



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
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SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATIONS

**Audience Reception Analysis of “BETEGNA” Radio Program:
The case of Amhara Mass Media Agency**

By: Mustofa Worku Jemal

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Journalism and Communications of Addis
Ababa University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Journalism and Communications.**

**AAU
May, 2011**

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Last but not least, I thank Allah, The most merciful and the most gracious.

Abstract

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has affected millions of people all over the world. In most countries, the HIV epidemic is related to behaviors that expose individuals to the virus. And the media plays pivotal role in disseminating information and creating awareness about HIV/AIDS and other health related issues. One of the programs is 'Betegna' which works on the fight against HIV/AIDS and other health and social related issues. Audience Reception Analysis of 'Betegna' Radio Program: The case of Amhara Mass Media Agency seeks to describe how the program contents or messages are interpreted by the target audience and how relevant they are to the audiences.

The study analyzed the access and use of media to determine audience's tuning habit, the relevance of the program to the audience, the language use, and interpretation or understanding of program contents were examined through focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and letters sent to the program producers. Four FGD which involved 25 participants were formed and the groups were arranged based on age. Most participants of the FGD used to be part of a listening group arranged by the program producers. In addition, three in-depth individual interviews were conducted with three program producers.

The finding indicates that the time of transmission is a factor for less regularity of audiences. Audiences, also, believe that the duration of the program is too short. The other factor the study revealed is that low level of education affects the understanding of language. Those who are uneducated and whose level of education is less than high schools have faced difficulties of understanding the message of the radio program.

List of Acronyms

- AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
- ARC: AIDS Resource Center
- ART; Anti Retro-viral Therapy
- HIV: Human Immune Deficiency Virus
- MoH: Ministry of Health
- NGOs: Non-governmental Organizations
- PLWHA: People Living with HIV/AIDS
- PMTCT: Preventing Mother To Child Transmission
- UNAIDS: Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
- UNESCO: United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organization
- UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund
- VCT: Voluntary Counseling and Testing

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The HIV/AIDS epidemic affects millions of people all over the world and the effect of the pandemic has been particularly striking in Sub-Saharan Africa. As a Sub-Saharan country, Ethiopia has been launching many projects to tackle the spread of HIV/AIDS since 1986 (MOH: 2006).

In most countries, the HIV epidemic is related to behaviors that expose individuals to the virus and so increase the risk of infection. Information on knowledge about HIV and the level and frequency of risk behaviors related to the transmission of HIV is important in identifying and better understanding populations most at risk for HIV. (UNICEF, 2008) therefore, the media plays pivotal role in disseminating information.

Different educational programs concerning HIV/AIDS have been transmitting through different medium. 'Betegna' is one of the radio program that is transmitted to create awareness in the fight against HIV/AIDS. 'Betegna' (which refers to a welcomed guest who often visits one's home) presents a unique insight into what it really means to be HIV positive in Ethiopia. The first radio diaries program in Ethiopia, it is a captivating and practical way of addressing the issues of stigmatization and marginalization that many PLWHA face, as well as the generally low perception of the severity and individual and communal susceptibility to HIV and AIDS in Ethiopia. The program showcases the diaries, real accounts, of ordinary people who want to share their experiences with listeners across Ethiopia and the world. Their stories start from their childhood and continue through to the events that led them to their present lives. They talk with honesty, openness, and real emotion. 'Betegna' also aims at addressing the array of social issues that revolve around HIV and AIDS in the modern world setting, such as risky behavior, stigma, positive living, etc.

The objectives of the program are to:

- 1 Develop regular weekly radio diaries for national broadcast highlighting the everyday experiences of PLWHA, and discussing the personal implications of living in a community affected by AIDS;
- 2 Develop and guide the skills of a small group of HIV+ "diarists" to talk clearly, powerfully and analytically about their situation; and of radio producers and their broadcasters to produce effective programming that responds to the priority health issues in their communities;
- 3 Decrease the stigma and discrimination that HIV positive people face in Ethiopia by exposing the human face of living with the disease and providing a platform for creating discussion on these issues among the general public;
- 4 Influence the social norm towards a greater tolerance of and support for people's access to information, services and care relating to HIV/AIDS; and,
- 5 Increase public awareness and utilization of VCT, PMTCT, and ART services.

The initiative is running in three phases:

Phase I - involved preliminary background documentation and research, identification of potential diarists, and planning for the broadcasts.

Phase II - consists of an ongoing process of training the diarists and radio producers and establishing listening groups.

Phase III - involves recording and broadcast of the programs and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Specific activities include:

1. Training of eight radio producers at a Radio Diaries Design workshop and training of nine HIV+ diarists;
2. Training of three radio broadcasters and three HIV+ diarists;
3. Development and dissemination of promotional materials, i.e. posters, flayers, stickers, press kits;
4. Development of an electronic press kit for use by the media in reporting on issues faced by HIV+;
5. Setting up and conducting listening groups with existing community groups such as Irids, HIV+ groups, youth involved in HIV/AIDS work, health professionals, workers; and,
6. Documentation detailing the process and the impact of the diaries on listeners, diarists and the radio producers.

The initiative is run by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs (CCP) in collaboration with the National HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (HAPCO) and funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) . It is managed by the national AIDS Resource Center (ARC) in Addis Ababa and builds on similar projects run by CCP in Nigeria and Malawi. Inter-news Network's Local Voices project – which trains and mentors Ethiopian journalists and talks show hosts to improve their reporting on AIDS – also provides intensive coaching on all aspects of radio programming.

1.2 Statement of the problem

'Betegna' is broadcast on Sheger FM 102.1, Amhara Mass Media Agency, FM 96.9, SNNP, and Tigray region. Audience in Bahir Dar is selected because of the

exposure of listening twice through Amhara Mass Media Agency and FM 96.9 and the prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS. Given the extent of the stigma and discrimination they experience, many people with HIV keep themselves hidden from others.

Based on the above assumptions this study looks into how ‘Betegna’ radio program reaches its listener. What are the challenges in making People living with HIV/ AIDS speak openly or disclose themselves in public? Does ‘Betegna’ really have relevance in the fight against HIV/AIDS?

1.3 OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 General objective

This study tries to find out the relevance of “Betegna” radio program from the point of view of selected audiences from the target audience living in Bahir Dar.

1.3.2 Specific objective

Based on the general objective, the study aims to achieve the following specific objectives:

- ❖ Examining how understandable, relevant to the needs of the audiences and interesting “Betegna” program is;
- ❖ Identify the sources of the program and its challenge
- ❖ Presenting the reaction of the audience in Bahir Dar on the contents of “Betegna” radio program; and
- ❖ Comparing and contrasting the understandings of the audiences of “Betegna” and the program producers regarding what the program intended to achieve.

1.4 Research Questions

The research aims to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do “Betegna” program address the information needs and interests of the audience?
2. What do audiences and the program producers think of the radio program?
3. What factors are at play to affect varied interpretation of contents of the program and its relevance among different audience groups?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This is a study conducted on one of the unique radio program and the first radio diary which has targeted general audiences. Producers of the ‘Betegna’ radio program may consider the outcomes of the study; its recommendations could help them tailor their program formats and contents in a way that meets the needs of the audience. Although, the findings may help people who work in institutions that fight HIV/AIDS, such as HIV/AIDS secretariat office and NGO’s working on HIV/AIDS. As Folkerts and Lacy (2001: 450) point out, media organizations need such researches on audiences in order to identify what the audience want so that the media organizations could produce contents that better suit their audiences.

Audiences of the program may also benefit in a way that the study sets forth what they think of the way the radio program - that has specifically targeted them – is performing. In addition to that, the study may reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the radio program leading to an improved quality in the program contents and presentations. It is also believed that the study has the significance of sparking insights for other similar researches in the area of audience research endeavors.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The limited amount of fund available for the research endeavor was proved to be a glitch in doing what the task demanded. Organizing groups of respondents was also a daunting challenge for the focus group participants were reluctant to sacrifice their time for a study.

1.7 Organization of the Thesis

The study comprises five chapters. In the first chapter are the background of the study, the general and specific objectives, the research questions, the significance, the scope and limitations of the study. Also briefly - by way of providing a backdrop of the focus of the study - it introduces the history of 'Betegna' radio program.

Review of related literature presented in chapter two, provides the basic literature on various theories with the aim of laying down the theoretical basis underpinning this study and providing understanding as to how audiences were perceived in various media theories.

Chapter three discusses and in a way justifies the methodology used for the study. Chapter four presents the data and analysis of the findings under four general themes. The last chapter - chapter five - concludes by summarizing the findings and giving recommendations.

Chapter Two

2. Review of Related literature

2.1 Defining Audience

In media studies audience is mostly used as a way of talking about people either groups or individuals as Ross and Nightingale (2003:4) put it. It used to refer to large groups of people, like the mass audience for television news, newspaper readership, the general public, or even people attending a major sporting event or a rock concert (2003:4). In addition, Ross and Nightingale (2003:4) stated the term is used to refer to groups of people who are linked by ties of more enduring socio- cultural significance. These ‘audiences’ may be described as subcultures, taste cultures, fun cultures, ethnic diasporas, indigenous or religious communities, and even domestic households.

In one of the pioneering models of mass communication as developed by Wilbur Schramm(1955), audiences are designated by the term ‘receiver’ with the role of taking in messages dispatched by a source(McQuail 2000: 360). In the earliest media theories too, audience meant the congregated ‘mass society out there’ passively receiving media contents. However, McQuail finds it convenient to put the notion of audience in different and overlapping ways, i.e., “by place (as in local media audience) by people (specific age belief groups) by the type of channel by the media content, i.e., the subject matter and by time (prime time)” Ibid.

Farmers, industrial workers, house wives, teenagers, and doctors will all have preferred listening times which will vary according to local circumstances as McLeish (2001:277) puts it. With regard to audience availability and program items:

The fairly superficial news or information and current affairs plus music type of continuous program where all the items are kept short, may be suitable for the general audience at times when other things are happening such as meal times or at work. But the timing of the more demanding documentary, drama, or discussion program can be critical and will depend on individual circumstances.

