

**MEDIA FRAMING OF VIOLENCE AGAINST  
CHILDREN IN ETHIOPIA: THE CASE OF THE  
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM OF ETHIOPIA RADIO**

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## Abstract

Violence against Children is a social problem that is very prominent in Ethiopia and is affecting children everyday. The study was conducted based on the premise that the media has a role to transmit relevant information in order to curb social problems such as violence against children. The study also highlighting the importance of frames in determining the understanding of the audience had used the framing conceptual framework. The media chosen for this study was the Ethiopia radio children's program, "From the world of Children". Focus was on the coverage of the programs broadcasted on Violence against Children for three consecutive years that is, 2007-2009. Six dominant frames were used as reference to study the types of frames used by the children's program. These were: The Economic Frame, The Conflict Frame, The powerlessness frame, The Human Impact Frame, The Morality Frame and the Attribution of Responsibility frame. The research hence found that in covering violence against children the Powerlessness, the Attribution of Responsibility and the Conflict frames were the most prominently used frames. The study further found that major factors that affected the coverage of programs on violence against children were editor's conscious decision; lack of awareness of editors, producers and journalists on the subject; sensitivity of the issue and lack of appropriate age classification as target group. The research finally gives a conclusion and recommendations for further studies in the area of violence against children and framing in general.

## List of Acronyms

UNCRC/ CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
CPU	Child Protection Units
VAC	Violence against Children
CR	Children's Rights
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAU	Organization for Africa Unity

# Chapter One

## Background and Statement of the Problem

### 1.1 Background

#### *Birds Fly, Fish Swim and Children Play*

This popular saying illustrates the innate nature of Children to play. Nevertheless, according to various evidences not all children are exercising this privilege. “Violence against children is committed on children everyday around the world”, states a UN Study on violence conducted world wide in 2001 (UN Study on Violence, 2006). The UN study was conducted in response to the various reports of violence evidenced on children in different countries and was to have a definite picture of children’s situation in the world.

Ensuring the promotion of the *best interest of the child* in all matters concerning children, *non-discrimination, survival and development, and Children’s participation* in the society is not only important but is the responsibility of all nations. These concepts today according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are the four pillars of rights that children have (UNCRC, 1999).

Nevertheless, Children in societies are amongst the most vulnerable due to their age and position they have been given in societies. We may then say that all children are vulnerable to abuse and neglect (Belay Hagos, 2006).

Violence against children is one of the rights violations that children have been continually facing in the world. The study on violence against children conducted by the United Nations in 2001 found that violence against children exists in every

country in the world, whatever the culture, ethnic group or background they are from (United Nations, 2006).

Children below 18 years of age constitute about 52 % of Ethiopia's population, while those below 15 years are 44% (Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2007) The violence committed against this majority population is likewise too common and deep rooted in the daily lives of the society at all levels. Most violent acts are committed against children with the hope that the actions will bring about behavior change. In other circumstances, violent acts are perpetrated as a way of expressing adults' anger and power over children (Save the Children Sweden, 2005). According to the UN Study these physical abuses are often committed as a means of disciplining a child. However, studies have also shown that alternative ways of disciplining and guiding children aside from physical and humiliating punishments have proven to be more effective (ibid).

Violence commonly committed against children can be generally put as corporal and humiliating punishments and sexual violence (ibid). However in the African context Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP) are also prominent types of violence that children face. HTPs include, early marriage, Female Genital Mutilations (FGM), abductions etc (Organization of African Unity, 1999).

Corporal punishment is considered by most developing countries as a norm and is accepted by the whole of the community including the children. This is a challenge to most countries such as Ethiopia in implementing laws that ban corporal punishments. Lack of knowledge of alternative ways of disciplining children aside from corporal punishment has been recorded as the main cause of such acts (ANPPCAN et al, 2007).

Ethiopia being a signatory of both international conventions (CRC and ACRWC) has the responsibility to ensure that these rights are implemented. It is true that different initiatives against violence on children are being undertaken by

government and nongovernmental organizations. The initiatives taken include the establishment of child friendly benches at the Federal Supreme Court and child friendly desks at hospitals and police stations, which were made real by the support of different non governmental organizations working together with government implementing bodies. Examples are the Child protection Units (CPUs) that were opened at every police station in Addis Ababa and major towns in the regions. The CPUs are staffed by trained social workers that assist the police in hearing cases of children, in a non intimidating manner.

The role of the Media in advocating, raising awareness and educating the society to combat violence against children and to hold governments accountable to the laws and conventions the country has signed pertaining to children's rights is immense. The public including children need information about existing structures in the system, best practices and ways to protect children.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Given the background of violence against children in Ethiopia, the role of the Ethiopian media to curb it and the framing of the coverage on violence against children, it is essential that academic institutions on media and other stakeholders do an extensive study of the subject area.

The search for similar studies on the topic about violence against children in Ethiopia and the attempt to determine if there were any studies done in a higher academic level on assessing the frames the media used revealed very little. As the School of Journalism and Communication is the first Graduate level School for media studies and communication in Ethiopia, the search from the database of theses works conducted so far revealed only limited studies done in the area. The only studies conducted that have to do with framing and children were the following: "A content analysis on Ethiopian Newspapers' Framing of the 2002-

2003 Ethiopian Drought and Famine” (Bethlehem, 2006), “Newspaper framing on orphan children’s issues” (Tsegewoini, 2008 )

Therefore, this research on the use of Radio medium will be the first to be conducted at the School of Journalism and Communication, on violence against children and framing, and thus will narrow the gap in knowledge about the state of use of the broadcast media in addressing this highly pertinent social problem.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

This study is conducted under the notion that the Media exists for the public and hence different social problems in societies may be curbed by its important role. Media watch groups in the developed nations work to expose neglected news stories and defend working journalists when they are muzzled. Such organizations are called Watchdogs of the Watchdog (Donhoue, 1995). They are there to watch the Media and make sure if it is effectively carrying out its role.

Similarly this study has the following specific objectives:

1. To see whether the selected Media as an institution is playing a relevant role in securing children’s rights by advocating to the government and by raising public awareness in general.
2. To see if Violence against Children and Children’s Rights are given sufficient coverage as these are important to securing children’s rights.

The Media that was chosen for this purpose is the children’s program on the Ethiopian Radio entitled “Ke Lijoch Alem” in Amharic, literally translated: “From the World of Children”. The reason for choosing this program is that it is a continuous production specifically targeting children and involves children in the production. In addition to its focus on children, this program is also dedicated to

parents and aims to educate by entertaining. This research therefore, will assess the types of frames the program has used in producing programs on VAC.

#### **1.4 Conceptual framework of the study**

This study is based on the Framing conceptual framework. Framing defines how a certain piece of media content is packaged so it will influence particular interpretations, which is accomplished through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration (McCombs et al, 1972).

The types of frames that the study will be based on are: The Economic Frame, The Conflict Frame, The powerlessness frame, The Human Impact Frame, The Morality Frame and the Attribution of Responsibility frame (Neuman et al, 1992).

#### **1.5 Research questions**

Based on the conceptual framework of the study, the research will hence question the following:

1. What was the nature of the Children's radio program's coverage on violence against children in terms of types of violence covered and topics discussed?
2. What are the types of frames the program had used while conducting programs on VAC?
3. What are the factors that influenced Journalists in framing programs on violence against children and children's rights?

## 1.6 Significance of the study

The study aims to assess the Frames the media has used in producing programs on VAC which will indicate the advocacy role Media has played to curb social problems particularly violence against children. To do this, studying only one consistent program that focuses on children was found to be more effective.

The results of this study would help point out best techniques to reach the objectives of the selected Media and also be used as a baseline for further study of Media Framing in Ethiopia in the area of violence against children.

## 1.7 Definition of Concepts

In order to better understand the terms and concepts that would be frequently used in this study, this section is dedicated to giving definitions of the concepts and terms.

**Violence:** Violence takes place when someone uses their strength or their position of power to hurt someone else on purpose, not by accident. Violence includes threats of violence, and acts which could possibly cause harm, as well as those that actually do. The harm involved can be to a person's mind and their general health and well-being, as well as to their body. Violence also includes deliberate harm people do to themselves, including killing themselves (Kwast et al, 2006)

**Child:** According to the United Nations Children's Rights Convention (UN CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) a child is any human being under the age of 18 unless national laws recognize the age of maturity earlier.

***Framing:*** In media studies, sociology and psychology, framing, is a process of selective control over the individual's perception the meanings attributed to words or phrases. Framing defines how an element of rhetoric is packaged so as to allow certain interpretations and rule out others (Fisher, K. (1997).

***Advocacy/lobbying:*** Advocacy is defined as a positive action offering credible alternatives. Advocacy is not only against something but must also offer positive alternatives. Clear messages based on clear and achievable objectives are the basis for successful advocacy (Save the Children UK, 2006).

