

**AUDIENCE RECEPTION OF RADIO MESSAGES THAT
DISCOURAGE EARLY MARRIAGE: THE CASE OF
MECHA DISTRICT**

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List of Acronyms

EM	Early Marriage
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HTPs	Harmful Traditional Practices
NCTPE	National Committee on Traditional Practices of Ethiopia
NGO	None Governmental Organization
SNNPE	Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia

Operational definitions

Audience -listeners and viewers of media messages

Decoding -consists of activities that translate or interpret physical messages in to a form that has eventual meaning for receiver, (Dominick, 1999:6)

District- The government's structure above the kebele and/or peasant association

Early marriage- marriage under 18 years of age for both boys and girls

Encoding-activities that a source goes through to translate thoughts and ideas in to a form that may be perceived by the senses (Dominick, 1999:6)

Ge'do-an Amharic word which refers to a local sanction that the bridegroom and the bride's parents set years not to have sex until the bride gets matured

Kebele-refers to low level government structures, headed by elected leaders. They are common in urban areas, but also present in some rural settings. In rural areas, Woredas are generally divided in to kebeles

Reception- audiences' response to radio messages

Region-an administrative state region constituting the federal government

Zone-the government structure below the region that incorporates several Woredas

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Abstract

This study was conducted to explore audiences' interpretation and response to radio messages that discourage early marriage in Amhara Region, West Gojam Zone, Mecha district. To generate the appropriate data, triangulations of quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed. Convenience and purposive sampling methods were also used to select study subjects. The study elicited important insights in the understanding of how different audiences make meaning out of radio messages that discourage early marriage and how they decode the messages. Accordingly, it was found out that audiences have the knowledge and awareness of early marriage and its harmful consequences, but have different understandings of the term early marriage as compared to the encoder. In other words, communication failure is detected between the encoder and decoders. With regard to respondents' reaction to radio messages on early marriage, study subjects have showed positive reactions to the preferred meaning. Specifically, educated, and urban respondents showed a preference to totally accepting the preferred meaning of radio messages on early marriage. In addition, the age of respondents impacted on the decoding the radio messages on early marriage. As the age of respondents increases, their reading of the preferred meaning decreases and vice versa. The Muslim religion with regard to girls' marriage at first age was found to be incompatible with the preferred meaning of radio messages that discourage early marriage. However, the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian religion was found to be compatible concerning girls' marriage at first age with the preferred meaning. In comparison, the illiterate tended, in contrast to the literate, to perceive radio messages that discourage early marriage as incompatible with their local culture.. The language that the Amhara radio program used was found to be easily understandable except the minor problem with the use of the Wollo dialect. In addition, the content of the radio messages on early marriage were found to be easy for respondents to comprehend. Generally, study subjects showed positive reactions to radio messages that discourage early marriage regardless of their behavioral change.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Ethiopia is home to various Ethnic groupings with their indigenous and diverse cultures and traditions.

However, a 1998 base-line survey on harmful traditional practice in Ethiopia indicates that some of the traditional cultural practices in parts of Ethiopia contradict the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 5). This declaration states “no one shall be subjugated to torture or to cruel in human or degrading treatment.” According to this survey, different ethnic groups in Ethiopia are engaged in harmful traditional practices including female genital mutilation, milk-teeth extraction, early marriage, abduction and so on.

Ethiopian authorities agree that there are traditional practices that are harmful affecting the health and wellbeing of women and children. Consequently, the Ethiopian National Committee on Traditional Practices was formally established in 1987 for combating harmful practices that can affect the health and well-being of people.

Of the different traditional practices, early marriage, the focus of this study, is recognized throughout the different regions of Ethiopia as being one of those considered harmful. According to the baseline survey by NCTPE, “many girls in Amhara region, for example, become pregnant before they see their first menstrual blood. Many of these pregnancies, however, end in miscarriages, mostly because of the immaturity of the girl and her precarious nutritional status” (2003:145).

When one considers the impact of early marriage on the lives of children, particularly girls, it is clear that the practice violates a range of human rights, including those contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the

Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Some non-governmental and governmental organizations have launched programs to combat this traditional practice. According to the baseline survey, the National Committee on Traditional Practices of Ethiopia (NCTPE) has striven to bring about public awareness of Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs) through information, education and communication activities. NCTPE (1998:8) launched 'more comprehensive research on harmful traditional practices in Ethiopia with the intention of developing better strategies focusing on areas where the need for the eradication of HTPs is greatest'.

Strategic communication starts with an objective of igniting awareness among the audience in combating harmful traditional practices and motivates people towards adopting specific behaviors. As Mckee et al (2004) write, strategic communication is an approach to the design and implementation of programs that increase their impact on behavior and social change. For some, communication may conjure up the image of a glitzy mass media. However, programs can be effective if and only if they capture the attention of the intended audience and influence individual behavior and social norms.

"Gender equality and women's empowerment are essential for addressing the central concerns of poverty and insecurity, and for achieving sustainable, people centered development" (NCTPE,2003: 4). Therefore, to identify the prevalence of HTPs and to achieve the objective of people centered development, NCTPE has been using different communication strategies to reach the public and bring about behavioral change.

The Bahr Dar branch of NCTPE has been discouraging harmful traditional practices on the Amhara radio by signing an agreement with the radio station. Radio messages on early marriage have been aired from 7.00 to 8.00 p.m. every Wednesday from which information on traditional practices accounts only 30 minutes.

In the Amhara radio program, messages that discourage early marriage broadcasts in the

801 k/Hz medium wave. Messages on harmful traditional practices in general and early marriage in particular have been broadcast along with different programs: *mahberawi*, *women's column*, and the likes. During annual festival days like May 27, Easter and *Mewulid*, additional programs on early marriage are broadcast for 30 minutes (Interview with Ato Teshome NCTPE Amhara branch coordinator). The format includes documentaries, news, and dramas.

The Bahr Dar radio station is the first regional radio station in the country started in the Amhara region where the National Regional State Culture, Tourism and Information Bureau began its transmission on 8th of May, 1997(Interview with Ato Chalachew Alemayehu radio news unit leader).

The voice of Amhara National Regional sates is situated in Bahr Dar, and assisted by Radio Sweden's Media Development office. The programs have been supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) since its inception (interview with Ato Teshome NCTPE Amhara Branch Coordinator).

Among other things, the station and radio programs aims at creating awareness amongst rural women covering issues related to their situation. They include educational information, advice and support on different topics including harmful traditional practices.

The Bahr-Dar branch of NCTPE provides the focus of this study. The branch has reached the public with messages that discourage harmful traditional practices including early marriage, the core subject of this research.

By using different communication strategies, including radio broadcasts, NCTPE Amhara branch along with other organizations has been discouraging harmful health traditional practices including early marriage.

The main objective of this research is to examine audience reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage in the selected area.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to the baseline survey of 1998, women and children in Ethiopia, who are the vast majority comprising of 75 percent of the population, carry the brunt of HTPs in the country. Therefore, if the health of the majority population is affected by traditional practices, this will impact on the countries economy.

In addition, it is a sensitive issue at the movement but much has not yet been done in the area.

Though there are studies that assess the consequences and prevalence of traditional practices nationwide, the negative effects of early marriage in the Amhara region and the prevalence of harmful traditional practices, there are no studies on how audiences interpret radio messages that discourage early marriage. As a result, little is known about how the target audiences make sense of the radio messages that discourage early marriage.

Therefore, the researcher has under taken this research to fill this knowledge gap.

1.3 Objectives

The general objective of this research is:

To investigate audiences' reception of radio messages that discourages early marriage.

The specific objectives are:

To identify the knowledge and awareness of the target group under study about early marriage;

To identify audiences' interpretation of radio messages that discourages early marriage;

To identify factors that influence audience's reception of the program in relation to early marriage.

1.4 Research Questions

To answer the above questions, the researcher has formulated the following research questions.

What is the knowledge and awareness of the target group under study about early marriage?

How are the radio messages that discourage early marriage interpreted by audience of Mecha district?

What are the factors that influence audiences' reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage?

1.5. Scope of the Study

The scope of this research is limited to the assessment of how audiences in Mecha district interpret radio messages that discourage early marriage.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

The populations of this study are the people of Mecha who are audiences of radio messages on early marriage.

Since the subjects of this study are selected purposively, it is difficult to assume that samples are representatives of all audiences. As a result, the conclusions drawn from this study can not be generalized to the whole population of Mecha district.

Besides time and budgetary constraints, lack of willingness of some organizations to disclose information presented a serious problem. For this, Bahr Dar Branch Fistula Hospital is a case in point. In addition, in the Amhara radio station and NCTPE Amhara branch, there were not enough written documents to refer to.

1.7. Application of Results

Hopefully findings of this research will help those who wish to research harmful traditional practices in general and early marriage in particular; it will also help inform the work of NCTPE Amhara branch working for the elimination of harmful traditional practices-early marriage in the region.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 The Concept of Early Marriage (EM)

Marriage may be defined as a partnership between two or more members of opposite sexes known as husband and wife by the mutual consent of both parties (NCTPE, 2003:123).

Marriage is also the emotional and legal commitment of two people to share emotional and physical intimacy, various tasks and economic resources (Olson and Defrain, 2000:8).

Finally, marriage can be conceived as a social institution that unites people in a special form of mutual dependence for the purpose of founding and maintaining a family (pathfinder International/Ethiopia, 2006:1).

According to the literature, early marriage is commonly practiced in different parts of the world. According to the report of Pathfinder International/Ethiopia on Cases and Consequences of Early Marriage in Amhara Region, “the practice of early marriage is common in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. In specific parts of West Africa, East Africa and South Asia, marriage before puberty is not unusual. In North Africa, the Middle East, and other parts of Asia marriage shortly after puberty is common among those living traditional lifestyles. Marriage of female adolescents’ between sixteen and eighteen years of age is also common in parts of Latin America and eastern Europe” (2006:1).

2.2 Early Marriage in Ethiopia

Harmful traditional practices are deep-rooted and wide spread in the society throughout Ethiopia. By unloading the burden of harmful traditional practice, especially from children of both sexes and women, it is possible to change the face of poor countries such

as Ethiopia. Women and children of both sexes suffer from the effects of harmful traditional practices including, nutritional taboos, female genital mutilation, early marriage, and marriage by abduction, milk teeth extraction, keeping a baby out of the sun and force-feeding fresh butter to new-born children, delivering babies unattended in isolated hut built for the purpose and so on (NCTPE, 1998 & NCTPE, 2003).

There are also traditional practices that are discriminatory or gender biased. Studies indicate a number of harmful traditional practices that specifically target women (NCTPE, 2003; NCTPE, 1997, NCTPE, 1998 and Pathfinder International/Ethiopia, 2006). These include shaking a woman after delivery, food discrimination, bleeding after expulsion of placenta, massaging the abdomen to enhance expulsion of the placentas. In addition, if a woman bleeds either as a result of menstruation period or after child birth, she will be considered unclean or polluted and is not allowed to join in religious or social services such as entering to the Orthodox Church or carrying out the 'solat' for Muslim women. In keficho for instance, a woman who is in her menstrual period is kept isolated from every male including her own children. It is believed that they will die if she dares to look them in the eye.

Generally, different traditions, customs and superstitions are reflected among the various ethnic groups that can hamper the lives of people in various ways. According to the report of NCTPE on Harmful Traditional Practices, “most ethnic cultures in Ethiopia are bound up with myths, superstitions and a false conception of humans, including their psychic and sexual lives. There are traditional practices in almost all ethnic cultures which adversely affect the health of people, goals of equality, political and social rights, and economic development” (2003: 3).

The distribution of early marriage prevalence at a young age varies among the different regions of Ethiopia. As indicated in the Base Line Survey of 1998 on Harmful Traditional Practices by NCTPE, early marriage is mainly practiced in the Northern and North Western. The survey also indicates that the major early marriage practitioners of Ethiopia are Amhara 82%, Tigray 79%, Benshangul Gumuz 64%, and Gambella 64%.

The above mentioned survey also indicates that the mean age of girls varies among the different regions. In Amhara region, the average age for girls to marry is 14-years of age, in Tigray 15, Benshangul Gumuz 16, Oromiya 17 (NCTPE, 2003).

As one can learn from the above figure, Amhara region is the most prevalent area in practicing early marriage as compared to other regions in the country. For this, social and cultural pressures can be attributed.

