water after watching/listening to media messages of ART, it is considered as a weakness and distancing oneself from sacred practices. As we know HIV is not a virus but an evil spirit, feeling positive about the drug is considered by every one in the group as weakening.

To further look at how other people intervened in participants' interpretation of media messages, here is an extract from an in-depth interview with a male participant who is among the 'spiritually elders'. For a question on my part whether someone has ever asked him an advice about taking ART, he said;

Females are often tempted by media propagandas on ART. Because we know that it is a result of evil spirit intervention, we advise them to stick to their faith. And we tell them that what they heard is all fake.

Something to note here is those labeled as 'spiritually elders' and "figures" by participants are those who joined the group earlier. In the case of participants at Entoto

“spiritually elders” are those who claim that they are cured from the virus after treated by the holy water. ‘Figures’ as participants at Tesfagoh label them are those who joined associations of PLWHA during those times when there was much stigma and discrimination. Concerning these individuals Lowery and De Fleur say

When people are in a system of close and interdependent interaction with one another, they tend to demand a high degree of conformity of each other. Thus, the primary group becomes a ‘reference group’ to whom its members turn for interpretation, advice and influence as they shape their response to the external world (1983:184).

Participants in both cases (those at Entoto and Tesfagoh) were influenced by others whom they trust and they eventually made some form of response to the messages which will be covered in the coming sections. This resonates with the idea of two-step flow of communication which argues that information flows “from media to people and from there to other people rather than directly from media to the mass” (Lowery and De Fleur 1983:180).

Participants of this study also re-confirm and leave out their feelings of difference while watching/listening to media messages regarding ART. I myself have witnessed discussants re-confirming each other the ‘correct’ reading of the messages during the discussion sessions. This can be clearly seen from the following dispute between two female discussants at Entoto. The participant finally seems to agree on what majority from the group believes. They were questioned on what they have understood from the selected programs on ART.

Discussant 1; from such programs, I understand that people get better after taking the drug

Discussant 2; (intervened) you believe that? You think that is from the drug?

Discussant 1; Oh no

Moderator; so what have you seen?

Discussant 1 People get cure only from the holy water

From the above quote, it can be seen that members of the group tend to conform to the norms and expectations of such groups. Opinions and attitudes within such groups tend to be shared and their perceptions are altered by group membership.

The case is the same with participants at Tesfagoh who are taking the medicine. They discuss ART issues together after listening/watching to media shaping one another in how they think

about media messages.

One thing different for participants at Tesfagoh (those taking the drug) is the feeling they have towards the media. They believe that they are families of the media. This is because it is their members and friends who are always on media to speak about the drug. When the participants were looking at the selected programs during the discussion time, I observed that they know every one speaking on the programs. This makes them to be more interested in watching/listening to the programs as compared to participants at Entoto and to have a different interpretation of the messages. This will be discussed in the last section of this chapter

In line with this, one of my key informants Birhane Kelkay, director of National Positive Women Network, contends

Whatever is on media about ART the previous night is a topic of discussion in our office the next morning. As the speakers are our friends, we either comment on what they said or we appreciate them if they speak something interesting.

In addition the social groups provide meaning for their members regarding ambiguous situations for which individuals don't have an adequate or standard interpretative framework. Birhane tells a similar story,

Once, an HIV patient who is currently taking the medicine attended a television program made on a woman who died of stomach complication from ARV. She then worried that she would suffer similar consequences from ARV use; she waited for me in my office to get my counseling. I, then, explained to her what the media wanted to say.

Birhane's involvement in elaborating the media messages for the woman who had another interpretation of the message goes hand in hand with what Croteau and Hoynes say about socially acceptable people's influence in how individuals interpret media messages. They argue that although media messages themselves have a contribution in how audiences interpret them, social location of audiences takes the highest share as "it shapes whom we talk to about different media, what we perceive to be our best interest and most important concerns and what kind of interpretative framework we bring to the mass media" (2003:

273).

Another thing observed from the FGD with participants at Tesfagoh is the fact that there is a change over time regarding their media use. The discussants revealed that as the issue of stigma and discrimination is becoming better, there is a noticeable change in how they use the media. To offer some examples, here is what participants from Tesfagoh had to say regarding their media use.

Previously, I didn't dare to listen to the radio/watch to TV about HIV issues in the presence of others. This was because I was afraid that people may suspect that I am HIV positive as there were some scars on my face. But nowadays, I follow the programs attentively especially when people taking ART share their experiences in the media. The medicine has given me a confidence and I feel like a normal human being.