## Chapter Two

### Literature Review

The aim of this chapter is to present the reviewed literature that was relevant for conducting this research. The reviewed literature is presented in three separate sections to easily see the relationship the materials reviewed have with the current research. The first section gives a brief overview of Violence against Children, while the second section elaborates the role of media in curbing this social problem of Violence against Children. Finally, the Media's Framing theory will be given in the third section.

#### 2.1. Violence against Children: an overview

Different studies, mainly the UN Study on violence conducted in 2001, show that violence against children is a social pattern found in every country in the world. The study showed that Children are subject to violence in varied situations, in innumerable forms and in many different degrees of severity (Kwast et al, 2006).

According to the advocacy paper on violence against children of Save the Children Sweden, violence committed on children can be physical, sexual, psychological and/or involving deprivation or neglect (Save the Children Sweden, 2007). This may range from killing, torture, commercial exploitation and child sexual abuse to a deliberate act of punishment or just the impulsive reaction of an irritated parent or teacher. It takes place within the family and homes, in schools, in residential institutions both private and State; in work situations, in the streets, in detention facilities and prisons by the police in the form of capital and physical punishment. (Ibid)

The UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against children, was a global initiative mandated by the General Assembly in 2001 (resolution 56/138) following a recommendation that called for an in-depth international study on violence against children. The aim was to conduct a study that "should lead to the development of strategies aimed at effectively preventing and combating all forms of violence against children, (and) outlining steps to be taken at the international level and by States to provide effective prevention, protection, intervention, treatment, recovery and reintegration".

The UN study had the objective to: Present an overview of the global situation of children, provide recommendations for improvement of policy, legislation and programmes, provoke comprehensive national reviews, and promote advocacy at all levels.

Corporal punishment which is the act of inflicting physical pain on to a person is an act of violence that is most commonly committed against children in their homes by their parents or guardians and in schools by their teachers.. In Ethiopia corporal punishment is very common and deep rooted in the society and is accepted as a norm by both the victims and the perpetrators (Save the Children Sweden, 2005). This act of punishment is declared illegal in schools by the law in Ethiopia but gives allowance to families in the home to inflict a "minimal" amount of physical punishment on their children.

### **2.1.1 Violence against Children in Ethiopia**

A study entitled "Ending physical and humiliating punishment against children: Ethiopia" was conducted in 2005 as a supplement to the UN Study on violence against children by Save the Children Sweden and African Child Policy Forum. The study was conducted to seek relevant information about violence against children in Ethiopia with particular emphasis on physical and humiliating punishment.

The study found that violence against children in Ethiopia is too common and deep rooted in daily lives of the society at all levels. According to data collected on two consecutive years (2005 and 2006) in Addis Ababa in all ten Sub-cities, over 1,572 children are reported from Child Protection Units (CPUs) set up in police stations, to have been victims of sexual and physical abuse. The data showed a very high percentage of female victims (95.8% and 97.5%) (Frehiwot, 2006). According to the reports at the CPU coordination office,, the perpetrators of such violations are parents, siblings, teachers and relatives.

Although the government has enacted laws and legislations for the protection of children's rights, these laws are, poorly implemented. Factor like inadequate commitment and efforts by concerned bodies to translate laws into action, low reporting rates and limited determination to investigate and prosecute reported cases all contribute to poor implementation of the laws and regulation in this area (Save the Children Sweden, 2005).

### **2.1.2 Children's Rights and Responsibilities**

Children's rights are basics human rights, but children are not always recognized as citizens with such rights. According to UNICEF, "Human rights are not something a richer person gives to a poorer person; nor are they owned by a select few and given to others as a mere favor or gift. They belong to each and every one of us equally, and need to be protected" (Feilitzen C.V and Carlson U., 1999). Nevertheless, despite this human rights law, it was believed that children needed special laws to ensure that their rights are protected. Consequently, International Laws on Children's Rights that Ethiopia has ratified are:

- A. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- B. African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)

Each of the global and regional legal conventions requires that individual countries take action that will entrench these legal instruments in the laws of the land. Hence, a country's commitment to children's rights is the first step towards ensuring better life for children but the CRC establishes clear obligation on the countries to translate their commitment to children's rights into action. This requires a set of budgetary, legislative policy and programs. To compliment the international conventions, Ethiopia has also enacted national laws on Children's Rights.

“Every child has the right to be free of corporal punishment or cruel and inhumane treatment in schools and other institutions responsible for the care of children.” ( Article 36 of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia )

To date, over 150 registered child rights actors work for the betterment of children's rights through different strategies including advocacy in Ethiopia, As the necessary laws and policies are intact in Ethiopia to a certain extent, the organizations work to ensure the implementation of these laws in the different areas of their operation. The Criminal Code of Ethiopia enacted in 2005 provides for protection from maltreatment of children in Article 576.

In discussing the rights of children, the issue of responsibilities of children also arises. Advocates of Children's Rights acknowledge that children have responsibilities as well as rights. According to Human Rights Education Association, The CRC created a new vision of children as bearers of rights and responsibilities appropriate to their age rather than viewing them as the property of their parents or the helpless recipients of charity (Human Rights Education Associates (HREA), 2003).

## 2.2. Role of the Media

“ ...State parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources” Article 17 of the CRC.

Similarly, according to the popular guard dog perspective on the role of the media, the media has the responsibility of educating and playing a watchdog role for the community as a whole and to make sure that the government is implementing the policies it signs (Donhoue, 1995). Hence, Ethiopia not only having domestic laws that support them but also being a signatory of major international laws that protect children against violence, has the responsibility to ensure that all children are protected.

The promotion of human rights depends, among other factors, on the active involvement of the media. Similarly according to the role of the media, the media has the responsibility of educating and playing a watchdog role for the community as a whole and to make sure that the government is implementing the Conventions and the Charters it signs (ibid).

Pertaining to children’s rights, Media has a crucial role to play to (Feilitzen C.V and Carlson u , 1999) :

- raise awareness of children’s rights and responsibilities,
- ensure children’s rights are promoted and protected,
- report on failures and neglect and highlight successes,
- provide children with opportunities to speak for themselves about their hopes and fears, their achievements and the impact of adult behavior and decisions on their lives.

Furthermore, by ethical reporting, media professionals can improve the representation of children's issues. In addition to the above roles, media also has a responsibility to hold government and society accountable to the commitments made and goals set to promote and protect children's rights (ibid).

### 2.3. Framing

According to Fisher K. (1997), taken as a whole, the many branches of 'frame analysis' literature do not exhibit a consensus over some basic questions, including what frames are or how individuals and cultures make use of frames. This lack of consensus largely arises from the very different methodological aims of the various authors who have contributed to the framing literature. Nevertheless, a study of framing informs the study of how societies process information to generate meaning, and thus can be broadly useful to many social sciences (ibid).

A number of scholars have found that the concept 'frame' serves a useful purpose in building a wide range of arguments. References to acts and processes of framing abound in academic literature, particularly among the social sciences, policy studies, linguistics, and fine arts genres. Even basic undergraduate social science methods textbooks advise students that 'the act of framing a question about social relations also encompasses values, beliefs, and differing perspectives' (Harrington, 1998)

Charlotte Ryan was quoted by John Harrington, where in *Prime Time Activism* she is specifically dealing with main stream news, says a frame can be described in the following way: 'how news stories are made i.e. how pieces of information are selected and organised to produce stories that make sense to their writers and audiences we call this process framing' (Ryan, 1991)

In Frame Analysis, Goffman was quoted by Fisher K. in his study as he argued that cultures generate 'primary frameworks', which render 'what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful' by offering a point of comparison, or a conceptual structure, through which people can digest information (Fisher K. 1997).

These authors define framing as the process by which 'ordinary people make sense of public issues' (ibid). People work with two types of frames: (1) 'domain-specific interpretative frames', which organise sets of behaviours and individual lifestyles; and (2) 'global interpretative frames' or 'master frames' which signify meaning on a broader scope and which organise sets of domain-specific frames (ibid).

A more disparate collection of scholars locate frames in the discursive system which people use in daily communication, and argue that the study of frames gives insight into how people understand and negotiate their world. This group of frame scholars, which includes social psychologists, linguists, and sociologists, defines the framing process as distinct from the formation and manipulation of ideologies. As a consequence, these authors have been more concerned with how people think about a range of issues at any given time, rather than how activists might respond to a particular social problem (Fisher K., 1997)

## **2.4. Media Framing**

Media Framing is a process of selective control over media content or public communication. Framing defines how a certain piece of media content is packaged so it will influence particular interpretations. This is accomplished through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration. This is central to second-level agenda setting (McCombs et al, 1972).

When we speak about media's responsibility to hold responsible bodies accountable and promote and ensure that children are protected from violence, the advocacy role of the media arises. For media advocacy to be successful framing the issue in a way that makes it compelling is necessary. <sup>1</sup>

In media studies, sociology and psychology, framing, is a process of selective control over the individual's perception the meanings attributed to words or phrases. Framing defines how an element of rhetoric is packaged so as to allow certain interpretations and rule out others. Media frames can be created by the mass media or by specific political or social movements or organizations. In other words, Framing is used consciously by journalists to reach a specific audience and transmit a specific idea to advocate on a certain social issue. Three subject areas stand out in the development of frame analyses: Management and organizational studies, social movement studies, and media studies. Each subject area focuses on different areas of framing theory and approaches the subject with different methods (König, 2004). Most current frame analyses take Entman as a starting point for adopting media frames (ibid).