However, the legal age of marriage for both males and females is 18 years. Marriage before the age of 18 is considered as early as it results in physical, psychological and health problems particularly among women and children of both sexes.

2.3 Early Marriage as a Norm

According to the report on causes and consequences of early marriage in Amhara region by pathfinder International/ Ethiopia, “many societies have norms that limit the age of young girls to enter in to marriage, but in some cases the age limit does not take in to consideration their physiological readiness for child bearing. Marriage often takes place at ages much earlier than the legally ratified minimum age” (2006:1).

The focus of this study, early marriage, is a norm among different communities of Ethiopia. Most society practiced early marriage for several reasons. Being virgin before marriage, for example, is highly valued and rewarded, and premarital pregnancy is too taboo. If things are the other way round, it is considered as degrading the respect and reputation to the family of the girl (NCTPE, 2003). If a girl is aware of the fact that she is pregnant before marriage, she will either commit suicide or go out of her family's home for fear of parental and traditional consequences. Consequently, “Ethiopia has one of the lowest average ages for first marriage. Virginity is a sign of purity and honor among the Oromo, Amhara, Tigray and most of the largest ethnic groups in Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia (SNNPE) ”(NCTPE, 2003:132).

Though age for marriage is ratified in Ethiopia, early marriage is still practiced. According to the report, "In one sample from Gojam, 88 % of girls were married before the age of 15 and, 37 percent before they were 10 "(NCTPE, 2003:137). It is also common to see early marriage followed by early pregnancy which is hazardous for both the mother and the fetus during delivery.

Early pregnancy following early marriage is highly related to culture among the different ethnic groups. In Amhara region, for example, it is supported and admired to have children immediately after marriage, and it is provoked and appreciated.

There are different beliefs among the different regions with regard to early marriage. In Gojam, for example, "it is believed that menstrual blood breaks the hymn. In fact in some parts of Amhara, menstruation and hymn blood are not clearly distinguished. A girl who shows blood is considered to have had intercourse and, therefore, to have been [deflowered]. Menarche, the start of the menstrual period, is supposed to be induced by intercourse and is not perceived as a natural biological event independent of intercourse. Thus the cycle of early marriage (before menses) to avoid the same blood before marriage, and the subsequent appearance of menses after the consummation, reinforce this false believe in the society" (NCTPE, 2003:131-132). As seen above, marriage in Ethiopia particularly in Amhara region seems to be dominated and dictated by traditional beliefs.

Human rights convention, however, underlines that early marriage violates the right of individuals particularly girls. Given this, Ethiopia realizes the need for setting minimum age for marriage and ratifies it. The Revised Family Code Proclamation NO.213/2000, article 7(1) declares that "neither a man nor a woman who has not attained the full age of eighteen years shall conclude marriage" (2000:5).

Those families who do not adhere to the practice of early marriage, however, face a number of social challenges. Among these are the invoking of curses, exclusion from

established social institutions/functions such as *idir* (self help voluntary associations for funeral occasions) or other voluntary associations; the refusal of marriage; and open criticism, NCTPE, 2003.

2.3 Cases for Practicing Early Marriage

According to a baseline survey of 1998 by NCTPE, the major reasons for early marriage include:

- Economic reasons i.e. improvement of the economic status of the family through marriage, or through material gains during the marriage ceremony (in Amhara in particular were different contributions in kind or case are made for the ceremony by relatives, neighbors, etc) or through dowry or bride price (Anyiwak, Bume, Guragie, Hararri);
- The parents desire to see the marriage of their daughter and/or a grand child (before they pass away);
- To strengthen ties between the marrying families;
- To avoid the perpetuation of a non-married status ("kumeker"). If a girl is not married beyond a certain age, she is considered as undesirable for marriage, a shame both to her family and herself. To avoid this stigma and ensure that the girl gets a husband, families agree to a request even when they might not consider the girl old enough;
- Early and compelling requests when the family or the elders sent by the bride groom's family are of such a status that negative response is unthinkable (Amhara, Tigray) or, as in Oromiya, when the request is from a "Bala Wouqabi" or ordained by him;
- To avoid premarital sex/loss of virginity and its consequences;
- Other reasons include the need to marry before menstruation appears (Argoba), to stake first-claim (Tigraway), for the fame of giving a marriage feast (Amhara, Kimant) as a repayment for attending other (friends, relatives, neighbors) wedding feasts (Amhara), to get the services of a son-in-law (Agew) and fear of abduction (Oromo);
- Fear of compelling pressure from community elders. (NCTPE, 1998:66-67).

2.4 .Effects of Early Marriage

Different documents including the 1998 base line survey on harmful traditional practices in Ethiopia point out the following harmful effects of early marriage (EM). As to the report, the most frequently mentioned harmful effects of early marriage include:

- harm to the uterus and/or the body in general including the lack to thrive, sickliness of the girl-child and damage to the uterus and the vagina, sometimes leading to death;
- problems at delivery;
- loveless marriage often ending in divorce;
- the girl child being not mature enough to run a household;
- problems related to early pregnancy;
- psychological problems;
- High expenses related to the marriage since it often ends in early divorce or the running a way of the bride;
- Early marriage can result in fistula. A study on the negative effects of early marriage by NCTPE reveals that “data collected from the fistula hospital indicated that 52.7 percent of the fistula cases married before they celebrated their 16th birth day and 90 percent married before they reached the age of 20 years”(1997:15).
- “Early marriage can also curtail girls' opportunities for education restricting their personal development and long lasting impacts on their lives and the lives of their children. Teenage girls are also much more vulnerable than older women to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and it also impacts on families and societies, the nations as a whole loses when girls are uneducated and unprepared for their roles as mothers and contributors to society” (NCTPE, 2003:147).With regard to education, in many traditional societies, “parents do not support young girls education after a certain age, especially after puberty, due to fear of pre-marital sexual relationships and unintended pregnancy. They also fear the vulnerability to sexual abuse and rape after the age of puberty. Loss of virginity is considered a disgrace for the family. Greater effort is therefore needed to create an environment supportive of girls' education which is an important aspect of human rights” (Pathfinder International/ Ethiopia, 2006:14).

Education as to the above concept is regarded as crucial in the fight against Harmful traditional Practices HTPs as it empowers people, women in particular. Consequently, women's education enables them to withstand traditional pressures for conformity is crucial as they are the ones that inculcate cultural values in their children. Female education is hampered mainly by the sexual division of labor, which confines girls to household activities, by early marriage, by the unfavorable societal attitude towards the education of girls and by the restriction on their physical movement in relation to the distance of the school from their homes, (NCTPE, 2003). However, “this results in an over all, literacy among females age 12-49 in the region [Amhara region] appears to be less than 40 percent, which suggests that more effort needs to be exerted to keep girls in school(pathfinder International/Ethiopia,2006:12). According to this study the largest number 31.7 percent of out-of-school women aged 12-24 give the main reason for not attending school as due to marriage.

Traditionally, the pressure for practicing early marriage may come from different parties. According to Pathfinder International/Ethiopia, “most of the urge comes from parents, (90 percent reported pressure from fathers and 88 percent from mothers).Twenty-two percent reported influence from community elders, who in most cases act as intermediate negotiators between the bride’s and groom’s families and work to get themselves heard and respected. In general, parents, grand parents, and other relatives play a significant role in pushing one in to marriage” (2006:31).

Even early marriage can have an indirect role in the propagation of HIV as most of these marriages fail and most of the women end up in urban areas and as commercial sex-workers. There is a need, therefore, to relate the fight against HTPs with the struggle to prevent HIV transmission "(NCTPE, 2003:23) Concerning the prevalence of marriage before 18, the Pathfinder International/Ethiopia 2006 study indicated that Ethiopia has one of the highest proportions of child marriage in the world, and the practice occurs in its more extreme forms and at higher numbers in Northern regions, particularly in Amhara and Tigray regions.

Generally, the practice of early marriage occurs in its serious forms and at higher numbers in the Amhara region for various reasons. Early marriage could also bring psychological, physiological and health problems especially among women and children of both sexes in Ethiopia in general and in Amhara region in particular.

2.5. Theoretical Frame work

2.5.1. Audience Reception Theory

Reception theory is interested in the meaning audiences make sense of the texts they consume. Scholars agree that audiences interpret media messages differently due to the various factors. As Williams (2003) notes, the factors can be individual, social and cultural.

He adds that media audiences are no longer seen as an undifferentiated mass of passive recipients of messages, but rather as a combination of different groups with their own histories, habits and social interactions.

2.5.2. Reception Analysis

Many scholars have agreed that audiences interpret media messages differently based on their life experience. According to Wicks, for instance, audience members do not simply receive media messages. Although the media may be instrumental in shaping attitudes, opinions, and beliefs, people actively process and interpret media messages in the context of stored knowledge (2001: XIV).

In addition, Berger confirms that “everyone who watches a mass mediated text interprets it on the basis of his or her disposition, education, background, and knowledge base” (2003:69).

As already noted, mass mediated audiences are not passive receivers of media texts instead they interact and struggle to make meaning out of mediated messages or texts.

Reception scholars are interested in identifying how audiences interpret those media messages they consume. Williams (2003) points out that the active audience could appropriate unexpected pleasures from his or her exposure of the mainstream media.

“The capacity of the audience to produce diverse interpretations of what they see, hear and read came to be celebrated in some quarters as evidence of the freedom of the audience to resist the media. Thus even if the media produce a dominant ideology or discourse, the audience can resist this” (Williams, 2003:166).

Williams (2003) also points out that for a number of media theorists, more power rests with audiences as to how they understand media messages with regard to their individual attitudes and opinions, and social backgrounds.

Consequently, the media effects model is highly criticized by these scholars as it considers people as passive consumers of media messages putting aside or ignoring interpretations that audiences could hold.

Theorists have pointed to further weaknesses with the media effects model. According to Williams, “it doesn’t address the influences that intervene between the messages from the media and the opinions and attitudes people hold. It also denies the audience any capacity to interpret, discount or distort the media messages they receive, ignoring that people engage with media messages from their own ideas, prejudices and preconceptions” (2003:172).

Nevertheless, for magic bullet theorists, messages are believed to affect audience members uniformly - the belief that each audience member interpret and understand it in a similar fashion (Wicks, 2001).

Wicks seem to argue against the stimulus response or behaviorists theory. The behaviorists adhere to the premise that people are essentially irrational and that emotional impulses cause them to behave as they do. Early communication researchers were

influenced by the philosophy of stimulus response approach. Wicks quoting Nimmo 1977 points out “understanding how we interact with media involves the use of cognitive schemas, constructs, cognitive maps, and scripts that contribute to the creation of meaning through the interaction of new and stored information” (2001:104).

In relation to the above idea, Staiger contends, “No natural, universally worthwhile texts exist. All interpretations are subjective, and all texts have political and social meanings and values 'positive' or 'negative', 'reinforcing' or contrary to the beliefs of their various readers [listeners]” (2005:3).

Berger (2005) points out that hypodermic theory has been abandoned and replaced by reader-response theory or reception theory. He disagrees with the philosophies that favors all members of an audience read a text the same way and make the same meaning out of it. Like Wicks (2001) he believes that meaning is a negotiated process between specific audiences and texts.

Wicks summarize this approach in that “the media and people are partners in constructing social reality about the world, country, and community in which they live. This contributed reality is a direct result of the interaction between our own life experiences and what we encounter through the media” (2003:95).

2.5.3. Encoding-Decoding Model

This model was first articulated by Stuart Hall. Williams quoting Cruz and Lewis (1994) writes that the encoding-decoding model is the starting point of the active audience research (Williams, 2003:195).

As Dominick explains, encoding refers to the activities that a source goes through to translate thoughts and ideas in to a form that may be perceived by the senses (1999:6). He adds that media institutions encode messages to affect audiences. These messages are designed to engage audience members and stimulate them to think about messages in certain ways.

Gunter, quoting Livingstone, points out “contemporary theories of the audience are more concerned with the way that active audiences contribute to the negotiation and construction of meanings” (2000:28).

According to Dominick, the decoding process is the opposite of the encoding process. It consists of activities that translate or interpret physical messages in to a form that has eventual meaning for a receiver (1999:7).

Gunter writes in this regard: "Audiences do not comprise a vacuum to be passively filled by media messages. Instead, audiences must be conceived as being psychologically active in their use of the media and the way they react to media content. Viewers, listeners and readers place their own interpretations on media content that are influenced by the social communities to which they belong or with which they identify "(2000:45).

