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*Naming ceremony in traditional Oromo Society in case
of Boset Wereda*

By

Eshetu W/Mariam Awoke



*July 2009
Addis Ababa*

*Addis Ababa University
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of Boset Wereda.*

A Thesis Presented to the school of Graduate Studies

Addis Ababa University

*In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts in Guidance and counseling Psychology*

By

Eshetu W/Mariam Awoke



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*Naming ceremony in traditional Oromo Society: The
Case of Boset Woreda*

By

Eshetu W/Marian

Approval of Board of Examiners

Signature

Chairman Department of graduate studies

Advisor

Examiner Internal



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Abstract

This study attempts to describe the naming ceremony which is conducted in some localities of Oromia region in Boset Woreda namely Chore Kebele/ the place between Adama and Wellenchiti in the East , Adulala mariam Kebele/ the place between Adama and Sodere in the south, Kuriftu Kebele around Wonji and koka Kebele. It examines the contributions of naming ceremony to social interaction, to identify the role of female relatives in the naming ceremony and to discover if there is the same naming ceremony for female as well as male children. The data was collected from 4 localities using interview questions on 40 elderly people and focus group discussions held with 32 participants who are living in the stated Kebekes. Both qualitative and percentage data analysis methods were used in this study. The finding of the study indicates that, all types of naming Ceremony such as Gudifecha, Mogaassa, and Tuffta are practiced in Boset Woreda. The finding of the study also indicates the importance of these aspects of naming ceremonies in strengthening socialization among parents, relatives and Ethnic groups. Finally the paper gives an over all picture of the naming ceremony and suggests that further study could be done to find out the influence of names in individual's social interaction, self evaluation and cognitive development.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Among the defining moments in a person's life like conception, wedding graduation etc. giving name for the newborn child is equally important Tong (2003). To the investigator of this study names seem far more than arbitrary labels; they rather have tremendous meaning to the child's future being.

Most of the Babies born anywhere in the world go through a naming ceremony. The name their parents choose for them usually has some significance for the parents and for the children as well. Names and their meaning are particularly important as parents look for a name that will exemplify the type of personality they think the child will have.

Ross.P. (2003)

Each person has one main name, their given name. They are often given other personal "love names" by family members. Their second name is the main name of their father. A third name is usually the name of their paternal grandfather. Phares, Rotter and Chance (1972)

Max. (1978) pointed out that there is a vast difference between cultures in the way children are named. For example, In Western Africa countries like the Akan (Ah-khan') people live primarily in the region of West Afuraka/Afuraitkait (Africa) which includes the countries of Ghana, Ivory Coast, Togo, and Burkina Faso. After an Akan baby is born he or she is kept indoors for eight days. And it is, on the eighth day that the naming ceremony will be held. On the other hand in one of Hamar ethnic group which is found in SNNPR a new born child is named three months after birth at a coffee ceremony. In the

same region in the Bana ethnic group a child is named on the third day of delivery. In this naming ceremony the baby is sprinkled with water and a plant locally called gale, then if the child is a boy the female relatives of his father or if the child is female the male relatives of her father take the child in and out of the house four times and hand over to its mother, the child is named after its relatives. On the other hand for Borena boys in one of the Oromia region a name is given with a great ceremony. Legesse (1973) described that each father approaches the leader and asks him to name his son. The name which is selected by the parents is blessed before it is assigned to the child. The name which is given in this way is often a symbol of lineage and the son is expected to up-hold it.

Usually family names are often considered to be important in some cultures. For example in USA, they give great consideration for family names. In others, the child receives his/her name based on events that may have taken place during the day of the birth in this case the practice of Gumiz nationalities in western Ethiopia could be a best example.

Still further traditionally, the father picks Oromo children's names but the mother has great influence in naming the daughter of the family. It must also be said that Oromo names have meanings as if to convey wishes of success, wisdom, and prosperity through generations. For instance, the most popular Oromo names are Ibsaa for males and Ibsituu for females, both meaning "light". Gemechu (2000)

Giving a name to a child is the most important event in a child's life because this is the name and his identity the child will have to live with. Regarding this Hurlock (1976) described that a person is his only symbol of self, which is important.

Hurlock (1976) further contented that, names always have been used as a symbol to identify and to indicate status in a group, family connection, religious affiliation, occupation and other personal details. This is true of primitive as well as civilized people.

According to Hurlock (1976), names have different categories. These are:

1. Most used names -widely used names in any specific culture.
2. Uncommon names- Mostly unfamiliar names in any specific culture.
3. Kinship names-indicate ones status in the family and his/her relationship to other family members. Symbolize warm relationship (son, brother, mother ...)
4. Legal names --which can't be changed without legal procedure/action
5. Title-like Mr. to, w/o...

Names are part of a person. Without a name, we cannot imagine of a person. Regarding this as cited by Hurlock (1976) Murphy reported that one of the most important parts of a person is his name.

The idea that names can affect the way people behave and how they feel about themselves caught the attentions of scientific researchers. Concerning this Ross (2003), argued that, during the last half a century, tentatively at first, later with a greater sense of the importance of their work, psychologists and others who study human behavior have explored the feeling that names influence their bearers. Psychologists and sociologists have been trying to figure out the significance behind names and personality for decades. There are indications based in psychology that way we act or behave a certain way because of what we learn and perceive. If this is true, there is a possibility that if one reads or hear what his name mean and what kind of personality goes along with it, chances are there that he could allow his name to affect his personality. In another study

published in the psychological journal by Robert Needleman, ([http: www. names and personality.com/](http://www.namesandpersonality.com/)), sixth-graders' self-concept--how effective, attractive, and valued they felt--was related to the desirability of their first names. Moreover, children with desirable first names scored higher on a standardized test of academic achievement. One possible interpretation is that teachers expect children with more popular names to do better and so, over time, those positive expectations translate into actual higher levels of achievement.

According to Byrene & Hamilton (1966) a person's name has an impact on the process of self-concept this is because the name helps determine the message other people send to the child. Byrene & Hamilton (1966) added that it has been well established through research that certain names are generally considered desirable in some culture and have positive meanings associated with them,. For example in our country especially in Amhara region the name Tewdros, in Tigray region the name Allula have a positive association specifically to the Tigians to most Ethiopians at large this is because the individuals who run by these names were a symbol of gallant people. Ghelawdewos (2006) the legend Allula Abanega, who was a vanguard fighter during Ethio-Italian war in January 1887, at the famous battle of Dogali is a symbol of freedom. It is also well established that other names are looked upon as being undesirable and carry negative association. In this, regard on the international arena the name Adolph Hitler could be the best example.

Depending on the type of names one has, it could either hamper or promote our social interaction. Regarding this Hurlock (1976) stated that name could be an asset or a barrier for socialization. In this, case the study done in 1954, looked at 1,682 case histories of children treated in a mental health clinic in New Jersey has found out that, boys with unusual names (names that only occurred once or twice among the group of children) were more likely to have moderate or severe emotional disturbance, compared with boys with more common names. Most of the time these messages are subtle, but sometimes they take the form of jokes, teasing, and even ridicule, specially within the child's peer group. At best joking and teasing can make children self-conscious about their names and reluctant to have contact with other children out of fear of being ridiculed. At worst, especially when insensitive adults think the joke and nicknames are funny and actually use them to, it can undermine what might otherwise be healthy personality.