One important focus of framing in media studies is the effects of journalistic professional norms on the public. Just like in social movement studies, data usually are collected from the media and different forms of qualitative and quantitative content analysis techniques are the preferred empirical methods. (ibid)

The frame does not predetermine the information individuals will seek but it may shape aspects of the world that the individual experiences either directly or through the news media and is thus central to the process of constructing meaning (Neuman et al, 1992).

In a study of news frames based on the newspaper medium, conducted by the Project for Excellence in Journalism by Princeton Survey Research Associates, the findings suggested that the notion that the press builds most stories around just a couple of story telling frames, such as conflict, is untrue. Newspapers, at least in their front pages, employ a variety of frames, and no one of them dominates. The study identified thirteen possible frames for news stories to test the hypotheses on what we think journalists commonly use. The frames were (Princeton Survey Research Associates, 2006).

- **Straight news account:** No dominant narrative frame other than outlining the basic who, what, when where, why and how.
- **Conflict Story:** A focus on conflict inherent to the situation or brewing among the players.
- **Consensus Story:** An emphasis on the points of agreement around an issue or event
- **Conjecture Story:** A focus around conjecture or speculation of what is to come
- **Story:** An explanation of the process of something or how something works  
Historical
- **Outlook:** How the current news fits into history
- **Horse Race:** Who is winning and who is losing
- **Trend Story:** The news as an ongoing trend
- **Policy Explored:** A focus on exploring policy and its impact
- **Reaction Story:** A response or reaction from one of the major players
- **Reality Check:** A close look into the veracity of a statement made or information given
- **Wrongdoing Exposed:** The uncovering of wrongdoing or injustice
- **Personality Profile:** A profile of the newsmaker

For the purpose of this research however, Neuman, Just and Crigler's five dominant frames that they used to identify the uses of frames by the media and the audience on political issues will be used. The dominant frames are: The

Economic Frame, The Conflict Frame, The powerlessness frame, The Human Impact Frame, The Morality Frame and the Attribution of Responsibility Frame. These frames are applicable in politics and in Social studies in general.

### 2.3.1 The Economic Frame

The **Economic Frame** reflects the preoccupation with “the bottom line” profit and loss. The media tend to employ technical language for the economic frame, while people are far more likely to overlay the frame with a moral or evaluative dimension. The economic frame fits well with the media’s propensity to cover news from the standpoint of official sources .**example media stories frequently covered the costs of government programs and the economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing various police objectives. (Neuman et.al. 1992).** In other words there is said to be the usage of the economic frame when the story indicates what violence against children will result in the economy of Ethiopia. When the story indicates what effect VAC will have if no measure is taken (individually or culturally)

### 2.3.2 The Conflict Frame

In **Conflict Frames**, according to communications literature, the media gives emphasis to conflict as means of attracting attention and readership. Polarized forces- “the two sides of the issue” is dominant theme identifies with the presentation of news. The conflict frame fits well with the media’s game interpretation of the political world as an ongoing series of contests, each with a new set of winners and losers. The received definition of good journalistic practice emphasizes reporting stories in terms of experts who offer clashing interpretations. This frame is said to have been employed when there is disagreement between different groups regarding Violence against Children, as to its cause, its solution as to the extent etc (dramas, interviews) (Neuman et.al. 1992).

### **2.3.3 The Powerlessness Frame**

The media use The Powerlessness frame to express the dominance of forces e.g. the stock market, the deadly AIDS virus, the power of cocaine addiction etc. over weak individuals or groups. Again, because the media are reporting other people's stories, control or lack thereof, is expressed not from an individual's perspective, but from the perspective of a more objective third person. Literature in communications has taken issue with the media for not being critical enough of those who are in power, especially government and corporate elites (Neuman et.al. 1992).

### **2.3.4 The Human Impact Frame**

The media's use of The Human Impact Frame focuses on describing individuals and groups who are likely to be affected by an issue. The official voice of journalist however, avoids direct expression of compassion for the people involved. Rather, it seems that reporters put a "human face" on stories by providing human examples and exemplars. In contrast the individuals who employ human impact frame express their personal concerns and compassion with a visceral directness (Neuman et.al. 1992)

### **2.3.5 The Morality Frame**

In using **Morality Frames** the professional norm of "objectivity" in journalism has been with us for so many years it is taken for granted by journalist and audience member alike. References to moral values in the media are simply more indirect than for example, what we find in the mass audience depth interviews. While respondents might condemn the "sinners" who got AIDS with some vehemence, the

media makes reference to such a moral frame indirectly through quotations or inferences. As with expressions of empathy in the human impact frame, reporters, for the most part are not in a position to speak directly and have to find someone else to “raise the issue” (ibid).

### **2.3.6 The Attribution of Responsibility Frame**

The Attribution of responsibility frame involves the question of causes and relationships. Social problems and issues usually involve this question of causes and responsibility. The attribution of responsibility frame suggests what measures should be taken by whom and why. This frame is employed when the story covers programs highlighting on who is responsible for solving or addressing the problems stated and suggests how to solve that problem (ibid).

# Chapter Three

## Research Methodology

### 3.1. The Study Population and Background

The Ethiopia Radio, the Children's Program of the Ethiopia Radio ("From the World of Children") and Editors and Producers of the Children's Program constitute the subject of the study. This section will give the background of the subjects of the study and will elaborate why the subjects of the study were selected.

#### 3.1.1 Ethiopia Radio

Historically Ethiopia Radio came into existence in 1974 when the facilities of Radio Voice of the Gospel, owned by the Lutheran World Federation that operated prior to the overthrow of the Emperor Haile Sellasie were seized by the Derg. To date, in Ethiopia, radio is the best means of disseminating information.

According to the 2003 figures of the International Literacy Institute (ILI) 64% (more than 19 million) of the adult population of Ethiopia was illiterate. ILI reported that there were just 4 television sets for every 1,000 people in the country and most are in Addis Ababa and other urban areas. But at the same time, there were 193 radios per 1,000 people, which makes radio the most widely used source of information in the country. (Mocria et al, 2003) Ethiopia Radio therefore, has the highest broadcasting coverage - 100% shortwave and 70% medium wave, followed by Fana Radio with 87% shortwave coverage (Ministry of Information, 2003). Thus, the study used purposive sampling by selecting Ethiopia Radio Amharic program, which is widely accessible in the country.

### **3.1.2 “From the World of Children”: Ethiopia Radio children’s program**

This radio program has been broadcast for decades and is still being broadcast on Ethiopia radio. The main target group for the program according to the editorial guide are children, parents and guardians. As there was no written record stating when this radio program had started, it was necessary to gather information of its inception from interviews. According to interviews with the editor and producers of the program the children’s radio program has existed as part of the programs shortly after Ethiopia radio started functioning.

The program has one Editor, one producer and several children participants who also produce with the guidance of the main producer. Interviews were held with all the above. Nevertheless, in order to get an insight as to how things were run previously, the former editor of the program was contacted and interviewed.

The program receives feedback from its main target audience in the forms of primarily letters, phone calls and interviews. The letters were received from all the regions in Ethiopia. For example in 2006 a total of 236 letters were received; 47 from North, 31 from South, 56 from Oromia and Harrar, 36 from, the West and 64 from Addis Ababa and the surroundings.

## **3.2 Study Design**

In undertaking this study, both quantitative and qualitative methodology was employed. Qualitative content analysis was done on the “From the World of Children” Radio program of the Ethiopian Radio of over the past three years to see the coverage of issues related to children’s Rights in general and Violence against children in particular. This method was also used to identify and code the frames used by the programs on Violence against Children.

In-depth Interview was done with the main editor, producer and the former editor of the children's radio program. Emphasis was given to receive information from editors as they are the gatekeepers in news and program selection, their position and attitude towards domestic violence have been given a prior emphasis. Therefore, they have the responsibility to identify social problems affecting the well being of the society and address them efficiently by setting them as a top priority agenda (Okigbo, 1987).

Focus Group Discussions were also conducted with the children producers as they were highly involved in the production of the programs especially, dramas. They were a guide to the producers as to what the children audiences would understand and like in the production of the programs. Their views and understanding on Violence against Children was important to this research as it played a determining role in the final productions.

### **3.3. Sampling**

Two levels of sampling were done in undertaking this research. The first was selecting the media institution; from the selected media institution respondents were selected i.e. the program editor, producer, children producers. The sampling technique applied in both cases is a non-random, 'judgmental' or 'purposive sampling'.

In purposive sampling the researcher purposively target and select sample units that are best suited for the study. As explained earlier, this study aims to examine the framing of Violence against Children by the children's radio program "From the World of Children". By doing so, the paper tries to identify the strong role media could play in protecting children from Violence. Only Amharic language programs were reviewed-as Amharic is the most commonly used national language in the country.