As one can learn from the above notion, though media texts address ideas and messages, the audience should be conceived as active decoders of media texts. Its implication is that decoders on their side may resist, or agree either partly or totally the ideology media texts offer.

In response to the direct media effect theorists, Williams contends “the content of the media, described as media texts, is open to a range of interpretations as it is polysemic
Audiences are involved in semiotic work in decoding the meaning of media texts” (2003:196).

Some people argue that media audiences interpret texts by incorporating their experiences or pre-existing beliefs with media texts. In this regard Wicks pointed out that “as consumers of media, we should realize that our own psychological composition influences the meanings we construct from media messages. Media practitioners should learn to anticipate how the messages they produce will interact with different members of society in their construction of social reality” (2001:29).

2.6. The Nature of Media Audience

Wicks categorize audiences into mass and segmented audiences. He writes: "The mass audience is most often viewed as homogeneous composition of individuals who are separate from one another and behave independently. The members of this audience are anonymous to the messages producer. Little interaction takes place among the people that make up the mass audience and the message are presumed to have a uniform influence of each member" (Wicks, 2001:37).

The segmented audience on the other hand is another aspect of the nature of audience. "Until the mid 1980s for example, (American) television was dominated by the three main networks, ABC, CBS and NBC, which attracted a mass audience garnering more than 90% of all viewers, [but] during the 1990s, with the rapid proliferation of cable networks, pay-per-view, fox, WB, and UPN, the combined ratings of the big three networks slipped to less than 50%. This together with the phenomenal growth of video stores, changes in radio formats, multi screen theaters, the vides stores, changes in radio formats, the advent of CDS, and of course the Internet, led many to proclaim that the age of the mass audience had come to an end [and] the age of the segmented audience, enabling people to program their own media environment, had arrived "(Wicks, 2001:38). From this one can understand that due to the advent of varied and advanced means of communication, audiences have got the chance to select media channel that suits their needs and interests. Though Wicks is writing about America, the application can also work in Ethiopian case. Thus, this leads people to the conclusion that media technologies result in audience segmentation.

This chapter presents the concept of early marriage along with its reasons for practicing it and its harmful consequences. The concept of reception theory has also been discussed. Since the intent of this study is to investigate audience reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage in the study area, the aforementioned review of literature and the theoretical framework of reception analysis are relevant to my study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this project is to investigate how audiences in Mecha district interpret, make sense of, use, interact with, and create meaning out of radio messages that discourage early marriage. To answer this question, I employed a triangulation of both qualitative and quantitative data gathering tools to collect relevant information.

This chapter includes the description of the research method, the data collection instruments, the study subjects and size, the procedures used in gathering the data and the statistical treatment utilized in analyzing the data collected.

According to Flick (2002), the combination of different qualitative methods in a given study can also be applied to the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Flick adds that “the different methodological perspectives complement each other in the study of an issue and this is conceived as the complementary compensation of the weaknesses and blind spots of each single method” (2002:265). This approach has been supported by Strelitz (2005) in that the strengths of quantitative techniques tend to be the weaknesses of qualitative and vice versa. Therefore, to compensate the weakness of one method, the researcher employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods.

With survey method, the researcher of this project also incorporated two qualitative data collection techniques including key informant in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions.

According to Deacon et al, “the key difference between qualitative and quantitative research methods is that within the qualitative tradition, samples tend to be seen as illustrative of broader social and cultural processes, rather than strictly and generally representative” (1999:65). Though my study subjects were not representative, I employed

survey method to get wider information from a relatively large number of population quickly. However, to complement the quantitative approach, I also employed qualitative methods such as focus group discussion and key informant in depth interviews.

The objective of this project is, therefore, conducting the research wider through quantitative method, incorporating a range of variables. In addition, I constituted two focus group discussions and two key informant in-depth interviews to support the information obtained from the survey approach.

3.2. Quantitative Approach

Survey Method

According to Groves et al, “a survey is a systematic method for gathering information from (a sample of) entities for the purpose of constructing quantitative descriptors of the attributes of the larger population of which the entities are members” (2004:2). The survey technique is well known for collecting systematic data quickly.

Some scholars resist the application of survey method for audience reception studies. According to Hansen et al, “discovering how audiences make sense of media messages is not easily done through survey research. (It) is good at providing a snapshot of audience beliefs, attitudes and behavior- the what of audience media relationships but is much less suited for telling us about the why or how of such relationships” (1998:257).

Babbie & Mouton write that “the quantitative researcher usually aims at analyzing variables and the relationships between them in isolation from the context or the setting (so as to increase generalizability), the qualitative researcher takes the exact opposite approach: the aim is to describe and understand events within the concrete, natural context in which they occur” (2001:273).

Using survey method, therefore, the researcher examined the broader perspective of how audiences interpret radio messages that discourage early marriage. These findings were triangulated by using qualitative methods.

3.3. Qualitative Approach

According to Babbie & Mouton (2001), qualitative researchers have mainly been interested in describing actions in terms of the actors own beliefs, history and content.

There are features identified by different scholars for qualitative research that distinguish it from quantitative research. These features include:

- Research is conducted in the natural setting of social actors;
- A focus on process rather than outcome;
- The actors' perspective (the insider or *emic* view) is emphasized;
- The primary aim is in-depth (thick) descriptions and understanding of actions and events;
- The main concern is to understand social action in terms of specific context (ideo-graphic motive) rather than attempting to generalize to some theoretical population;
- The research process is often inductive in its approach, resulting in the generation of new hypotheses and theories. (Babbie& Mouton, 2001:270).

3.4. Debate on Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

Different scholars in the field of research favor a given method over another. For instance, Flick citing Kleining (1982) underlines that “qualitative methods can live very well without the later use of quantitative methods, where as quantitative methods need qualitative methods for explaining the relations they find” (2002:264). Here the scholar tends to emphasize the strengths of qualitative approach over quantitative.

However, proponents of quantitative technique criticize qualitative methods. Stake points out that “quantitative researchers regularly treat uniqueness of cases as errors, outside the system of explained science” (1995; 39). However, proponents of qualitative methods respond to the criticism. Stake, for example, writes “We take a particular case and come to know it well, not primarily as to how it is different from others but what it is, what it does. There is emphasis on uniqueness, and that implies knowledge of others that the case is different from, but the first emphasis is on understanding the case it self”(1995:8). This scholar further elaborates the advantage in that case study seems a poor basis for generalization but single or a few cases will be studied at length.

Generally, taking the debates by different scholars of the field into account, the researcher of this project decided to employ qualitative and quantitative research methods to corroborate the weaknesses of one method by the strengths of another. This was applied by surveying quantitatively through an interview questionnaire as to how the majority audiences of radio messages on early marriage react to the radio message on early marriage. However, the researcher of this project believed that the quantitative approach alone does not give enough data for the study. As a result, the researcher included the qualitative approach to get rich and in depth data as to how audiences decode the radio messages on early marriage.

3.5. Data Collection Method

In my research, I used a triangulated, three-stage approach to examine audiences' reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage. The three stages were:

1. Survey method was used to examine the subjects' reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage.
2. Two focus group interviews with total of 16 discussants in order to support the survey data.
3. Two semi structured in-depth individual interviews with key informants-with program Producer and NCTPE Amhara branch coordinator.

3.5.1. Pre-testing

According to Strelitz (2005), one of the useful ways of overcoming the potential difficulties of data gathering tools is to pretest or pilot the questionnaire. In my case, I offered the questionnaire to a number of interviewers whom I trained in order to see or check whether it worked as intended. This gave the opportunity to assess the clarity of the questions; to check that the interviewers understood the questions; and to ensure that the interview flows in an efficient and purposeful manner.

In addition, before the questionnaire was administered, it was appraised by different scholars in the field of research at Bahr Dar University.

The survey data collection was conducted by high school female and male students of high achievers after they were trained as interviewers.

My role during the survey interview was to supervise whether the recruited interviewers were approaching the people who fulfilled my purpose. In short, I went around with interviewers to monitor whether enumerators approached the right individuals. Besides, I interviewed some interviewees. The researcher believed that monitoring enumerators could increase reliability of the data obtained.

At first it was difficult for me to approach respondents especially the rural. But later, I went to the Mecha preparatory school and asked the director for help on how to approach the study subjects. Soon he called on students who are from the rural Enamirt-my selected kebele, and sent me with them to the place and they introduced me with the kebele administrators. Then those kebele administrators asked the people to cooperate me in providing information. After that the people voluntarily co-operated with me.

3.5.2. Sample Size

Since the objective of this research is to assess audience reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage, I found out that it was impossible to select representative subjects randomly by households or by any other means. This is because my study population must be not the entire population of Mecha district, but those who had been listening to the program on early marriage on the radio. Hence, I had to contact the people of the study area while they gathered for buying fertilizer or compost, for social gatherings such as *Idir*, for borrowing money from Mecha branch Amhara Credit and Saving Institute(ACSI), marketing and for schooling in order to know who had been attending the radio program with regard to early marriage.

In addition, the population are scattered especially the rural so that I had to choose study subjects purposively who fulfilled the criteria I had set up.

I had planned to incorporate in my interview 200 heterogeneous study subjects and I looked for subjects till I secured the required number. Since the questionnaires were filled by trained interviewers, I was able to obtain all of the completed questionnaires (200).

3.5.3. Study Area

Mecha, the site of the research, is located in the Amhara National Regional State, West Gojjam zone with the total population of 344, 853, and 62,400 households from which 9,954 are urban households. The district consists of 42 kebeles of which 39 are rural and three are urban. Of the chosen kebeles, Enamrt has a total population of 7068 and 1346 households. In addition, Merawi has a total population of 24,829 and a total household of 9,954. Merawi, the urban of Mecha administration, was selected along with its three kebeles.

Merawi is 530 km north of the capital, Addis Ababa.

The Information with regard to population and household statistics has been secured from Mecha district Agriculture and Rural Development office. Deciding the district for my study, Merawi-the town of the administration and a rural kebele, Enamrt, were selected by judgment to undertake the research.

3.5.4. Focus Group Interview

“The focus group interview has gained widespread popularity as a research method for studying audiences. With the rise of reception studies in media research during the 1980s it became a key component of the essential of approaches deployed by communications and media researchers” (Hansen et al, 1998:258).

Focus group methodology involves bringing together a group or series of groups of individuals to discuss an issue in the presence of a moderator (Gunter, 2000: 42).

Though a moderator may face challenges in controlling dominating respondents while encouraging passive participants, Gunter (2000) suggests that these challenges can be managed without either embarrassing or completely shutting down the dominating participants. This can be managed by encouraging participants to speak in their turn and

by giving relatively equal time for all participants. He also points out the need for the establishment of rapport with the group members so as to encourage the passive or quieter members to participate.

Flick (2003) points out that focus groups are used as a method on their own or in combination with other methods including single interviews. Given the above idea, the researcher of this project designed to employ key informants for in-depth interviews.

For the focus group discussion, men, women, girls, boys and the likes were grouped in the same group to stimulate hot and argumentative discussion from the heterogeneous groups.

With regard to the number of members that a given focus group discussion FGD accommodates, Deacon et al (1999) recommend that the most common number of participants is between five and ten. Consequently, the researcher decided to have eight participants for a group, and the researcher believed that it is a reasonable number to stimulate and exchange debate.

In total, besides the survey data, two focus group interviews with a total of 16 discussants were conducted. A focus group comprising of eight members were conducted from Enamrt, and another group with the same number of members were conducted from Merawi. Besides gender and living locations, age and level of education of the participants had been taken in to account while composing the focus groups.

For both group members samples of radio programs on early marriage were played to stimulate the discussion.

In my project, focus groups were used to support survey results. While survey method gave the broader aspect, the focus groups gave the in depth aspect so that the results complemented each other.

3.5.5. Sampling and Recruitment of Groups

“Audience studies using focus group methodology often draw participants from naturally existing communities and this clearly makes the task of engaging the desired participants easier than drawing them completely at random”(Sterlitz,2005:72). My sampling technique for the focus group interviews was non-random in that I purposely selected discussants. Purposive sampling procedures were used. My choice of focus group interviewees were shaped by different factors such as age, sex, area of residence and education level.

Besides, the interview and focus group discussions were conducted in Amharic, the native language of the study area and later translated in to English.

The interviews setting for the discussion were Merawi preparatory school for the urban discussants and Enamrt public gathering area for the rural discussants because of their convenience to me as well as the discussants.