Hurlock (1976) reported that the famous researcher Murphy's psychiatric case histories provide a good example of this in action. Murphy wrote of a young college man whose chief complaint at the beginning of psychoanalysis was that his excessive underarm perspiration, and the accompanying odor, was responsible for his inability to make friends. The man's name happened to be Stankey, and in the course of analysis, he revealed that in elementary school the other students gave him the nickname "stinky." For this, he reacted by withdrawing from the group and become aloof. He also let it be known during treatment that his mother belittled the family name and that both his parents were compulsive about odor of any kind. At first the young man denied any problem associated with his name, later he came to realize that he had unconsciously

blamed his father for both his name and his unpleasant odor. Eventually, he learned that the real difficulty lay in his concept of self. In effect, the boy has come to see himself as "Stinky." And this in turn, made him act the way he thought a stinky person was supposed to act. Growing with an odd name leads to experience of being teased. Therefore, it is not advisable to underestimate the influence that names have. Most of the time names are detested because of their interpretation. Hurlock (1976) contended that names are, more often disliked for their association than for the unpleasantness of their sounds. In this case, Adolph Hitler in Germany since world war the II could be an example. As Long (2003) pointed out that studies of likes and dislikes revealed those common names are preferred. Where as, different/uncommon names make the bearers both conspicuous and inferior.

Still in other research done in idea of psychiatric disturbance resulting from odd names goes back at least to Kraepelin (1909), but it has also been investigated with Harvard undergraduates, who are more likely to flunk out with rare names (Savage & Wells), and with psychiatric samples, where those with rare names show more severe emotional disturbance (Ellis & Beechely, 1954). Lacking experimental control over the names of their subjects, these studies do not demonstrate that names are casual, rather than just being markers of various parental characteristics.

There are studies also that try to examine name rarity more directly, and they suggest that rare names, and rare spellings, get lower rating from judges (Mehrabian & Piercy, 1993), and, when such names are randomly assigned to students essay, they get lower grades than more common names (Harari & McDavid, 1973)

As clearly stated in the World book of Encyclopedia volume 14 almost all of names have meanings .Example names taken from the Bible, John means gift of God, Michael means whom is like God, Samuel means God has heard, etc. Like wise in our country Ethiopia many names have traditional, religious, or tribal meanings.

Although names are given with clear meanings like Nesanet meaning “Freedom” Fikre meaning my “love”, Nigussie meaning “my king” etc. In some cases parents may assign names to their children arbitrarily without bothering for their meanings rather they try to give the name of a prominent or popular person mostly a national hero and sometimes of internationally distinguished person. For example according to the report of BBC News of Nov.2008 in Kenya these days the name Obama is given to many of new born boys starting the victory of the first black American President of USA.

Generally in giving names it is not the source that matters but it is the denotative and connotative meaning that counts. Therefore, before we assign this or that name to our children we have to see what the impact will be on the behavior of the bearers. Regarding this Allen (1941) stated that the choice of a name to be bestowed upon a child matter of no little moment to him in his relation with other individuals for unfortunate selection may doom him recurring embarrassment or even unhappiness.

1.2 Statement of the problem

At the present time there is little research done concerning naming ceremony. Hence this study is done to fill the gap in this regard.

Most of the time if not always we address people by their names. Especially in Ethiopia if we address a person as “Ante” or “Anchi” meaning you he/she gets easily disappointed. Therefore, we are name conscious, that is why there are many maxims that are

associated with names, such as “sim kemeqabir belay yiwla”, meaning a name is hoisted on once monument ” “sime tefa”, meaning my name is spoiled etc.

The above examples indicate that the Ethiopian people give great value/concern to names. In this regards there are various nations and nationalities and ethnic groups in Ethiopia that have naming ceremony to assign personal names to their children.

We this notion in mind to examine the contribution of naming ceremony to social interaction and to find out the role relatives of the child in this event, the student researcher forwards the following research questions.

1. How do parents assign names to children in traditional Oromo society?
2. When do parents assign names to children in traditional Oromo society?
3. Who have the significant role in the naming ceremony in traditional Oromo society?
4. Is there the same naming ceremony for female as well as male children in traditional Oromo society?

1.3 Objective of the study

The major objective of this study is to identify the naming ceremony in traditional Oromo society in Oromia Region in Boset Wereda., the specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Find out the contribution of naming ceremony to social interaction among families or relatives.
2. Identify the roles of female and male relatives of the child in the naming ceremony.
3. Discover if there is the same naming ceremony for female as well as male children.

1.4 Significance of the study

The findings of this study may create an opportunity for parents and relatives, to be aware how naming ceremony is conducted and contributes to the social interaction and give an insight how they should be concerned in giving and assigning names. It also helps to keep cultural heritage. Most importantly this study increases the limited number of literature available on the present topic and serves a stepping stone for further research in the study area.

1.5 Delimitation of the study

To do the study in depth the study is delimited to some selected localities of Oromia Region in the vicinity of Adama city. Therefore, the study was done in only four rural Kebeles. These are Chore/ the place between Adama and Wellenchiti at the East, Adulala mariam/ between Adama and Sodere at the South, Kuriftu around Wonji and koka. These study sites are chosen for the following reasons.

In these areas the major habitants are Oromo people, second for their accessibility and proximity, since they are a few Kilometers away from Adama.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The researcher strongly admits that inclusion of large population size could have a great value, so as to get more credible information. However, because of financial and time constraints it was not possible to conduct the study in many Woredas of the Eastern Shoa zone so that there could be adequate representative for the whole region. Not only that, the limited source material in the subject has made it difficult to enrich the literature review in the study area.

1.7 Operational definition of terms or concepts

Below are some terms which are used in this study. It is believed that explaining the meaning of some culture related terms are very essential for a better understanding of different issues raised in the study.

Aba wera – Male head of household in oromiffa

Areki- Home distilled alcoholic brew

Ayyaana- spirit in Oromiffa

Celebrant- The person that is assigned to guide and coordinate the naming ceremony.

Evil Eyed- supposed harmful person that hurt/damage specially, children.

Gabi-Traditional cotton cloth

Gada-Oromo traditional Administrative institution

Naming ceremony -the activities which are done during assigning personal names to children.

Galma –Ritual house for conducting different ceremonies in oromiffa

Gudifecha-Adoption of child in oromiffa

Gumi Gayo-popular assembly in oromiffa

Guyyaa.day in oromiffa

Hamachaisa-Naming and blessing of a new born child by qallu/qalitti in oromiffa

Mogaassa- Adoption of elder children in traditional Oromo culture in oromiffa

Odd names-Those names that are strange in that specific community.

Qallu –a person who is believed that he has a spirit upon him in Oromiffa

Qaliti- a person who is believed that she has a spirit upon her in Oromiffa

Paternal line –ancestors of ones father

Rare names- Those names that are not commonly used in that specific community.

Social interaction –friendship and occasional contacts among and between people and different ethnic groups

Shenecha-the fives (derived from Shni meaning number five) in oromiffa

Traditional society –Those communities which are not highly intermixed with other ethnic group.

Unusual name-names that occur rarely in that specific community.

Waqa-God in oromiffa

Chapter two

Review of related literature

2.1.1 The essence of Naming Ceremony

Since the family is a recognized cornerstone of all society, it serves as a repository for value orientation that guides human behavior, as a transactional milieu for life span socialization, and as a catalyst for cultural revitalization that is why it is the main agent to conduct and organize different household ceremonies. Out of the many different houses hold ceremonies like birth day naming ceremony is one. As cited by Hub (2007) McCrae and Costa (2003).

When families are celebrating the birth of a new baby, they often feel the need to mark the occasion with a gathering of family and close friends. One way that this can be done is by holding a Naming Ceremony in the Oromia Region Boset Woreda.

According Ahluwalia (2006) Baby naming ceremonies, in one form or another, have a history practically as old as man. What is new are the original ideas new parents keep coming up with for the traditional baby naming ceremony.