### **3.4. Data collection**

Combinations of different primary and secondary data collection methods were applied with the view to get sufficient information. The methods include related literature review, in-depth interview and assessment of media coverage in a given period of time. Data collection tools like note-taking and audio recording of all the interviews and Focus Group Discussions have been carried out and transcribed.

#### **3.4.1 Secondary data**

Secondary source materials both on the concepts and practices relevant to the research subject were reviewed. Relevant books from different resource centers and individuals were referred. In addition to the books, electronic materials from the internet and publications from government and non-government organizations were also reviewed to get clearer idea and good background information pertinent to the research topic. Scripts of the programs on Violence against Children from 2007-2009 of “From the World of Children” were analyzed and coded to identify the frames.

#### **3.4.2 In-depth Interview**

Open-ended questions were prepared for program editors and producers for the in-depth interviews. The questions were designed to measure the interviewees' level of awareness, the depth of their knowledge on the topic, and for examining their attitude. Similarly for the Focus Group Discussions open ended questions were prepared for the children producers.

## Chapter Four

### Findings, Analysis and Discussion

This chapter is dedicated to present the findings of the data collection, give analysis and discuss the causes and effects of the findings. It has been elaborated in the previous chapters that the main objective of the research is to identify the frames the Ethiopia Radio children's program, "From the World of Children" had used in preparing programs on Violence against Children. However, during the data collection phase, it was found necessary to go through various steps to successfully meet the objectives. Steps taken were to identify:

- the nature of coverage of the program;
- the number of programs made on Violence against Children;
- the particular types of violence's covered;
- reason's why particular types of violence where covered while others were not and;
- analyze the frames of the programs broadcasted on Violence against Children.

For the effective administration of the above steps both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Content analysis was used in the first three steps while focus group discussions and interviews were administered for the last two steps.

In identifying frames, six dominant frames were used as reference to check each program on Violence against Children that was transmitted in the research time frame (2007-2009). The dominant frames used are: The Economic, The Conflict, The Powerlessness, The Human Impact, The Morality and The Attribution of Responsibility frames. Coding results show that more than one type of frame was found in plenty of the programs. This had been likely to happen as the children's

program uses different methods to transmit messages during broadcasts. More often than not, drama, poetry, stories, songs and interviews were combined as means to transmit a message and hence, the final result explain the different frames used in each of the channels. For example, drama may reflect a conflict frame where people disagree on a particular cause of the source of violence, while a poem read on the program may attribute responsibility to a certain body for the source of violence. Either way all the frames identified within the study scope where coded and analyzed.

#### **4.1 Nature of coverage**

As mentioned above, this research focused on the coverage of three consecutive years; that is, from 2007- 2009 of the Ethiopia radio children's radio program. Content analysis was done in order to find out the number of programs broadcasted. The themes of the programs broadcasted were also assessed in search of programs that covered Violence against Children and children's rights. Various keywords were used to identify each theme and group them under different categories of violence.

#### **4.2 Findings**

##### **4.2.1 Rights vs. Responsibilities**

In order to clearly see how the programs were framed it was found vital to employ the CRC's new vision of children as bearers of rights and responsibilities appropriate to their age (HREA, 2003) and group all programs in to the two general categories namely, Children's Rights and Children's Responsibilities.

For this reason, all aired programs that had to do with children's need to behave in a certain way was grouped under Responsibilities. In other words, if a program

focused on the need for children to be better students in school, the importance of keeping a good hygiene, the need for children to obey their parents and elders, the importance of children to help with household chores etc. was grouped under “Responsibility”. This was found challenging to group as various subjects lay under this category.

Programs that dealt with the rights of children were grouped based on the definition of Children’s Rights as put in the UNCRC and ACRWC. For instance, the ACRWC states that children have a unique and privileged place in African society and that; children need protection and special care. It also acknowledges that children are entitled to the enjoyment of freedom of expression, association, peaceful assembly, thought, religion and conscience. It further, states that children should be safeguarded against all forms of economic exploitation and against work that is hazardous, interferes with the child’s education or compromises his or her health or physical, social, mental, spiritual, and moral development.(OAU, 1989). All programs with these focuses therefore, were grouped under Children’s Rights.

Accordingly results of the content analysis showed that a total of 143 programs were broadcasted from September 2007 to August 2009. From these, 64 were on Children’s Rights and 159 were on Responsibility.

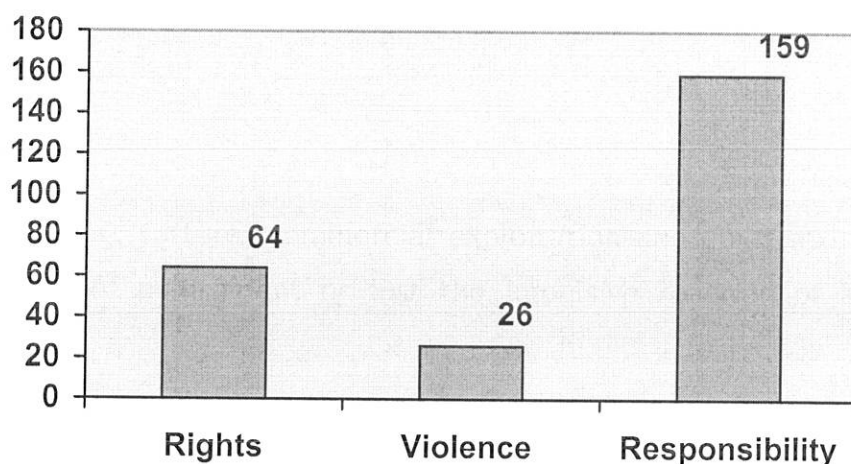
#### **4.2.2 Violence against Children**

Particularly looking at Violence against Children had required a special grouping that was taken out from the Children’s Rights category. To select these, the definitions of Violence against Children as put in the CRC and ACRWC were also used. Accordingly, violence committed on children can be physical, sexual, psychological and/or involving deprivation or neglect.<sup>2</sup>(United Nations, 2006)

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<sup>2</sup> UN Study on violence against children, United Nations, 2001

which may range from killing, torture, commercial exploitation and child sexual abuse to a deliberate act of punishment or just the impulsive reaction of an irritated parent or teacher. It may take place within the family and homes, in schools, in residential institutions both private and State, in work situations, in the streets, in detention facilities and prisons, by the police and the use of capital and physical punishment. Hence, Subjects that dealt with any of the above were grouped under Violence against Children.



*Figure4.1 The statistics of program coverage of the children’s program: “From the world of Children” from 01/2007-12/2009*

The greater number of themes on Children’s Responsibility (159) as compared to the number of total broadcasts (143) is explained by the nature of operation of the children’s program. This is to say that each day’s program is a combination of different methods of communicating and entertaining children. For example, songs, dramas, stories, poems interviews etc are presented per program. This is to say that on one program more than one theme may be transmitted but as the airtime is restricting (30 minutes), not more than two or three themes are presented per program.

Furthermore, the station had started to read from the Convention on the Rights of the Child (since 2008) which takes up to five minutes in the times it was broadcasted. These presentations were included in the study as a child rights theme.

### 4.2.3 Types of Violence by coverage

Results of the content analysis show that from a total of 143 programs only 26 programs that dealt with Violence against Children were broadcasted. The violence types covered were *corporal punishment*, *child labor*, *harmful traditional practices* particularly early marriage and although very minimal, *sexual abuse*.

#### Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment was covered 29 % out of the programs on Violence against Children Sample keywords used to identify corporal punishment in the children's radio program were "whipping", "hit", "physical punishment", "injury", "discipline" and "alternative ways of disciplining". The manner in which they were presented will be discussed under the Frames section below.

#### Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse was covered only 8% from the total broadcasts on Violence against Children. In fact in the times it was broadcasted it was indirectly implied as a consequence of street life that is likely to be caused by children being abused in the homes. According to interviews with the editor and the producer of the program this was done intentionally as the subject is considered too complicated and inappropriate to discuss on the children's radio program. In fact the programs that transmitted sexual abuse were broadcasted on the programs that were sponsored by a local NGO that works on promoting children's rights. Sample of the

keywords used to identify this theme in the broadcasted program was “abuse by gender”, “sexual violence” and “sexual harassment” etc.

### **Child labor**

Child labor was the most repeatedly covered area from broadcasts on Violence against Children that is, 35%. According to interviews with the producer, the reason for this is, since the problem is very wide spread in Ethiopia and as it is easy for children to understand what it is and as it is not a sensitive topic to raise. Keywords used to identify child labor were: “burden”, “work”, “labor”, and “exploitation”.

### **Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP)**

Coverage of HTP is the only program that according to the editor and producer that is intended to reach the society in the rural areas. Hence, HTPs are generally discussed 27% of the coverage of Violence against Children. Nevertheless, only early marriage was the particular HTP that was discussed in detail. To make it easier for children to understand the concepts they mostly used drama, stories and poetry to transfer the messages. Keywords used to identify this topic were “early marriage”, “arranged marriage”, “under age marriage”, “fistula” etc..

