

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
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**FACULTY OF JOURNALISM AND
COMMUNICATION**

**AUDIENCE SATISFACTION WITH
ETHIOPIAN TELEVISION AMHARIC
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM: THE CASE OF
CHILDREN IN ADDIS ABABA**

BY: TSEGANESH MULUGETA

**JULY, 2009
ADDIS ABABA**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Tseganesh Mulugeta

ABSTRACT

The central focus of this study was to explore the satisfaction/dissatisfaction of children with Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program. The study attempted to see the extent to which the program gratify the children or not, for what purpose they use the program, the children's program preferences and whether the children's needs/interests are addressed or not.

In the literature review, various literatures that have connection with children and television were review. Accordingly, Bandura's social – learning theory and the uses and gratifications approach were used as a theoretical framework to this particular theme.

The research method that was utilized in this study was qualitative. The study, by using focus group interviews and in-depth individual discussions, tried to explore the level of the respondent's satisfaction/dissatisfaction in relation to the program. The respondents were selected purposely to find out the real viewers of the program. The editor and producers of the particular program also interviewed to make the study complete.

The findings of the research demonstrated that ETV Amharic children's program is not in the position to gratify its viewers. The responses of the respondents reveal that their needs and/or preferences are not fit with the content and presentation of the program. Even if they have lots of reasons to watch it, they didn't achieve what they want and expect. The outcomes of the individual in-depth and focus group interviews revealed that the majority of the respondents lost interest toward the program because the program did not gratify their needs.

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Chapter one: Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Ethiopian Television (ETV), after various trials and errors, established on November 1964 and started broadcasting by five Ethiopians and twenty-six foreigners who came from Britain. In that time, most programs of the station, except news and forum, were western's, which were transmitted through films. Through various trainings and experiences, more local producers got the know-how to produce local programs. At the beginning of broadcasting, out of the total programs transmitted through the station, 80% were foreign films (imported programs) and the rest 20% were the local ones. In contrast, in 1993 E.C., the situation was vice-versa. (Leykun, 1997 and Abel, 2004)

ETV has different programs that are focused on information, education and entertainment. From these programs, children's program is the prominent one. In addition to the Amharic children's program, it also started its transmission in Afan Oromo and Tigrigna languages. The main purpose of this program is to educate and entertain children. (Leykun, 1997) It is believed that children, through entertainment, would learn about the world around them. There were audience researches to base some of the programs of the station. However, as far as the researcher knowledge is concerned, there has been no research done to strengthen the children's program. There is no record on what the children expected and whether they are satisfied or not with regard to the program.

According to Abel (2004:11), audiences are curial in communication to all media in general and television in particular. Media always produce programs to audiences. Program producers bear also in mind the heterogeneity of their audiences and what they want. On the other hand, the audience has some preconceived idea that they may expect their communication needs would be satisfied by a particular medium or text. This is applicable for children also. They have their own needs. The medium has to know the needs of the children and how to manage it. Unlike what used to be believe, children are

not passive viewers waiting for the media to show them anything. Some studies regard children's relationship with television as active. (Bryant and Anderson, 1983 and David Buckingham, 1998)

Nowadays, children have a lot of choices to inform, educate and entertain themselves. So, media especially Ethiopian Television has to know what children expect from the program and what is best for them and how to satisfy their needs. In order to do this, a research is needed.

1.2 Statement of the problem

It is true that the meaning and importance of any media depend on the existence, impact and influence to its audiences. Without audience, there is no media. If audiences are not satisfied with what the media presented for them, they will probably not become regular viewers of the particular media or they will stop watching. When we compare children's attention span with grownups, it is short. They easily get bored on what they have seen, heard or did. Care should be taken on how to handle children's affairs.

When I was a child, I was fond of ETV Amharic children's program. Like other children in the neighborhood, I couldn't wait for this program to start. It is obvious that on that time, there was no as such alternative media to enjoy ourselves. The program was prepared to children. But, I remember our parents and other people were also watching it because it had an interesting episode of the time.

Nowadays, with the help of science and technology the choices of children are increasing. They make themselves inform, educate and most importantly entertain through internet, computer, and digital video play station games etc. Children use the technology as an integral part of their life. "There are children's programs like films, movies and other motion pictures that are readily available for children either in video cassettes, DVDs or VCDs or televised satellite broadcasts in the likes of DSTV and Arab

broadcasts.”(Endalkachew, 2008) Globalization of media enables various opportunities for children. Gigli (2004) states that media brings opportunities to broaden children’s outlooks and provide more equal access to information. But, it also threatens cultural identification and values. To avoid these threats, local media play an important role by producing segments that would help children to learn and inform through entertainment about their rights and responsibilities and culture of their society.