Sorbello (2008) supposes that a naming ceremony is a very special way of celebrating the birth of a child and welcoming the new arrival into the family and the wider community. It is also an opportunity to declare, before family and friends, and a promise to be as good a parent as one can and for adult friends or relatives to confirm their special relationship with ones child. It is a unique occasion for everyone to feel involved as they pledge their

love and support for the child's future development. Sorbello (2008) further says that Naming ceremonies can also be used as a celebration of adoption or to welcome step-children into an extended family unit. Children of any age may have a naming ceremony - you may wish to include older children as well as your new child. Baby Naming ceremonies have no legal requirements and parents can compile a ceremony as personalized and unique as they choose. As they are not legally binding and do not have any legal status, they can be presented with a record of the ceremony as a symbol of the day.

The timing of this ritual varies; some Tribes perform the ceremony shortly after birth; other Tribes perform the ritual when the child is several years old. In either case, this ritual is illustrative of formal kinship obligation.

2.1.2 Common features of naming ceremony

According to Hub (2007) these are the common features of naming ceremonies:

Welcome the child into the community

The birth of a child is a proud moment for the mother and father. The extended family, the larger community of friends and neighbors and the congregation that the parents worship with all share the joy at the news. The brisk, christening, baptism or naming ceremony of each faith all serve the purpose of welcoming the new member of the community. In part it is an introduction, but a bit of the ceremony stems from the concept that each adult present at the ceremony is in part responsible for the care of the child. This is the reason that gifts are given at these ceremonies.

Announce the names that have been chosen

Choosing the name of the new baby is not a simple task. In some cultures the name of the parent or a respected friend or relative is given to the child. Other cultures give the name of a deceased relative to honor the memory of the ancestors. In other cultures, the religious elders are consulted to provide a name that will bring good fortune to the child. No matter what method is used, the choice of the given name is important and the naming ceremony serves to identify this new baby as someone who exists as a unique individual - with a name that has meaning. Often, the meaning of the name is explained as part of the ceremony.

Make promises of commitment to the child

Naming ceremonies involve the important people in the child's life - family and special friends. Parents have the opportunity to ask other adults to play a supportive role to their child through to adult life (grandparents, godparents, mentors or supporters). The adults who are chosen to attend naming celebrations are usually close to the parents. They are either related by birth or have become close through friendship or shared beliefs. This is the core of the community that the new baby belongs to. These are the adults who will share and shape the future of the child. Being asked to participate in these ceremonies is an honor, but also a commitment.

Choose other adults to provide for the child

In most naming ceremonies, a godparent or godparents are chosen. Although all of the adults are committed to cherish and care for the new baby, the role of godparent is more serious. They promise that they will make sure that the child is taken care of and raised in the faith if for some reason the parents are not able to do this. Being a godparent is not something that should be entered into lightly.

2.1.3 The need for naming ceremony naming

Make promises of commitment to the child

Ahluwalia (2006) reported that the children that are being born at the moment are the pioneers of the next step in human evolution. They are very different to our generations and have specific requirements in order to fulfill their purpose here. We feel that they are highly evolved spiritual beings, and therefore need to be grounded in the physical by these types of ceremonies; also they need to feel safe, honored and respected by their family and community. They have a huge amount of information, power and wisdom to offer humanity and it is in our best interests to honor their requirements and provide them with what they need in order to do their work. He further argued that the Naming Ceremony is a beautiful, meaningful experience and an awesome opportunity for creativity, unity and a celebration of the miracle of life! It is an extremely sacred ceremony and therefore whatever aspects, meanings, etc. are brought in is held in great sacredness.

Moreover according to Hub (2007) Naming Ceremony provides a dignified and meaningful opportunity to:

- Welcome the child into the family and wider community.
- Announce the names that have been chosen and perhaps give the reasons for those choices.
- Make promises of commitment to nurture and support the child.
- Choose other adults prepared to promise a special supportive relationship to the child.
- To introduce the child to family and social group in a meaningful way
- The ceremony allows the parents to publicly affirm their love and commitment to their child

- These ceremonies give the child a sense of safety and belonging, honor and respect. The most important aspects of the ceremony are love, intention, meaning and sacredness.

Therefore, naming ceremony has the above advantages.

2.1.4 Organization of naming ceremony

In order to make the naming ceremony more meaningful and effective Sorbello (2008) recommends the following organizing check list.

Choose date and time for the ceremony , Decide on venue Confirm celebrant, Meet with celebrant to ensure you feel comfortable, Collate guest list, Send invitations (four weeks prior is a good guide), Decide what the child will be wearing Decide on food and drink requirements, Ask for volunteers to help on the day And Book a photographer or nominate a friend to take photos

2.2 Naming ceremony

2.2.1 Some selected social practices

In Oromo culture there are different social practices through out the region. Out of which we will examine only some of these rituals which have close relation with names.

a. Gudifecha /Adoption

‘Adoption is the privilege of parents upon the child and the advantage of having parents for the parentless’. Encyclopedia Britannica (1991.105) In Ethiopia among the Oromo the term adoption is synonymous with Gudifecha .Gemechu (2000)

Adoption is a common practice and widely recognized and accepted among Oromo communities for centuries. Adoption is not limited only to their own ethnic group. The Oromos also adopts children regardless of clan, religion and ethnicity with some limitations .As cited by Bayeh (2006) Bekele (1998) and Ayalew (2002) stated that a child who belongs to a family suspected of leprosy or “Buda” meaning evil-eyed person was ineligible for Gudifecha. There is also an age limit for adopting children. In this case the age limit is 2-12 months. Although, they adopt children from both sexes, they prefer male child to a female this is due to the fact that they attach great value and respect to male children. Not only that, there is also a strong belief that, a boy is more responsible than, a girl to support his family and keep parental lines on going.

On the other hand there are different reasons for adopting children like:

- When parents don't have a male child. In this case they adopt only a male child
- When a family has no child due to sterility or any other case. In this case they adopt male/female or both.
- When there are orphans in that area or when another family fails to fulfill the need of the child due to economic constraints/poverty

The child which has been adopted to a new family for one of the above cases will be called after the name of his foster family head.

b. Hamachaissa

One way of naming ceremony is Hamachaissa. It is the formal procedure of blessing and naming of a new born child by the qaluu/qaliti (a person who is believed that she/he has a spirit upon her/him that can harm or do good things to people). This ceremony could be done any time when the child is 2-12 months old. It is a common ritual ceremony developed and practiced among the Oromo community who believe in qaluu/qaliti. The believers of qaluu/qaliti parents are supposed to take their new born child to Ayyaana before christening a child. Along with the child they also take diffo dabbo/home made bread and Araki or any other gift for qaluu/qaliti.

2.2.2 Naming Ceremony in Oromia region

According to Bayeh (2006) Naming is a process of engaging a child to a predetermined social organization, into which it is born human, and through which it grows and becomes someone with some personal name attached to it. This can take the form of a ritual that could be simple or complex. This process is one of identity formation in which the child becomes gradually included into the society by acquiring its unique sociolinguistic and cultural features. The identity is also anchored to the specific locale of the society into which the child is born, and a part of him, the placenta, is buried. With the label he is socialized and with the placenta, he is grounded or anchored

Bayeh (2006) further stated that individual names are not only personal as the adjective personal may suggest, they are also social, embodying, in a very transparent manner, the features of the society into which the namee is born and through which he is linked. Such names are, thus, more than arbitrary labels. In order for a person to have a name that is intrinsically his, first the angels have to be solicited or their proxies consulted. This has to be done in a manner characteristic of a ritual, in which, all those concerned such as kin and kith are involved, and thus making the naming process a social affair and not an individual exercise.