My role as a moderator during the discussion was facilitating and stimulating discussion. This role of the moderator is supported by Gunter in that “the moderator ensures the discussion remains on the issue at hand, while eliciting a wide range of opinions on that issue” (2000: 42).

3.6. Interview Guide

To make the discussion focus on the subjects and issues of my project, I prepared interview guide. However, I did not rigidly follow the interview guide (see appendix).

3.6.1. Recording the Data

Before the discussion started, I asked the focus group participants’ consent to record the discussions on tape. Following this, I asked each participant to introduce who they were for the purpose of voice identification and for the purpose of building intimacy and minimizing suspicion among participants. I also asked each participant for their age, social role, and level of education, job and the likes.

3.6.2. Key Informant In- depth Interviews

Besides Focus Group Discussion FGD, the researcher conducted interviews with different people such as NCTPE Amhara branch project coordinator and, message producer discouraging early marriage.

The researcher of this project conducted two in depth individual interviews with NCTPE Amhara branch project coordinator and message encoders that discourage early marriage. These key informants were approached to know the purpose of encoding the message on early marriage and the challenges they faced while discouraging. I conducted two individual in-depth interviews with key informants as to why they encode a given message on early marriage.

3.6.3. Sampling and Recruitment of Individual Interviewees

I employed two informants purposely or non-randomly. However, these key informants were not participants in the focus group discussion.

3.7. Study Population

The population under the study was the people of Mecha district, who had been listening to radio messages on early marriage in the Amhara radio program. However, the study subjects were those who fulfilled the minimum age of 15-year old. The researcher believed that people above the aforementioned age could interpret radio messages that discourage early marriage while listening to the program.

3.8. Data Analyses Techniques

Analysis was made based on appropriate quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. Quantitative data were entered in to the computer using SPSS software program. Coding and analyzing of data were carried out using this software package. In addition, the qualitative information (interview and FGDS) was analyzed in a way to support the result of the quantitative data. Furthermore, the data is analyzed by percentages in the SPSS program.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter I present and discuss my analysis. As has been mentioned in the previous chapters, the study was targeted at those who are frequent listeners of radio messages on early marriage. The main purpose of this research was to assess audiences' reactions to radio messages that discourage early marriage in the study area.

The data discussed in this chapter were gathered via the survey method, in depth interview with key informants, and focus group discussions.

With regard to the questionnaire, it comprised two parts: demographic questions and main body questions used to get information to help know how audiences interpret radio messages on early marriage.

The discussion is preceded by demographic distribution results obtained from the data and then followed by questions related to audience reactions to radio messages on early marriage.

Part one: Demography

4.1 Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Demography is a wide term which carries many meanings, but in my project it comprises different socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The researcher included them to know whether they affect audiences' decoding of radio messages that discourage early marriage. The major variables for my study are sex, age, education and living location. The rest are included to give insights to readers about respondents' general information. With this in mind, the demographic distribution of the target audiences of radio messages on early marriage of this research is discussed below. Given that I did not implement random sampling techniques, my results cannot be generalize beyond the individuals interviewed.

Table-1: Respondents categorized by age and education

Age		Sex			
Age group		M	F	T	%
	≤19	27	35	62	31
	20-30	23	26	49	24.5
	31-40	30	32	62	31
	41-50	7	8	15	7.5
	51-60	6	2	8	4
	≥61	1	3	4	2
Education					
	Illiterate	41	53	94	47
	Read & write	19	12	31	15.5
	Grade 1-8	3	14	17	8.5
	Grade 9-12	23	19	42	21
	Above grade 12	8	8	16	8

4.1.1. Living locations

Of the total of 200 study subjects, 107 were rural and 93 urban respondents. This indicates that the research incorporated both rural and urban respondents. This also highlights the fact that the researcher used a reasonably good number of rural and urban respondents to compare and contrast their reactions to radio messages that discourage early marriage. The number of rural respondents slightly exceeds that of urban. This is because early marriage is commonly practiced in rural areas (Pathfinder International/Ethiopia, 2006).

4.1.2. Age of Respondents

Ages of respondents were from 15 to 73. The minimum age 15 was taken for the fact that the researcher believes respondents including 15 years of age and above can listen to the

radio program and decode or interpret the messages that discourage early marriage. According to the Report of Causes and Consequences of early Marriage in Amhara region by Pathfinder International/Ethiopia (2006:22), the mean age at first marriage was 14.46. Taking this in to account, I set 15 years of old as the minimum age.

As depicted in table-1, 31% of the respondents were between the ages of 30-40, 24.5% of respondents were between the ages of 20-30 and 7.5% between 40-50. In addition, 4% of the respondents were between the ages of 51-60. The rest 2% and 31% distributed for respondents of ≥ 61 years and ≤ 19 years respectively. Generally, the mean age of respondents was 29.73. From this, the researcher hopes that the respondents, who are incorporated in the study, are at the right age of interpreting the radio messages on early marriage.

4.1.3. Sex of Respondents

As table-1 indicates the total study subjects amounted to 200, 53% were females and 47% were males. This highlights that the number of female respondents slightly exceeds male respondents in the study area. This is because the researcher believes that females do carry the brunt of early marriage and its harmful effects more than males. Consequently, I hope their ideas to the radio message on early marriage will be a good asset for my study.

4.1.4. Religion

With regard to religion, the largest proportion of the study respondents (91.5%) was Ethiopian Orthodox Christian believers. Besides a relatively small number of respondents 5% and 3.5% were Protestant and Muslim respectively.

4.1.5. Education

Table 1 also shows that the largest portion of the respondents, 47% were illiterate followed by 15.5% who could read and write. In addition, 8.5% of the respondents had attended grades 1-8, 21% achieved grade between 9 and 12. Furthermore, 8% of the respondents were beyond high school level. Though the largest proportion of the respondents was illiterate, the researcher believed that they could interpret the radio message on early marriage in relation to their culture.

4.1.6. Occupation

The main occupation of the population of the study subjects was farming (32.5 %). The rest can be explained as 15% housewives, 7% merchants, 5% office workers, 25.5% students, 1% retired people, 5% daily laborers, 3.5% maids, 4% teachers and 1.5 others. This highlights the fact that the respondents were of mixed occupation with a total of 58% of students and farmers. This also shows that the majority of the respondents included in the study were farmers and students.

4.1.7 Family Size

The family size of the subjects under study ranged from 1 to 12. The largest proportion of the study subjects, 74.5%, consisted of one to five members. The next largest number 6-11 members accounted for 24.5% and only 1% of the respondents reported 12 members.

4.1.8. Monthly Income

The research findings revealed that monthly income ranged from 100-2600 Ethiopian Birr. The largest member of respondents, 70.5%, earned a monthly income of between ETB 100 and 400. In addition, 12.5% claimed that they earned from ETB 401 to 600, and 17% of the respondents claimed to earn with in the range of ETB 601 to 2600. This confirms that the majority of the study target groups were of low economic status. Though they earn low monthly income, most of them have a radio in their house (see Table -8).

Part 2 Main Questions

Under this section, three themes of the study are incorporated including knowledge and awareness of the respondents about early marriage, respondents' reactions to the radio messages on early marriage, and factors affecting audiences' decoding of these messages.

4.2 Knowledge and awareness about early marriage

To know the knowledge and awareness of study subjects about early marriage, respondents were asked different questions. The following table gives the summary.

4.2.1 Respondents' understanding of early marriage

Table-2: Respondents' understanding of early marriage categorized by location

Location		Marriage Before completing school		Marriage without the consent of the two parties		Marriage of unequal age disproportion)		Marriage before maturity(15)		Marriage before 18		Total	
		Ct.	%	Ct	%	Ct	%	Ct	%	Ct	%	Ct	%
Rural	Male		0	3	5.8	2	3.8	36	69.2	11	21.2	52	100
	Female	1	1.8	4	7.3	2	3.6	47	85.5	1	1.8	55	100
Total		1	0.9	7	6.5	4	3.7	83	77.6	12	11.2	107	100
Urban	Male	2	4.8	3	7.1	1	2.4	20	47.6	16	38.1	42	100
	Female	0		2	3.9	3	5.9	28	54.9	18	35.3	51	100
Total		2	2.2	5	5.4	4	4.3	48	51.6	34	36.6	93	100

Ct= count

As can be seen from the above table, the term early marriage was understood in different ways. The majority of rural respondents (77.6%) and 51.6% of urban respondents reported that early marriage is marriage before maturity. The second largest number of respondents revealed that early marriage is marriage before the age of 18. The rest of the respondents revealed that early marriage is marriage before completing education, marriage without the consent of the two parties or marriage held with marriage of unequal-age disproportion.

However, the majority respondents revealed that early marriage is marriage before maturity. Maturity in the study area contextually meant 15 years old. Early marriage according to the radio messages dealing with this issue is marriage before the age of 18. This was also confirmed by the qualitative data. Most of the focus group discussants

reported that early marriage is marriage before the age of maturity. This may indicate the degree of influence that custom has in the community under study for their media text understanding. It is possible to say that the preferred meaning is not shared with the majority audiences as intended.

Thus from the above data, one can learn that there is communication gap between the encoder and the decoders in that most decoders interpret the preferred meaning based on their own cultural understanding.

On the other hand, 11.2% of rural and 36.6% of urban respondents responded in line with the dominant meaning in that early marriage is marriage before the age of 18. From the above result, one can also infer that urban respondents tend to decode in line with the preferred meaning better than rural respondents. This might be because urban respondents have more exposure to new ideas and innovations than their rural counterparts.

Generally, the above data seem to disprove the magic bullet theory in that messages are assumed to reach audiences not in the same way and that each person processes the messages in different fashion (Williams, 2003).

With regard to the practice of early marriage, the majority 81.3% of rural and 75.3% of urban respondents reported that early marriage was practiced in their area. On the contrary, 15.9% of rural and 11.8% of urban respondents maintained the opposite. The rest (2.8%) of rural and 12.9% of urban respondents reported that they were not sure whether it was practiced. This figure shows that early marriage is still practiced in the study area.

The survey data also revealed that 82.9% of urban and 51.7% of rural respondents pointed out that early marriage was practiced to a lesser extent- than previously. As compared to the urban, relatively higher number of rural respondents 43.7% reported that early marriage was widely practiced in their area. Most of the focus group participants

confirmed this data in that early marriage is still practiced though not as widely as previously. One key informant also revealed that “the campaign failed to bring the desired behavioral change. One way or another, the people are still practicing early marriage though it is not as serious as it used to be” (IN: 18). This might be because a number of schools have been opened in the area so that girls get the chance of discussing the issue with their teachers and among their school mates. He further pointed out that when some parents are asked for medical testing so as to check whether their daughters are 18 years and above, they take elder sisters of the daughter or any other neighboring daughter who are 18 and above to escape from legal measures.

The same informant added that parents marry off their teens by sending them to relatives who reside at different locations. They do this to escape any legal measures that may be taken against them.

The above data clearly indicates that early marriage is a deep rooted practice in the study area. From the quantitative and qualitative data one can also learn that early marriage seems to be practiced to a lesser degree in urban areas than in rural areas.

With regard to the consequences of early marriage, respondents pointed out that it resulted in health problems, marriage instability, economic problems, and increase of family size. This was also confirmed by the focus group discussants in that early marriage results in health related problems. Three informants emphasized that early marriage resulted in unplanned population growth and marriage instability. A remaining focus group informant pointed out that “early marriage is not only a problem to the growth of the population but also the violation of women’s rights by inflicting moral and physical assaults on them” (IN: 7). She uttered her experience in line with Human Rights: “I was able to save the life of a 12- year-old girl from the practice of early marriage by taking the case to court and the court cancelled it. However, after a two months school vacation, I could not locate the girl in the school since she was made to marry a man. Once again, I took the case to court and in the mean time, she conceived and died during delivering as a result of her young age ” (IN: 7)

However, concerning the relation between population growth and early marriage, a focus group participant argued against with the idea that early marriage resulted in unplanned population growth. From religious point of view, he pointed out that ‘‘Our Bible says ‘be many and fill the planet’. It also orders that humans should multiply their number (size) to fill our earth with human beings. The Bible condemns the use of family planning methods to halt the growth of humans. Those who kill human beings by using family planning methods are killers, and they are condemned. We must not challenge the power of God by putting an end to the life of his human creatures by using our worldly philosophy of applying family planning methods. The power to give life and bring death to human beings is only of God’s’’ (IN: 5).