It would be crucial to conduct a study on audience satisfaction to know the status of its audience. According to Leykun (1977), producing and transmitting programs without the needs and/or preferences of its audience mean nothing except waste of time, energy and resources. It is the assumption of this research project that the Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program is not satisfying its audience as it was suppose to be. One of the producers of the program told me and as I observed in my preliminary search that nobody gave priority to the program: inexperienced and uninterested journalists are recruited, they also did not last long, they did not have the know-how which program fit for children and which are not, priority has been given for other programs of the station in general and so on.¹ In these circumstances, I asked myself how the program is able to satisfy the needs and preferences of the children. Taking this into account, I wanted to study how the children’s program in Ethiopian Television play its role to grab the children’s attention or to satisfy their needs and interests in appropriate way and how much the children use and like it.

1.3 Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- Why children watch Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program?
- Are they satisfied with the program?
- Do they have an interest on the program and are their needs or preferences addressed?

¹ Interview conducted December 17, 2008

- What are the factors that make the children contented or discontented with the program?

1.4 General objective of the study

This study offers an exploration of audience satisfaction with Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program.

1.5 Specific objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study are:

- to explore the extent to which Ethiopian television Amharic children program met the needs and/or preferences of the children
- to see the satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction of the children with the program
- to identify the audience responses and the reason behind the responses
- to see how the program is useful and satisfactory in the life of the children

1.6 Significance of the Study

The primary significance of the study rely on its contributions to the program producers of Ethiopian Television Amharic children program in particular and to the station in general on how to satisfy the needs and/or interests of the children and how to deliver the program in a better way for the audience-children. It will help the producers to find out which segments interests their audiences and which are not, why children are contented/discontented and how to handle it. In this respect, they will address the needs and/or preferences of the children in appropriate way.

One of the producers of the program informed me in an informal interview that Ministry of Women Affairs is responsible for the affairs of children in the country. According to the producer, however, the ministry didn't have a regular contact with the media unless

there is a national celebration.² So, this study help to indicate the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the children with the program, what they need and how those stakeholders, with the support of the media, address these needs. They have the responsibilities to teach the children about their rights and responsibilities, different cultures, traditions and ways of lives of their own and other countries. In this regard, media is the best means to reach children.

The study could also be useful for NGO's that work on children on how to educate and entertain the children by analyzing their needs and interests. Children have the right to get what they want and to know what's appropriate for them.

1.10 Limitations of the study

The subjectivity nature of satisfaction might influence the over all outcome of the study. There are no relevant documents about the program in Ethiopian Television's library and the unwillingness of the station to give some of the segments of the program also creates hindrance on the study. The limitation of time allotted to the research project was also limited me from using other research techniques like observation in addition to the individual interviews and focus group discussions. Shortage of relevant materials related to the theme in the Ethiopian context might have impacts on the study to some extent.

1.11 Scope of the Study

The study focused only on the Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program. It doesn't include the Afan Oromo and Tigrigna languages of children program transmitted in the station. So, the scope is limited to the Amharic children's program of ETV.

1.12 Thesis Organization

² Interview conducted on December 30, 2008

This thesis contains five chapters, out of which this first chapter deals with the general feature of the paper. This chapter is a show up for the background of the research, statement of the problem, objectives and significance of the study.

Chapter two, the literature review, deals with some of the prominent features of children and television. This chapter also presents the premises of social-learning and the Uses and Gratifications theory that are related with children and television and which represents the theoretical framework of the study. It also comprises the short background of the Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program and children programming.

Details of research methodology, data collection methods, sampling techniques and research procedures are the center of attention for the third chapter. The rationale for the adoption of qualitative research methods will be discussed.

The fourth chapter provides the presentation and interpretation of the data. Finally, chapter five concludes the thesis in terms of the findings and results of the study.

Chapter two: Review of literature

2.1 Background of Ethiopian Television Amharic Children's Program

As it mentioned earlier, there is no record when and how the Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program started. According to Ato Kefelgn Getahun, chief-editor of the program, when the program started transmission and until recent time, the program has been recorded not digitally. This is one of the reasons that the station did not have enough record on how the program begins. The program is under the bureau of social affairs of the station.

The ETV Amharic children's program is composed of music, films, news for children, a segment where letters from the children presented and other special programs that are prepared for the audience. According W/ro Aynalem Balcha, one of the producers of the program, the target audience is not officially set but it is supposed to have children between the ages of 3-15. The program aired on Saturday and Sunday mornings between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.