Gemechu (2000) stated that there is an elaborate ritual of naming called *gubbissa* among the Borana Oromo of southern Ethiopia. The practice is also common among other groups in the region. As cited by Bayeh (2006), Daniel Deressa, 2000, for Shewa Oromo; Ibrahim Said, (2000), for (Wallaga Oromo) or in the country at large, with degrees of variation in their symbolic power and practice. In Borana society, which is predominantly pastoral, a name is given to a child any time before he is two. The time of naming is during the rainy season of April - October, when there is plenty of pasture for the herd and a lot of milk and butter for the people.

2.2.3 Meaning and sources of names

In Oromo culture, like in others the names given to children have meanings and are also used as an outlet of different emotions of the name givers. Bayeh (2006) stated that in the individual names feelings like aggression, desperation, aspiration etc are expressed.

For example here under these are the different names that are assigned during expression of: aggression, desperation, aspiration, satisfaction, compensation, disposition, eventual and identification.

2.2.3.1 Expression of Aggression

There are forms that are used as personal names with the purposeful intent of highlighting sour relations between individuals and /or groups in a society irrespective of the levels of hierarchy in the society in which the individuals or groups form such relations. There are names that allude to such relations including those that lead to aggressive behaviors and hostile attitude, and which cause uneasiness or even fear in the minds of people who feel threatened. The names may suggest the use of force and terror as a means of asserting power among groups with conflicting interests that are likely to lead to disengagement or exclusion. These names are the following:

Oromo	English
Bul_aa	buy them
Adabaa	punish him

Apparently all such names are used for males only, as the values they embody are believed to be characteristic of the men folk if not totally unbecoming for women. The names serve as evocative terms addressed to a target group or individual real or imagined with which relations have gone sour. They are emotive forms giving one a high sense of power and charisma when the victor and the lack of it to the victim, as a result of, for example, confrontation. They are meant to cause fear among the enemy, and propagate power among allies and friends so that their positions and associated roles remain secure. If and when relations turn amicable with one of the parties disengaged or relinquished, a

different set of names is used to show this positive turn of events. This includes forms like *irk'ihun* 'let there be peace' and *selamu* 'the peaceful', expressing quite strongly the reduced distance and tension and the induced intimacy between the parties. In this sense, names can be taken as expressions of relations more than the identification of individuals anchored to the parties forming the basis for the relations to be formed and maintained.

2.2.3.2 Expression of Desperation

In a country where institutional medical services are very recent phenomena and a luxury to the rural poor (Bayeh, 1998), the desire for salvation from the scourge of epidemics of every type is also powerfully reflected through naming. As stated above, with regard to serial child death, disguising a child by the use of bad names or ugly looks is not always an effective strategy, for many a child perishes even when they are made to be strongly repulsive to the palate of an evil spirit. In such cases, as when a rampant epidemic takes its toll in tens and hundreds, the state of desperation and the degree of uncertainty about the future is symbolically expressed in circumstantial personal names like the following:

Oromo	English
Guddata '	If he could grow for me''
Ta'a '	If he could be(come) mine'
Nafgadde '	If He could save him for me'

These forms are conditional; they describe a condition, which is almost counter-factual. Their direct reference is to a helpless child born into a society besieged by a hostile environment that reduces people to utter desperation and hopelessness. The names stand in direct opposition to those names or expressions of aggression, which as we have seen above, are full of force and hence are intimidating. These are words that cry for help. Both types of expression refer to the troubled social and natural environment in which the people live.

2.2.3.3 Expression of Aspiration

As stated above, in a rigidly stratified social organization where power is asymmetrically shared, it is often the rule and not the exception that one looks upwards and aspires for a power position somewhere close to the top, no matter how distant, unreachable or risky it may seem. The aspired position could be for the namer himself or for the child he is naming. And consistent with the Amharic saying, *cher tamañ cher tagañ* meaning 'wish for something good in order to achieve good' or simply 'be optimistic', such aspirations are expressed through names that refer to titles bestowed to a few members of the top echelon of the society or the features characterizing their life.

Oromo	English
Li'ul	'Prince'
Mesfin	'Duke'
Motii	'My king'
Gifti	'Queen'

When one names his child Li'ul, he is using the term as an expression of his wish that the child is figuratively, a prince or literally becomes one. It is a wish for something beyond one's reach, particularly for one positioned at the bottom end of the social hierarchy. Moving up the hierarchy would be too risky an enterprise, in the sense of Brown and Levinson (1978:74) for it would mean sharing power through negotiation or usurping it through aggression. In its weak sense, the name could be a reminder of yet another Amharic saying, *hod siyawk' doro mata* literally 'when the stomach, that is the self, knows... chicken at night, that is for dinner' or simply self deception in the sense that one is wishing for something, which he knows only too well, is too good to be achieved. But one thing is clear and that is that the names are reflective of a type of social organization

and power relations therein, where distance is so visible that one is forced to use such wishful names (see also Mashiri, 1999). If and when such wishes come true and one gets to the very top through for example, negotiation, one receives a name, which is suggestive of some divine power involved in the success of the enterprise. Names like Haile Selassie, 'power of the trinity' conferred upon Teferi on his ascendancy to political power, marking the mobility of the man from one status to another, from a lower to a higher rank, and which is capped with a name more befitting to the new power position he has assumed. In such events of assuming or usurping power, the victor will often cease to use his original name in favor of a name more resounding than the former and hence more befitting to his new position. Such a name also bears reference to some divine power believed to have rested on the individual.

2.2.3.4 Expression of Satisfaction

Rarely though it may be, there are times when dreams come true and aspirations are fulfilled. Victims of aggression may turn into victors and desperation into aspirations and accomplishments. Such fortunate turns of events get expressed with terms such as the following,

used as names of persons whose births have coincided with and, hence, witnessed, the development of such momentous occasions.

Oromo	English
Gammada	I am pleased'
Guttata	'It is fulfilled for me'
Hatau/tolaa	'It happened for me'
Hawwanii	'As I wished for you' (fem.)

If, on the other hand, dreams can remain dreams, or even worse turn into nightmares, with the unwanted becoming apparent, such as when one goes for a boy but gets a girl, or aspirations for the next higher rank are not achieved, or still worse, one is moved down a rank for being too ambitious. Such events of misfortune are expressed with names of acquiescence such as the following:

Oromo	English
Hatatu/ Tatu	'Let it be so'
Akkafeete/Yofeete	'As he wishes

Names like Hatatu meaning 'as he wishes' express a high level of frustration that the individual leaves everything to its fate. It appears that both success and failure can occur in the actualisation of one's self-fulfilment: there is very little in the making of personal enterprise and responsibility for whatever may have happened. There is always some power to which everything is relegated as in the case of a child's wellbeing being given to the custody of a guardian angel: one is only a passive on-looker rather than an active participant in things that happen. There is always an external catalyst sought for the self to be or for something, good or bad to happen for it.

2.2.3.5 Expression of Compensation

In the course of contact and interaction between individuals or groups, there are times of conflict and reconciliation. The wronged may feel that justice has been done for the loss he may have suffered or the hard times he may have been subjected to and such moments of joy are expressed in personal names such as the following.

Oromo	English
Garuumma	'The gracious'
Beekaa	'His wisdom/miracle'
Tolasaa	'His mercy'
Iddosaa	'The substitute'

The reference here is to God or any other deity, depends on the belief system of the namer. He may have been suffering alone or working against the main interest of the group, but then all his agonies have been turned into pleasure. He may have been saddened by the loss of his only child, which he attributes to 'the power' and then receives a new baby as a substitute, whom he has to give a name like Mitiku 'the substitute'. In the same way, one who has suffered from ill health or poverty may suddenly gain health and wealth and become successful in life, which he again attributes to the same power, and expresses his indebtedness to him by using any of the above forms.