Ross and Nightingale (2003: 6) contend that the audience comes into being where a group of people engage with mediated information. This means that audience ship not only requires the physical presence of people but rather the active engagement of those people with the mediated message. According to Corteau and Hoynes (2003: 266-9), “this notion of ‘active audience’ is, in reception theory, intended for embracing three concepts that complement each other. The first one refers to the rejection of the passivity and gullibility of audiences. It means that audiences engage themselves to bring about their knowledge and experiences as they make sense of media contents. The second one points at the claim that reception and interpretation of media outputs is not strictly individual; it is also a social activity. Individuals share a number of elements common in their social setting and their lived life brings about factors which influence the way audiences make sense of media contents. The third view embedded in the ‘active audience’ notion is the ‘collective action’ people could occasionally take in response to certain media program contents”.

All the aforementioned discussion shows that are in fact different viewpoints hold by different scholars, from which the notion of ‘audience’ is seen. All the above scholar said, this study uses the concept of ‘audience’ to refer to people as a group or individuals who actively receive media messages and make sense of them in relation to the context of their daily life. This also presupposes that the way audiences interpret media messages is influenced by the ‘identities’ (factors such as gender, race, age...) associated with the ‘reading communities’ they (audiences) belong to.

2.2 Audiences Participation

For Corteau and Hoynes (2003: 260), audiences are people with live histories and social networks. These people are ‘active readers’ of media messages and not

passive recipients of them. Audiences actively engage themselves with the media contents they access and construct meaning in light of the context of the everyday life where in they are situated. Apparently, audiences may participate in different medium which they are engaged in. Nevertheless, McLeish (2001:152) stated that radio is not a good medium by itself for establishing a genuine two way contact. Listeners may feel that the broadcaster comes to their home and they may even get the impression that they know an individual. However, Ibid explains it; this is at best a substitute companionship rather than genuine personal interaction. The broadcaster / listener relationship or perhaps that of the station/listener can be made more real through the broadcaster's ability to allow and encourage listeners to take part in the program making activity. According to Ibid audiences participate through letters and e-mails, texting, and phone call:

2.2.1 Letters and E-mails

Program correspondences incoming to the station may be classified under three general headings: letters intended for use on air, those requiring a response by e-mail or letter, and that which can be forgotten (McLeish, 2001:152). He also suggested that it is a matter of station policy whether or not an individual presenter is encouraged to become involved in replying to listener. On air use includes music requests and dedications, competition replies, or letters and e-mails written directly to a program letter spot that is to be read on air. In general, they either offer advice to the audience at large or ask for help with a personal problem.

McLeish (2001:153) explains further that the producer of a letter spot may consider the following in arriving at most appropriate format:

- 1- To maximize listener's involvement, several pieces of correspondence can be dealt with in a single spot.

- 2- A long letter may not be read in its entirety but extracts used to reflect accurately what the writer is saying.
- 3- A letter with a lot of questions doesn't monopolize a spot but is broken up and used in parts perhaps in several spots.
- 4- To give variety of pace and vocal interest a spot may use more than one of the response forms listed above.

A letter is not simply program fodder, but deserves the same level of consideration that its sender gave it. This becomes increasingly important for short-wave or long-distance broadcasts.

2.2.2 Texting

Stations that encourage text messages by mobile phones in general set out to attract the younger audience. McLeish (2001: 154) points out that when giving out a special number and code to ring, there may be a program assistant ready and available to take the messages and if needed to respond to callers. However, incoming texts can come straight to the presenter on-screen, like e-mails for reference on air- an ideal way of handling brief computation answers.

2.2.3 Phone-ins

Phone-ins are likely to require more personnel than a single producer-presenter, especially if the callers are to be screened before they are put to air, Starkey (2004:85). Ideally, every caller who is allowed to speak in the program will have been spoken to beforehand, either by the producer or by a researchers who should attempt to identify those who sound more interesting, have something relevant to say, and not be too much of liability in terms of potential issues of libel and taste and decency as Starkey (2004:85) puts it. In line with Starkey's point of view McLeish contend that through public participation, the aim of a phone-in is to allow a democratic expression of view and to create the possibility

of community action. An important question, therefore, is to what extent such a programme excludes those listeners who are without a telephone (2001:137). Although, Starkey (2004:84) emphasizes that the presenter plays an overt role in setting the agenda- perhaps introducing a list of acceptable topics for debates, beginning and curtailing each conversation, sign posting before advertisement breaks and the news and so on.

According to Starkey (2004:85), the call screener should quickly determine the value of the caller in terms of his or her likely contribution to the program and the level of risk that the caller may misbehave 'on air'. In choosing the calls McLeish also explains that the person vetting the calls quickly develops an ear for the genuine problem, the interesting point of view, the practical, or the humorous such people converse (2001:141). They have something to say but can listen as well as speak, they tend to talk in short sentences and respond quickly to questions put to them; these things are soon discovered in the initial off-air conversation (McLeish, 2001:141). From this it is understood that there are some calls which can be discarded when some calls put to air. For Starkey (2004:85) there are polite ways of declining the callers' offer to take part without losing a listener forever, but it's better to lose a listener in person, rather than losing hundreds of thousands of others who switch off boredom or to have to pay damages to someone who successfully pursues a libel action in court. This means that the call screener has to be extra careful who to decline and when to decline in order not to lose a large number of audiences. Moreover, McLeish (2001:141) argue that there are people who one might prefer not to have on the program:

- a. The 'regulars' who are always phoning in.
- b. The abusive, perverted, offensive or threatening callers.
- c. The over-talkative and uninterruptible.
- d. The boring, dull or slow.
- e. Those with a speech defect, unless the program is designed for this topic.
- f. Those with speech patterns or accents which make intelligibility

particularly difficult.

- g. The sycophantic who only want to hear you say their home on the air.

From the above discussions we can understand that audience can use which ever medium they prefer to and they have access to: letter, phone, or e-mail. Although, program producers or presenters has to be very careful when choosing the kind of content that audience come up with to present on the program.

2.3 Radio Drama

Dictionary definition of drama generally suggests representation of life, either real or imagined. There are clear differences in print, screen, and live performance media between narratives that are described and those that are enacted, and although often blurred, those differences translate coherently to radio contexts (Starkey, 2004:178). For McLeish (2001:243), “Drama is about conflict and resolution, a relationship and feelings and people being motivated by them, both driving and driven events. What happens should be credible, the people believable and the ending have a sense of logic, however unusual and curious, so that the listener doesn’t feel cheated or let down”.

According to McLeish (2001:242) “the radio medium has a long and distinguished history of turning thoughts, words, and actions into satisfying pictures within the listeners mind by using the techniques of drama”. He also contends that there is no need for the producers to think only in terms of Shakespeare play – the principles of radio drama apply to the well made commercial, a program trail, dramatized reading, five minute serial or two minute teaching point in a program for schools. The radio is globally acclaimed as the voice of the grassroots. In support of this assertion, Falobi *et al* (2002) observe that the radio is the primary communication medium for reaching the

largest segment of the population in Africa. They argue that the radio is a constant presence on the streets, in homes, market places, and workplaces. Apart from radio jingles as a tool of creating awareness, 'radio serial dramas are one of the newly emerging means of HIV&AIDS preventive education' (Cole, 2005: 2). Why is the choice of drama considered so potent in educating people in this regard? Saunders (1979: 93) has this to say on the power of drama in educating:

Drama is an active method of learning with a high degree of participation. Whether taking part or watching, you enter into the experience of the characters and become emotionally involved with the message. Drama communicates meaning beyond that which the human intellect can grasp. It communicates through feelings and emotions to the deepest places in a person's life.

We all like stories, partly because a story can offer a framework for the understanding- or at least an interpretation of life's events. Often a mirror in which we can see ourselves- our actions, motives, and faults- and the outcomes and results can contribute to our learning as McLeish (2001:243) puts it. From the above assertions we can understand that drama plays a great role in creating awareness, educating, and entertaining. A message- may be about culture or health or life in general, can easily reach the audience. With regard to spreading HIV&AIDS messages, Nwansa and Bergman (2003, p. 10) explain further:

Apart from the existence of negative social and economic structures that favors the spread HIV, all communities are influenced by beliefs, myths, and taboos that could contribute to the spread of HIV&AIDS. They need to be raised, brought out into the open and challenged. Even in much closed societies drama has proved to be a useful and dynamic vehicle for bringing up sensitive issues – like stigmatization, child abuse, how the church may play the lead role in "blaming and shaming" people living with AIDS. Drama has contributed to the breaking up of the silence.

Starkey (2004:181) stated that with the wider genre, radio drama programs exist in a variety of forms:

1. The single play creates characters and situations that are not necessarily intended to be reprised in any further sequel or episode. It is a one –off and its narrative structure may therefore be closed.
2. The drama series features some common characters and situation that return each program, without their necessary being any plot development across the series, other than the stories that are begun and ended each week.
3. The drama serial, by contrast, involves the unfolding of a single core narrative over a number of episodes, each one having an open structure, but with the final episode ending in closure.
4. The soap opera consists of multiple episodes, each one being typically multi- strand- in that a number of different narratives run in parallel across several episodes, opening and closing at different times and without any particular connections between them other than the commonality of characters and location.

2.4 Media and HIV/AIDS

Many media reports have focused on the disastrous and rapidly increasing impact of HIV and AIDS on children and women. Skeptics have argued that the media incorrectly pays more attention to HIV and AIDS than to other fatal illnesses, such as malaria and tuberculosis - a possible indication of the limited response to the magnitude of health related challenges in developing countries Madhu et al (2009:4). HIV/AIDS is no longer simply a health problem. It is a pandemic becoming a global socioeconomic disaster. It afflicts the groups whose functions and skills are most vital for development. With regard to the role of media in the fight against HIV/AIDS Madhu (2007:1) explains further:

Media has a major role to play in the broad-based strategy to contain the spread of HIV by bringing practical knowledge to the public with the widest coverage. This task has to be done in close cooperation with specialists, to avoid wrong, ineffective, or counter-productive messages being disseminated. Media programming must promote a better awareness on how the virus is transmitted, how its spread can be contained, and also a better understanding and care for PLWHA. Media must also learn to refrain from blaming and take a proactive role against the tendency for denial of the risk of HIV infection even amongst the most vulnerable of the population. Social and economic discrimination against HIV positive is another area where media has to raise its voice.