From the outstanding hosts of the program, Abbaba Tesfaye was one of them. There is no evidence about exactly when and how he and his responsibilities to children who attend the program started. According to W/ro Aynalem, he was in the program for more than forty years. On the time when he was the major presenter of the program, children were eager to attend the program because of him. He told many stories and advices that educate and entertain the children. Even if there was no a single research on the impact of his words - stories and advices – on the viewers, it is supposed to have a great impact (positively) on the attitudes and behaviors of the children.³

³ Interview conducted on February 4, 2009

2.2 Children and Television

Television is commonly cited by people as their major source of information about what is happening around the world. It also plays a great role in the lives of young people - children. Many studies argue that television has its own influences in the lives of children. Many of these were on the effects of television on them. This is because of the 'enormous power of television' and the 'inherent vulnerability of children. (Gunter and McAleer, 1997:165)

However, television can and does influence children depending on how the medium is used. It might be destructive or constructive in the social and intellectual life of the child. Television can provide children with a breadth of experiences, not all of which can in any way be construed as bad. Indeed, television can bring to children knowledge and other personal benefits which may be unavailable to them through any other source. (Ibid)

2.3 Children Programming

Programming can refer to an outcome or a process. The processes of selecting, scheduling, promoting and evaluating programs define the work of a programmer. Whether designated a program director, program manager or operations manager, the person's job will be to choose the programs that target the desired audience, then design a schedule for them, make sure they are effectively marketed and then monitor the outcome. (Eastman and Ferguson, 2002:4)

This simply means that the programmer has to make sure that the program is appropriate for and reach the desired audience. The primary goal of programming is to satisfy the needs of the target audience. This is also true in children program. Today's media environment enable children to a variety of entertainment and information from a

large number of television channels, radio stations, print publications and new electronic media accessible through computer technology.

Children program is a program that is designed to appeal to a particular segment of the public – children. It should reflect the fundamental nature of childhood. Children program should be as attractive as other programs of the particular media. In modern societies, different television channels offers different programs or segments that aimed especially at children. Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program is one of them.

Children need special care. Their attention span is short and they easily get bored. They watch television because there is something that they want to see. If they are not interested in, they stop watching. 'Individual personalities' and 'current moods' will have a contribution on how and why children select specific programs to view. (Gunter and McAleer, 1997:17)

According to Eastman and Ferguson (2002:7), "The most important part of programming is understanding the audience. What appeals to viewers or listeners or online users? Quite simply, audiences want to be entertained and they want to be informed. These two elements comprise the whole of programming."

Children program need to inform, educate and entertain the audience as other programs. How the program is presented has an impact on the children's viewing styles. Some programs that are designed to inform and educate may also need to be entertaining. In addition to its function, these programs also have an entertainment impact in order to win and maintain their audience. Entertainment programs, on the other hand, may also cultivate awareness of certain aspects of life, influence beliefs and values, or provide insights into how to deal with personal and social problems. Mere educational or informatics programs may not interest the children. The programs not necessarily attract viewers by their major functions.

Journalists, who produces children's program, have to consider that the program that aimed specifically at children will have pro-social and educational values. They should also make sure that 'fad-driven' nature of the program. This is because children are easily quit on what they are looking if they are not interested in. In other word, their interest is fickle and change quickly. The other point programmer bear in mind is that the time the program is presented is appropriate to the children.

The government, the society and other stakeholders have to give attention on the importance of the children's program and work so as to satisfy the needs and expectations of the children. Carelessness and misunderstanding of children's needs, interests and learning abilities would result in the failure to meet the desire goal of the program. Therefore, the station in general and the program in particular have to make sure that they are able to meet their target audiences' needs.

2.4 Children's Television Program Charter

According to UNESCO yearbook (1999:409), different organizations in different countries of the world actively used the Children's Television Charter in their own countries. This charter revised and adopted in Munich in 1995.⁴ It states:

- *Children should have programs of high quality which are made specifically for them, and which do not exploit them. These programs, in addition to entertaining, should allow children to develop physically, mentally and socially to their fullest potential.*

- *Children should hear, see and express themselves, their culture, their language and their life experiences, through television programs which affirm their sense of self, community and place.*

⁴ The children's television charter was presented by Anna Home, Head of children's programs, television, BBC, at the first World Summit on Television and Children in Melbourne, Australia, March 1995. (UNESCO, year book 1999)