Another participant had the following to say;

Today it is different. We are very attentive followers of the programs about ART on media as our life is associated with it. When I compare it with some 10 and 11 years back, it is totally different. Then, I didn't follow the programs on HIV or I wouldn't let others know that I am listening. If someone in the family finds me listening to such programs, they want me to shut the TV/radio off so that they will avoid their being prone to neighbors backbiting.

One participant however had a different opinion on this;

Yes there is a big change. Some ten years back, I had a feeling that I will listen something new every time I switched the radio/TV on. There were times I came home in the middle of work to listen to the radio. But now I am getting used to it. I just listen to the radio or watch TV like any body else.

In the case of participants who are negative of HIV, the situation is different. Of course they discuss about HIV issues with friends and sometimes with families. However, almost all of the participants in the study said they have never discussed about ART with anyone. ART has never been their topic of discussion. They rather discuss, after watching/listening to media, about issues like abstinence, condom use, testing and other related topics but not ART. The participants gave reasons for not doing so. Most of them identified the way such programs are presented as a potential reason.

They said such programs are usually presented in serious genre which is less likely to grab attention of those negative from the virus. It also seems that, they assume such programs are only for those living with the virus and taking the drug. This is apparent in the following responses of a female participant, HIV negative.

Participant; I don't listen/watch programs on ART

Moderator; Why?

Participant; there is no one in our family who is HIV positive. So if I have to listen it should be either extremely interesting or it should be presented by a journalist I like. If not, what does it help me?

Thus, participants who are negative from the virus take messages about ART as just simple information

Programs of such type add new things to our body of knowledge on HIV/AIDS. But only when such programs are entertaining or when they are presented by a journalist I like, I attend them seriously and with interest. However, we have more interest to issues that relate to condom use, testing and the like than ART.

As one of the discussants suggested "messages of ART should be presented in an entertaining way so that we also could follow to them seriously"

HIV negative participants suggested the entertainment- education strategy defined as "the process of purposively designing and implementing media to both entertain and educate" to be used while producing ART messages. Concerning the potential of entertainment education to engage audiences emotionally, Rogers and Singhal also say that

Soap operas, whether on TV or on radio or via some other channels consist of highly complex narratives with various protagonists and antagonists, plots and sub plots and conflicts and resolution. Such narratives designed with the use of formative research are perceived by audience members as more coherent, believable and involving than straight forward rational appeals (Rogers and Singhal 2005: 292).

4.2.4 Preference of media

The focus group discussions and individual interviews conducted with participants at Entoto revealed that they have developed hatred and distrust towards the media in

general. One participant gave the following reason for his dislike of the media;

There is nothing true on the media about this disease. They are talking much on using condoms, taking the drug and others. Look! Miracles are happening here. People are getting completely cured from the disease. Why don't the media report this to the whole world? This is actually being against the Ethiopian Orthodox religion.

Another participant who is not taking the medicine had a similar opinion;

What they always show us is a woman speaking about her getting fatter after taking the drug. I have never seen/listened any one on media who is cured from the disease. But here this is happening everyday. God is doing a miracle here every single day. Isn't it something worth telling to the whole world?

From the above excerpts, it can be noted that there is a feeling among participants from Entoto that they are denied attention from the media. This also has an impact on how they interpret messages promoting the media which will be discussed in the oncoming section.

The negative attitude towards the media being a common feeling they share, some of the participants at Entoto still have a preference towards the radio to TV. A female participant who came from Gondor had the following to say on this;

There actually is nothing good on media about the ART. But if I am to choose between radio and TV, I prefer radio to listen to programs about HIV and the drug. This is because radio gives me the chance to listen to it with out the knowledge of others that I am listening to such a program. As no one in the family knows my status of HIV, I don't have the confidence to watch TV about HIV in the presence of others.

A male participant at Entoto has another reason to prefer radio to TV on issues about HIV;

At the outset, we should know that media programs or dramas on ART can't help fight HIV/AIDS. The only way out is engaging in fasting and praying. But if I am to choose between radio and TV, I would prefer radio because it at least helps me not to see miserable, shameful and sad scenes as I do on TV. Under the pretext of HIV teachings, they show on TV scenes and dance performances that actually drive to sexual temptation..