Media is the most powerful means to reach countries' populations, and this power carries great responsibility. To be able to deal with the issue in an ethically appropriate manner, media professionals must fully understand its psychosocial components – fear, blame, denial, discrimination etc. Although, Robey and Stauffer (1995:42) explained the role played by the media in creating public awareness, discussion, and debate as the media can generate public and policy discussion of HIV/AIDS, which further encourages public awareness and leads to action by political, financial, and other leaders. Accurate news coverage of HIV/AIDS can generate public and political support for fighting HIV/AIDS. Schindlamayr (2001:27) also writes that the media influence public opinion and attitudes about HIV/AIDS, including attitudes towards people with HIV/AIDS. An analysis of media coverage and public opinion over several decades concluded that there is a strong relationship between them. When the media focus on a particular issue, there is a higher degree of public awareness and support to tackle that issue. Similarly, the media influence the language of HIV/AIDS, which in turn helps shape how people think about and deal with HIV/AIDS. The media can also point to healthy behaviors – for the prevention of HIV/AIDS, the protection of those who are most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, and for the care of people affected by HIV/AIDS.

Radio reaches a wider audience than any other medium: for example there are an estimated 94 radios per thousand people in the least developed countries, ten

times the number of televisions or copies of daily newspapers available, Adam and Harford (1999:3). In line with this, Adam and Harford (1999:3-4) listed the following points about why use radio to promote HIV/AIDS communication:

1. Radio can motivate people by building on aural/oral traditions and stimulate the imagination better than video or television.
2. Radio programs are cheap, quick, and easy to make.
3. Radio receivers are widely available, cheap and easily portable; this makes them convenient for listeners.
4. Radio can reach people who are isolated by language, geography, conflict, illiteracy, and poverty.
5. Radio can reach those who do not come to health facilities because of cost, distance, or embarrassment: it can convey insights gained by health workers on the ground to a wide audience.
6. Radio can help inform people and raise awareness about a new idea, product, or service that is available.
7. Radio can help create a demand for services, eg 'If you are concerned that you might have a sexually transmitted disease (STD), you can go to an STD clinic where you will be treated in total confidentiality by the doctors and nurses'.
8. Radio can give additional credibility to multi-media communications HIV/AIDS campaigns on the ground.
9. Often radio listening is a group activity which encourages discussion of educational issues after the broadcast. This is an important stage in the process of behavior change.

Adam and Harford didn't only provide the reasons why we use radio than other medium but also they provided the following lists of drawbacks in using radio for promoting HIV/AIDS communication (1999:4-5):

- 1- Radio is a transitory medium: information may not be retained by listeners who cannot ask for the information to be repeated or clarified.

- 2- Radio is a one-way medium: unlike face-to-face communication radio offers no immediate opportunity to ask people questions about what they know or to check if people have understood what they heard. Nor can listeners respond instantly and ask questions to clarify issues.
- 3- Many people lack access to electricity and batteries are expensive and can be difficult to obtain.
- 4- In the wrong hands radio can heighten people's fears and prejudices inciting conflict and hatred rather than resolving it. This was the case in Nazi Germany, and has been seen recently in Rwanda and former Yugoslavia where broadcast propaganda fuelled the mass killings and expulsions.
- 5- It is not yet fully understood how precisely increased awareness of public health issues is most likely to lead to significant behavior change and improved health.

In general, we can deduce from the above discussions that the media (television, newspaper, or Radio) is an important tool that has a high contribution in the fight against HIV/AIDS by creating public awareness, discussion, and debate. In turn, it may bring some behavioral change on individuals or on the audience.

2.5 Direct Effects Theories

When media theories began to hold foot in early 1920's, the dominant preoccupation was finding what effects the media had in the lives of people. With that the theme 'what do the media do to people?' became the main feature media researches. As a result the magic bullet theory, which propagated the media's eminent power, the direct and 'obvious' effects they exerted on the behavior of the 'passive mass audience', emerged to become the dominant paradigm guiding

early media studies (Baran and Davis 2006: 82). The direct effects theory considered the audience as “passive consumers” of whatever the media had to offer. People who come in to contact with messages of the media could do nothing but be conditioned to the influences of the powerful media.

The direct effects theories argued that the audience had neither the consciousness nor the experience to resist the manipulative power of the media and the engulfing effect they brought up on their lives. Hence, they (audiences) were considered at best ‘passive receivers of media messages’ with no effort to interact with it and worse ‘media dupes’ (Ross and Nightingale 2003: 72). McQuail as cited in Negash (2008:18) writes that early effects theories focused on the audience with some positive intentions of finding out better ways of communicating the audience or avoiding harmful effects of the media. Nevertheless, almost all the research was conducted with a strict adherence to a one-way process of communication and a conception of the audience as “an unwitting target or passive recipient of media stimuli”. The direct effects theories received as much critiques as the vast array of interest they generated. The most widely stated flaw is the direct effects theories’ claim that audiences are inactive when it comes to interpreting media messages. Message from the media could just be injected in the minds of the audience with little or no knowledge and resistance from the side of the receivers (Negash, 2008:18). Critiques such as the abovementioned ones and the growing interest to apply scientific methods to carry out media researches brought about a shift in perspective ushering the theory of limited effects.

2.6 The Limited - Effects Theory

The central tenet of the theory is that the media did not have in fact direct influence on the audience because there are a set of social relations and variables associated with them to intervene. The limited-effects researches insist

that there is indeed a level of effect subtly injected in to audiences by the media - a limited one if not immensely a minuscule. In this regard, the milestone work of Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) who, in their research, came up with the 'two-step model' in which they argued the media were not as such powerful enough to directly affect the opinions and beliefs of people because there were people – 'opinion leaders', as Lazarsfeld and his colleagues called them – having the role of distilling the information on to larger members of the group (Shroder et al 2003: 36).

This 'two-step flow' of information stressed message came from the media to 'opinion leaders' who exercised group influence, as a result of the knowledge and respect they commanded, to the other members of the group (Williams 2003: 174). The fact that the media messages reach audiences through the 'opinion leaders' was, according to Shroder et al (2003: 36) and Williams (2003: 175), used to stress the limitation that the media faced in directly affecting the actions of their audiences. The theory, by emphasizing the minimal level of the direct effects of the media recognized that "people were not the passive, isolated and impressionable entities of mass society theory but individuals who could interpret what they saw and heard" in line with their own pre-established beliefs and attitudes (Williams 2003: 174). Similarly, Baran and Davis (2003: 176) argue that the limited-effects theory acknowledges the significance of group dynamics in which interpretation of media contents occur. The theory underlines, by way of stressing the existence of a host of mediating factors which affect the way audiences select, assess and reject media messages, the fact that audiences are no longer 'passives victims' of the media.

Critiques of the theory mention that it overemphasized, in various studies, the use of stimuli-response research methods to assess and quantify all kinds of media/audience interactions at all levels (Baran and Davis 2003: 264). Despite their shortcomings, researches coming out of the limited-effects tradition did inspire endeavors which focused on investigating what for audiences used media

contents; hence spawning the uses and gratifications theory (Williams 2003: 177). Baran and Davis (2003: 264) too agree that too much research focuses on the negative effects of the media and that “intended positive uses of the media were being ignored”, thus developed an influential theory dubbed ‘uses and gratifications’.

2.7 Use and Gratification theory

According to Ross and Nightingale (2003: 29) the uses and gratifications perspective brought audiences to the centre stage of media researches by recognizing the cognitive variables in understanding the role of the media in everyday life. Stone et al writes that the use and gratifications perspective is one of a precious few theories that the communication discipline can truly call its own. It examines media behavior from the audiences members view, acknowledging that media users control their own decision (1999:200). DeFluer and Ball-Rokeach (1989: 187) shares Stone et al view point by stating that The uses and gratifications perspective is a major shift in the description of the role of the audiences in the sense that it emphasized the active role of audiences by focusing on “what they do with the media content rather than what the media do to the people”.

Negash (2008:21) quoted McQuail who summarizes the basic assumptions of the uses and gratifications theory in the followings four points:-

1. Media and content choice is generally rational and directed towards certain specific goals and gratifications;
2. Audiences are conscious of the media related needs;
3. Broadly speaking personal utility is a more significant determinant of audience formation than aesthetic or cultural factors;
4. All or most of the relevant factors for audience formation (motive,

perceived or obtained satisfactions, media choices background variables) can in principle be measured.

Stone et al (1999:200) also summarizes what the theory seeks to explain abstractly in the following five points:

1. The psychological needs that help shape;
2. Why people use the media and that motivate people to;
3. Engage in media use behaviors to;
4. Derive gratifications to;
5. Fulfill those intrinsic needs, within the confines of a particular socio-cultural environment.

They also added that the theory recognizes first individuals differ a long several psychological dimensions which, in turn, prompt them to make different choices about which media to patronize, and second even individuals exposed to the same media content will respond to it in different ways, depending on their characteristics (1999:200). As part of its theoretical assumptions, the uses and gratifications approach implies that individual audiences approach every media program with a sense of purpose. Nevertheless, this has been contested on the ground that audiences not only casually tune to media outputs but they may attend to a particular media program out of appreciation of the way that particular program is composed and presented; watching and listening to a media program may not all the tie be goal oriented and seriously purposeful (Williams 2003: 178, McQuail in Stagier, 2005: 55). DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach add to the list of criticisms that the uses and gratifications perspective did little to provide “a systematic explanation beyond a list of reasons for which people claim for the selection and attending to the media” (1989: 187).