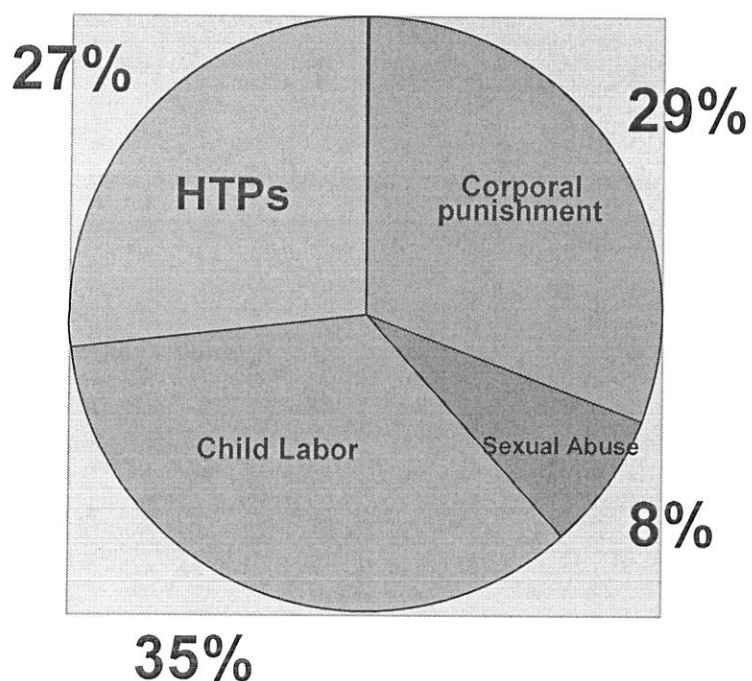


Figure 4.2 The types of Violence covered by the children's program from 2007-2009

#### 4.2.3 Frames

To identify the frames used in the broadcasts of the programs on Violence against Children, coding was done for each violence type. That is, coding was done to identify what frames were used while producing programs on corporal punishment, sexual abuse, child labor and HTPs. As mentioned earlier, the dominant frames (Economic, conflict, powerlessness, morality, human impact, attribution of responsibility) were used against which the themes of the programs were analyzed. The results of the analysis of the frames are discussed below.

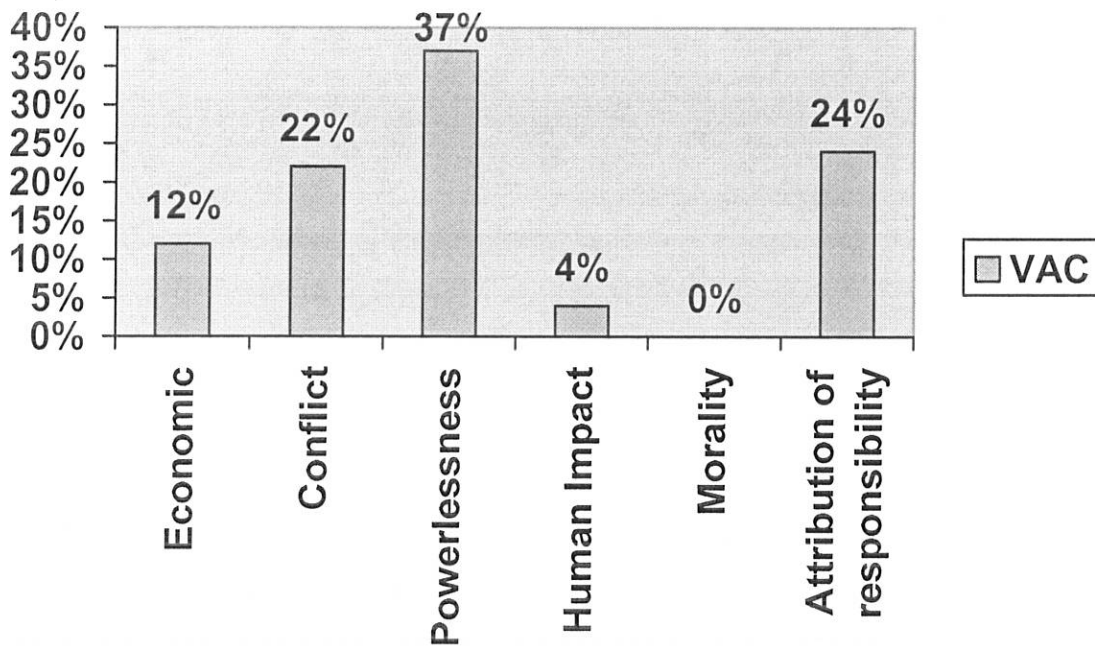


Figure 4.3 Percentage of the usage of dominant frames on programs on violence against children

#### 4.2.3.1 Economic Frame

A program was considered to have the Economic frame when the story indicates how violence against children will affect the economy of Ethiopia or an individual and what effect Violence against Children will have if no measure is taken. Results from the coding showed that the Economic frame was applied 12% of the total coverage on Violence against Children. This frame was used when airing programs on child labor. The frame came up along with the controversy of finding alternatives to solve the problem of child labor in that children had to work for their survival and/or help their families in cases of limited resources. Coding done on child labor shows that the economic frame is used 35% which is high as compared to other frames used while covering the topic. On country level, the frame was used when it was stated in programs that children are tomorrow's

future and the country's all rounded development depends on the proper nurturing of the future generation.

#### **4.2.3.2 Conflict frame**

As to the conflict frame, a theme was considered to have this frame when disagreement between different groups regarding Violence against Children as to its cause, its solution and as to the extent etc. was presented ( Neuman et al, 1992). Coding results showed the frame was used 22% of the time. This was most commonly seen in dramas and interviews broadcasted by the program. In dramas for example characters presented different sides of the conflict of interests that is common in the society. This was particularly seen in programs centering on HTP 38%, Corporal Punishments 21% and child labor 18%.

A good example on how this frame was used is depicted in covering early marriage as and HTP in a drama. The drama reflected the views of elders in the community as against that of a modern teacher. The elders gave an account of the advantages of a girl marrying at a very young age in her community as she will get financial and social security; get acceptance in her society by conforming to the norm; be safe due to avoiding dangers of kidnapping and rape while going to and from her school. Her teacher on the other hand advocated against early marriage because it will destroy the possibilities of success the girl might have in her as well as her country's future; it will endanger her health as she will be forced to bear children at an early age etc.

#### **4.2.3.3 Powerlessness frame**

The Powerlessness frame in the case of violence against children is when the cause of violence is due to circumstances that make the stakeholders weak. This could be reflected through portraying the weakness of the victims, the perpetrators, the government, the police and the community etc.(Ibid). This frame was used 37% of

all coverage's on Violence against Children. It is the highest from each of the types of violence coded. It was used 43% in corporal punishment, 50% in sexual abuse, 29% in child labor and 38% in HTP. The nature of children and their dependence was told in dramas in narratives, interviews and poems when talking about their weakness to defend themselves. For example, a drama on early marriage tells of a 13 year old that is to be wed. The summarized excerpt is as follows:

*Daughter:* what is the preparation for?

*Mother:* You will not go to school anymore. It has been arranged, you will be wed.

*Daughter:* (to herself) says what can I do?

*Father:* He has found her a good person to marry

*Teacher:* (She goes to the girls parents to tell them that its not right but has no success)

*Final outcome:* the girl is wed against her will then is a victim of fistula.

#### 4.2.3.4 Human Impact Frame

The media's use of The Human Impact Frame was coded when the story provided one or more individual or group as an example or when the story included personal history of persons directly or indirectly from other sources (Ibid). This frame from reading program scripts was very minimally used in covering stories on Violence against Children which was only 4% all of which were found in programs that were made on corporal punishment. This shows that the producers did not strongly adhere to the view of Gallagher (1998) that putting a human face can bring change in attitudes. Similarly in coherence with this view the Women's Media Watch in South Africa claims that stories about women who escape abusive relationships are often inspirational to women still caught in the cycle of violence (Gallagher, 1998). The informants stated that they were more comfortable using this frame when it had to do with less serious issues. This was when alternative ways of disciplining a child rather than inflicting physical punishments at home was presented. Interviews and narratives of people who used the positive disciplining

method were presented. Although not frequently used, this frame was used in providing a solution to the problem at hand i.e. corporal punishment.

An example is a broadcast of an interview with a mother who stated that she believes in keeping close relationship with her children and prefers to give them advises and warnings if they need punishment rather than physically punishing the children. This mother was presented as a role model for other parents. As mentioned in the above chapters although the main targets are children, parents also are targeted. The producer in an interview for this research stated *“Our target group is primarily Children then Parents and Families. Children rarely listen to the radio by themselves”*.