In contrast to participants who are living with the virus and not taking ART, whose

preference of media is radio for the greater freedom it affords, participants who are taking the medicine say they prefer TV for programs on ART. This is because “TV adds to the trustworthiness of the messages about ART as it lets us to see for example, the physical changes on a person after taking the drug”

For participants of this study who are HIV negative, again TV is their number one preference of media about HIV issues including ART. In addition to their preference of TV, however, they want the programs about ART to be presented in an entertaining way for them to follow seriously. This whole difference in their use of the media results in different interpretation of the messages.

4.3 Interpretation of messages

The main aim of this study was to investigate how different audiences interpret radio and TV messages of ART. And to see the extent to which individual interpretation of programs could be shown to vary systematically in relation to different backgrounds.

This study included different sections of the audience to see whether there actually is a difference in their interpretation of the messages of ART. It also investigated the factors contributing to their difference in interpretation and response of the messages.

It has been argued in the literature review chapter that some audiences resist the constructions of reality preferred by the mass media and construct their own, often oppositional, meanings for media texts

From the discussions conducted with participants from different categories (those taking the drug, taking the holy water and those HIV negative), however, it was found out that participants understood the meaning of the messages almost in a similar way. What so ever differences they have in their HIV status, educational background, profession and gender, almost every participant of the study understood the messages on media about the drug in a similar way. They do have a very clear understanding of what the intended message is.

This was observed in each participant's answer when they were asked to retell the messages he/she understood from the media during the discussion period. Note the following quotes from their answers

A male participant at Entoto who is a teacher;

I notice that the programs are about the when and the how of the medicine's application and the type of food to be taken.

An administrative staff at Tesfagoh who is taking the medicine;

The programs emphasize three issues namely prevention, testing and success stories of ARV use.

A male participant negative from the virus;

Such programs are to urge PLWHA who refused to take the medicine by showing them people's improved life after taking the drug.

A female participant taking the drug, who has a college diploma;

These programs are about the use of the medicine, how to use it and when. Addressing PLWHA directly, they also advise those who haven't yet tested to know their status and take it if they are positive..

From the above answers it can be seen that the different participants in different groups are very clear on what the intended messages were

The difference, however, lies in their response to the messages. Some of the participants accept and believe the messages while others reject them from their own prior experience, pre-existing beliefs or using logic or other rationales to criticize what is said on the media.

This resonates with Watson's argument that

there is a plurality of responses to media messages; that people are capable of making their own minds up, accepting some messages, rejecting others using the media to a variety of reasons and using them differently at different time (Watson 2003:62).

One can see this from the following quotes taken from the focus group discussions when they were questioned on what they actually think about ARV

A female participant at Entoto, 28;

'Seeing is believing. Having seen many people getting cured from HIV/AIDS here, the holy water is the ultimate cure for me.

In line with what the above participant said, Festinger argues people avoid messages that don't fit with what they know or with other opinions they hold (in Griffin 2006: 228)

A male participant at Entoto rejects media messages of ART like this;

ARV is said to 'prolong' life. As far as I know prolonging life is possible only for God. Take the medicines for TB, malaria e. t. c, they are effective because the diseases they cure don't often emerge as a result of failing to meet God's demands. HIV on the other hand is a disease by which God's rage is manifested. Why prolonging after all while cure is possible?

Another participant used the following logic to criticise what is said on the media about ART;

ARV is like medicines given to animals to fatten them. It may be considered as food given to make a weak body strong. Had it been life prolonging, we would have prescribed it to our elderly people so that they would stay alive a bit longer.

A participant from Tesfagoh, taking the medicine, accepts the messages based on her own experience;

We are living witnesses for the wonders ART does. After we started taking the medicine, we are now able to work as normally as any person. Programs of such type are of importance for us..

A female participant who has a college diploma used the following logic to reject the messages. She is among those at Entoto not taking the medicine;

The program cautions that not a single second should pass from the time of medicine intake. It looks that this medicine is fake. Otherwise it would have been as effective as the holy water with no time limits. People talk of improved life after they have begun taking the medicine. I don't think they are genuine though. I think they take it with a sense of hopelessness and helplessness..

A female participant who is HIV negative;

I can see that it is a relief to them and good news for us in case we face a similar

problem as no one can be sure on what will happen in the future. But such programs are always presented in scary and serious way which lets me to avoid it automatically.

Thus, it can be said that there are of course differences not over the meanings they derived from the messages but on whether or not they believe it.

We can see that participants at Entoto who are taking holy water are in a social setting that provides them with ways of criticizing the dominant meaning and thus they reject the preferred reading of the messages.