Moreover, According to Katz et al as cited in Stone et al (1999:201) uses and gratifications theory is founded on three basic tenets:

1. Viewers are goal directed in their behavior;

2. They are active media users; and
3. They are aware of their needs and select media to gratify those needs.

2.8 Contemporary Audience Reception Studies

Reception studies came to the media research realm with the belief that audiences are active and can reconstruct meaning not exactly intended by the media producers but as the audiences own life styles, experience and social interactions dictate. Therefore contemporary audience researches focus on inquiring in to “what audiences think and do” in order to understand the influence of the media (Williams 2003: 190). Reception studies prioritize investigating media messages by active audiences. Meaning is, therefore, regarded as the construct of audiences as they interact with ‘media texts’ rather than what producers embed in the contents (of the media) (Shroder et al. 2003: 124).

Central to contemporary audience reception theories is the encoding/decoding model developed by Stuart Hall. This model of mass communication, which later came to be known as reception studies, explains that the media and their act of communicating ‘media texts’ to the audiences “should be understood in terms of a circuit of communication” (Hutchby 2006: 8). Hall’s model of mass communication connects the producers of media contents and audiences (as the two occupy the two ends of the communication loop) by the continuous process of production, distribution, reception, and feedback. As a result, this interconnectedness of both ends - the encoding and the decoding sides - lends itself for empirical investigation. However, the model focuses on the decoding side to suggest three basic ways in which media messages could be discerned, i.e., dominant oppositional and negotiated. The dominant interpretation or “the preferred reading of media texts” occurs, Baran and Davis (2006: 276) explain, when audiences interpret media contents as intended by the producers. The oppositional decoding happens when audiences come up with interpretations

that appear to be in direct opposition to the preferred one. Yet audiences could also misinterpret some parts of the message or disagree with it to develop an alternative interpretation which is labeled as 'the negotiated meaning'. A vital aspect of this model is the role of the audiences as active interpreters of media messages. Reception studies such as the pioneering work of Hall's model and the practical researches such as Morley's on the 1970's British TV magazine *Nationwide*, as Corteau and Hoynes put it , established a tradition of "real people back in to focus in media research by exploring the interaction between people and media texts and locating meaning in those interactions"(2003: 298). The audience reception theory has the strengths of a focusing attention on individuals and understanding how, within the particular context of their lives, they interpret media contents in the mass communication process. Critiques of the theory, on the other hand, draw attention to the theory's basing of itself on the subjective interpretation of audience reports, its intent to downplay the absence or presence of effect, the tendency to focus on audience resistance of media message and the lingering subjectivity of researchers themselves (Baran & Davis 2003: 278 and Williams 2003: 207-08).

According to Strelitz (2000: 38), the encoding/decoding model of mass communication acknowledges that, in part to stress that the significant difference it has with the uses and gratifications theory, reception of media messages and making sense of them are influenced by those factors which identify groups of people called 'reading or interpretive communities'. These factors which Strelitz (2000: 38) and Williams (2003: 196) identify to be race, gender, age, educational background (level of education) and other 'identities', are in fact important elements that need to be closely investigated when researching how audiences make sense of media messages becomes the concern of a study.

Researchers like Stagier insist that "reception studies matter for our individual and our social and political life. It is a practically pragmatic field even if at times

reaching specific conclusions is difficult” (2005: 4). Shroder et al (2003: 141) also support this view that the study of audience reception, with all the shortcomings they exhibit, continue to be an established tradition with formidable theoretical and methodological foundations.

Chapter Three

3. Methodology of the Study

3.1 Data gathering methods

To achieve the objectives of the research, qualitative research method were employed. The qualitative data were gathered through in-depth interview, and letters, SMS messages, and phone calls sent to the producers of the program and Focus group discussion, which were analyzed using content analysis method. The focus group or group interviewing is a research strategy for understanding audiences or consumer's attitude or behavior, Samy (2005:94).

3.2 Sampling Method

To meet its objective, the researcher will employ convenience samples and purposive sampling method. According to Zoltan,(2007: 87) The convenience sampling is an important criterion of sample selection is the convenience of the researcher: members of the target population are selected for the purpose of the study if they meet certain practical criteria, such as geographical proximity, availability at a certain time, easy accessibility or the willingness to volunteer. Furthermore, Brucel (2001:32) says, the convenience sample relies on available subjects—those who are close at hand or easily accessible. Participants for Focus Group Discussion and in-depth interview will be selected in line with achieving the purpose of the study. Thus, the participants for the focus group will be taken from the target audience (group) and interviewee will be taken from editors and reporters.

3.3 Scope of the Study

This study has '*Betegna*' radio program in focus which is broad casted in Amhara

Mass Media Agency and FM 96.9 for the region and Bahir Dar city respectively. And the content analysis done qualitatively on programs covering a six month period. Four focus group interviews and three individual in-depth interviews were held. The focus groups were organized based on age and educational background. The three in-depth individual interviews were conducted with producers of the radio program in order to provide the point of view from side of the 'decoders'. In light of this, the study will maintain a sense of relevance but not a belief to generalize for the whole population of 'Betegna' radio program audiences.

3.4 Qualitative Research Methods in Reception Studies

With all the controversies surrounding the use of qualitative or quantitative methods in researching mass communication, many experts acknowledge that there are areas which are better explored qualitatively. In this regard, Mytton captures the comparative advantage qualitative methods offer in audience research as he writes that “in qualitative methods researchers have found very useful ways of understanding human behavior, exploring how media messages are interpreted” (1999: 126). He strengthens his claim that qualitative methods of researching audiences are resourceful if a study is intended to provide understanding on what factors influence audiences' engagement with the media and the resulting experiences. Mytton, therefore, adds that qualitative methods of audience research are important for they “can bring out the intervening influences of people and the experience of audiences more clearly than is the case with quantitative methods” (1999: 126).

In underlining the major difference between the two methods in research, Dabbs, as cited in Berg (2001: 2-3), explain that the notion of *quality* is essential to the nature of things. On the other hand, *quantity* is elementally an amount of something. Quality refers to the what, how, when, and where of a thing its essence and ambiance. Qualitative research thus refers to the meanings,

concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things. In contrast, quantitative research refers to counts and measures of things.

3.5 Qualitative Content Analysis

Audience reception studies take a strong interest to provide insights in to how audiences interpret media contents. This particular tool, i.e., the analysis of media content at the surface level is an important tool in a reception study. When Jensen provides a general picture of what a reception study must look like, he writes “reception analysis ... combines a qualitative approach to media texts” – texts that need understanding on the part of the researcher (1988: 3). This is imperative for these media texts bear both the purposes and the meaning of “producing and circulating meaning in the society” (1988: 3). And this is an important point to take as it allows the researcher to get a glimpse of ideas about the decoder’s objectives in communicating a particular ‘text’. Shroder et al. too agree that textual analysis of media contents is productive because it equips the researcher with the “knowledge on the media products” (2003: 154-55). This knowledge helps not only in conducting “focused conversations with the informants” but also in “eliciting the experiences of informants on media contents” Ibid.

Having this in focus, the researcher will look into the program of *Betegna* radio program aired between the period of July 1st and December 31st, 2010. That covered a span of six months which roughly gave a twenty-six hour programs production. Given the schedule set to complete this study, it was believed that the content analysis of the six-month programs would suffice to serve the research objectives and to garner the desired level of knowledge and ideas on the program contents.

3.6 Focus Group Discussion (Interview)

Lunt and Livingstone (1996: 96-97) state that focus group interviews are particularly useful when a research aims at discovering participants' meanings and understandings. As a resourceful tool of gathering data focus group interview has long been preferred by researchers for the various advantages it bears to a reception study. Hansen et al., (1998: 62-63) for example, provide two strong reasons which focus group interviews are connected with. The first one is that focus groups present the social activity in which "audiences form their interpretations of media content and their opinions about such content through conversations and social interactions", while the second one is related to the relatively vast amount of data such group dynamics produce. Libbes and Katz cited in Hansen et al., lend their practical experience to argue that focus group interviews are also resourceful for they could be used as opportunities "for the individual expressions of latent opinions, for the generation of group consensus, for free associations to life and for analytic statements about art" (1998: 263).

This research relies on focus group interviews as the key source of data. Sampling participants were considered the recommendation of the program producers of the Betegna radio program producers who have established their own list of participants and listening groups. Hansen et al (1998: 268) confirm that this way of using 'existing lists' to draw participants is viable as long as the researcher is granted access. Thus, the researcher has conducted four FGD with 25 participants. Most participants for the FGD were selected because they used to be part of the listening group organized by 'Betegna' radio program producers. Ibid also note that decision to determine the size and number of the focus groups, mainly depends on the nature of the research and the resources available at hand. Therefore, given the limited time and resource, this study organized four focus groups comprising five to eight people.

3.7 The in-depth Interview

According to Wimmer and Dominic argument Intensive and well performed in-depth interviews provide detailed background about the reasons why respondents give specific answers. It elaborates data concerning respondents' opinions, values, motivations, recollections, experiences, and feelings (2003:127).As a result, this research employed individual in-depth interviews with three program producers of *Betegna* radio program in order to explore more about the audience from the point of view of the program producers.

Chapter Four

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1 A Brief overview of 'Betegna' Radio Program

To serve the purpose of equipping the researcher with relevant information on the program contents of 'Betegna' radio program and gain insight which would help doing the focus group and in-depth individual interviews, a rough review of the program transmitted between September 1st, 2010 and January 31st, 2011 was carried out with the aim of providing the reader with a brief overview the format, content, or presentation of 'Betegna' radio program. The program begins with a woman's voice saying one line followed by a man's voice saying another line (which has now become the one thing that anyone can tell that 'Betegna' radio program is on air). The piece that the woman and the man say has the following lines:

Women: I share my happiness to you

Man: I tell my secret to you

Woman: When I am sad, I talk to you from my heart. I am your 'Betegna' (homey).

Man: This program is your 'Betegna' (homey).

Woman: 'Betegna'.