#### **4.2.3.5 Morality frame**

Morality frame was said to be present when the issue was stated as good or appropriate or bad or inappropriate or when the story refers to God or other super powers (Neuman et al, 1992) As the whole idea of violence against children itself is a negative concept, it was found irrelevant if this research coded on the basis of the negative truth of the subject matter. Instead for the purpose of this research this frame was seen in light of the use of any supernatural powers, faith or traditional myths in preparing programs on Violence against Children. With the rich and diverse religious and cultural background of Ethiopia, the coding result showed surprisingly that the Morality frame was used 0%. This refutes the claim of Neuman et. al in that argue that cultural values find their way in to the media. An explanation was given by the producer that they purposely edited out such matters as the program is supposed to be all encompassing.

The editorial policy of the Ethiopia Radio and Television also reflects this view in stating that all matters of religious issues should be edited out, as the media should not be found advocating for or against certain ideas regardless of how negative they are by using religious reasoning or by pointing to religious causes for the

existence of the problem. This coincides with the view that the ownership of the media and their interest affects what and how the media cover events, issues or problems (Graber, 2002).

#### **4.2.3.6 Attribution of responsibility frame**

The Attribution of responsibility frame on the other hand involves the question of causes and relationships. This frame was used 24% from all coverage's on Violence against Children making it the second highest following the powerlessness frame. This frame was relatively high in all types of violence coded. It was used 21% in Corporal Punishment, 50% in sexual abuse, 18% in child labor, and 23% in HTP. Although this frame is used very highly it was evident from the programs that the responsibility was assigned mostly to parents. The responsibility that governments have to protect children from violence was not addressed. This fact shows that although the responsibility frame was used it was directed towards other causes (parents and caregivers). The media under study here did not play the watchdog role that Donhoue, (1995) discussed as media's important role. According to the CRC, Governments have the main responsibility to uphold the rights of children to protection, and access to health, education and other services. They must also help families to provide their children with care in a safe environment.

Table 4.1. Distribution of dominant frames by types of violence covered by the Children's radio program "From the World of Children" from 2007-2009

Types of Violence Covered	Frames						Total Frames used	Total Coverage of VAC
	Economic	Conflict	Powerlessness	Human Impact	Morality	Attribution of Responsibility		
Corporal Punishment	-	3	6	2	-	3	14	29%
	-	21%	43%	14%	-	21%		
Sexual Abuse	-	-	2	-	-	2	4	8%
	-	-	50%	-	-	50%		
Child Labor	6	3	5	-	-	3	17	35%
	35%	8%	29%	-	-	18%		
HTP	-	5	5	-	-	3	13	27%
	-	38%	38%	-	-	23%		
<b>Total Frames</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>49</b>	
<b>On VAC</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>24%</b>		

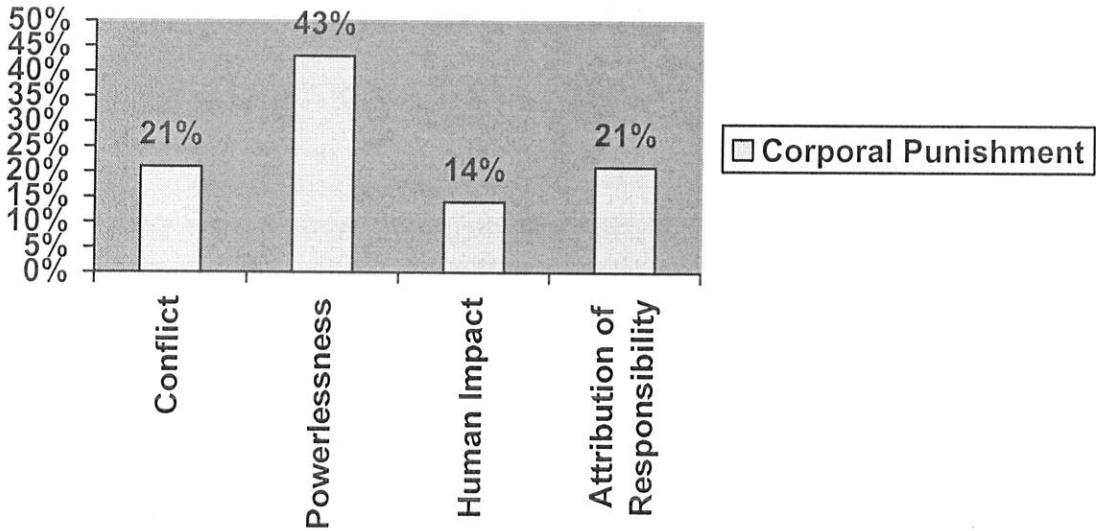


Figure 4.4 Dominant frame distribution on programs prepared on corporal punishment by the children’s radio program “From the World of Children” from 2007-2009

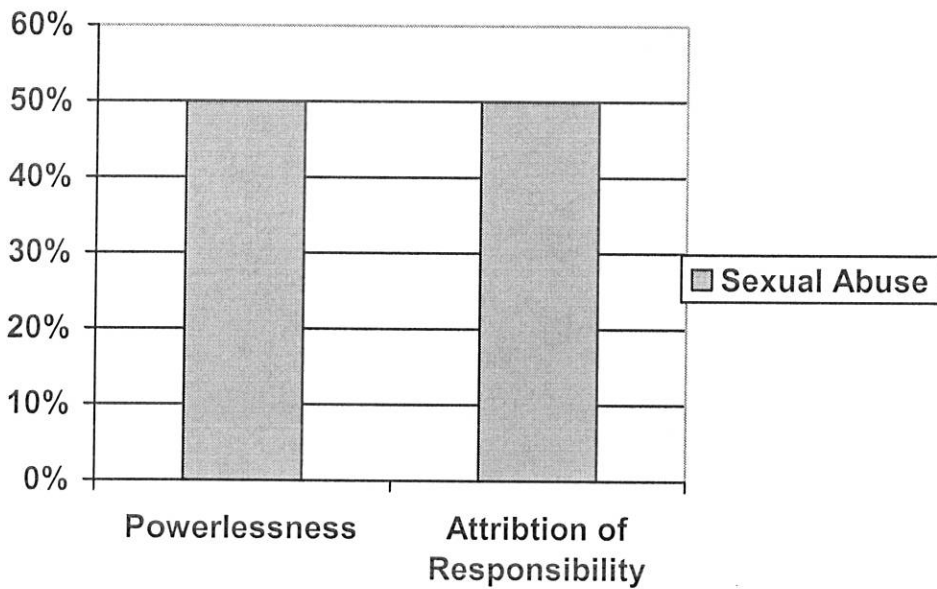


Figure 4.5 Dominant frame distribution on programs prepared on Sexual Abuse by the children’s radio program “From the World of Children” from 2007-2009

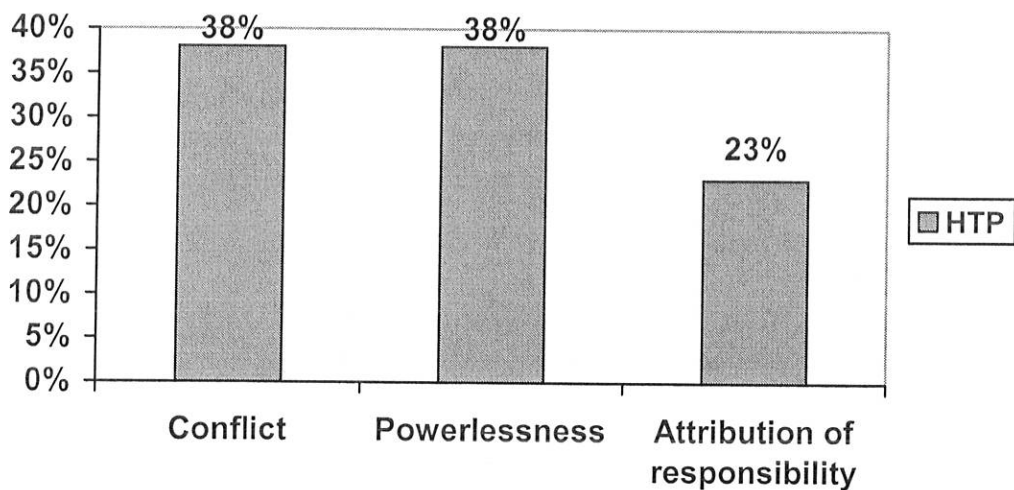


Figure 4.6 Dominant frame distribution on programs prepared on Harmful Traditional Practice by the children's radio program "From the World of Children" from 2007-2009