When it comes to participants who are taking the drug, they all inserted themselves in to the dominant system and had dominant response to the messages

Mills cited in Casty (1973:187) has forwarded three reasons for audiences to reject media messages and it also is the case to the participants of this study who rejected/accepted the messages. According to Mills participants compare what is said on media with their own personal experience and direct knowledge to finally reject/accept the messages. Moreover, participants of this study resist or accept the messages mediated by significant people. Those 'significant' are actually different for each group.

We may think to relate audiences' rejection/accepting of the same message to individual's pre-existing beliefs and experiences. However as can be observed from the answers above, participants from each group have similar response to the messages despite their individual differences. People from different educational background, profession and gender agreed up on their response to the messages on ART and that the accuracy of the messages was evaluated using agreed evidence.

This goes in line with Morley's argument that members of a given sub-culture will tend to share a cultural orientation towards decoding messages in particular ways and that individual "readings" of messages will be framed by shared cultural formations and practices (in Chandler 1997).

This however seems to be in contrast with what (Croteau and Hoynes 2003) said on how

each individual will have an individual interpretation and response to messages on media. Audiences' being active at the individual level (Croteau and Hoynes 2003) seems to be very loose for participants of this study as they shape each other to have the same interpretation and response to the messages.

What was seen from the responses of negative peoples is that they are situated not in position of conformity or opposition to the dominant ideology, but in ones that confirm to it in some ways but not others. They accept the dominant meaning in general but modify or inflect to meet the needs of their specific situations.

4.3.1 Partial decoding of the whole messages

Under the umbrella of ART programs, messages about application of the medicine, success stories of ART use, prevention, testing, stigma and discrimination and other countries' experience of ART use are also concerns of programs on ART.

However, discussants who are not taking the drug and those HIV negative thought that such programs are only about success stories of medicine intake. When asked to tell what such programs are about, majority from those who are not taking the medicine and those negative failed to identify some of the main messages.

A female participant from Entoto;

It is all about people's improved life after they have begun taking the medicine..

A male participant who is negative from the virus;

It is all about what the medicine can do for you.

Discussants from Tesfagoh who are taking the medicine, on the other hand, have mentioned some more points about such programs. A male participant from Tesfagoh stated;

It emphasizes on three issues namely prevention, testing and success stories of ARV use.

A participant taking the drug for over four years;

For us, already taking it, these messages inform us on how to. For those living with the virus but refusing to take the drug, such programs inspire them to immediately start using it. For those untested, it provides advice to know themselves.

In these examples it is clear that discussants who are negative and those not taking the drug don't give attention to every bit and part of programs on ART, which might be the cause for their incomplete understandings of the whole messages. This may be the result of lesser interest they have towards such messages.

Though no difference is observed in how different participants understood the intended messages, some of them decoded the messages completely while others have partial understanding of the whole messages.

4.4 Factors affecting interpretation

4.4.1 Religious institution's outlook of HIV/AIDS

What is also observed in this study is the fact that different religions have different definitions to HIV and its medicine which is reflected in how followers of a particular religion interpret media messages of HIV in general and ART in particular.

Though religion is not considered in selecting participants of the study, it is found important to include religious institution's view of HIV/AIDS in the analysis as it is one factor in how audiences interpret media messages of ART. These are, thus, the different definitions given to the disease as told by key informants representing the three dominant religions in the country.

Bahitawi G/Medhin Demessie of the Orthodox Church, a Baptist, referred to the Bible to define HIV. He said;

God has warned those who fail to comply with his orders that he will punish them with severe diseases and infections that have no cure. That is what you now call HIV/AIDS. The Bible further says those punished with severe diseases will get cure from the holy water..

Further questioning on my part also revealed that HIV is not among other diseases that Baptists at the church refer to medical doctors. Bahetawi G/Medhin contends “evil spirit can’t be cured by injection or medicine”.

For Wondim Buli Beyene overseer of the Protestant church on the other hand, HIV is just a virus. Wrongdoing may not be its cause but sin can contribute for its spread, he said. Though there are many diseases mentioned in the Bible, nothing is specifically said that it is the current HIV, he said. Thus, the church advises its followers to wait for spiritual healing, as it does for any other diseases, while taking the drug. A consecutive and different prayer ceremony parallel to their medicine intake is provided for those living with the virus. After all, he says, “it is God who gave scientists wisdom to find the medicine. So what is the problem of using it?” A religious leader of the Muslim religion has a similar opinion on this.