A piece of instrumental music plays for a little while. Then the presenter's voice comes alive to give a hint about the previous episode and to introduce the day's program. Then the diarists start to narrate their stories continuing from the previous episode (or at the beginning of their story if they are on air for the first time). For about seven to ten minutes. After the story, a piece about HIV/AIDS comes on alive like a promotion. Then the presenter picks an issue from the story presented in the ten minutes for discussion or for others opinion. Usually others opinion concerning the issue raised by the follow an interview format in more of a feature story. At last the voice of the presenter introduces the diarist

for a hint to the next episode. Finally, the presenter tells post number, phone number, and e-mail address if the audience have any comments concerning the program. Moreover, the program takes up to 20-22 minutes to transmit all this. The program is based on the diarist's life story. The issues for discussions are also taken from the story as well.

4.2 Results of Focus group discussion and in-depth interview

4.2.1 Accessing and using the media

Audience can have different reasons or needs to attend different media programs. This part of this chapter discusses the views of the respondents and attempts to investigate if 'Betegna' radio program is achieving its objectives. Furthermore, it looks into the listening habits of research participants, which types of media they access, and which columns or programs they usually tune to. All FGD were started by discussing how their access to media is.

Audience can access different media like radio, television, and newspapers or magazines. Thus, all 25 participants of the four FGD responded that they have access and use radio as a medium. Ten of the respondents only use radio. Eleven of the respondents choose newspapers/magazines next to radio where as four of the respondents said they use television as a medium next to radio. This reflects the fact that radio is important for it is inexpensive, mobile, and available for group listening. This leads to the question does all the research participants own a radio?

All FGD respondents except Yeshareg, 20, FGD-D respond that they own a radio but that doesn't mean they always listen to programs at home. There are times when they listen to neighbor's radio or a friends' radio and at a café or even in a taxi. On the other hand, Yeshareg, 20, FGD-D said that she doesn't own a radio.

Yeshareg: I don't own a radio at home. So, I usually listen to a neighbor's radio. If my neighbors are not around I will go to different anti- HIV/AIDS clubs In order to listen to some programs I don't want to miss.

Concerning how and where to find information about HIV and AIDS Sileshi, 25, FGD-B, Alemitu, 30, FGD-C, and Helen, 19, FGD-A explain it in the following manner:

Sileshi: I have different sources to get information about HIV/AIDS. My first information source is the regional AIDS resource center. I find different pamphlets and research papers which can strengthen my knowledge and also help me to find updates about HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, I find different information from different radio programs like 'Betegna'. I, also, get variety of information in my day to day activities with the community..... you know.... there are things others know and I don't know and vice-versa. So, we share these things.

Alemitu: well, uhhh...I get information about HIV/AIDS from different anti-HIV/AIDS clubs and from different radio programs since I, myself, live with the virus and take ART currently. So, this information is basically about my life..... you know what I mean?.....It is like food and water for me. I hope people won't find wondering around to different anti-HIV/AIDS club to get information too surprising.

Helen: My source for getting information about HIV/AIDS is actually not that much a lot. Nevertheless, it is obvious that there are a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations that works on the fight against HIV/AIDS.....these offices are my first source for information. In addition, leaflets are my other sources next to

radio..... I like few radio programs that are produced on health and other related issues such as 'Betegna': programs present the reality in a dramatic and entertaining fashion which you can't find from those organizations or from a pamphlet.

All the respondents asserted that they use radio as a source of information about HIV/AIDS. They also pointed out that they listen to local Medias: Amhara Mass Media Agency and FM 96.9. In line with this participants were asked to list their favorite radio programs based on their importance. All participants put news on their first list. Why? Their response is that they all are eager to know what is going on around them and around the world. Since there is always a news report every hour it helps to know what's new. However, participants fall apart in to different groups about what comes next on their favorite program list. 12(48%) of the participants chose health related programs where as 8(32%) of participants prioritize sport programs than health and 4(16%) of the respondents are fixated up on youth program. The other 1(4%) of the respondents has put business and consumer reports on as their favorite. Helen, 19, FGD-A, Yenenesh, 25, FGD-B, Kassahun, 21, FGD-D, Zeki, 28, FGD-C, and Sileshi, 25, FGD-B has explained the reason why these programs are their favorite:

Helen: Next to news my favorite program is sports. I really love sports especially football..... I am always anxious about the results of different leagues across the worldyou know.....who is winning and who is losing. I am also very much interested in attending health related program. I think there is a lot I can learn about health. Furthermore, I am also attracted by business and consumer reports, especially these days. Since the government is making new rules and regulations concerning price and supplies. I have to know these rules and regulations so that I can obey it and can be benefited from it.

Yenenesh: Primarily, I preferred Business and Consumer reports next to the News. This is because I am a merchant. Thus, I have to follow up every day for new rules and regulations made by the government so that I can obey it. Otherwise, it could be a contributory factor for me to go out of business. I also listen to programs produced on health related issues like 'Betegna' radio program. Since I am young, there might be obstacles of life ahead of me such programs help me to learn from others experience and help me to make myself ready for challenges.

Kassahun: My favorite programs are those which are produced on health related issues. This doesn't mean that I am not interested in other programs like sport or business; however, I believe health is much more important than other things. If we are not healthy, we will not be capable of doing other things. We can only protect our health if and only if we learn about it. It doesn't only have to be from the media. It could be from different sources, yet we have to know. Therefore, my priority lies on health related programs.

Zeki: My favorite next to news is sports. Most youths have a tendency towards sport. Since I am young, I also have this big passion about sport, particularly for football. Health related programs are my other favorite.....you know.....sometimes there might be some diseases like bird flu for instance or something else I can be aware of such things by listening to such programs. Therefore, it is worth listening.....If you know what I am talking about.

Sileshi: My favorite programs are those which concerns the youth. For instance, since I am young, I need to find information and experiences from others. Thus, programs produced on the youth would really help me a lot. My other favorite would be various programs on health. Especially, I am very eager to

know how much we have been hurt by the transmission of HIV/AIDS. In line with this I give much attention to 'Betegna' radio program. Since it is about people living with HIV/AIDS sharing their life story, I have so much to learn from their true life experience. It really helps me to build my knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS and other social phenomenon.

As indicated above, the highest number (12(48%) of the participants claimed that the health related programs are their favorite next to News. Moreover, the rest of the participants put health related programs into their third favorite which would make 'Betegna' radio program in the top three on the participants list. Accordingly, this has something to do with the question whether or not participants made it their habit to listen to 'Betegna' radio program and their response is further analyzed through the lens of the questions how often do they listen to 'Betegna' radio program and how convenient is the time of the day which the program is broad casted. All but seven participants from FGD-B, FGD-C, and FGD-D say they don't listen to 'Betegna' radio program on a regular basis. They all have varied reasons as for why? Adane, 29, FGD-C, Alemnesh, 24, FGD-B whose level of education is below high school, and Haymanot, 20, FGD-D are some of the respondents who says that they don't listen to 'Betegna' radio program regularly:

Adane: I think I am not a regular listener of 'Betegna' radio program..... don't get me wrong here..... I listen to 'Betegna' whenever I get the chance. Yet I miss it sometimes. It is not because I don't want to listen but because of the nature of my work..... I move from place to place.....you know.....it is a field work. And I don't take a radio whenever I go. So this is why I said I am not a regular listener.

Alemnesh: I think I only listen to 'Betegna' radio program whenever I am at home. Nevertheless, if I go out of my home, I just don't have the guts to find a radio. Sometimes I could be hanging out with my friends and they usually don't feel listening

instead we spent the time by chatting about something. Thus, in order to keep my friends feeling, I miss the program.

Haymanot: I used to be a regular listener of 'Betegna' radio program.....you know..... because of a personal problem I stopped listening the program for a little while but now I started listening again..... I guess I am back on track now to be a regular listener.

Audiences can have different reasons to tune into a particular radio program. All the participants of this research have their own reasons why they listen to 'Betegna' radio program, even those participants who do not listen to the program regularly. Though there are reasons or factors that contribute in one way or another for them not to listen to the program regularly. Helen, 19, FGD-A, Zeki, 28, FGD-C, and Haymanot, 20, FGD-D has expressed it very why they listen to 'Betegna' radio program as follow:

Helen: well, I listen to 'Betegna' radio program for three important reasons. Firstly, it teaches me a lot about life in an entertaining manner. Secondly, I am obliged to know about HIV/AIDS for my and others sake. I think it's apparent when I say for my sake. But when I say for others sake, I believe it is only when I know more about HIV/AIDS, I could be able to teach and help others. Also, it helps me in my participations of different anti-HIV/AIDS clubs. Finally, it helps me to treat those who live with the virus and strengthen my relationship with them.

Zeki: I believe the very first reason why I listen to 'Betegna' radio program is that because it shows me how to travel the path of life..... you know.....when you are young you tend to do a lot of crazy things for fun in which some result in a bad or dangerous situation. Thus, from the diarists, I took their experience and adopt it into my personal life.

Haymanot: I listen to 'Betegna' radio program because it most of the

time focuses on the obstacles or challenges of the youth's life. Also, it is about love. Therefore, gaining others experience on life and love is something that you cannot find easily. Most of all, the program teaches us while entertaining.

It is perhaps important to note that all the participants have varied and similar reasons for why they listen to 'Betegna' radio program. All most all participants, for instance, reported that they listen the program because it teaches them even though the subject each participants gain may differ. In other words, some say the program teaches them about life or love and others say they learn about HIV/AIDS from 'Betegna'. Most importantly, the other varied reasons pointed out by the participants are to gain other's life experience and to entertain themselves. This indicates that audience have different reasons to listen to a particular program since an individual difference from other individual based on background, experience, and interest. As there are reasons for an audience to listen to 'Betegna' radio program, there are also factors or reasons that hinders audiences from attending a particular media program such as 'Betegna' on a regular basis.

One of the problems which could be associated with less regularity in participants listening habits has got something to do with the time of transmission and the length of the program. Those who says the transmission time (Saturday morning, 7:10 am) is not convenient for them comes from FGD-B and FGD-D. Both Yenenesh, 25, and Aleminesh, 24, whose level of education is less than high school are from FGD-B and Haymanot, 20, FGD-D. They explain why the time of transmission is inconvenient as follow:

Yenenesh: since I am a merchant and Saturday is a market day, it is very difficult for me to listen to the program at that particular time. I always prioritize my business. So, I always rush to open my shop and prepare it. Nevertheless, there are times when I manage to waked up early morning and open my shop before 7:00 am. This way I can listen to the program

while I am working. However, if I don't manage to wake up early, which is usually, I will try to listen it from the FM 96.9 on Tuesday.....again while I am working. I think it would be much better if the program is transmitted at night..... say 9:00 pm or something.