2.2.3.6 Expression of Disposition

Sometimes attention may focus on the child to be named more so than on its context of birth. The particular point of focus may be its natural dispositions like physical appearance and or its instinctive actions after birth, on the basis of which, attitudes are formed, and subjective statements of opinion are expressed. Such subjective expressions become the basis for the naming of the child. The following are examples of such names:

Oromo	English
Garumma	'You are fine/good' mas.
Baredduu	'He looked attractive'

All these are examples of judgmental expressions on the aesthetic value and the physical attributes of the child. They can be taken as self-oriented references since their focus is on the child more so than on the context. Furthermore, all, but the last, are sentential with the forms occurring as complements of a second person subject, which refers to the child as possessing the features of value. The pronouncement of the name by the namer, thus, goes like, 'I believe 'you are X" (X = gold, beauty etc.). There are other forms, which are lexical and showing reference to the size or behavior of the child, at times ironically, such as when his size is too small. Such names include Awraris 'the rhino' and Anbessa 'the lion' used as direct metaphors for size and courage respectively. Others are taken from fruits (though not roots) such as *birtukan* 'orange' and *lomi* 'lemon', used specifically for females since they are suggestive of the nice odor and taste that is often associated with them.

2.2.3.7 Expression of the birth Event

There are terms that have a little wider scope than those above which, as we have seen, focus on the child as a whole or on some of his attributes. The terms here relate to conditions surrounding the birth of a child, which could be long or short, painful or painless, predate or postdate, clinical or natural etc. They can be referred to as event oriented expressions, since the concern is the manner or circumstance surrounding the birth event. Examples are the following:

Oromo	English
Turee	'It is late'
Ulfaataa	' It is tough'

As stated above, these are terms that make some reference to the condition of birth, whereas others relate to the spatio-temporal location of the birth event itself.

In a country where maternity care and clinical follow up are nearly non-existent, child birth can take place any time and anywhere in which case names like the following are used:

Oromo	English
Ketema (loan)	'Town'
Godana	'Road/highway'
Obboru --	'Dawn'
Meskerem (loan) --	'September'

Note that not all temporal nouns are used as names: it is only those that mark the beginning of some period, so suggesting hope and new beginnings. Meskerem is the name of the first month of the year, which marks the beginning of spring, a period of flowers and early green harvest. It is a name for the female folk, as flowers are associated with beauty and hence to women.

2.2.3.8 Expression of Identification

The forms presented so far are believed to be reflective of the circumstances surrounding the birth and/or the naming event of a child. They are, therefore, circumstantial in their focus. Whereas this seems to be the case in general, there are particular instances where names fail to reflect their most immediate contexts. This can happen when a child is given a name, that is or was already in use by someone else. Such names may suggest a very high position in the sociopolitical hierarchy to which the community belongs. Such names include Menelik, Yohannes, Tewodros, Haile Selassie, which have no immediate relation with the context of birth or the naming event of ordinary people. Rather, such names are designations of power achieved through political ascendancy and are as such socially recognized as powerful names. The bearers are likely to be highly emulated as idols or role models. Their etymological context may take us back to biblical and/or historical times. Such names can be given later in life, for example when people take up positions of power. They will replace the personal names that they were given at birth. For

example, Emperor Tewodros had a given name Kasa, which he used until he became king. Teferi was the given personal name of Haile Selassie, which he used until he was crowned. One could say that the bearers have undergone a transformation or rebirth of a political nature by being renamed in recognition of their success and new position. The choice of such names by ordinary people as personal names comes from the desire to identify with such powerful individuals. Also, such names are believed to be bestowed upon people of divine elect. It is worth noting here the fact that other monarchs earlier on in the political history of the country had also used such names. For example, Yohanes and Menelik were given four and two times respectively, to prominent leaders. It would appear that this was to identify with the person, though some would argue that it was due to births coinciding or linking with the reign of a particular king. Evidence for this comes from the pattern of naming in Gambella among the Anywa and Nuer, in which one finds generations of names following the names of political personalities of the time. In the reign of the Emperor, there were many named after Haile Selassie and in that of the Derg, still more had the name Mengistu. One could, perhaps, include such names as ‘eventual’ since they link the birth of a child to a period of political significance.

2.2.3.9 Expression of Reassurance

For the majority of the Ethiopian peoples, children are considered as financial assets or insurance against being left alone and unsupported in old age. There are, thus, names that directly reflect this expectation.

Oromo	English
Boddanee	'Fruit for old age'
Gashaw (Ioan)	'Shield'
Galgaloo	'For night' (old age)
Irkoo	'My support'
Gaddisaa	'Be umbrella' (shelter)

All such names refer to the support that one wishes to receive during old age, when one is weak and no longer self-supporting. At this time life can depend entirely on others.

However, it is not only parents that need such support; it is also the young ones who need love, care and attention from their older siblings. Such names as Mekuriya, 'source of pride', reflect such relations of dependency between children and parents on the one hand, and between older and younger siblings on the other. In many areas of Amhara society where age difference is recognized with some degree of respect, the young are usually expected to address their older counterpart with special forms of address that show both the age difference and the dependency relation that binds them. Such names used by the younger sibling are not made public, as they are restricted to private use.. Because of such relations of dependency between the young and the old, an older person may have a number of 'reassurance names' from younger members of the family.

Chapter Three Method

3.1 Research design

This study aimed at identifying the naming ceremony in traditional Oromo society in Oromia Region. In this study descriptive survey method was employed: This method was chosen because, it is most used in social science; it is also fit to get details of data from many respondents and is appropriate to assess the status of phenomena.

Not only that, it as well would help to reveal the naming ceremony as it happens.

3.2 description of the study area

According to the 2001 annual plan of Boset Woreda, there are 180 woredas in the Oromia Region of Ethiopia. Boset Woreda is one of them in the Misraq Shewa Zone located in the Great Rift Valley, Boset is bordered on the south by the Arsi Zone, on the west by the Awash River which separates it from Adama, on the north by the Afar Region, and on the east by Fentale. The administrative center of the woreda is Welenchiti; other towns in Boset include Bofe, Bole and Doni.

This woreda is predominantly level land with undulating features; almost 90% is less than 1500 meters above sea level; Boset Guddo is the highest point. Rivers include the Tebo. A survey of the land in this woreda shows that 26.2% is arable or cultivable, 30% pasture, 15.8% forest, and the remaining 28% is considered barren, degraded or otherwise unusable. The Nura Era and Tibila State Farms are major agricultural centers. Fruits and vegetables are important cash crops.

Industry: in the Woreda there are 19 small scale industries that employed 28 people, as well as 576 legally registered business enterprises which include 69 wholesalers, 318 retailers and 189 service providers of differing types. There were 31 Farmers Associations with 6208 members and 7 Farmers Service Cooperatives with the same number of members. Boset has 97 kilometers of dry-weather and 103 of all-weather road, for an average of road density of 136.8 kilometers per 1000 square kilometers. About 87% of the urban, 36% of the rural and 45% of the total population have access to drinking water.

Demographics

Based on figures published by the Central Statistical Agency in 2005, this woreda has an estimated total population of 158,253, of whom 76,410 are men and 81,843 are women; 33,348 or 21.07% of its population are urban dwellers, which is less than the Zone average of 32.1%. With an estimated area of 1,461.88 square kilometers, Boset has an estimated population density of 108.3 people per square kilometer, which is less than the Zone average of 181.7.