Here it is important to note that the definition for HIV by each religion has an influence on how audiences’ interpret messages of ART through the media.

It was also apparent in this study that audiences are exposed to different messages about ART that contradict each other. In such cases participants showed a tendency of turning to members of the ‘opinion group’ for interpretation. Being exposed to confusing and contradictory information may be the reason for their misunderstanding of the messages and complete rejection of the intended message

The following is an example where contradiction of the messages from media and religious institutions is plainly observed as told by one of the participants who then rejected messages from the media;

We hear a lot about ART. And we know that its application goes at odds with our Christian deeds. In the first place, here you need to fast and pray. The medicine rather requires one to take food before taking it which contradicts with fasting. I prefer dieing in God’s temple to amassing my sin by taking the medicine.

For Ethiopian people who are historically and predominantly adherent to their faith, this

factor is so influential in shaping audiences' interpretation of media messages and hence their response to the messages.

4, 4.2 Exposure to Media

The FGD and in-depth interviews with participants who are taking the drug revealed that they have a feeling of assuming ART messages of the media as their own messages and their voice.

This was found to affect the way they look at the messages. It has been noticed in this study that this feeling leads them to give attention to every single bits and details in the programs. And finally to have a dominant reading of the messages. Look at the following extract from the FGDs with PLWHA taking the medicine;

We are different in how we follow to such kind of programs. For others it may not be a big business as it is for us. I, for example, was looking the exact time the woman on TV takes her medicine. Other individuals who are not taking the medicine may not do so.

In the case of participants at Entoto, who are not taking the drug, there is a feeling among them that they are denied attention from the media This is observed to be one factor which affects participants to have an oppositional reading of the messages about ART and finally to reject the intended message. Participants thus suggested the media to also tell their story; the holy water, as it does the drugs

On the part of participants negative from HIV, there is an assumption that ART messages of the media are not intended for them. They mentioned the fact that only those people who are living with the virus are the speakers on such programs to be one of the reasons for their assumption.

Related to this one female participant who is negative from the virus said the media should include says of negatives in programs about ART so that “we feel like it also is our program”.

4.4.3 Who speaks

In this study, it was also found out that the person speaking about ART on media has an effect on how different audiences interpret the messages.

The common point we can take from different participants of this study is that almost every participant needs the messages to be communicated by people from their domain (of their type). Participants from each group tended to trust messages told by those having similar experience. This is so because participants make meaning out of the programs that are connected with their own social experience. We can notice this from the following excerpts taken from the FGDs.

A participant living with the virus but not taking the medicine;

Why don't the media ask our people about what is happening here?

A participant who is taking the medicine;

I don't feel good about listening to songs on HIV/AIDS because I assume they are sung by HIV negative people. When they are played by people of our type (those living with HIV/AIDS), it gives me some comfort as I think that they share my feelings.

A participant who is negative from the virus and is an M.A student;

I think such messages should also include those negative so that we, negatives follow the programs.

Also, participants were found to be accepting messages from reference groups- groups that members use to define their identity than from media. The social Judgment Theory might apply here. Sherif in (Griffin 2006) claims "highly credible speaker can stretch the hearer's latitude of acceptance". He thus suggests changing attitude of reference groups for dramatic change of attitude on other audiences which also can be used while communicating radio/TV messages promoting ART.

4.4.4 Ways of presentation

The way ART programs are presented is also among the factors that shape participants' interpretation of the messages.

Some of them, particularly those who are newly infected with the virus and started the drug recently want such programs to only present success stories of ARV use. When they get used to things, they showed an interest in watching/listening to different issues concerning the therapy. They selectively watch to such programs which is hypothesized as one of the "mental mechanisms people use to ensure that their actions and attitudes are in harmony" (Fisting in Griffin 2006:229). Fisting termed this as "Selective exposure".

For participants who are negative from the virus, programs on ART should be presented in an entertaining way so that they follow them seriously. When such issues are presented in serious genres as they are now, it seems that they are intended for only those who have no other choice than listening/watching it. Thus, they recommended ART messages be included in series dramas and other entertainment programs, what is named as edutainment.