Aleminesh: I believe the transmission time of the program is inconvenient if we consider the real situation. Saturday is may be comfortable for civil servants and some students, but it is not comfortable for merchants and farmers. Obviously, there are more merchants and farmers than civil servants..... I am part of this majority. FM 96.9 can be taken as an option, but does it reach audiences outside of Bahir Dar city?.....I don't think so. However, Amhara mass media does. Thus, I suggest they should transmit the program at night so that the program can have a larger audience.

Haymanot: well..... my reason to say the time is inconvenient may seem a bit silly, yet I have missed listening to 'Betegna' because of it..... you know.....it is Saturday. Since I got nothing better to do in weekends, I usually sleep a lot. Therefore, I miss the program because I over slept..... it would be much better for me if they (the program producers) push the time a little further like 9:00 or 9:30 pm.

All except four respondents from FGD-B and FGD-C agreed that not only the duration of the program has to be extended up to 30 to 35 minutes but also the number of times the program transmitted in a week has to be increased up to three or four times a week. Banchigize, 22, FGD-A and Sileshi, 25, FGD-B has expressed it well.

Banchigize: I believe the duration of the program is too short. You know..... my friends have this feeling too. Whenever we bring the issue of 'Betegna' radio program on the table the

only complaint we raise is about the shortage of duration. I think I would be happier if the duration of the program is extended up to 30 minutes at least.

Sileshi: It would be great if the duration is extended up to 30 minutes but not more than that, for it may bring pressure up on work. However, half an hour can convey a good enough message. Sometimes the fewer the minutes of the duration of a program are the lesser the messages that can be transferred. Furthermore, I do not agree with the idea that 'Betegna' radio program has to be transmitted only twice a week. For instance, music has got more coverage in a week than 'Betegna'. Since 'Betegna' program teaches us while entertaining, I think it should be arranged to transmit 'Betegna' four days a week if not every day of the week. I believe a lot of people are the victim of HIV/AIDS one way or another. Thus, talking about it once or twice a week or even everyday of the week would not stop the transmission of the diseases, but it may help, through teaching, to reduce the vulnerability of people to HIV/AIDS.

Letters sent to the producers of the program as a feedback and participation for questions and answers for the last six months (From August 2010- January 2011) has also confirmed what has been raised in the focus group discussions concerning the shortage of the duration of the program. The following comments were taken from letters written by Alelign Tsehaye from Mota, Enkuahane Mekuriaw from Mer'awi, and Aberash Alemu from Bahir Dar.

Alelign: The program you produce is sometimes making me feel sad, but it is highly educational and entertaining more than anything else. The stories about Workie's life, which is full of ups and downs, really hurt my feelings. However, it was very educational. So, keep up the good works.....one last thing..... there is a big shortage of time. You really need to consider

improving it.

Enkuahane: First of all, I wish you a happy new year. The true life experience that is transmitted through 'Betegna' radio program is teaching us a good education. It enables me, since I live in a small village, to switch my radio on and listen to 'Betegna' with the villagers and discuss about it and HIV/AIDS afterwards. For farmers who live in small villages like us, it is creating a great awareness. Therefore, keep it up and be strong, but I have a little complaint about the time. I think the duration of the program is too short. Would you mind thinking about extending it?

Aberash: Dear 'Betegna' radio program producers,..... Your program is educational which is very great, since it boosts our knowledge about HIV/AIDS. It would be great if you extend the duration though..... it's shorter. Finally, I would be very happy to meet the diarists if possible.

The program producers are also aware of the complaints about the time of the transmission, the duration of the program, and the number of times the program is broad casted in a week through the letters sent to them, the phone calls and text messages they received. The producer believes that all the complaints have been taken as a feedback and some can be considered. Tirsit Tesfaye (Producer of 'Betegna' radio program in Amharic) and Shewaye Arega (Producer of 'Betegna' radio program in Oromigna) said the following concerning the aforementioned points.

Tirsit: We never thought of changing the time of the day in which the program is transmitted, but what we are considering is that to transmit the program twice a week instead of once.....you know.....audiences are saying if we miss the program in the morning, why not repeating it at night so that we can listen to it. Nevertheless, I think, it is better for us to think

something else than redundant. Although, there is a complaint about the duration of the program, I think it is enough.....you know..... I want the audience to wait in suspense for the next episode. If the duration is extended, it may be come boring. And I don't want the audience to phase out from listening to the program because of boredom.

Shewaye: We never thought of changing the time of the day in which the program is transmitted. When we first start producing 'Betegna' radio program, we have done an assessment on at what time we can find audiences, and at what time of the day and what day of the week would audience listen to the program if it is broad casted. The feedbacks we collect from the audiences about the program doesn't say much about changing the time of the day or the day of the week. However, most of the comments say that the duration of the program is shorter so that we should extend it. If these complain keeps coming up, it may consider conducting another assessment or research.

The replies of the respondents concerning the time of the day in which the program is broad casted, the number of times the program transmitted in a week, and the duration of the program proves that audiences have least convenience. This particular finding implies that the need to reschedule the time and/or the day and to extend the length of the duration should be seriously considered by the program producer. However, the response from the program producers indicates that there was no room to accommodate a change in the time of the day in which the program is transmitted and the length of the program. Yet there is a little consideration to increase the number of times the program is broad casted in a week. What the producers need to take account is that the convenience is an issue for both the broad casters and the audience to be on the same page. Nevertheless, regarding the change of time and/or day of the transmission and the duration of the program two different opinions are raised

from the program producers. One is the result of considering audiences feeling. In other words, as it is a matter of choosing whether to make audiences bored by increasing the duration or to keep them suspense until the next episode. The producers set their minds at keeping audience interested. The other opinion is that since the program is scheduled based on audience assessment, the questions rose about change of time and/or day would force the producers to be engaged in another audience survey. If so, the complaints gathered from audiences through letters, text messages, and phone calls are a good clue to consider audience survey.

4.2.2 Relevance of 'Betegna' Radio Program to the Audience

Every audience hopes to gain something from a program they attend since they attend it for varied reasons. Somehow a program can be useful for an audience whether it is taken as a source of information or as an entertainment. Thus, this poses the question why do audiences listen to 'Betegna' radio program? As it turns out, there are four reasons which come from the discussions conducted with all focus group discussion. The first is that participants take it as not only their source of information about HIV/AIDS but also as a source of entertainment. Moreover, they believe it's very educational. Some of the participants mentioned gaining others life experience is also their reason to listen to the program. The researcher has also asked how 'Betegna' radio program interests the participants most and what makes the program relevant to them? This might help to identify what differs 'Betegna' from any other radio program hence there are other radio programs that are educational and can be used as a source of information or entertainment. Haymanot, 19, FGD-A, Zeki, 28, FGD-C, and Haymanot, 20, FGD-D have explained it why the program interests them and what makes it relevant in the following manner.

Haymanot: You know..... when you are young you tend to look into others life.....how they spent their youth life. Having to

listen to others story, sharing their life experience....wow....it is fascinating. It helps me to shape my life in the way I suppose to spend my youth. This makes it relevant to me. In addition, I always enjoy it. It is very entertaining which keeps me interested.

Zeki: What makes 'Betegna' to relevant for me is that in life I may have to face different challenges which I may or may not have solutions for. Yet I can learn from the true life story of the diarists on 'Betegna' and apply it to my own life. Furthermore, the program is presented in a remarkable entertaining way.....you know..... posing the reality in a dramatic fashion. It is not factious but real life. What could be more interesting than this?

Haymanot: Apparently, what makes me tune my radio to this particular radio program (Betegna) is that it shows me what is really going on the youth's life, what sort of ups and downs, and what kinds of challenges they come across. This is a very important lesson that one can't find in school and I am very open and enthusiastic to learn something new. Therefore, this is very useful to me.... I guess this also why I am interested in the program.

The responses of the rest of the participants actually couldn't agree more than what is mentioned above. In line with this, participants were asked how their needs are met in 'Betegna' radio program. Being interested in a program may not mean that needs of the audience are fulfilled. However, all participants agreed on the point that most of their needs are met. None of the participants raised a single need that hasn't been met. They believe that if they encounter what they need from the program won't meet in the future, they will call the program producers and leave a comment about it. This indicates that the program is too perfect in meeting the needs of the audience. In order to keep this up, program producers has to work more or as this is, for audiences expectation

of the program will depend on their perception of the program now.

Similarly, since participants agreed that the program is relevant in one way or another, is 'Betegna' radio program useful for the general audience, or for a particular one is another question. Program producers were asked this question and Tirsit believes that the program is designed for a general audience. The program is working on health related issues especially on HIV/AIDS and it concerns all. What Tamirat Yemane (junior program producer) said agrees with Tirsit's opinion. He also believes that it is useful for the community since the program shows HIV/AIDS victim's life from childhood until the present. So, it concerns not only adults but also children's. However, Shewaye sees the usefulness of the program in a different lens. He categorized it as those who live with the virus and those who are not.

Shewaye: Primarily, it targets those who are living with the virus.

Why? The program is produces in order to avoid stigma and discrimination and to make them see that they have the spirit to say we can. Thus, they are the primary beneficiary. Moreover, those who already have their blood checked and knew their status, and those who doesn't know their status can learn a lot from the experience of the diarists.

As indicated above, 'Betegna' radio program is relevant for the participants even though the reason varies. In addition, program producers made it clear that it is very useful for the general audience. The researcher was wondering what comes to the participants mind when they think of 'Betegna' radio program. All, except Yeshareg, 20, from FGD-D who feels sad about the diarists, the participants has explained that they have a good feeling about it. Helen, 19, FGD-A, Sileshi, 25, FGD-B, and Zeki, 28, FGD-C has expressed their feelings when they think of 'Betegna'.