The 1994 national census reported a total population for this woreda of 109,578, of whom 56,743 were men and 52,835 women; 18,641 or 17.01% of its population were urban dwellers at the time. The four largest ethnic groups reported in Boset were the Oromo (73.68%), the Amhara (20.74%), the Hadiya (1.75%), and the Welayta (0.95%); all other ethnic groups made up 2.88% of the population. Oromiffa was spoken as a first language by 71.58%, 25.63% spoke Amharic, and 1.02% spoke Hadiya; the remaining 1.77% spoke all other primary languages reported. The majority of the inhabitants were

Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, with 78.98% of the population reporting they practiced that belief, while 14.42% of the population said they were Moslem, 5.04% practiced traditional beliefs, and 1.08% were Protestant

The **Oromo** is an ethnic group found in Ethiopia and to a lesser extent in northern Kenya. They are the largest single ethnic group in Ethiopia, at 34.49% of the population according to the (2007) census, and today number over 25 million. Their native language is the Oromo language (also called *Afaan Oromo* and *Oromiffa*). Oromos are found predominantly in Ethiopia (99%), but are spread from as far as northern Ethiopia (southern Tigray Region) to northern Kenya, even as far south as Lamu Island. The Oromo represent one of the largest Cushitic-speaking groups inhabiting the Horn of Africa. Their physical features, culture, language and other evidences unequivocally point to the fact that they are indigenous to this part of Africa.

3.3 Participants of the study

The participants of this study are 20 female and 20 male elderly individuals for the interview and 32 for FGD who are well recognized for their social wisdom about their communities as well as natives of that particular area. Since they are living in their localities for many years they have participated in different social ceremonies and rituals. Therefore, this opportunity of being part and parcel of diverse social gatherings helps them to see vividly those activities which are done in the respected ceremonies. In addition to this from the four Kebeles under study one administrative worker from each Kebele have served as key informants.

Table one.1 Characteristics of Sample Population

No.	Item	Respondents		
		No.	%	Remarks
1	Sex			
	A. male	36	50%	
	B. female	36	50%	
	Total	72	100%	
2	Age			
	A.60-70	59	87.5%	
	B.50-59	13	12.5%	
	Total	72	100%	
3	Educational background			
	A .illiterates	12	16.67%	
	B. elementary edu.	50	69.44%	
	C. secondary edu.	10	13.89%	
	Total	72	100%	
4	Religion			
	A. Christian	50	69.44%	
	B. Muslim	22	30.56%	
	Total	72	100%	

As indicated in the above table the number of participants of study is 36 female and 36 male inhabitants of Boset Woreda. 87.5% of them are between the ages 60-70 where as only 12.5% are between the ages 50-59. In education the majority of them are in the category of elementary education which is 69.44% where as 13.89% are in the category of secondary education and 16.67% are illiterates. Out of the total participants of study 70% are Christians and 30% are Muslims.

3.4 .Sampling procedure

The target population of the study encompasses parents in Boset Woreda. The study was done in only four rural Kebeles. These are Chore/ the place between Adama and Wellenchiti at the east of Adama city, Adulala mariam/ between Adama and Sodere south of Adama, Kuriftu around Wonji sugar factory and koka at the west of Adama. The study participants were selected with the help of the respected representative Keble's Administrative workers as well as natives of that particular area. The criteria of selecting respondents were: having high level of recognition in their social wisdom about their communities, native of that particular Kebele, participation in different social ceremonies and rituals and having at least one child. Then using the information given from Keble's Administrative workers 20 elderly female and 20 elderly male individuals were selected and have been interviewed. In the majority of the cases during the interview sessions notes were taken. Of course, with the consent of some informants tape recorder have been used to record the information for further use. The 32 FGD participants were also selected in the same manner.

3.5. Instruments of the study

The items shown in the instruments of the study cover two lists of items related to back ground information of the respondents, and semi structured interview items where as for focus group discussion another items are used. The items in the back ground information questioner require respondents to provide data about sex, age, educational level, and religion.

In the study semi structured interview is used to collect data about parents' practices and beliefs about naming ceremony. In addition to this focus group discussion is also employed to gather general information how naming ceremony is conducted in the traditional Oromo society.

3.6 Data analysis method

Both qualitative and percentage data analysis methods were used in the current study.

The qualitative analysis was used to narrate the response obtained from the focus group discussion. Percentage was used to describe the proportion of parents who used to conduct different types of naming ceremonies.

Chapter Four

4. Presentation and Interpretation of data

As it has been explained in the previous chapters objective of this study was to find out how the naming ceremony is held in Oromia Region .Hence data were collected through interview and focus group discussion held with different selected parents. Therefore, this chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of the already collected data.

4.1 How naming ceremony is conducted in traditional Oromo society.

According to data obtained from 32 FGD participants there are four instances of naming ceremony in the area under study.

- A. When a child is born. B. When there is Gudifecha .C. When there is Mogaassa
- D. When there is Tuffta

A. When a child is born

When a child is born depending on the economic status and belief system of the child's family different Naming ceremony could be held.

One way of naming ceremony is Hamachaissa. This is a common ritual ceremony developed and practiced among the Oromo community who believe in qaluu/qaliti. It is the formal procedure of blessing and naming of a new born child by the qaluu/qaliti. The believers of qaluu/qaliti parents are supposed to take their new born child to Ayyaana before christening a child. Along with the child they also take diffo dabbo/home made bread and Araki for qaluu/qaliti. This ceremony could be done any time when the child is 2-24 months old.

On the day of Hamachaissa, parents present the child to qaluu/qaliti and then he/she embraces and starts blessing. In the process of blessing qaluu/qaliti spits and sprays saliva over the face of the child. (This is called Tuffta). After the blessing a name will be given to the child by the qaluu/qaliti. Although, the name which is given to the child may last for many years sometimes it may be changed by parents or relatives. According to the information obtained from the participants of FGD these days the number of families who follow this practice is getting less and less due to change of attitude towards qaluu/qaliti. This study result is similar with that of Bekele (1998) and Ayalew (2002).

The second one of naming ceremony for the new born child is by social gathering without taking the child to qaluu/qaliti. Here if the parents of the child have the capacity to prepare food stuffs for those guests (in most cases relatives and very close friends) who are going to be invited for the ceremony, they fix the day, prepare food as well as beverage/drinks and invite participants of the ceremony. Then, before the food is served different names will be suggested for the child by parents, grand parents and relatives. Most of the time the name suggested by the father of the child or grand mother in the paternal line (relatives in the side of the child's father) will be the final name for the child. Those relatives and close friends who have participated in the naming ceremony bring different gifts to the new born child. These gifts could be sheep/goat, cattle clothes etc. They also promise to care for the child and contribute their part in the course of the child's socialization. This study finding is related with the findings of Asmerom (1973).

The third type is when simply only parents give names for their children as soon as they are born.

B. When there is Gudifecha/Adoption?

When one family accepts/takes away a child from his/her biological parents as a foster/adopter family to up bring him/her it has also to organize a naming ceremony for the child. During this ceremony even if the child comes from another ethnic group he/she will be given an Oromo name and will be named after the name of the Aba Wera.

Among the Oromos residing in the vicinity of Adama city, Gudifecha has its own cultural process and procedure. When parents want to adopt a child they should adhere to the social norms. According to my informants the adopting parents swear by the name of Waqa meaning God to treat the child equally with their biological children and to give him all rights including inheritance of wealth from his/her adopting parents. In the same ceremony a child will be given a new Oromo name.