- *Children’s programs should promote an awareness and appreciation of other cultures in parallel with the child’s own cultural background.*
- *Children’s programs should be wide-ranging in genre and content, but should not include gratuitous scenes of violence and sex.*
- *Children’s programs should be aired in regular slots at times when children are available to view, and/or distributed via other widely accessible media or technologies.*
- *Sufficient funds must be made available to make these programs to the highest possible standards.*
- *Governments, production, distribution and funding organizations should recognize both the importance and vulnerability of indigenous children’s television, and take steps to support and protect it.*

2.5 Television Audience and Their Satisfaction /Dissatisfaction

“The television audience is composed of a wide variety of groups and is not a homogeneous mass....these groups actively read television in order to produce from it meanings that connect with their social experiences.”(Fiske, 1987:84) An audience is a group of people who have different background and experience and who receive a particular message or program from the media. McQuail (2005:396) describe television audience as follows:

An audience can thus be defined in different and overlapping ways: by place (as in the case of local media); by people (as when a medium is

characterized by an appeal to a certain age group, gender, political belief, or income category); by the particular type of medium or channel involved(technology and organization combined); by the content of its message (genres, subject matter, styles); by time (as when one speaks of the 'daytime' or 'primetime' audience or an audience that is fleeting and short term compared with one that endures).

According to him, audiences are active members of the media who have their own motives to watch. It is also true that any viewer can capture what they want and reject what they do not want from the particular media. However, not all members of the audiences are active in their media use. They also differ in interpreting and using media messages. (Ang, 1991)

In general, audiences are active and purposive in their viewing so as to fulfill their needs. But, the main point here is that how would it be possible to know whether they are contented or not.

Many scholars defined audience satisfaction/dissatisfaction in different ways. Jacobs (1995) and Assael (1998) describe it as “Satisfaction can be achieved when program or service performance is greater than expectations; on the contrary, when expectation exceeds performance, dissatisfaction overtakes.”(Cited in Abel) According to Palmgreen and Rayburn (1985), satisfaction is a feeling of contentment that came from the use of a particular media. Hecht (1978), on the other hand, looks audience’s satisfaction with fulfilling expectations through media interaction. Therefore, satisfaction might be explained by the viewer’s gratifications gained from the television programs like Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program. So, audience satisfaction is a gratification audiences’ achieve from the particular television program.

There are disagreements in how to achieve satisfaction as long as it’s a mental process. According to Assael (1998), even if knowing audiences satisfaction is important, it is difficult in mass communication to measure it. Nevertheless, media products like

Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program have to measure or assess audience's satisfaction so as to improve or develop the program in order to hold the existing and new audiences.

By quoting McQuail, Abel stated that audiences with high level of satisfaction are expected to have their levels of viewing becoming more and more frequent accompanied by less and less complaining behavior. On the contrary, viewers who do not get television programs attractive and satisfying as they expected are not supposed to watch since weak performance reduces the level of satisfaction.

Satisfaction can be achieved when audiences get some thing from the media product or programs whereas dissatisfaction occurred when the television programs failed to fulfill the needs and expectations of the audience.

However, satisfaction can not be achieved equally with all audiences. It differ form one individual to another. Children with different needs have their own motives to watch television. But, their satisfactions with the programs of the television differ from one child to another. One of the reasons for this is that they use the same television program in different ways and for different purposes.

Hence, attracting the audience to the media or satisfying their needs and expectations is important. "Media researchers ought to be studying human needs to discover how much the media do or do not contribute to their creation and satisfaction."(Katz et al. 1974) In the context of this research, therefore, satisfaction is a process whereby children attain or fulfill desired needs and wants from viewing Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program whereas dissatisfaction/discontented will occur when the program do not meet the needs and expectations of the children.

2.6 Why Do Children Watch Television?

It is obvious that people do watch television even if there is no clear figure all the time. However, people watch television intentionally or unintentionally. The main point is that they watch to get something out of the media. Some kind of choice has been made as to watch program they are going to watch. Children are no different. They have their likes and dislikes. In fact, different theories and scholars wrote about the question ‘why people watch television?’ For this particular purpose, as children are the target group, the researcher used Uses and Gratifications and Social-learning theories as a theoretical framework for the particular study - Audience satisfaction with Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program.