Helen: What first come to my mind when I think of 'Betegna'

radio program is that I think of myself on the diarists shoe.....what if it is me?.....you know. I don't think I have the patience to go through the challenges the diarists passed. There are also times when it disturbs me inside. Surprisingly, I will wait in excitement until the next episode.

Sileshi: It is HIV/AIDS that comes to mind when I think of 'Betegna'. How they spent the day the first time they found out that they are living with the virus, the burden of stigma and discrimination, and most of them go on public telling their story so that the next generation could learn from them. Therefore, whenever I think of 'Betegna' I think about HIV/AIDS from where to where? And I see something bright because a lot of people has passed melted like a candle. They thought us a lot of things. I understand it is not a fable when they say what we have done is done but let us save the generation.

Zeki: I always think of the name 'Betegna'..... you know. It really fits the program. It got me thinking that you can only share your deepest and darkest secrets with those who are dear and very close to you. Those individuals who share their life story with the audience have thought of us close to them. They don't want us to have the same path of life as they did. They want us to be better.... This is how I think of 'Betegna' radio program.

The above replies reveal that 'Betegna' radio program really means something to the participants. Whether it is usefulness can be judged as educational, entertaining, or a source of information.

4.2.3 Language Usage of 'Betegna' Radio Program

'Betegna' radio program is produced in different languages such as; Amharic, Oromigna, and Tigregna. The program which is broad casted through Amhara Mass Media Agency and FM 96.9 is in Amharic since Amharic is the official language of the region. Therefore, audiences of 'Betegna' radio program who listen to the program in Amhara Mass Media Agency and FM 96.9 may not have a problem of understanding the language used by 'Betegna' radio program because it is their mother tongue. Nevertheless, it is quite difficult to draw a conclusion that audience must understand the language used hence it is their first language. There might actually be dialects or jargons used by the presenters, by the diarists, and by different interviewees. All focus group participants were asked whose language they understand better in order to identify whether the language of the journalist, the diarist, or the interviewee they understand clearly and completely. All FGD participants responded that they understand the language of the diarists hence almost all of the diarists are from their surroundings they share the same culture and language, though they don't even have difficulties of understanding dialects of the diarist if used. They also mentioned that they understand the language of the journalist's as well as the interviewee's but not as easy as the diarist's.

Akelat: I really don't have that much difficulty of understanding the language used in 'Betegna' radio program. I understand the diarist's, the journalist's, and the interviewee's. But I am very much satisfied by the language of the diarist's. I just don't know why?.....May be it is because I pay close attention to every word they say since I am very enthusiastic and exited about their story.

Zeki: I clearly and easily understand the language of the diarist's. I think what makes it this much easier for me is that I have the same culture and I speak the same language as the

diarist's. However, this doesn't mean that I don't understand the language spoken by the the journalist's and the interviewee's. I do. Nevertheless, there are times when the interviewee uses jargons mostly they explain what it means but sometimes they don't. In general, the language used in the program is understandable.

Haymanot: I understand the language of the diarist much more than the language of the journalist and the interviewee. Since the diarist's are narrating their life story, they know exactly what word or term expresses their actions or sequences of events in their life. Thus, the most interested part of the program is the story of the diarist's and I pay my attention to a single word they say and I understand it. I also understand the journalist's and the interviewee's language as well.

This view of participants goes in conformity with the program producers of 'Betegna'. Tirsit (program producer) agrees that she faces a big problem when she produces the program. She believes that some people have difficulties of expressing themselves. They start to talk about others when she wants them to talk about themselves. She also confirm that there are few people who tries to use English terms in the program but she tries her best either to make them use only Amharic or use English that fits the level of the audience and sometimes she asks for explanation of jargons during an interview. Furthermore, Shewaye categorized the language usage into two: the Language of interviewee's and the language of the diarist's.

Shewaye: I see the language usage into two different ways. The first is the problem that we face with interviewee's language. There are interviewee's that uses different jargons. Obviously, I believe, jargons cause confusions for audiences than teaches them. Thus, we try to correct them during the

interview by raising questions like “do you mean....?” on the spot. If we don't ask them what it means on the spot, we try to paraphrase the technical terms in the studio. The second is the language of the diarist's. Language is one criterion for us to bring the diarists on the air....you know....Does the diarists express their opinions, thoughts, feelings, ideas, and attitudes in such a way that is understood by the speakers of the language? If they fulfill this criterion, we may make a few corrections in the use of dialects....then they are good to go.

Tamirat: As a program producer we face different language problems. There are a lot of professional people we invite to give us explanations regarding points or issues raised in the story of the diarists and these professionals sometimes use technical terms which are difficult to be understood by the audiences. Thus, we ask for explanations on the spot. Otherwise, we give them a call from the studio and ask them what that particular term or jargon mean.

This view of the producer indicates that they are trying as much as possible to alleviate language problems that could possibly come from the interviewee and the diarist. The researcher was eager to know how program producers (presenters) correct if they have language usage problem. The first and the most crucial response given by the producers is that they have lived among the people in which the language is used. Thus, they believe, they know the dialects and the culture of the audience somehow. In addition, they took short term trainings before and after they were hired in the production of 'Betegna' radio program. Most of the trainings were arranged by the organizations (National AIDS Resource Center) that hired them and some creates the opportunity themselves. Tirsit, for instance, has computed in the international AIDS conference and went abroad for short term training. Meanwhile, both Yeshareg, 20, FGD-D and

Alemimesh, 24, FGD-B whose level of education less than high school, and Alemitu, 30, FGD-B who is uneducated claims that they sometimes have problems of understanding the language used by the journalist's and the interviewee's. This indicates that those whose level of education is low have difficulties of understanding the language of the presenters and the interviewee's. This shows that some of the words used by the journalist or the interviewee don't cope up with the level of understanding of the audiences.

4.2.4 Audiences' Interpretation of Message's of 'Betegna' Radio Program

Audiences can have different interpretation or understanding of a particular message or program. Therefore, the researcher intended to find out participants understanding of what the program's are about, what meanings audiences make after listening 'Betegna' radio program, and what kind of message they hope to get from the program. Concerning what the programs all about some participants understand the program as a program that presents a story of people who lives with HIV/AIDS while some others believe that it is a program that shows how people end up in living with HIV/AIDS because of unfaithfulness to their marriage or to their partner or because carelessness (or not practicing the ABC rule) and some participants interpret it as a story of people who live with HIV/AIDS and that shows how they had been stigmatized and discriminated by the community. Banchigizie, 20, FGD-A, Sileshi, 25, FGD-B, and Aragaw, 21, FGD-D have said the following regarding what meaning they make after listening to 'Betegna' radio program.

Banchigizie: I make the meaning after I put myself on the diarist's shoe. Since I am young, I would like to consider myself that way..... you know..... what if same thing as him or her

happens to me tomorrow? You see, this is the meaning I give..... what if this is me? So, it helps me fight through whatever problem I face.

Sileshi: The meaning for me is that it got me saying life is like this. Because what 'Betegna' radio program transmitting is a life experience. For instance, you can see the ups and downs caused by lack of transparency and lack of honesty. Furthermore, I see different situations, conflicts, or understanding. All this things makes me say life is like this and when life is like this, you will take its experience.

Aragaw: You know..... what I make out of 'Betegna' radio program is that how I should protect myself from HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Although I have never had such experience as the stories, I take their life experience as a life therapist. If something happens which has the same manner as the diarists, it would help me to easily find a solutions. Thus, this is the meaning I make from 'Betegna' radio program.

This view of participants indicates that the meaning they make has something to do with the diarist's life story. The meaning the participants make out of the program is based on their understanding and interpretation of the message (content) of the program. Above anything else, participants hope to gain facts and more experiences of people. This goes in line with the content of the program hence it is based on people's real life story. In general, the meaning the participants make out of 'Betegna' and what 'Betegna' program is all about has got similarity. Those who understood 'Betegna' as a program that shows the life of people who live with HIV/AIDS relate the meaning they make after listening to the program with HIV/AIDS. And the same is true for those who understand the program as a love story or a life experience.

Chapter Five

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Focus group discussions, in-depth individual interview, and letters from audience were used to gather the data for the study to come up with its findings. The decision to employ these data collection tools was justified by the preference made at the outset to use qualitative research paradigm to guide this study. Focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews have been very advantageous when the data generated through that was combined to arrive at a few meaningful findings. In fact, this part of the paper has summarized the findings of the study.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the researcher looked into audiences' access and use of media through their source of information, their listening habit, relevance of 'Betegna' radio program, whose language they (audiences) understand easily and clearly, and their interpretation of messages or contents of 'Betegna' radio program.

As a result, it was found that most respondents habitually tune to 'Betegna' radio program for the purpose of following up the diarists story while seven respondents from FGD-B, FGD-C, and FGD-D don't listen 'Betegna' on a regular basis because of the nature of their work or personal reason. In line with this, the time of the program transmission has a contribution for less regularity. Participants from FGD-B and FGD-D, whose level of education is below high school, claimed that the time of the transmission is inconvenient for them. This, as pointed out by the participants, has got to do with Saturday being a market day. These participants are neither students nor civil servants rather they are farmers or merchants which makes Saturday the busiest day of the week for them. Those who miss the program on Saturday may listen to it on Tuesday at FM 96.9 but the limitation of transmitting 'Betegna' radio program on the FM is

that it has fewer audiences than Amhara Mass Media Agency.

In connection with the above point, hence those participants who don't listen to the program on a regular basis raised the time of transmission as a factor. Furthermore, except four participants from FGD-B and FGD-C, all agreed that the duration of the program is too short. Letters sent to the producer of the program has also confirmed this. These groups of participants believe that the program should be extended from the 20 minutes to 30-35 minutes. Some of the participants were also agreed that the number of times the program transmitted in a week should also be extended three or four times a week where most of the participants said twice a week is good enough. The program producers of 'Betegna' has also confirmed that they are aware of the shortage of the duration of the program through audiences feedback. They also said that there has never been a comment to transmit 'Betegna' radio program more than twice a week.