This idea seems to oppose the radio messages that discourage early marriage particularly the one that claims early marriage results in population growth.

Concerning the theme of the radio messages on early marriage, the majority of the study subjects (68.4% of rural and 85.2 % of urban, reported that practicing early marriage is harmful in various ways including health related problems. The remaining responded that early marriage could bring poverty. In addition, very limited number of respondents reported that early marriage could also be cases for unplanned population growth. Besides, focus group discussants (IN: 3; 6; 11; 15) pointed out that the main messages of the radio programs on early marriage are:

-To make the public aware of the consequences of early marriage-damages to the morals, physical bodies and life of females, and make the public participate in the reduction of these acts.

-To free females from bad customary practices

An urban female informant pointed out that ‘‘the radio programs on early marriage educate myself and my family not to practice early marriage. In addition, it enriches my knowledge about this bad practice of early marriage that it is totally useless and harmful’’ (IN: 8). This tends to be in line with the idea of the key informant in that ‘‘the ultimate

goal of the radio messages on early marriage is to free children of both sexes and women from this bad practice. By preventing the practice of early marriage, it is possible to bring change and development in the country [Ethiopia] in general and the region in particular. Early marriage results in an increase of poverty, health problems, growth of population and the likes" [IN: 17].

The data indicates that audiences seem to know the main themes of the radio messages on early marriage regardless of their behavioral change.

4.2.2 Respondents' knowledge of fistula.

Table- 3: *Respondents' awareness whether fistula was preventable categorized by location*

Location		Yes		No		Not sure		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Rural	Male	43	82.7			9	17.3	52	100
	Female	34	61.8			21	18.2	55	100
Total		77	72			30	28	107	100
Urban	Male	33	78.6			9	21.4	42	100
	Female	40	78.4	2	3.9	9	17.6	51	100
Total		73	78.5	2	2.2	18	19.4	93	100

Fistula-is a situation where females are unable to control urine.

With regard to the prevention of fistula, 72% of rural and 78.5% of urban respondents reported that fistula is preventable. However, 2.2% of urban respondents maintained the opposite. The rest 28% of rural and 19.4 % of urban respondents replied that they were not sure whether fistula is preventable.

Gender wise, rural male respondents seem to have the knowledge of preventing fistula better than their female counter parts. This might be because males have greater opportunities for contact with different people and discuss issues so that they can have a better knowledge of preventing fistula. On the other hand, a slightly equal number of

urban female and male respondents seem to have the knowledge of preventing fistula. Similarly, 74% of rural and 84.9% of urban respondents reported that fistula can be prevented by avoiding early marriage. However, 18.2% rural and 15.1% of urban study subjects reported that fistula could be prevented by avoiding rape. The survey data was also corroborated by the qualitative data. Most of the focus group discussants reported that fistula could be prevented by avoiding the practice of early marriage and rape.

Some of rural focus group discussants reported that fistula could be prevented by setting an agreement locally called *Ge'do*- sanction that forbids the bridegroom to have sex with the bride until certain years or she gets matured for sexual practice. Similarly a town focus group discussant revealed that “there are some who encounter problems and there are others who safely manage the period of pregnancy and delivering a child by the will of the creator, *Allah*. A girl does not encounter fistula for she is married off in the age of 15 or so” (IN: 1).

From this one can safely conclude that respondents under study seem to have the knowledge that fistula is preventable before it affects the health of females. However, some respondents tend to believe that fistula can be prevented by cultural and religious beliefs.

4.2.3 Respondents’ awareness about early marriage and HIV/AIDS.

Table -4: *Early marriage and HIV/AIDS categorized by location*

Location		Yes		No		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Rural	Male	46	88.5	6	11.5	52	100
	Female	39	70.9	16	29.1	55	100
	Total	85	79.4	22	20.6	107	100
Urban	Male	35	83.3	7	16.7	42	100
	Female	45	88.2	6	11.8	51	100
	Total	80	86	13	14	93	100

In terms of the relation between early marriage and HIV/AIDS, 79.4% rural and 86% of urban respondents reported that early marriage could expose girls for HIV/AIDS. The rest 20.6% rural and 14% urban respondents reported that early marriage could not expose females for HIV/AIDS. A rural focus group participant pointed out the relation between HIV/AIDS and early marriage as follows: “a husband who married a young girl will have concubine in towns since his wife is too young to practice sexual activities. Until his teen gets matured, he finds some one whom he wants to gratify his sexual drives in the near by town and does unsafe sex ” (IN: 13).

The reasons given by the survey respondents as to why early marriage exposes women for HIV/AIDS are condensed as follows:

- After divorce, as a result of early marriage, some girls go to urban areas, and they will be employed in hotels as waitress. Soon they will be sex workers. In the mean time they will be exposed to HIV/AIDS.
- They married with out HIV/AIDS test because the girl is too young to decide. In addition, rural families do not have the know-how of HIV/AIDS test before marriage.

Both the quantitative and qualitative data indicate that study subjects tend to think early marriage can expose women to HIV/AIDS.

As compared to the rural respondents, the urban respondents seem to have better knowledge that early marriage could cause HIV/AIDS. This might be the urban people have better exposure for various media outlets.

Generally, from the above data, one can safely infer that the people under study seem to have the knowledge and awareness of early marriage and its negative consequences or effects. However, the qualitative data revealed that respondents tend to stick to practicing early marriage one way or another.

4.3. Audiences' reaction to radio messages on early marriage

In this section, respondents were asked what their reactions to the radio messages that discourage early marriage. Their reactions to the messages can be summarized by the following tables.

Table-5 Respondents reaction to radio messages on early marriage categorized by location.

Location		Accept entirely		Accept Partially		Don't Accept at all		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Rural	Male	23	44.2	27	51.9	2	3.8	52	100
	Female	35	63.6	19	34.5	1	1.8	55	100
Total		58	54.2	46	43	3	2.8	107	100
Urban	Male	34	81	8	19	0		42	100
	Female	45	88.2	4	7.8	2	3.9	51	100
Total		79	84.9	12	12.9	2	2.2	93	100

Respondents were asked for their decoding of radio messages that discourages early marriage. Concerning radio message on early marriage, the above table depicted that 54.2% rural and 84.9% urban respondents reported that they entirely accepted the radio messages that discourage early marriage. The second largest number 43% rural and 12.9% urban respondents reported that they partially accept radio messages that discourage early marriage. In comparison, few respondents said that they do not accept the messages at all. Besides, a rural focus group participant pointed out that “the farmers blame the government in such a way that it should not interfere with our business of conducting early marriage because we inherited it from our forefathers and we do it at our expense.....we do not ask the government for help for preparing wedding feast”(IN: 13). The above data proves the concept of media reception theory in that audiences resist the imposition of preferred meanings actively in reinterpreting media messages in contrary, even subversive, ways.

In addition to the survey data, the rural and urban focus group discussants showed various reactions to radio messages that discourage early marriage. Most of the discussants contended "the programs reflect the harmful effects of early marriage including health, economic and social problems. It also emphasizes that early marriage violates the rights of children" (IN: 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, & 14). Similarly, 84.9% of urban respondents also pointed out that they entirely react positively to radio messages that discourage early marriage as compared to 54.2% of rural respondents. This figure shows that urban respondents seem to show positive attitude towards radio messages that discourage early marriage more than their rural counterparts. This might be due to the wider exposure of the urban respondents to different media outlets.

In addition, 43% rural and 12.9% urban respondents revealed that they partially accept the radio messages that discourage early marriage. This is also confirmed by the qualitative data. A focus group participant pointed out that 'our religion orders its followers to marry off girls starting from 15 years old. The words of 'Allah' are unchangeable so that it is incompatible with our religion. However, I do not accept marriage before 15 for girls and 18 for boys' (IN: 1). A rural focus group participant revealed "if girls are made to stay unmarried until 18 years of age, they will not be obedient to their families and even they will break materials such as pot as a revenge. In addition, the people will discourage especially girls as a result they will migrate to urban areas to avoid the psychological insults and soon exposed to HIV/AIDS. As to me marriage for girls should take place beginning from 14 years of age and for boys 16. Furthermore, girls are shy to ask family though they want to marry .Given this they will prefer to practice unsafe sex than to ask their parents for marriage" (IN: 12). These seem to be in line with what Morley (1980) quoted in Croteau and Hoynes (2003:276) refers to negotiated reading.

From the above data, one can infer that the majority of urban respondents tend to accept the radio messages entirely as compared to the rural respondents. On the other hand, a relatively good number of rural respondents tend to accept the message partially as

compared to urban respondents.

Table-6 Audience reaction to early marriage messages categorized by age

Age in Category		Accept entirely		Accept partially		Don't accept at all		Total	
		Ct	%	Ct	%	Ct	%	Ct	%
<=19	Male	23	85.2	4	14.8			27	100
	Female	35	100						100
	Total	58	93.5	4	6.5			62	100
20-30	Male	11	47.8	11	47.8	1	4.3	23	100
	Female	15	57.7	10	38.5	1	3.8	26	100
	Total	26	53.1	21	42.9	2	4.1	49	100
31-40	Male	15	50	14	46.7	1	3.3	30	100
	Female	25	78.1	7	21.9			32	100
	Total	40	64.5	21	38.9	1	1.6	62	100
41-50	Male	3	42.9	4	57.1			7	100
	Female	4	50	2	25	2	25	8	100
	Total	7	46.7	6	40	2	13.3	15	100
51-60	Male	5	83.3	1	16.7			6	100
	Female		2	100				2	100
	Total	5	62.5	3	37.5			8	100
>=61	Male			1	100			1	100
	Female	1	33.3	2	66.7			3	100
	Total	1	25	3	75			4	100

Ct= count

As can be seen in the above table, study subjects whose ages are between 15-40 tend to accept the radio messages that discourage early marriage entirely more than those whose ages are 41 and above. On the other hand, those respondents whose ages are 41 and above seem to react to the radio messages partially compared to the rest two. In addition, a few number of respondents stated that they do not accept the message at all.

As to the media reception theorists, media audiences may hold different positions for a given media message. The theorists contend that audiences may read oppositional, dominant or negotiated meanings of media messages. As to the qualitative and quantitative data, the majority of respondents reported that they entirely accept the radio messages on early marriage which show that they read the dominant meaning. As to media reception theorists, different interpretations of media audiences are shaped by their ages, occupation, gender, neighborhood, educational background and the likes.

In addition, the second largest respondents reported that they partially accept the dominant meaning. On the other hand, a very limited number of respondents reported that they strongly resist the radio messages that discourage early marriage. This clearly indicates what Morley (1980) quoted in Croteau and Hoynes (2003:276) refers oppositional reading. Reception theorists also realized the relation between media messages, audiences and meaning. Croteau and Hoynes point out the “possibility that some audiences interpret media texts in an oppositional way or engage in a kind of interpretive resistance” (2003:289).

The study subjects reasoned out as to why they entirely accept the radio messages on early marriage. They pointed out that the radio programs on early marriage have pedagogical functions in that it educates many things including the dangers and harms of early marriage on the health, rights, psychology and economy of individuals. Besides, it clearly shows what is really happening around us concerning early marriage.

From the above data, one can conclude that respondents’ reaction to radio messages that discourage early marriage varies according to their ages. Those close to the age of 15 tend to entirely favor the radio messages that discourage early marriage. In contrast, those close to the maximum age of 73, tend to be less willing in entirely accepting radio messages that discourage early marriage. This may be older people are change resistant; they may stick to their local culture they inherited.

With regard to education, educated respondents tend to read the preferred meaning better than the illiterate. On the contrary, most of the illiterate respondents show the tendency to read the negotiated meaning and the oppositional reading. This might be because the illiterate resist foreign ideas either partly or totally by comparing with their local culture.

With regard to gender 63.6 % rural and 88.2 % urban female respondents replied that they entirely accept the radio message on early marriage. Similarly, 44.2% rural and 81% of urban females responded that they entirely accept the radio messages that discourage early marriage. This might be because females experience the pain of early marriage and its harmful consequences.

Respondents’ awareness of age at first marriage

Table- 7 Respondents’ perception of age for marriage categorized by location

Location		Yes		No		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Rural	Male	31	59.6	21	40.4	52	100
	Female	18	32.7	37	67.3	55	100
	Total	49	45.8	58	54.2	107	100
Urban	Male	7	16.7	35	83.3	42	100
	Female	3	5.9	48	94.1	51	100
	Total	10	10.8	83	89.2	93	100

As it is depicted in the above table, 45.8% of the rural respondents reported that they support marriage before the age of 18, but the remaining 54.2% revealed that they do not support marriage before the age of 18. On the other hand, 89.2% of urban respondents reported that they do not support marriage before the age of 18, but the rest 10.8% respondents revealed that they support marriage before 18.