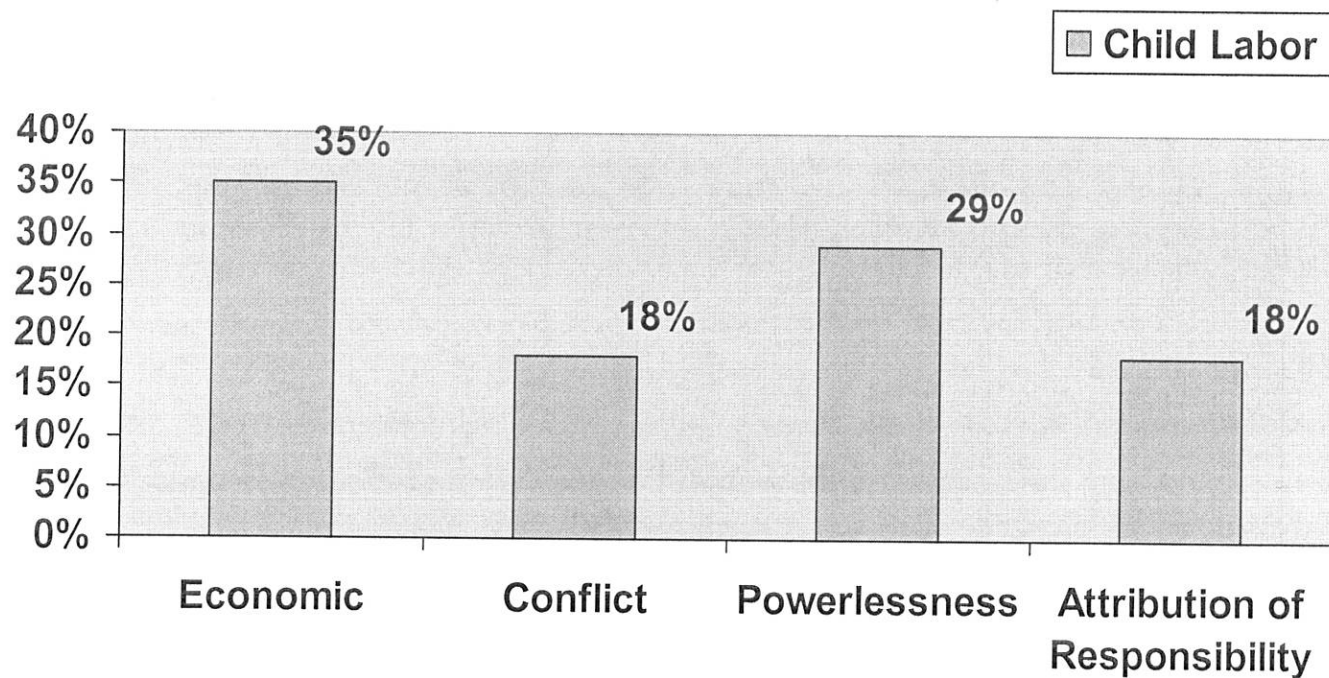


Figure 4.7 Dominant frame distribution on programs prepared on Child Labor by the children's radio program "From the World of Children" from 2007-2009

## **4.4 Factors Affecting Coverage and Framing of Programs on Violence against Children**

Based on the primary and secondary data collected and literature reviews, this section tries to show the factors that had affected the frames. Based on interviews it was found that the process of framing on the children's program was not prepared consciously. Nevertheless, it can not be said that the programs were not prepared keeping in mind certain parameters influenced by various factors be it from the side of the program production team or due to other historical and unforeseen reasons. Although Violence against Children was not given a frequent coverage, in the that it was presented, Attribution of responsibility, Powerlessness and Conflict frames were the frames most repeatedly used followed by Economic frame (24%, 37%, 22% and 12%). These frames, although not pre-thought, were a result of various factors as can be seen from evidences drawn from the interviews.

Major factors identified by this researcher are: Editors conscious decision; lack of awareness of editors, producers and journalists on the subject; sensitivity of the issue, lack of appropriate age classification as target group, The legal weight of the subject; Children as victims and Poverty and Underdevelopment. For further elaboration, the factors are treated separately below:

### **4.4.1 Editors' Conscious Decision due to Sensitivity of the Issue**

The media has a great power in agenda setting and hence what it decides to present becomes the most important issue in a community, a nation or the world in general. Hence, Editors and journalists have the power of determining what the audience should think and hold as an important issue and so their decisions determine the content (Donhoue, 1995).

It was found from interviews that a major factor why limited number of programs on Violence against Children were presented was due to a conscious decision by the editors not to air programs on violence. To quote from an interview with the previous editor of the children's radio program: *"... it was previously consciously avoided to cover issues of violence against children because, this was considered a very serious subject to present to children and there was not the awareness to present the topics to children in a way that is appropriate to their age. As a result the custom has always been to prepare programs only focusing on entertainment and teaching children to be responsible citizens in the community."*

Going over the editorial policy, this researcher however found no rule that prevented sensitive issues from being broadcasted as long as it will ultimately help the children to grow in a healthy environment. Nevertheless, the sensitivity of the issue of Violence against Children was raised repeatedly as a determining factor on how it was presented.

The Former editor, Ato Berhanu stressed that the fact that the primary audiences are children make the issue of violence very delicate to present. *"Because it is a very sensitive issue and it may coincide with the programs main intention which is to educate children by entertaining them. If we had presented more serious matters such as violence we do not know how children will react to it"* Hence, it was not since very recently (since 2006) that the issue of violence against Children was presented.

#### **4.4.2 Awareness of journalists and Editors**

As previously discussed, editors and journalists have the power of determining what the audience should think and hold as an important issue. Therefore they have the responsibility to identify social problems affecting the well being of the society and address them efficiently by setting them as a top priority agenda.

Their power can only be fully utilized however, if they are well aware of pertinent issues. This requires their seeking the collaboration of experts in the field (Martha, 2006).

According to the interviews and the data collected, not once was information covered about the available resources that children could access in case they are exposed to violence. This can be explained by the lack of awareness that the production team admitted to. The production team including the children producers, pertaining to the child protection structures available, stated that they were not certain that the child protection structures at police stations or at the federal court house existed; a somewhat exception is the main producer who stated: *“I have heard that there are some child protection units but am not sure of their whereabouts or as to how established they are.”*

To look at the awareness of the extent and seriousness of the problem is also important as is evaluating the awareness on violence. This is because the awareness of what Violence against Children is might not necessarily mean that it will be considered important to report. This was seen in that every member of the production team knew *about* Violence against Children but they did not know to what extent children were affected and the facilities available to protect those who were.

At the FGD with the children producers, when asked, the children were able to define and explain in their own language what violence against children meant. One child producer (12 years old) gave an informed and full answer and stated that: *“violence against children is any act of violence committed on a child causing physical or psychological damage”*. Although all the children did not give such an answer they had all unanimously stated that they are aware of specific violent acts that may be committed against children such as severe corporal punishments in schools and in homes, sexual abuses and the like. Nevertheless, it

was admitted to the interviewer that no action was taken to incorporate that knowledge in the program.

Conflicting views raised from lack of awareness were also noticed; such as a child producer that strongly believed that corporal punishment should be committed on children in order to correct their bad ways but after giving verbal warnings first. Studies however were conducted by child rights organizations and made public on the ineffectiveness of corporal punishments on children (Save the Children Sweden, 2007).

Evidence that raised awareness can increase the effectiveness of the media to transmit relevant issues in an informed manner is the observation that the coverage rate of Violence against Children and Children's Rights although not depth-wise, had increased steadily during the study period due to the various initiatives of different governmental and non governmental campaigns and trainings that the producer and editor attended on Children's Rights issues: *"A major factor that raised my interest (in producing programs on children's rights and Violence against Children) is that my organization sends us to participate in different trainings. I had gone to Nazareth to attend a training organized by forum for Street Children Ethiopia. We received training on children and violence and I had also received information materials."* The producer continues to explain that that was the reason she started preparing programs on children's rights more frequently: *"After the training we cover Children's Rights very frequently in different forms e.g. by dramas, by introducing the convention, by interviews with children also. We emphasize on the right to education, right to play, child labor, love, always rights with their responsibilities. This has been what we are doing since 2007"*

### 4.4.3 Lack of Appropriate Age Classification

The lack of suitable age of children targets has been, according to the former editor a long existing problem of the children's radio program. The ages of children audiences ranges from the ages 4/5 to 14/15. The radio program gets all kinds of feedback from different regions of Ethiopia through letters and interviews. In 2006, 246 letters were received by the station with regional distribution: North= 47, South= 31, Oromia/Harrar = 56, West= 36 and Addis Ababa and the surroundings= 64. *"From these feedbacks we were able to see the big gap in requests and interests which makes it very hard to find a common ground to prepare programs for children"* said the producer in an interview and further described that it was planned to separate these target groups and prepare two separate programs one for the younger ones and another program entitled "tadagi" or for adolescents. Nevertheless due to the very limitations of resources and time assigned to the children's radio program (30 mins), it was not possible to carry out this plan. The lack of appropriate age classification is therefore according to the former editor a great factor that has prohibited them from giving coverage to violence against children in a deeper and more meaningful manner.

### 4.5.1 The legal implication

The fact that Violence against Children is a major crime is one factor for the formation of Attribution of Responsibility frame. Programs on violence were found to hold mostly parents and guardians responsible for children's well being. Especially in corporal punishment this frame was highly reflected. This is because as it is banned legally from schools but is allowed to some extent in the homes, children who face this sort of violence from their parents will be led to the streets or will be victims of lasting psychological and physical scars. Responsibility was not assigned though to the government this illustrates John Harrington's (1998) argument that even when issues do make it onto the mass media more often than not it has been found that the manner that the story is construed will not be so far

outside the narrow focus of the dominant ideologies and that over time these conflicting views can be assimilated to fit the dominant ideology. The impact of the story will be very limited.