C. When there is Mogaassa

Mogaassa is a process by which mostly a grown up person is accepted as a member of an Oromo family through his/her appeal. During Mogaassa like that of Gudifecha any person who appeals to be a member of foster/adopter family including from another ethnic group he/she will be given an Oromo name and will be named after the name of the Aba Wera if his/her age is less than 15 or so. If he/she is beyond this age he/she will be considered as a brother/sister and will be named after the name of the father of the. For the ceremony of Mogaassa when one family is asked to accept an elder child as a member of the family and if that family agrees, first the Aba Wera of that family will appeal to a kind of a social committee called “Shenecha” to organize the ceremony of Mogaassa and accept the child as a member of that specific community. On the day of Mogaassa food and drinks will be served after which an Oromo name will be given to the child.

D. When there is Tuffta

This happens when the married couples are unable to get children in their 2 or more years of marriage. In this case what the couples do is wait till the holy Cross festival comes, which is celebrated once in a year in the month of September for 7 days. In Oromo culture, during the celebration of this festival a group of 7-10 younger children go house to house to praise, flatter and appeal for a gift from the families. When this group goes to that family where the married couples are unable to get children in their 2 or more years of marriage, the couple asks the group to pray for them for mercy of Waqa meaning God to give them a child. Then when the group prays, the couples sit down in front of the group. After the prayer is over, the group members spray their saliva over the couples as Tuffta. Hereafter, the couple promises to slaughter a bull or an ox and invite them for the naming ceremony if they get a child. Therefore, in the naming ceremony which is conducted in this way, the main guests will be the group members. During the ceremony, the child will be called Tuffa, which is taken from the word Tuffta.

4.2. Parents practice and beliefs with regard to Assigning names to children. The following data are gathered through interview.

Table -2 Assigning names to children

Parents were asked about how they assign names to their children. Their responses are reported in table 2.

No.	response	Respondents	
1	Simply by our selves without organizing naming ceremonies but with the active participation of the family members.	No. 25	% 62.5
2	By organizing naming ceremony and consulting relatives and close friends	No. 10	% 25
3	By taking to qaluu/qaliti	No 5	% 12.5
	Total	40	100%

As indicated in table 2, 62.5% of the interview participants reported that they simply give names for their children without consulting others and consider it as a family concern.

Where as 25% responded that names are given by organizing naming ceremony. It is only 12.5% of the respondents which reacted that children are given names by taking them to qaluu/qaliti.

Table -3: Beliefs about the impact of children's name in their behavior

2. Parents beliefs about the influence of the name they have given to their children on children's personal characteristics are reported in table 3.

No.	response	Respondents	
		No.	%
1	Yes --This because children try to act and behave accordingly depending on the meaning and source of their names.	32	80
2	No	8	20
	Total	40	100%

Table 3 shows that 80 % of the interview participants reported that they believe names given to children have an impact on the personal character of the bearers. And only 8 % assume that it has no impact on the personal character of the bearers.

Table 4 –similarities of naming ceremony in the community

As to parents' response in the similarity of the naming ceremony in the community responses are presented in table 4.

No.	response	Respondents	
1	Yes It is common for all during Mogaassa and Gudifecha.	No 36.	% 90
2.	No	No 4	% 10
	Total	40	100%

Table 4 shows that 90 % of the interview participants respond that is a common naming ceremony for Mogaassa and Gudifecha. The rest 10 % reply that there is no common/specific naming ceremony in their culture.

Table 5 The age at which the new born child is given a name

No.	response	Respondents	
1	Usually 2-24 months	No 40.	% 100
	Total	40	100%

As indicated in table 5 a child is named within 24 months.

Table 6 the source of children's name

No.	response	Respondents	
		No.	%
1	From the Bible	7	17.5
2	From the Quran	5	12.5
3	Others the name of former relatives -the time of the day on which the child is born. -natural, social and historical phenomenon like names of rivers, mountains trees etc.	25	70
	Total	40	100%

According to the response obtained in table 6 70% interview participants have different source of names for the child like the name of former relatives, the time of the day on which the child is born as well as natural, social and historical phenomenon like names of rivers, mountains trees etc. Where as 17.5% use the Bible and 12.5% The Quran as source of names.

Table 7 Meanings of children's names

As shown in table 7, 75% of the interview participants respond that in most cases all of the names have clear meaning. The rest 25 % reply that their children's names have no clear meanings.

No.	response	Respondents	
		No	%
1	Yes in most cases	30	75
2.	No	10	25
	Total	40	100%

Table 8 Parents role in naming children

As indicated in table 8, 67.5 % of interview participants reacted that both parents and other relatives like grand parents have equal rights to participate in the naming ceremony.25 % replies that the father has the upper hand and only 7.5 % respond that mothers play the greatest role in naming the child.

No.	response	Respondents	
		No.	%
1	Both parents and other relatives like grand parents have equal rights to suggest the name of the child..	27	67.5
2.	Fathers	No 10	% 25
2.	Mothers	No 3	% 7.5
	Total	40	100%

Table 9 The concern for the naming of male and female children

Participant's responses about the concern they gave in the naming of female and male children is presented in table 9

No.	response	Respondents	
		No.	%
1	Yes we do there is no difference.	28	70
2	No we don't we give a better concern for male children.	No. 12	% 30
	Total	40	100%

70 % of the interview participants answered that equal concern is given for the naming male and female children. Where as 30 % act in response that they give a better concern for naming male children.

Table -10 the major activities of naming ceremony

Participants of the study were asked about the major activities of naming ceremony. Their responses are presented in table 10.

No.	response	Respondents	
		No.	%
1	Welcoming the child into the family and wider community, suggesting and choosing names for the child, give the reasons for those choices, making promises of commitment to nurture and support the child, introducing the child to family and social group in a meaningful way and Presentation of gifts.	40	100
	Total	40	100%

According to the response of the interview participants major activities of naming ceremony are welcoming the child into the family and wider community, suggesting and choosing names for the child, give the reasons for those choices, Making promises of commitment to nurture and support the child, introducing the child to family and social group in a meaningful way and presentation of gifts.

Table 11- The influence of naming ceremony to social interaction

As shown in table 11, all of interview participants believe that naming ceremony contributes to social interaction.

No.	response	Respondents	
		No.	%
1	Yes-Since we take Gudifecha/Mogaassa children from other ethnic group during the naming ceremony there is inter and intra ethnic group relation hence, Naming ceremony gives us an opportunity to create friendly relationships with others	40	100
	Total	40	100%

4.3 Discussion

The data collected from the interview and FGD participants confirm that, the Oromo people who are living in Boset Woreda have their own way of celebrating naming Ceremony. Usually, the ceremony is carried out when the child is 2-24 months with the exception of Mogaassa which can be conducted beyond this age.

The Naming Ceremony is an important occasion for Oromo people who are living in Boset Woreda, to feel involved as they pledge their love and support for their child's future development. They use the naming Ceremony for celebrating the birth of a child and welcoming the new arrival into the family and the wider community. It is also ideally suited to celebrate an older child into the family, in the form of Mogaassa. It is as well used to welcome and celebrate an adoptive/Gudifecha child into the family. Generally it is a perfect way to bond a family unit.

A naming ceremony is an opportunity to announce the name that has been chosen for a child. It is also an opportunity for the parents to publicly acknowledge their responsibility for their child, in the expectation that they will safeguard and promote their child's health development and welfare. During this ceremony parents and close friends give their promise:

- To love, care and respect, to bring him/her up to respect those around him /her and to grow up to be happy and contented
- To nurture his/her curiosity, courage and enthusiasm and in doing so, to enable him/her to lead his/her life with confidence and grow into a responsible adult.
- To keep his/her safe and strive wherever possible to meet his/her needs, dreams and desires, to teach him/her right from wrong and to always set a good example.
- To always be there for him/her in times of need, to always show him/her kindness, tolerance and patience and to offer our support, comfort, love and understanding whenever he/she needs us.
- To raise him/her to believe in friendships and to understand the importance of his/her contribution to society.