From this one can conclude that both the rural and urban respondents show a tendency of opposing marriage before the age of 18. In addition, the urban respondents tend to oppose marriage before 18 more than the rural respondents who maintained the same position.

On the contrary, higher number of rural respondents tends to support marriage before 18 as compared to urban respondents who maintained the same position. Similarly, most rural and urban male respondents tend to favor marriage before 18 as compared to female counterparts.

Reasons for those who support marriage before the age of 18 are condensed as follows:

- 15 years is an ideal age for marriage
- The sooner girls and boys married off during their teen, they will produce children that would help them in labor work
- If a girl and a boy get married in their teens, they will grow up together and know each other very well. This enables them to adapt each other's characters so that they will lead peaceful life.
- To avoid kidnapping and raping. Starting from the age of 12, girls are becoming so smart that males might be motivated to kidnap or rape them.
- To stick to the local culture.

Focus group discussions revealed that there were respondents who supported marriage beginning from the age of 15 but oppose marriage before 15. A rural focus group participant pointed out that "unless girls are married off in their fifteenth, either they will be exposed to HIV/AIDS, unintended pregnancy or/and an illegitimate child which adversely affect their future" (IN: 14). In addition, an urban focus group discussant revealed that "in Muslim the minimum age for females to marry is 15 and for males 18. The Quoran orders that girls starting from the age of 15 can perform any religious activities-such as(*solat*) carry out praying" (IN: 1). On the other hand, a focus group participant revealed: "according to the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian dogma, *Metshafe Gabcha*- book of marriage, a boy should marry at least at the age of 25 and at most at the age of 30. More over, girls must marry at least at the age of 18 and at most at the age of 20"(IN:3).

In the focus group discussion, a limited number of respondents reported that if girls are made to stay until the age of 18 to be married off, they will lose their beauty and will not get a husband that her family and herself want to. Two focus group participants argue against with the above idea that "the beauty of women right from the age of 18 to some years up will not perish rather it shines. The problem with the beauty of women may arise after 30 or so years" (IN: 6, 7).

Those who opposed marriage before 18 reported that if girls are married off at a minimum age of 18, they will be free of the consequences of early marriage including health problems, economic problems, marriage instability and the likes.

From this one can infer that audiences of radio message that discourage early marriage seem to decode it not by totally adopting the radio message on early marriage rather by incorporating many things such as culture, religion, past experiences and the likes to the preferred meaning.

4.4 Factors Affecting Audience Reception

In this section, factors that can affect audiences' decoding of radio messages on early marriage are incorporated.

4.4.1 Radio accessibility

Table-8 *Respondents' access to Radio categorized by location*

Location		Yes		No		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Rural	Male	42	80.8	10	19.2	52	100
	Female	50	90.9	5	9.1	55	100
	Total	92	86	15	14	107	100
Urban	Male	41	97.6	1	2.4	42	100
	Female	44	86.3	7	13.7	51	100
	Total	85	91.4	8	8.6	93	100

Study subjects were asked whether they had access to radio in their house.

The above table depicts that the majority respondents 86% of rural and 91.4% of urban respondents reported that they had access to radio in their homes. The remaining respondents reported that they had access to radio from their neighboring houses or/and from friends. They reported that they listened to the radio programs on early marriage during the coffee ceremony with neighbors. Thus, radio access does not seem affecting respondents' message reception as most of them own radio in their houses.

Concerning their listening habit, most of the respondents reported that the whole family usually listened to the program. The second largest percentage reported that only men always listened to the program. This may affect the listening habit of the rest of the family. This is because males may keep radios with them.

With regard to the time radio messages on early marriage are broadcasted, 73.8% of rural and 88.2% urban respondents reported that it was convenient to them. The rest 26.2% of rural and 11.8% of urban respondents maintained the opposite. From the above data, it is possible to summarize that the time of broadcasting for programs on early marriage seems to be convenient for the majority of respondents.

A focus group participant, on the other hand, contended that “mostly early marriage is undertaken when the fasting period for Christmas is over and when the fasting period for Easter is to begin (before the fasting period of Easter starts). So, the program should be targeting the right and suitable period to reach and teach the farmers about anti-early marriage practices” (IN: 8).

It seems reasonable that as most of the study subjects are Ethiopian Orthodox Christian believers (see on page-29), they undertake marriage following these significant days. In addition, it is soon after their harvesting time so that the rural people can economically be relatively strong to prepare wedding feast. A key informant argued against that “the program should be broadcasted 2-3 months before the wedding season, before the married families start to prepare foods and drinks for the wedding.”(IN: 18).

Those who maintained the opposite suggested that Saturdays and Sundays are convenient to them. This seems to reflect that the majority of the study subjects are Ethiopian Orthodox Christian believers (see on page-29). In the study area, their religion forbids followers to work on fields on Sabbath so that they are relatively free to attend the radio program. They reasoned out that this would lessen the burden since after field work in the evening, they felt tired and slept before the program was on air.

4.4.2 Radio message and culture

Table- 9 *Radio message and cultural compatibility categorized by location*

Location		Yes		No		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Rural	Male	5	9.6	47	90.4	52	100
	Female	13	23.6	42	76.4	55	100
	Total	18	16.8	89	83.2	107	100
Urban	Male	3	7.1	39	92.9	42	100
	Female	12	23.5	39	76.5	51	100
	Total	15	16.1	78	83.9	93	100

As it can be seen in the above table, out of the total number of respondents approached, a slightly equal number of urban and rural respondents reported that the radio messages on early marriage were compatible with their culture. On the other hand, the remaining 83.2% rural and 83.91 urban respondents maintained the opposite.

This survey figure is supported by the focus group discussion in that the majority of members reported the radio messages on early marriage are incompatible with their culture.

From the qualitative and quantitative data, it is possible to infer that the radio message on

early marriage seemed to be incompatible with the culture of the study subjects.

As to the reception theory, audiences' local culture, custom, personal factors and backgrounds affect their interpretation of media messages.

Table-10: *Radio message and cultural compatibility categorized by education*

Education		Yes		No		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Unable to read/write	Male			41	100	41	100
	Female	8	15.1	45	84.9	53	100
	Total	8	8.5	86	91.5	94	100
Read/write	Male	2	10.5	17	89.5	19	100
	Female	3	25	9	75	12	100
	Total	5	16.1	26	83.9	31	100
Grade1-8	Male	1	33.3	2	66.7	3	100
	Female	4	28.6	10	71.4	14	100
	Total	5	29.4	12	70.6	17	100
Grade9-12	Male	4	17.4	19	82.6	23	100
	Female	7	36.8	12	63.2	19	100
	Total	11	26.2	31	73.8	42	100
> Grade12	Male	1	12.5	7	87.5	8	100
	Female	3	37.5	5	62.5	8	100
	Total	4	25	12	75	16	100

As it can be depicted in the above table, the majority of the respondents reported that the radio messages on early marriage are incompatible with the culture of the respondents in the study area. However, the rest respondents maintained the opposite. Education wise, those who are unable to read and write contributed the majority (91.5 %) as compared to the literate responded that the radio messages are incompatible with their culture.

From this one can safely conclude that the illiterate mainly tend to consider the radio messages that discourage early marriage incompatible with their culture. This might be because they are traditional so that they stick to the traditional way of understanding things.

Respondents reported that the radio messages on early marriage are not only incompatible with their culture but also with their religion. They added that their culture provokes early marriage. However, with regard to religion, a focus group participant pointed out that “Ethiopian Orthodox Church is not incompatible with the messages that discourage early marriage. Some people criticize the church as if it were in favor of early marriage. But the reality is this: “Adam and Eve are created aged 30 and 15 years old respectively. However, they made love for the first time after 7 years, that is, Adam 37 and Eve 22 years of age. If Ethiopian Orthodox Christian believers follow their Bible, children of both sexes and women will not suffer from the dangers of early marriage” (IN: 5).

On the other hand, a key informant blamed: “priests and deacons are hindrances for the campaign in fighting the practice of early marriage in that they marry girls below the age of 18 and even sometimes under 10. Followers of it practice early marriage just by adopting what the religious people-role models of the area act out” (IN: 18).

However, a rural focus group participant stated his rationale as to why they practice it: “The reason for practicing early marriage is not because our religion permits practicing it but, as deacons, we usually spend our time on learning spiritual dogmas by going to different places within the region and within the country until we manage our study. As a result, we get older and when we come back to our birth place to marry a wife, we can not get our age mates as they are married off several years earlier, and are given births. Besides, our religion does not allow us to marry girls who are not virgin so that we have nowhere to go. Consequently, situations obliged us to marry girls even up to 7 years of age” (IN: 9). This seems to agree with the report of the negative effects of early marriage

by NCTPE (1997) in Ethiopia that marriage can occur as early as 7-8 years, but the girl may stay with the husband for about 4 years without doing sex until 12 years of age. In addition, there are situations that obliged people for practicing early marriage. For this, a focus group participant pointed out that “the culture of the society seriously conflicts with the radio messages that discourage early marriage particularly with the rural people. Because individuals hate discrimination and stereotypes, they are highly influenced by the popular culture. The society may outcast parents who refuse the quest of early marriage from the community” (IN: 4).

However, those who advocate the radio messages that discourage early marriage as ‘compatible with their culture’ pointed out that their culture forbids marriage before the age of maturation. They added that the message on early marriage are acceptable in the area for its harmless effect on the health, physical, psychological and physiological nature of audiences (people) in the study area for it frees individuals from the painful consequences of early marriage.

4.4.3 Respondents’ attitude towards having children at teen

Table-11 Respondents’ attitude to the Amharic saying *lij beljinet*- having children at a teenage by location

Location		Yes		No		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Rural	Male	22	42.3	30	57.7	52	100
	Female	23	41.8	32	58.2	55	100
	Total	45	42.1	62	57.9	107	100
Urban	Male	7	16.7	35	83.3	42	100
	Female	6	11.8	45	88.2	51	100
	Total	13	14	80	86	93	100

Lij beljinet- is an Amharic saying which refers to having children at a teenage

As depicted in the above table, 42% rural and 14% urban respondents revealed that they

did support the Amharic saying *lij belijnt*.

This figure was also supported by some of the rural focus group discussants. A rural focus group discussant said that “having children even in one’s teens enable us to be economically strong. As you see we are farmers and we can not manage life unless we work hard on farmlands so that if I have children earlier, they will help us by looking after houses and cattle while I and my wife work on the farmlands. With out labor division, we can not manage our lives properly” (IN: 12).

From this one can say that rural people show a tendency to support having children at early ages as compared to urban respondents. In addition, rural respondents aged 20 to 30 seem to support the idea of having children in the teens for labor help. On the other hand, the old seem to support the saying for it secures them supporters during old age.

In addition, the above table also depicted that the majority respondents 57.9% rural and 86% urban respondents claimed that they do not support the Amharic saying *lij belijnt*. Most of the focus group discussants reported that *lij belijnet* is harmful for various reasons. They reasoned out that *lij belijnet* results in economic problems, health problems, by provoking early marriage.

Similarly, a focus group informant explained his experience in relation to having children in the teen ages : “the mama girl, angered by the early marriage, was threatening to go to their parents and the papa boy, being unhappy about their having babies at an early age, was becoming a street boy. Because the mama girl and papa boy encounter severe problems at that so early age, they ruined the marriage” (IN: 7). This shows that having children while one is still a child, tend to bring personal, social and economical impacts.

Though there is a significant tendency in the side of the majority respondents to oppose the saying, the quantitative and qualitative data indicates that the Amharic saying, *lij belijnet*, affects audiences’ reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage.

From this, one can infer that audiences' decoding of radio messages that discourage early marriage tend to be affected by their culture. In short, culture tends to be a factor in decoding radio messages that discourage early marriage.

Generally, factors affecting audiences' reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage are summarized by Croteau & Hoynes in that "readers approach media product with a preexisting set of beliefs and experiences through which they filter media message. Readers also occupy specific social positions that affect how they interpret the media" (2003:247).