Language use by journalists and professionals is also pointed out by participants to be one factor affecting their interpretation. Sometimes journalists exclude themselves while presenting ART issues which lead participants to "avoid the messages at the very beginning". Moreover, some journalists and health professionals are said to use derogatory words like "*Yeedme marazemia*" to mean life prolonging, "*YeAIDS Teshekami*" to mean carriers of HIV and others. This, participants believe, has an influence on how they look at the messages and finally results in avoidance of such messages.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the findings of the research under three different themes, namely access to and use of the electronic media, interpretation of messages and factors affecting audiences' interpretation. The next chapter concludes the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This chapter sums up the key issues that arose out of the study. This study explores audiences' interpretation radio and TV messages promoting ART. It also examines how different audiences' use media messages of ART, their response to the messages and the factors affecting their interpretation.

Although this study is limited to a small group of audiences and its finding can't be generalized to the wider populations,, the findings are believed to offer some important insights in to the understanding of how audiences make meaning out of ART messages of media Accordingly, this study elicited important insights in to the understanding of audiences' media sense of ART.

In order to explore the interpretation of the messages constructed by the different audiences, I have used qualitative research methods; focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. These interviews have led me to understand the way audiences in different social settings make meaning out of media messages and how the meanings they made depended on different factors. The methods used have allowed me to also understand reasons why audiences produce dominant, negotiated or oppositional reading of the messages and why they finally tend to accept or reject the messages.

It was observed that participants' source of information regarding ART and their media use, the people they discuss with, after watching/listening to such messages, are all related to how they make meaning out of the messages.

Moreover, participants having different educational background, profession HIV status and gender were found to have similar understanding of ART messages. They, however, were observed to differ in their response to the messages. Some of them accept the messages while others reject the messages for different reasons.

The study also identified that members of the same social group reshape each other to have similar interpretation and response to ART messages of the media. At some point, it was also observed that there was incomplete understanding of the variety of messages incorporated under the umbrella of ART messages.

The study also discovered the main causes of this partial decoding and rejection of the messages. The distrust some participants have over media, the setting participants are in, the way the programs are presented and the influence of 'significant others' were identified as factors for the poor watching/listening habit of participants which in turn results in incomplete understanding of the whole messages and finally to their rejection of the messages.

Also, religious institutions' outlook on HIV in general and its medicine in particular was found to be one and the main factor contributing to how participants interpret the messages and to their rejection/acceptance of the messages.

Participants' involvement in the media was also one other factor affecting their interpretation. The feeling of being neglected by the media contributes to oppositional reading of the messages of ART and finally to reject the messages. Involvement in the media leads audiences to have dominant reading and be more accepting what is on the media about ART.

What is more, who is sending the messages has an influence on how audiences interpret the messages and finally adding to their rejection/acceptance of the messages. It was generally observed that participants tend to accept ART messages communicated by those belonging to their group.

Having seen that messages are not communicated in a simple way, producers of media messages should know individual audience's interpersonal environment to understand their exposure and reactions to the messages.

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APPENDIX I; GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

I Media use

1. Do you have any idea about ART?
2. Where do you get information about ART?
3. Do you follow to programs about ART on the media?
4. How do you watch TV/listen to the radio?
5. Do you discuss what you have seen/heard from media about ART with other people? With whom do you often discuss it?

6 Do you prefer radio/TV to follow about ART? Why?

II Interpretation of messages (after they have watched/listened to sample programs)

- 1 What are these programs about?
2. What do these messages and other programs like this mean to you?
3. On what issues do you think ART programs focus?
4. How do you rate programs on ART? (Good, bad, entertaining, educative)
5. What would you say to another person who hasn't listened/watched these programs?
6. Which issues about ART are most salient to you?
7. What do you like/dislike about programs on ART?
8. Which one of the programs you have followed about ART is more understandable to you?
9. To whom do you think such kinds of programs are well suited to?
10. What do you think about taking ARV?
11. Which one of the programs about ART you have followed motivates you to take ARV?

III Factors affecting interpretation

1. Does the number of women/men sharing their experiences in the programs you have followed affect your attitude towards the programs?
2. What kind of messages would you like to receive about ART (facts, people's experience, scary messages, educative, entertaining etc)
3. How do you evaluate language use by journalists and professionals in the programs?

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APPENDIX III; GUIDES FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Interview Guide for Religious leaders

- 1 Kindly give me your name
- 2 How does your church define HIV?
- 3 Do you know any thing about ART? What is it for you?
- 4 Do you follow to programs on radio/TV about ART?
- 5 What do you say about those programs?
- 6 What do you think is the intention of programs on ART?
- 7 What do you think about taking ARV?
- 8 Is there any time you remember that messages from radio/YV contradict with what you teach at your church?
- 9 If people ask you advice about taking ARV, what do you advice them?
10. What is the contribution of your church in communicating the correct message about ART?