#### **4.5.2 Children as victims**

The age and position children have in the society makes them exposed to any sort of abuse. Children have been portrayed as weak and unable to defend themselves. In fact this is the underlying cause for the drafting of special international laws such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child despite the existence of the Human rights laws that covers children's rights.

The vulnerability of children hence has influenced the usage of the second most prominent frame i.e. the powerlessness frame by the children's program. Although special rights have been enacted and have also been introduced in the Ethiopian legal system, unless families, the society and the government make sure that children's rights are protected in every aspects of their lives, children on their own will be exposed to violence. The powerlessness frame as can be seen on figure 3, was the highest frame used (37%).

This however does not correlate with the new vision of the CRC that states that children should not be viewed as weak and powerless but should be seen in light of having responsibility in

#### **4.5.3 Poverty and Underdevelopment**

Poverty and the underdevelopment that affects many sectors of Ethiopia is one factor that has influenced the framing of programs on Violence against Children. This was most reflected as discussed in the above sections, in the conflict frame.

The conflict frame was used in programs that were made on Child labor and on early marriage. Regarding child labor the frame was used in explaining that children are forced in most cases to go in search of labor in order to survive or in order to support their families as they are from poor families.

This assumption of the producers in preparing the programs is verified by a study on income contribution of children in Ethiopia that shows that the average contribution of each working child is estimated at 4 to 7% of household income, although there is substantial variation with contributions ranging up to 50%. These results underline the dependency of poor households on child work for survival. (John Cockburn, 2004).

## Chapter five

### Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 5.1 Summary and Conclusions

This study had centered on studying the frames the Ethiopia Rdio children's program, "From the World of Children", used in framing programs on violence against children. The study has focused on the coverage of the programs broadcasted for three consecutive years, from 2007 to 2009. The children's radio program has existed for decades and it has been transmitted through the Ethiopian Radio and has 90% coverage of Ethiopia. It receives regular feedback from children throughout the regions primarily through letters. The program is run by one Editor, one main adult producer, and an average of six children producers whose number may vary from year to year.

Violence against Children is a social problem that is very prominent in Ethiopia and is affecting children everyday. The study was conducted based on the premise that the media has a role to transmit relevant information in order to curb social problems such as violence against children.. Although covering the issue is important, the study argued that the manner the topics are framed will determine the way the subject is understood by the audience and hence the main focus was on studying what types of frames the programs on violence had.

Hence, based on the framing conceptual framework, six dominant frames were used as reference to study the types of frames used by the children's program, namely: The Economic Frame, The Conflict Frame, The powerlessness frame, The Human Impact Frame, The Morality Frame and the Attribution of Responsibility frame.

All programs covered were grouped into two major groups namely, “Children’s Responsibilities” and “Children’s rights”. Accordingly, Program on children’s responsibilities were 159 while children’s rights were 64 and violence against children covered in 26 programs. The findings showed that the types of violence covered were mainly Corporal Punishment, Child Labor, Harmful Traditional Practices and Sexual Abuse.

In covering the above types of violence the Powerlessness frame was the most prominent frame employed. This frame was used 37% times of all coverages on Violence against Children. It was used 43% times in corporal punishment, 50% times in sexual abuse, 29% times in child labor and 38% times in HTP. The Attribution of responsibility frame was the second highest in that it was used 24% times from all coverages on Violence against Children. It was used 21% times in Corporal Punishment, 50% times in sexual abuse, 18% times in child labor, and 23% times in HTP. Conflict frame was also frequently used (18%). On the contrary the Morality frame was not employed at all in all productions.

Thorough interviews with the producers and editors the study had identified the major factors that affected the coverage of programs on violence against children. These were: editor’s conscious decision; lack of awareness of editors, producers and journalists on the subject; sensitivity of the issue and lack of appropriate age classification of target group.

The frames most dominantly used, the Powerlessness frame, the Attribution of responsibility frame and the Conflict frame although not pre-thought, were a result of various factors as well. The major factors are: The illegalness of Violence against Children; Children as victims and Poverty and Underdevelopment.

Looking at the current situation of children and violence in Ethiopia and the opportunity and responsibility of this media outlet to equip children, parent/caregivers and other adults with information on child protection and

children's rights, based on the findings it can boldly be said that violence against children and other children's rights issues were given very minimal coverage. Moreover, in the cases where topics on these issues were covered, they were not dealt with in depth.

The result of this research shows that the need for journalists to be updated on issues pertaining to their specialties is immense as it will influence the way they frame topics and serve the purpose of the program they are producing, editing or reporting for. Although the sensitiveness of the topic is unquestionable, the children's program had failed to give sufficient coverage and appropriately frame and transmit relevant information that could curb the problem of violence not intentionally but due to lack of awareness.

Appropriately categorizing a target audience is also very important in the media as that will influence the type of programs prepared. This is specially seen in the dilemma the producers had in preparing programs on violence against children which eventually affected the types of frames used.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

This study has mainly brought out the need for further research be done in the area of framing in order to assess what frames will better address the objective of the media in solving social problems such as Violence against Children for an Ethiopian audience. It further suggests that studies should be done on how the media could be used to transmit messages to children in a child friendly way for children to understand and respond. A study on the advocacy role the media is playing in helping to solve social problems such as violence against children will also be very relevant.

In order for media to effectively play the role of watchdog and of informing the public, the journalists and editors need to be enlightened on existing problems.

Therefore, further study should be done in analyzing the knowledge gap of the media personnel and they should be targeted for trainings by higher education institutions.

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## Appendix A

### Coding Sheet

#### 1. Program description

##### 1.1 Program type

1.1.1 Children's Responsibility \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.2 Children's Rights \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.3 Violence against Children \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Frames of programs on Violence against Children

##### 2.1 Economic Frame

Does the program describe or mention how VAC will affect the or No economy of children, Ethiopia Yes

Does the program refer to economic consequences of perusing  
Yes or No or not perusing an action?

##### 2.2 Conflict Frame

Does the story reflect disagreements between parties or  
Yes or No Individuals.

Does the story refer to two or more sides for different views  
Yes or No

### **2.3 Morality Frame**

Does the story make reference to morality, God and other religious  
Yes or No tents?

Does the story provide religious reasoning as a solution?

Yes or No

### **2.4 Powerlessness Frame**

Does the story describe children or a person dominated or weak?

Yes or No

Does the story describe of a certain power of having influence over

Yes or No children or adults?

### **2.5 Human Impact Frame**

Does the story provide a human example or give a human face on

Yes or No the issue?

Does the story go into private or personal lives of individuals?

Yes or No

### **2.6 Attribution of Responsibility Frame**

Does the program suggest that some level of government, NGOs,  
International communities, donors etc have the ability to alleviate

Yes or No the problem of VAC?

Does the program suggest that individuals themselves or their  
immediate caregivers have the ability to alleviate the problem?

Yes or No

## Appendix B

### Interview Guide

#### 1. General

- What is your understanding on Children's Rights?
- Are you aware of any rights that children might have?
- What is your understanding on Violence against Children?
- Are you aware of facilities or structures available to protect children from Violence in Ethiopia?
- How do your media cover programs on Children's Rights and Violence against children?
- How do you get feedbacks from your audiences on your programs?
- Who are your target audiences?

#### 2. Themes

- What are the types of violence you give coverage?
- Why do you focus on these sorts of violence only?

#### 3. Frames

##### 3.1 Economic Frame

- What are the economic implications of Violence against Children?
- Do you prepare programs on these economic implications? Please explain.

##### 3.2 Morality Frame

- Did you consider the societies beliefs in preparing the programs? Please explain.

### **3.3 Human Impact Frame**

- What is in your opinion the importance of putting a human face in preparing programs?

### **3.4 Attribution of Responsibility Frame**

- Who do you think is responsible for solving the problems of VAC?
- Why did you frequently refer to parents as responsible for solving problems on VAC?

### **3.5 Conflict Frame**

- What is in your opinion is the difference in opinion in the society that is a cause of VAC
- Do you think these conflicts of ideas have an important implication on VAC. Please explain

### **3.6 Powerlessness Frame**

- Do you consider children to be powerless in protecting themselves from Violence
- What/who do you consider as having power over children in their exposures to violence.

## Apendix C

### List of Informants

Tigist Tefera	Ethiopia Radio Children's program Main Producer
Birhanu Teshome	Ethiopia Radio Children's program Editor
Albert Seyoum	Ethiopia Radio Children's program Child producer
Melat kebede	Ethiopia Radio Children's program Child producer
Fosia Ahmed	Ethiopia Radio Children's program Child producer
Hana Teklu	Ethiopia Radio Children's program child producer

## Declaration

I the undersigned declare that this thesis is my original work. All the sources have been duly acknowledged.

Mishisalla Beyene

October 2009