The Oromo people who are living in Boset Woreda give a very great concern for naming a child and the naming ceremony as well. During the naming ceremony females also have equal rights to suggest names for the child.

In almost all of the cases the name given to the children have clear meanings. The different sources of these names are like the name of former relatives, the time of the day on which the child is born as well as natural, social and historical phenomenon like names of rivers, mountains trees etc.

The gifts which are given to the child especially in the form of cattle could be a good source of wealth for the child.

In the naming ceremony which is held in Boset Woreda parents give equal concern for male as well as female children. This is a affirmative social practice which should be encouraged. There is also an equal participation of female and male relatives in the naming ceremony.

Chapter Five

Summary, conclusion and implications

5.1 Summary conclusions and implication

Summary

The major objective of this study is to describe the naming ceremony in traditional Oromo society in Oromia Region in Boset Wereda. Specific, objectives of the objective of the study are to:

1. Find out the contribution of naming ceremony to social interaction among families or relatives.
2. Identify the role of female and male relatives in the naming ceremony.
3. Discover if there is the same naming ceremony for female as well as male children.

In order to attain the desired objective data were gathered using semi structured interview to collect data about parents' practices and beliefs about naming ceremony. In addition to this focus group discussion is also employed to gather information about how naming ceremony is conducted in the traditional Oromo society. The interview participants of this study are 20 female and 20 male elderly individuals and 32 FGD participants who are well recognized for their social wisdom about their communities as well as natives of that particular area.

The data gathered were analyzed both by qualitative and percentage data analysis methods. The qualitative analysis was used to narrate the response obtained from the focus group discussion. Percentage was used to describe the proportion of parents who used to conduct different types of naming ceremonies.

Based on the analysis of the data the summary the major findings and are listed of here under:

- ❖ The naming ceremony major activities which are conducted in Oromo culture for Gudifecha and Mogaassa is alike in the Boset Woreda.
- ❖ The naming ceremony which is conducted in Oromo culture contributes fairly well to social interaction since there is intra and inter-ethnic group adoption /Gudifecha and Mogaassa. This is because; during the celebration of Gudifecha and Mogaassa relatives and close friends are invited to the ceremony to play their part. Not only that the family and relatives of the Adoptee are considered as relatives to the Adopter family after the ceremony on wards. Hence this strengthens friendship among and between families, people and ethnic groups.
- ❖ Females have equal rights to participate in the naming ceremony.
- ❖ Equal concern is given for the naming of male and female children in Oromo culture in the vicinity of Adam city
- ❖ The number of families who go to qallu/Qaliti to assign names for their child is getting less and less. Due to attitudinal change from the side of the believers.
- ❖ The major activities of Naming ceremony are welcoming the child into the family and wider community, suggesting and choosing names for the child and give the reasons for those choices, making promises of commitment to nurture and support the child, introducing the child to family and social group in a meaningful way and presetting gifts.

Conclusions

In Boset Woreda Naming ceremony is conducted to celebrate the birth of a child and welcoming the new arrival into the family and the wider community. Naming ceremonies can also be used as a celebration of adopting Gudifecha children into an extended family unit in Oromia Region. There are also for instances naming ceremony in the region. These occasions are when a child is born, when there is Gudifecha, Mogaassa and Tuftta.

5.3 Implication of the study

1. The naming ceremony has provided considerable attention to the desirability of an individual's name. Hence this practice may have an important role in individual's social development.
2. The naming ceremony which is conducted in Oromo culture contributes to some extent to social interaction since there is intra and inter-ethnic group adoption /Gudifecha and Mogaassa. This is because; during the celebration of Gudifecha and Mogaassa relatives and close friends are invited to the ceremony to play their part. Not only that the family and relatives of the Adoptee are considered as relatives to the Adopter family after the ceremony on wards. Hence this strengthens friendship among and between families, people and ethnic groups
3. Finally further study should be done in line with the influence of names in individual's social interaction, self evaluation and cognitive development.

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Appendix: I

The interview Questions

I: Personal information of the Respondents

1. Age a. 50-59 b. 60-70 c. >70
- a. Sex a. Male ----- b. female-----
2. Marital status a. Married--- b. single ----
3. Educational back ground a. Illiterate--- b. Elementary--- c. Secondary----
4. Religion a. Muslim b. Christine 3. c. others

II: The interview Questions

1. How do you assign names to your children?
2. In your community who has the greater role in naming the family? 1. Mother 2. Father 3. others
3. Do you believe that your children behave in a certain way due to the meaning of their names? 1. Yes 2. no If yes mention them -----

4. Is there a specific naming ceremony in your family and community? 1. Yes 2. No
If yes mention them -----

5. At which age is the new child given a name?
6. Do your children's names have clear meanings? 1. Yes 2. No
If yes please give some examples -----

7. What is the source of your children's names? 1. Bible 2 Quran 3. Others
Others If others please mention them-----
8. Do you give equal concern to females and males in assigning names? 1. Yes 2. No
9. What are the major activities of naming ceremony?
10. Do you believe that Naming ceremony contributes for social interaction? 1. Yes 2.No
If yes how ?-----

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Appendix: II

I: Personal information of the Respondents

1. Age a. 50-59 b. 60-70 c. >70
- a. Sex a. Male ----- b. female-----
2. Marital status a. Married--- b. single ----
3. Educational back ground a. Illiterate--- b. Elementary--- c. Secondary----
4. Religion a. Muslim b. Christine 3. c. others

II. The Focus Group Discussions Guide Questions

1. How is baby naming ceremony conducted in traditional Oromo society?
2. Is there different baby naming ceremony in your community?
3. Is there any well established way of celebrating/conducting naming ceremony in your locality?

Appendix:III

Obama name craze for Kenya babies

Mothers in Kenya have marked Barack Obama's historic win in the US presidential elections by naming their newborns after him and his wife.

More than half of the babies born in a Kisumu Hospital on the day after the election were named either Barack or Michelle Obama.

Kisumu is close to the village where Mr Obama's father was born and raised and Mr Obama is a local hero. The region erupted in celebration after he won the race for the White House.

Out of 15 babies born in the New Nyanza Provincial Hospital in the western city of Kisumu on Wednesday, five boys were named Barack Obama and three girls were called Michelle.

Pamela Adhiambo, who gave birth to twins – a boy and a girl - on the night after the elections, named them Barack and Michelle Obama.

"I made up my mind to name them long before the elections, and even if Obama had not won, I would still have done the same," she said.

Some of the mothers said they admired the couple and hoped that their children would be inspired to reach for great heights by sharing the names.

Mrs Adhiambo said she hoped the names would motivate her children to work hard and achieve as much as the Obamas.

She invited Mr Obama and his wife to come and visit their twin namesakes.



“ Even if Obama had not won, I would still have done the same ”

Pamela Adhiambo
Mother of twins Barack and Michelle

Jubilation at Obama's Kenyan home

N.B. BBC News released Nov.2009

Appendix: IV



Territory of Oromia region

Declaration

I the undersigned here declare that, this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree and that all relevant sources used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Eshetu Woldemariam Awoke

Signature-----

Date-----

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as
University advisor

Reda Darge (Associate professor|)

Signature-----

Date-----

Date of approval-----