4.4.4 Radio and language use

Table-12: Respondents' attitude of the language usage in the radio program categorized by location

Location		Yes		No		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Rural	Male	51	98.1	1	1.9	52	100
	Female	52	94.5	3	5.5	55	100
	Total	103	96.3	4	3.7	107	100
Urban	Male	42	100			42	100
	Female	49	96.1	2	3.9	51	100
	Total	91	97.8	2	2.2	93	100

With regard to the language that the Amhara radio program used for discouraging early marriage, the majority (96.3%) of rural and 97.8% urban respondents reported that the language the radio used on early marriage were easy for them to understand the message. Besides, a slightly equal number of rural male and female respondents reported that the language that the radio used was easy for them to comprehend.

On the other hand, 3.7% of rural and 2.2% of urban respondents maintained the opposite. They reasoned out that the message on early marriage incorporated different dialect, difficult vocabularies and unclear expressions. This is also supported by the focus group discussants one of whom stated that “the media used difficult words such as ‘fistula’ and commonly incorporating the Wollo dialect” (IN: 2, 4 6, 12, and 13).

Another focus group participant with regard to the Amhara radio program pointed out that “the messages transmitted in the form of play /dramas are understandable. But the actors and actresses (characters) converse using Wollo dialect not Gojjam’s” (IN: 2).

From the above data, it is possible to infer that the figure tends to show that audiences can easily understand the message on early marriage. In addition, it is possible to conclude that urban male audiences seem to easily understand radio message on early marriage better than urban female respondents. This might be due to the fact that females are busy in house hold works as a result they may not give due attention to radio messages.

With regard to the content of the radio messages, the majority respondents (91.6%) of rural and all the urban study subjects reported that they could easily comprehend the content of the radio messages on early marriage. Only 8.4% rural respondents maintained the opposite. Almost all of the focus group participants revealed that they can easily understand the radio messages that discourage early marriage.

From this one can safely conclude that the radio messages that discourage early marriage seem to be understandable by the study subjects so that it tends to positively affect audiences’ reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the findings of the research under three different themes, namely awareness level of respondents about early marriage, audience reactions to radio

messages, and factors affecting audiences' interpretation of radio messages on early marriage. The next chapter concludes the entire study.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

In this study an attempt was made to investigate audience reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage in Amhara Region, Mecha district. In brief, the researcher was interested in knowing about the knowledge and awareness of study subjects about early marriage, audiences' reaction to radio messages on early marriage, and factors influencing (affecting audiences' reception of radio messages). To answer the aforementioned questions, the researcher consulted different literatures, collected data through quantitative and qualitative methods so that results complement each other.

The sampling technique was multi-stage sampling. First, theoretical sampling was used to select the district, Mecha. Then two kebeles from the district were selected purposively. Using convenience sampling technique, 200 study subjects were interviewed in the selected kebeles. All the study subjects were interviewed by interviewers by filling interview questionnaire. The questionnaire embraced both close ended and open ended questions to get a relatively rich data.

In addition, two focus group discussions and two in depth interview with key informants were utilized. Finally analysis was made using qualitative and quantitative research analysis methods.

The research was conducted between April and July 2006. On the basis of the study subjects, the following conclusions have been drawn.

Both the quantitative and qualitative results confirmed that audiences of radio messages on early marriage have the knowledge and awareness about the consequences of early marriage. However, there was a misunderstanding or communication gap between the encoder and decoders with regard to understanding the concept of early marriage. In short, communication failure is detected between the encoder and decoders in that study subjects identified the concept of early marriage as marriage before the age of 15. However, the preferred meaning indicated that early marriage is marriage before the age of maturity.

The Muslim religion with regard to marriage at first age for girls was found to be incompatible with the preferred meaning of radio messages that discourage early marriage. Consequently; it was observed that the Muslim religion with regard to marriage at first age for girls was an obstacle for audiences' interpretation of the preferred reading that the media encodes. However, with regard to age at first marriage, the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian religion was found to be compatible with the dominant meaning.

As the findings indicate, although the majority of the participants react positively to the radio messages that discourage early marriage as intended, a good number of respondents read the negotiated reading and very few respondents read the oppositional reading. Specifically, the educated and urban respondents showed better preferences to totally accepting the preferred reading. In total, study subjects were found to interpret radio messages that discourage early marriage in line with the preferred meaning.

Study subjects' reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage was found to be affected by age. Accordingly, as the age of respondents gets closer to the maximum age, 75, the tendency to read the preferred meaning decreases but as the age of respondents gets closer to the minimum age, 15, they tend to read the dominant meaning. In other words, age of respondents is inversely proportional to their interpretation of radio messages that is, as the age of respondents' increases, the tendency to read the preferred meaning decreases and vice versa.

The study also indicated that audiences oppose marriage before the age of 18 for both girls and boys. Specifically, urban respondents oppose marriage before 18 better than their rural counterparts.

The language that the Amhara radio program that discourages early marriage used is found to be easily understandable except the minor problem with the use of the Wollo dialect. In addition, the content of the message that the Amhara radio program encodes concerning early marriage was found to be easily comprehensible by the study subjects.

The study also identified the time of transmission for radio messages that discourage early marriage was found to be convenient to the study subjects.

The study also indicated that study subjects perceive the radio messages that discourage early marriage incompatible with their local culture. Accordingly, the illiterate perceive radio messages that discourage early marriage as incompatible with their local culture more than the literate.

The Muslim religion, custom, tradition and past experiences are found to affect audiences' reception of radio messages that discourage early marriage.

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Appendix A

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE FILLED OUT BY TRAINED INTERVIEWERS

PART ONE

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

1. Respondent's location: circle one

1. Rural 2. Rural urban

2. Age _____

3. Sex :circle one

1. Male 2. Female

4. Religion

1. Orthodox Christian
2. Protestant
3. Catholic Christian
4. Muslim
5. Other /specify _____

5. Educational status

1. unable to read and write 2. Read and write 3. Grade 1-8
4. Grade 9-12 5. Above high school

6. Occupations:

1. Farmer 5 student
2 .House wife 6 retired
3 merchants 7 laborer
4 office worker 8 others/ specify_____

7 family size_____

8 What is the monthly income of your family?(Estimate)_____

PART TWO
MAIN QUESTION

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT EARLY MARRIAGE

1. Have you heard about early marriage in the Amhara radio program?
1. Yes 2. No
2. If your answer for Q 1 is YES, how frequent you listen to the radio program on early marriage?
1. Regularly 2. Occasionally 3 once a week
4 - others/specify _____
3. What is early marriage?

4. Is early marriage a common practice in your area?
1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
5. If your answer for Q4 is yes, how commonplace or widespread it is?

6. What do you think is/are the consequence/s of early marriage? (Multiple selection possible)
1. Health problems -such as fistula, problems during child bearing etc.
2. Marriage instability 3. Having more children
4.Others/specify _____
7. Is there any one in your area suffering from fistula?
1. Yes 2.No
3. Not sure
8. Is the problem of fistula preventable?
1. Yes 2. No 3.Not sure
9. If your answer for Q 8 is YES, how can it be prevented?

10. Do you think that early marriage exposes children to HIV/AIDS?

1- Yes 2-No

11. If your answer for Q10 is YES, how?

AUDIENCE DECODING OF RADIO MESSAGES THAT DISCOURAGE EARLY MARRIAGE

1. What is your reaction on the radio programs that discourage early marriage?

1. Accept entirely 2. Accept partially 3. Don't accept at all

2. If your answer for question NO 1 is **accept entirely**, why?

3. If your answer for question NO 1 is **accept partially**, why?

4. If your answer for question NO 1 is **don't accept at all**, why?

5. What was/ were the main message (s) in the information you heard?

6. Do you think that radio messages that discourage early marriage in your area compatible with your culture?

1. Yes 2. No

7. If your answer for Q 6 is NO, why?

8. If your answer for Q 6 is YES, how?

FACTORS INFLUENCING AUDIENCES RECEPTION OF EARLY MARRIAGE MESSAGES

1 Is there a radio in your house?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

2 If your answer for Q 1 is YES, in your family who listens to the program usually?

- 1. The whole family
- 2. Men only
- 3. Women only
- 4. Children only

3 If your answer for Q 1 is NO, do you have any other access to radio outside your house?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

4 If your answer for Q 3 is NO, with whom do you listen to it?

5. Is the time of broadcasting convenient for you?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

6. If your answer for Q4 is No, which time is convenient?

7 The messages you received from radio program with regard to early marriage is

- 1. Support my culture
- 2. Oppose my culture
- 3. Other/specify _____

8. Do you support the saying 'lij belijnet'- having children while one is still a teen?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

9. If your answer for Q 8 is YES, why?

10. If your answer for Q 8 is NO, why?

11. Have you ever participated in discouraging early marriage activities?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

12. If your answer for Q11 is YES, how?

13. If your answer for Q 11 is NO, why?

14- Is the language used easy for you?

1. Yes 2. No

15-If your answer for Q 14 is NO, why?

16-Can you easily comprehend the content of the radio messages that discourage early marriage?

1. Yes 2. No

17- If your answer for Q 16 is NO, why?

Appendix B

ክፍል 1 አጠቃላይ መረጃ

1 የተጠያቂው መኖሪያ፡- አንዱን አክብብ

1/ ገጠር 2/ ከተማ

2 ዕድሜ -----

3 የታ

1/ ወንድ 2/ ሴት

4 ሀይማኖት

1/ ተዋህዶ 2/ ኘሮቴስታንት 3/ ካቶሊክ 4/ እስልምና 5/ ሌላ ካለ
ይገለጽ-----

5 የትምህርት ሁኔታ

1/ ማንበብና መጻፍ የማይችል 2/ ማንበብና መጻፍ የሚችል
3/ 1-- 8 ክፍል የተማረ 4/ 9 -- 12 ክፍል የተማረ 5/ ከ12 ክፍል
በላይ

6 የስራ ሁኔታ

1/ አርሶ አደር 2/ የቤት እመቤት 3/ ነጋዴ 4/ ቢሮ ሰራተኛ
5/ ተማሪ
6/ ጡረታ 7/ የገልበት ሰራተኛ /ወዛደር/ 8/ ሌላ ካለ ይገለጽ-----

7 የቤተሰብ ብዛት -----

8 የቤተሰብ የወር ገቢ/በግምት/-----

ክፍል 2. አብይ/ዋና/ ጥያቄዎች

2.1 ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ የተጠያቂዎች እውቀት /ንቃተ ህሊና/

1. ስለ ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻ በአማራ ሬዲዮ አድምጠው ያውቃሉ?

ሀ/ አዎ ለ/ የለም

2. ለአንደኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ; ከሆነ ለምን ያህል ጊዜ ያደምጣሉ
/ይከታተላሉ/?

1/ ሁልጊዜ ለ/ አልፎ አልፎ 3/ በሳምንት አንድ ጊዜ 4/ ሌላ ካለ
ይገለጽ

3.ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻ ማለት ምን ማለት ነው?

4. ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻ በአካባቢዎ ይፈጸማል?

- 1/ አዎ 2/ የለም 3/ እርግጠኛ አይደለሁም

5. ለአራተኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ; ከሆነ ምን ያህል ተሰፋፍቷል?

6. ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻ የሚያመጣው/ቸው ችግር/ሮች የትኛው /የትኞቹ ናቸው/ ነው?

- 1/ የጤና ችግር - እንደፊት-ላይ፣ በመውለድ ጊዜ የሚከሰት ችግር ወዘተ
2/ የጋብቻ መፍረስ 3/ ከመጠን በላይ ልጅ መውለድ 4/ ሌላ ካለ ይግለጹ----

7. በአካባቢው በፊት-ላይ ምክንያት የሚሰቃይ ሰው ያውቃሉ?

- 1/ አዎ 2/ የለም 3/እርግጠኛ አይደለሁም

8. የፊት-ላይ ችግር በሴቶች ላይ ከመድረሱ በፊት መከላከል ይቻላል ወይ?

- 1/ አዎ 2/አይቻልም 3/ እርግጠኛ አይደለሁም

9 ለ8ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ; ከሆነ እንዴት መከላከል ይቻላል?

10 ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻ ሴት ልጆችን ለኤች አይ ቪ ኤድስ ያጋልጣል ብለው የሰጡ?

1. አዎ 2/ የለም

11 ለ10ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ; ከሆነ እንዴት?

2.2 ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ የአድማጮች /የታዳሚዎች/ ግንዛቤ /ምላሽ

1. ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ በሬድዩ ለሚተላለፉት መልእክቶች ምን ምላሽ አለዎት?