In regard to the relevance of 'Betegna' radio program to the audience, participants have pointed out four reasons for why they listen to 'Betegna' radio program. One of the reasons mentioned in the group discussion was they listen to 'Betegna' because they get information about HIV/AIDS. The other reasons were the program is entertaining and educational while some others listen to 'Betegna' to gain other's experience. Moreover, all the group discussion participants mentioned that their needs are met in the program so that they are very satisfied with the content of the program. The needs of the participants being satisfied and their reason to listen to 'Betegna' radio program make the program relevant to them.

Language use was not a problem for most of the participants. All of the group participants claim that they understand the language of the diarists. Since they speak the same language, share similar background, and have the same culture, it is easier to understand their dialect or language. On the other hand, the producers of 'Betegna' radio program claim that they face a big problem in language usage of the diarists (which is a criterion for recruitment) and the

interviewee's but they manage to correct most of the problems. However, three participants from FGD-B and FGD-D whose level of education is below high school and uneducated mentioned that they sometimes have problems of understanding the language used by the journalist's and the interviewee's which, actually, is confirmed by the producers of the program that sometimes some interviewee's use English words and Jargons but they sometimes tells the interviewee to explain or use Amharic. Otherwise, they have to explain or paraphrase it in the studio.

Even though the theme of 'Betegna' radio is the same, participant audiences have varied understanding or interpretation of the message. Some of them understand it as a program that presents the story of people who lives with HIV/AIDS while others believe that that the program is about how people end up in living with HIV/AIDS and some also interpret it as how people who live with HIV/AIDS have been stigmatized and discriminated by others. This indicates that people or audiences have different interpretation or understanding of the same theme.

5.2 Recommendations

One of the findings from the FGD appeared to be the time in which the program is transmitted (Saturday morning 7:10 am. The FM 96.9 transmits the program on Tuesday afternoon on its own will) for less regularity. Furthermore, participants pointed out that duration had to be extended and the number of times the program transmitted in week must also be extended. Therefore, 'Betegna' radio program producers (staff) should address the issue of time.

The other issue raised from the group participation was participants with low level of education have sometimes faced difficulties of understanding some words (language) used by the journalist (the presenter) and the interviewee. Thus, 'Betegna' radio program producers have to consider the issue of language to the level of background of the general audience.

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APPENDICES

Appendix – 1 A

Interview guide for FGD and In-depth Interview with participants

Part 1: Biographical Information

1. Name/Code _____
2. Age _____
3. Gender _____
4. Level of education
 - a, illiterate
 - b, 1-9th grade
 - c, 9th grade and above
5. Status of Amharic:
 - a, Mother tongue
 - b, 2nd language
 - c, 3rd language
6. Place of residence _____

Part 2: Access to media and use

1. How is your access to the media?
 - a) Radio b) TV c) Print media (newspapers and/magazines
 - d) Both _____ & _____ e) Any other
2. Which programmes/ columns do you attend more often?
3. How and where do you get information about HIV/AIDS?

Part 3: Amhara Mass Media Radio and *Betegna* Program

I. General

1. Access
 - Whose radio do you usually listen to?
 - a, Your own radio
 - b, A friend's radio
 - c, A neighbor's radio

d, Other _____

2. Listening habits

2.1 When did you start tuning to Amahara mass media radio?

2.2 How often do you tune to Amahara mass media radio?

- A) Almost everyday
- B) About 2 or 3 days a week
- C) Once a week
- D) Any other _____

2.3 Which radio programmes are your favorites? (*List them in order of importance*)

- A) Business and consumer reports
- B) Sport
- C) Health
- D) News
- E) Other _____

2.4. What are your major reasons for the above priority.....? Would you please list

them for me?

II. Specific (on *Betegna* radio program)

1. What comes first to your mind when you think of *Betegna* radio program?

2. Why are you listening to *Betegna* radio program?

3. How often do you listen to *Betegna* radio program?

- A, Regularly
- B, Not regularly

4. When did you start listening to *Betegna* radio program?

5. What do you use *Betegna* radio programme as?

- A, As a source of entertainment
- B, As a source of information and news
- C, As any other radio program
- D, I don't know
- E, Any other

6. What makes the program interest you most and make the program particularly relevant to you? Why? (*Could be more than one answer*)

7. How are your needs met in the radio program? (Refers to the issues you think

were made particularly relevant to you)

8. What do the program lack/miss which make it fall short of meeting your needs?

9. In what condition do you listen to *Betegna* radio program (*while working or doing business, eating, sitting in your office room...*)?

10. Was there a moment when you decided to stop listening to *Betegna* radio program?

A, Yes

B, No

11. If your answer to the above question is 'yes', what were your reasons?

A, The broadcast time is not convenient with your own activity

B, Overlap of the program with other TV/radio programs

C, Irrelevance of the program to your personal activity (interest)

D, Any other _____

12. What is your reaction to the duration of *Betegna* radio program? Should it be extended (longer than the current) or reduced (shorter than its current duration)? What are your reasons?

13. Are you comfortable with the time of the day in which the program is broadcast?

14. Which issues do you think have got more coverage on *Betegna* radio program? (*Would you do your own sequencing, please?*)

A, HIV/AIDS prevention methods

B, Issues related to people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA)

C, Issues related to stigma and discrimination

D, Issues related to how people get infected by HIV/AIDS

E, Any other _____

15. How relevant are the above issues to your day to day activities?

16. How easily/clearly do you understand the language/words used by the journalists and interviewees or diarists (for example, experts...)?

17. Whose language do you understand better? The journalists', the interviewees' or the diarists'?

18. How much do you think has *Betegna* radio program been helpful personally

to you in learning about HIV/AIDS?

19. Do the program contents of *Betegna* conform to what your friends and other people tell you and with your beliefs regarding the realities of HIV/AIDS?

20. Do you discuss the issues raised in *Betegna* radio program with other people?

If 'yes' with whom? If 'no' why?

21. How do you generally rate *Betegna* radio program?

A. Excellent B. Very good C. Fair D. Poor

Appendix - 1B

Interview Guide for all FGDs on *Interpretation* of Messages

1. What are the programs about?

2. What meaning did you make after listening to the programs? Why?

3. Were they interesting to you? Why?

4. Are they in conformity with what you already know?

5. How does each program appeal to your own life experience?

6. To whom do you think the programs need to be presented?

7. What kind of messages do you want to get from *Betegna* radio program? (*facts, people's experience for example successes or failures, ...*)

8. If you were to evaluate *Betegna* radio program, where do you put it?

A) Excellent b) Very good c) Fair d) Poor

9. Why do you rate it that way?

Appendix - 1C

Guide for individual in-depth interview with the producers of *Betegna* radio program

Personal Details

- Name _____
- Position _____
- Responsibility in the production of *Betegna* radio program _____
- Educational background _____

Questions

1. How long have you been involved in the production of the program?
2. How do you get program ideas?
3. To whom do you think the issue is relevant for?
4. What are the sources of the information/facts... on which you base your program?
5. Do you edit stories you take from other sources (newspapers, magazines, websites...) so that they can appeal to radio audience?
6. Do you edit interviews you have had with experts or diarists in which there have been incidents of using the language?
7. What format do you commonly use while producing 'Betegna' radio program
(*prioritize if you are using more than one format*)
A, Lecture /Straight talk B, Interviews/discussions
C, Drama D, Music E, Jingles/Slogans F, Feature
G, Magazine (containing a number of issues in the form of interviews, music, straight talk...) H, Infotainment I, Any other

9. Do you think the issues you raise relate to the reality on the ground?
10. Have you ever thought of changing the time of broadcasting the program? If 'yes' Why?
11. Are there plans to air *Betegna* radio program more than twice a week? If 'yes'

what do you think necessitates that?

12. How does feedback on your program come to you?

13. What do the comments generally say?

15. Have you ever received media related trainings? And in particular on HIV/AIDS or health related?

16. Have you ever been in disagreement with the officials of **Amhara Mass Media Agency**?

17. Has the management or member of the management team of the **Amhara Mass Media Agency** editorial right over your programmes? Are there cases in which you were forced to drop an already produced program/s as a result of exercising this 'editorial right'? Please explain.

18. Any challenges you are facing in dealing with **Amhara Mass Media Agency**?

Appendix - 2A
Focus group participants

1. FGD – A: age 18 – 21

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Level of Education
1	Aysheshum Alene	M	21	9 th and above
2	Banchigizie Sendeku	F	20	9 th and above
3	Esubalew Kifle	M	21	9 th and above
4	Haymanot	F	19	9 th and above
5	Helen Muluhabit	F	19	9 th and above

2- FGD – B: ages 22 – 25

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Level of Education
1	Akelat Muchie	F	22	9 th and above
2	Alemnesh	F	24	1-9 th grade
3	Anchinayehu Kassa	F	24	9 th and above
4	Banchigizie Alemu	F	22	9 th and above
5	Eniyesh Tamirat	F	23	9 th and above
6	Sileshi Getachew	M	25	9 th and above
7	Tikeber Wubetu	F	22	9 th and above
8	Yenenesh Animut	F	25	1-9 th grade

3- FGD – C: ages 26 and above

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Level of Education
1	Adane Yigzaw	M	29	9 th and above
2	Alemitu Mekonnen	F	30	Illiterate
3	Haregeweyn Ezezew	F	26	9 th and above
4	Senait	F	26	9 th and above
5	Taye Asfaw	M	27	9 th and above
6	Zeki	M	28	9 th and above

4 – FGD: ages 18 - 21

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Level of Education
1	Addissie Abeje	M	20	9 th and above
2	Aregaw Zenebe	F	21	9 th and above
3	Essey	F	18	9 th and above
4	Haymanot Aregawi	F	20	9 th and above
5	Kassahun Adege	M	21	9 th and above
6	Yeshareg Maru	M	20	1-9 th grade

Appendix - 2B

Participant of the In-depth interview

- 1- Tirsit Tesfaye- Program producer of 'Betegna' in Amharic
- 2- Shewaye Arega- Program producer of 'Betegna' in Oromigna
- 3- Tamirat Yemane- Program producer of 'Betegna' in Tigregna