Thank you very much for your time.

Interview Guide for Journalists

- 1 Kindly give me your name
- 2 Who is your target audience for the programs you produced on ART?
- 3 What do you wanted to communicate in this program?
4. What is the main concern of such programs?
- 5 Who do you often consult before producing programs on ART?
- 6 Do you get feedback from your audiences? What kind of comment? From whom? Those taking ARV or not?

Thank you very much for your time.

Interview Guide for Birhane Kelkay, Coordinator of National Positive women Network

- 1 Kindly give me your name and your responsibility at Positive Women Network
2. Where do you get information about ART?
3. How do follow media programs on ART?
4. Do you discuss ART programs with other people ? with whom do you often discuss with?
5. What do you think is the main concern of radio/TV programs on ART?
6. Do such kind of programs have special meaning to you?
7. How do you evaluate radio/TV programs on ART?
8. Is there any program on radio/TV which was extremely important to you? Can you mention?
9. Is there any time you remember that people came to you for clarification after they followed media programs on ART?
10. Is there any program on radio/ TV which was not important to you? Can you mention?
11. How do you evaluate language use by professionals and journalists presenting on ART programs?
12. For whom do you think radio/TV programs on ART are well suited/
13. What kind of programs should be done on ART?
14. Do you prefer radio or TV for programs on ART?

Thank you very much for your time.

APPENDIX IV; GUIDES FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS (AMHARIC VERSION)

KGÄT •f S] < ¾}²ÖË nK SÄp

1. e Uf T" ÄvLM ;
2. u""} u?/i` e+Á" f` Ñ<U >? >Ä y= U"É" < ;
3. eK ì[- >? >Ä y= SÉG'>f ¾T>Á" < l f 'Ñ` >K ;
4. ì[- >? >Ä y= SÉG'>f" u}SKY} uT>ÉÁ ¾T>c\ ýaÓ^V< }SMi} " < / >ÇUì" < Á" <nK< ;
5. eK ²=I ýaÓ^V< U" ÄLK< ;
6. ²=I ýaÓ^V< >LT†" < U"É" < ÄLK< ;
7. ì[- >? >Ä y= SÉG'>f" eKT>" eÆ c< U" ÄLK< ;
8. ì[- >? >Ä y= SÉG'>f" u}SKY} uT>ÉÁ ¾k[u< ýaÓ^V< Y""} u?/i` e+Á" SM °if Ò` }Ò} " < Á" <nK< ;
9. c< ì[- >? >Ä y= SÉG'>f uS" <cÉ ²<]Á Ui` u=Ä l f U" ÄSib†ªM ;
10. ¾""} u?/i` e+Á" ì[- >? >Ä y= SÉG'>f" u}SKY} fiiK-" <" SM °if KU °S" uTÉ[e uY<M Álf >e}ªî* U"É" < ;

e Kfww` >ScÓ"KG<::

KÖ²?ì™ < ¾}²ÖË nK SÄp

1. e Uf" T" MuM ;
2. ì[- >? >Ä y= SÉG'>f" uT>SKYf KT>c\ ýaÓ^V< >ÉT à%G< 'T" "†" < wL<G< e vL<G< ;
3. u²=I ýaÓ^V< " < e Ø U" SM °if KTe}LKõ ð KÖ<G< ;
4. ¾²=I ýaÓ^V< >LT U"É" < ; uU" LÄe Á}Y<^K< ;
5. ì[- >? >Ä y= SÉG'>f" u}SKY} ýaÓ^V< YT²ÖË<G< u òf upÉT>Á ¾U'ÒÓ\ T"" ' " < ;
6. u ýaÓ^V%G< ²<]Á >e}Á¾f >Ó~ <G< " <nL<G< ;

U" ›Ãƒ ›e }Á¾ƒ; Ÿ'T"; SÉG'>~" ŸT>" eÆ "Ãe ŸTÃ" eÆ;