1. ሙሉ በሙሉ ፣ አቀበለዋለሁ፣
2. በከፊል ፣ እቀበለዋለሁ፣
3. በምንም ዓይነት ፣ አልቀበለውም፣

2. ለአንደኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #ሙሉ በሙሉ እቀበለዋለሁ; ከሆነ ለምን ?

3. ለአንደኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #በከፊል እቀበለዋለሁ; ከሆነ ለምን ?

4. ለአንደኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #ሙሉ በሙሉ አልቀበለውም; ከሆነ ለምን ?

5. ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ ካደመጡት ኘሮግራሞች ዋና መልእክቱ/ቶች ምን ምን ናቸው?

6. ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ በሬድዩ የሚተላለፉት መልእክቶች ከአርስዎ ባህል ጋር ይጣጣማሉ?

1/ አዎ 2/ የለም

7. ለስድስተኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #የለም; ከሆነ ለምን ?

8 ለስድስተኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ; ከሆነ ለምን?

9 ሴት ልጅ አለዎት?

1/ አዎ 2/ የለም

10 ል ያገባች /ያገቡ ልጅ/ልጆች አለዎት?

1 አዎ 2/ የለም

12. ለ10ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ; ከሆነ ልጅዎን /ልጆቹዎን የዳሩበት እድሜ ከ18 ዓመት በታች ከሆነ ለምን?

- 1/ የአኮኖሚ ጫናን ለመቀነስ
- 2/ ከሌሎች ጋር ግንኙነት ለመፍጠር
- 3/ ሀይል ለማጠንከር
- 4/ የልጅ ልጅ ለማግኘት
- 5/ ሌላ ካለ ይገለጽ _____

13. ከ18 ዓመት በፊት የሚከናወንን ጋብቻ ይደግፋሉ?

- 1/ አዎ ለ/ የለም

14. ለ13ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ; ከሆነ ለምን?

15. ለ13ኛው ጥያቄው መልስዎ#የለም; ከሆነ ለምን?

16. ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ በሬድዩ የሚቀርበው ነገሮችም ሳቢ ነው?

- 1/ አዎ 2/ የለም

17. ለ16ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ; ከሆነ እንዴት?

18. ለ16ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #የለም; ከሆነ ለምን?

2.3 ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ በአድማጭ /በታዳሚ/ ምላሽ ላይ ተጽእኖ የሚያሳድር

1. ከቤተሰብዎ ውስጥ ሬድዩ አለ?

- 1/ አዎ 2/ የለም

2. ለአንደኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ; ከሆነ ከቤተሰብዎ ውስጥ ማነው ሁልጊዜ የሚያዳምጠው?

- 1/ ቤተሰቡ በሙሉ 2/ ወንዶች ብቻ 3/ ሴቶች ብቻ 4/ ልጆች ብቻ

3. ለአንደኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #የለም; ከሆነ ከቤትዎ ውጭ ሬድዩ የሚያገኙበት አጋጣሚ አለ?

1/ አዎ 2/ የለም

4. ለሶስተኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ; ከሆነ ከማን ጋር ነው የሚያዳምጡ?

5. ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ የሚተላለፈው የሬድዩ ኘሮግራም ስዓት ይመችዎታል?

1/ አዎ 2/ የለም

6. ለ5ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #የለም; ከሆነ የትኛው ስዓት ይመችዎታል?

7. ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ ከሬድዩ የሰሙት መልዕክት

- 1/ ከእኔ ባህል ጋር አይጣጣምም
- 2/ ከእኔ በህል ጋር ተደጋጋፊ ነው
- 3/ ሌላ ካለ ይገለጽ-----

8. ልጅ በልጅነትን የሚለውን አባባል ይደግፋሉ?

1/አዎ 2/ የለም

9. ለ8ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ;ከሆነ ለምን ?

10 ለ8ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #የለም; ከሆነ ለምን?

11 ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን ለማስቀረት በማደረገው ማንኛውም እንቅስቃሴ ተሳትፈው ያውቃሉ?

1/ አዎ 2/ የለም

12 ለ11ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #አዎ; ከሆነ እንዴት?

13 ለ11ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #የለም; ከሆነ ለምን?

14 ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ በሬድዩ የሚተላለፉ መልእክቶች የሚጠቀሙት የቋንቋ አጠቃቀም ለእርስዎ በሚገባ መልኩ ነው?

1/ አዎ 2/ የለም

15 ለ14ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #የለም; ከሆነ ለምን ?

16 ያለዕድሜ ጋብቻን ለማስቀረት በሬድዩ የሚተላለፉት መልእክቶችን በቀላሉ መረዳት ይችላሉ? 1/ አዎ 2/ የለም

17 ለ16ኛው ጥያቄ መልስዎ #የለም; ከሆነ ለምን ?

Appendix C

QUESTIONS FOR KEY INFORMANT -MESSAGE ENCODER

1. Identification

1. Code _____ **Age** _____ **Sex** _____

2. Ethnicity _____

3. Current responsibility _____

4. How long have you stayed in the area and in this post? _____

2. Is early marriage a threat to the people of Mecha? How?
3. How do you see the prevalence rate? Is it decreasing or increasing? Why?
4. What is the intention of the message that discourages early marriage?
5. What are the processes involved in the preparation and production of the program?
Culture /survey pre research undertaken.
6. What methods have been employed to provide the proper with early marriage information? By whom they are employed?
7. What do you think are the major challenges you face in communicating messages discouraging early marriage?
8. Is there any feed back mechanism to learn from beneficiaries?
9. What challenges did you face in communicating messages that discourage early marriage?
10. Any issue you would like to add that are not raised in this interview?

Appendix D

ለአማራ ሬድዮ ዜና ቡድን መሪ የቀረበ ጥያቄ

ሀ. አጠቃላይ መረጃ

ከድ-----እድሜ----- ያታ -----

ብሄር -----

ሃላፊነት-----

በዚህ ስራ ላይ ለምን ያህል ጊዜ አገለገሉ-----?

1. ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ በአማራ ሬድዮ የሚተላለፈው ዝግጅት አላማው ምንድን ነው?
2. ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ በአማራ ሬድዮ የሚተላለፈው ኘሮግራም ከመዘጋጀቱ በፊት ቅድመ አሰሳ ጥናት ታካሂዳላችሁ ወይ?
3. ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ ኘሮግራሞችን እንዲያዘጋጁ የሚመደቡት ጋዜጠኞች በምን መስፈርት ነው?
4. ኘሮግራሞችን ለታዳሚ ወይም ለሕብረተሰቡ ስታስተላልፉ ያጋጠማችሁ እንቅፋቶች አሉ?
5. ከአድማጭ ምላሽ (Feed back) የምታገኙበት መንገድ አለ ወይ?
6. የጋዜጠኞች ብቃት ምን ይመስላል?
7. ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻን ለማስቀረት የሚቀርበው መልእክት ወቅቱን ጠብቆ ይቀርባል ወይ?
8. የምታቀርቡት ኘሮግራም ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ የክልሉን ሕዝብ የራሱን ችግር ነው ወይስ ከሌላ እያመጣችሁ ነው? ኘሮግራማችሁ ለአድማጭ ሳቢ ነው?

Appendix E

INTERVIEW GUID QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD)

1. Do you listen to Amhara radio program discouraging early marriage?
2. What is the theme of the message? What meanings did you make from the messages that discourage early marriage? What are the effects of early marriage?
3. Is the message compatible or tailored with the culture of your area/? Why? Do the people of your area resist the marriage?
4. What are the challenges you face to receive messages that discourage early marriage? Do you think that the language and the content of the message that discourage early marriage understandable?
5. Do you cooperate in eradicating EM? Why?
6. What is your reaction to the radio messages that discourage early marriage?
7. What do you recommend the message producers discouraging early marriage?

ለቡድን ተሳታፊዎች የቀረበ ቃለ መጠይቅ

1. ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ የሚቀርበውን የሬዲዮ ኘሮግራም አዳምጠው ያውቃሉ?
2. የኘሮግራሙ ዋና መልዕክት ምንድን ነው? ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻ የሚያመጣቸው ችግሮች (ጠንቆች) ምን ምን ናቸው?
3. ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ በሬዲዮ የሚቀርበው ኘሮግራም ከእናንተ ባህል ጋር ይደጋገፋል (ይጣጣማል) ወይ? ለምን? ባካባቢዎ ያሉ ታዳሚዎች ኘሮግራሙን ይቃወሙታል ወይ?
4. በሬዲዮ የሚተላለፉትን መልእክቶች ለመቀበል ተፅዕኖ የሚያሳድርባችሁ ነገር አለ ወይ? የቋንቋ አጠቃቀሙና የመልእክቱ ይዘት የሚቀርበው ለእናንተ በሚገባ መልኩ ነው?
5. ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻን ለማስወገድ ወይም ለማስቀረት በሚደረገው ጥረት ይሳተፋሉ ወይ? ለምን?
6. ስለ ራዲዮ ኘሮግራሙ መልእክቶች የእርስዎ አቋም ምንድን ነው? ይቃወማሉ ወይስ ይደግፋሉ?
7. ለኘሮግራሙ አዘጋጆች የምታስተላልፉት አስተያየት ካለ?

Appendix F

Questions for key informant-NCTPE Amhara branch

1. Identification

Code _____ age _____ sex _____

Ethnicity _____

Current responsibility _____

How long have you stayed in the area and in this post _____

2. Is early marriage a threat to the people of Amhara especially Mecha district? How?
3. How do judge the prevalence rate? Is it decreasing or increasing? Why?
4. What is the intention of the radio messages that discourage early marriage?
5. What challenges did you face while communicating messages that discourage early marriage?
6. Which part of the Amhara region most prevalent in practicing early marriage?
7. What procedures or steps are used to prepare the radio program?
8. Do you undertake any preliminary or pilot survey before the program papered? Are the programs aired timely?

Appendix G

ለአማራ ቅርንጫፍ አስተባባሪ የቀረበ ጥያቄ

1. አጠቃላይ መረጃ

ኮድ እድሜ ያታ

ብሔር

አሁን ያለዎት ሃላፊነት

ለምን ያክል ጊዜ በዚህ ቦታ ቆዩ

2. የለዕድሜ ጋብቻ ለአማራው ህዝብ ምን ምን ችግሮች አስከትሏል?
3. የለዕድሜ ጋብቻ በአሁኑ ወቅት ምን ደረጃ ላይ ይገኛል?
4. ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ በአማራ ራዲዮ የሚተላለፈው ፕሮግራም ዋና መልእክቱ ምንድን ነው?
5. ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻን በተመለከተ መልእክት ስታስተላልፉ ያጋጠማችሁ እንቅፋት ምንድን ነው?
6. በአማራ ክልል የትኛው ነው በአብዛኛው ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻ በመፈጸም በጣም የማታወቀው?
7. ፕሮግራሙ ሲዘጋጅ ቅድመ ጥናት ተደርጎበት ነው ወይስ በዘፈቀደ ነው? ፕሮግራሙስ ወቅቱን ጠብቆ ነው የሚቀርበው?

Appendix H

Focus Group Discussant (FGD)

	Sex	Social Position	Code
1. Sheik Mohammed Adem	male	Religious leader	IN:1
2. Fasika Desalegn	female	Community elder	IN:2
3. Zuriash Fantu	female	house wife	IN:3
4. Almaz Chane	female	Women's affair	IN:4
5. Hailemelekoy Tereffe	male	Religious leader	IN:5
6. Mulatu Alemu	male	Community elder	IN:6
7. Mulugojam Abate	female	merchant	IN:7
8. Aster Chekole	female	student	IN:8

Appendix I

List of Urban Focus Group Member

The following are lists of focus group discussion participants for the rural (Enamirt).

	Sex	Social Position	Code
1. Moges Behilu	Male	Religious leader	IN:9
2. Wuletaw Tazeb	Male	Community elder	IN:10
3. Meselech Bosale	Female	house wife	IN:11
4. Amare Taye	Male	Farmer	IN: 12
5. Tadesse Tamirat	Male	Student	IN:13
6. Amsal Bayu	Female	Community elder	IN:14
7. Dasash Yaze	Female	community leader	IN:15
8. Mare Filate	Female	student	IN:16

Appendix J

List of Key Informant

1. Ato Chalachew Achamyelch Amhara radio program news unit leader IN:17
2. Ato Teshome Tadele NCTPE Amhara branch coordinator IN:18

Declaration

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

Name Biset Ayalew

Signature_____

Date of Submission October 10, 2007

Place of Submission Addis Ababa