Kƒww` ›ScÓ"KG<

Kw`G'@ ŸM"Ã (Ÿ?‹ ›Ã y= Ò` ¾T>•\ c?„‹ ØU[ƒ ›e }vv])
¾}²ÒË nK SĬĬp

1. e Uƒ"" u²=l u=a "" < e Ø ÁKƒ" ¾e^ L òƒ u=ÑMì<M~
2. ì[- ›?‹ ›Ã y= SÉG'>ƒ" u}SKŸ} S[Í ¾T>ÁÑ-<ƒ Ÿ¾ƒ '"" <;
3. ì[- ›?‹ ›Ã y= SÉG'>ƒ" u}SKŸ} ŸK?KA‹ c‹ Ò` Ã"ÁÁK<; Ÿ'T"
Ò` ;
4. ¾T>ÉÁ ýaÓ^V‹ "Èƒ '"" < ¾T>Ÿ}K<ƒ;
5. ì[- ›?‹ ›Ã y= SÉG'>ƒ" u}SKŸ} u_ÉÄ / u+y= ¾T>k`u<
ýaÓ^V‹ ›LT U"É"" < wK"" < Áe vK<;
6. "²=l ýaÓ^V‹ K""} ¾}K¾ ƒ`Ñ<U ›L†"" <;
7. eK ì[- ›?‹ ›Ã y= SÉG'>ƒ u_ÉÄ / u+y= ¾T>}LKñ ýaÓ^V‹
"Èƒ ÃÑSÓS<ªªªM;
8. ì[- ›?‹ ›Ã y= SÉG'>ƒ" u}SKŸ} u_ÉÄ / u+y= Ÿ}LKñ ýaÓ^V‹
"" < e Ø u×U ĩnT> ¾'u[" < ¾ƒ-"" < '"" <; KU";
9. c‹ ì[- ›?‹ ›Ã y= SÉG'>ƒ" u}SKŸ} uT>ÉÁ Ÿ}Ÿ}K< u%EL
Uĭ` KS¾p "" Å `e ¾Sĭ<uf ›Ò×T> 'u` ;
10. ì[- ›?‹ ›Ã y= SÉG'>„" u}SKŸ} uT>ÉÁ ýaÓ^V‹ c=k`u<
Ò²?ĭ™‹U J'< vKS<Á ¾T>ĭKS<ƒ" s"s "Èƒ ÃÑSÓS<ªªªM;
11. eK ì[- ›?‹ ›Ã y= ¾T>cƒ ýaÓ^V‹ ›ÉTà‹ / }SM"Ɖ‹ 'T" "†"" <
wK"" < Áe vK<;

12. eK ì[- ›?« ›Ã y= SÉG'>f U" ›Ã'f ýaÓ^V« u=c\ Ø\ '"" < wK"" <
Áe vK< ;

13. ì[- ›?« ›Ã y= SÉG'>f" u}SKŸ} ¾T>k`u< ýaÓ^V«" u_ÉÄ
"Ãe u+y= SŸ}M ÃS`×K< ;

APPENDIX V PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

I Focus Group Discussants

Group 1

- 1 Discussion held at Entoto, the compound of the church
- 2 A total of seven people, all men aged 28- 42 participated in the discussion
- 3 All of them are HIV positive but don't take ART
- 4 Date conducted May 15, 2007.

Group 2

- 1 Discussion held at Entoto, the compound of the church
- 2 A total of eight people, all women, aged 23- 45 participated in the discussion
- 3 Seven of them are HIV positive one of them has a medical certificate reporting her negative status of HIV after treated by holy water. They all don't take ART.
- 4 Date conducted May 16, 2007.

Group 3

- 1 Discussion held in the conference room of Tesfagoh PLWHA association.
- 2 A total of six individuals, living with HIV/AIDS and currently taking ARV participated.
- 3 All of them are men aged 24-41
- 4 Date conducted June 3, 2007.

Group 4

- 1 Discussion held in the conference room of Tesfagoh PLWHA association.
- 2 A total of six women living with the virus and taking ARV participated. They aged 23-38.
- 3 Date conducted June 10, 2007.

Group 5

- 1 Discussion held in one of the participants' house.
- 2 A total of six men who are HIV negative participated. They aged 26-29
- 3 Date conducted June 15, 2007.

Group 6

- 1 Discussion held in one of the participants' house.
- 2 A total of 7 women, HIV negative participated. They aged 22-30
- 3 Date conducted June 20, 2007.

II Interviewees

- 1 Three religious leaders from Orthodox, Protestant and Muslim religion
- 2 Birhane kelkay, Coordinator of Positive women Network
- 3 Six selected individuals from the Focus Group Discussions, Three are men and three women.

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 Eskedar Mulualem

Signature_____

Date of Submission July 13, 2007

Place of Submission Addis Ababa