2.6.1 Social Learning Theory

According to Gunter and McAleer (1997:72), “Children have to learn how to behave in different social situations. Society requires its citizens to follow certain norms or conventions and to adopt appropriate and accepted social roles. In other words, as they grow and develop, children become socialized.” This socialization of the child come from learning about living in the world and it acquired through watching and listening to families, peer groups, teachers and other adults. Socialization is a process during which people (and young children in particular) learn what to expect from the world and what the world expects from them. It has also been defined as the process of learning how to live in human society or as the process by which human behavior is learned and maintained. (Roberts 1973, McLeod and O’Keefe 1972, cited in Davison and et al. 1982:176)

Television is another prevalent potential source of social learning. Characters on television can provide role models whom children may strive to emulate. Even if they do not directly copy their favorite

characters, children may acquire certain values, attitudes or rules from them.

This means that television can play a fundamental role in the social development of a child. According to McQuail, media especially television has an advantage in the child's social interaction. Through television, children learn about the wider world, helps in forming an identity and learning of pro-social attitudes and behaviors. One of the social uses of the media is social learning and identification with role models. (2005:493)

The basic idea of Bandura's social learning theory is that learning takes place through watching other people model various behaviors. A child can observe someone engaged in certain behavior on television and can then practice that behavior in his or her own life. In other word, children can learn behaviors by observing it from the mass media especially television. In addition to parents, brothers, sisters, friends, teachers, and others, television has socializing effects on children through the adoption of various models of action. (Ibid)

It is believed that television has its own importance in the social interaction and integration. In relation to this, the following typologies were presented by McQuail (1987):

Gaining insight into circumstances of others or social empathy; identifying with others and gaining a sense of belonging; finding a basis for conversation and social interaction; having a substitute for real-life companionship; helping to carry out social roles; and enabling one to connect with family, friends and society.⁵

⁵<http://www.amazon.com/social-cognitive-theory-Internet-gratifications/>
: accessed on February 12, 2009

Through television and the people whom the children are like most, it is easy to teach them. If children have their role model in the television, they may observe and learn everything from their role model. The children create a close association with their role models whom they aspire to be like. Those people who appear on the television screen and whose performance stimulates face-to-face conversation with the children have their own role in the social-learning of the child. The television people should understand this and make it available to their target audience. The richness of children's learning environment can be measured in part by the quality and variety of available sources of lessons.

Gunter and McAleer stated that children often claim that television provides various kinds of learning – in the form of both factual knowledge and how to handle other people and different social situations. If children are motivated to find out about something through viewing, then learning is likely to occur. However, learning of the child depends on many factors as Robinson and Levy stated.

Whether or not children learn from television depends on a mixture of factors which relate to viewers' background knowledge and interests, reasons for watching television, degree of concentration and attention while viewing, and the way that programs are produced. (Ibid)

2.6.2 The Uses and Gratifications Approach

In practice, uses and gratifications research has tended to focus largely on adults, although there are some important studies which focus on children and young people. For example, Rosengren and Windahl (1989), Wolfe and Fiske (1949), Noble (1975), Brown (1976), Himmelweit et al. (1958) and so on. (Buckingham, 1998:138) Taking these studies into account, the researcher used this theory – the uses and gratifications- to see why children especially in Addis Ababa use the Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program.

One of the traditions in media research is the uses and gratifications theory. It originally emerged in 1940s and got its revival in the 1970s and 1980s. According to this theory, “Media use depends on the perceived satisfactions, needs, wishes or motives of the prospective audience member.” (McQuail, 1997) It is a theory that seeks to explain the uses of media and the satisfactions derived from them in terms of the motives and self-perceived needs of audience members.

This approach focuses on why people use particular media rather than content. In contrast to the concern of the ‘media effects’ tradition with ‘what media do to people’ (which assumes a homogeneous mass audience and ‘hypodermic’ view of media), uses and gratifications can be seen as part of a broader trend amongst media researchers which is more concerned with ‘what people do with media’, allowing for a variety of responses and interpretations.⁶

According to Erikson, scholars of this paradigm believed that audience view television for different reasons – social, psychological or developmental needs. These needs help those audiences to achieve satisfaction from the particular media. (Cited in Abel, 2005) Audiences intentionally watch TV in order to maximize their needs and expectations. Rubin (1994:421) states that “People intentionally participate and select media or messages according to their expectations. These expectations emanate from personal traits, social contents and interactions.”

According to the uses and gratification approach, people pay attention to and perceive information that will help them to satisfy their needs and interests. This is because, in one way or another, the information will give them satisfaction. It considers how media fulfill the needs and gratifications of their users. It is believed that mass media provide gratifications to their audiences.

⁶ <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/119632213/abstract?CRETRY=1&SRETRY=0>
: accessed on February 23, 2009

According to Frank and Greenberg (1980), there is a difference in the needs of an individual and the way they use the media. Although there are exceptions, it is somewhat related with age and sex. (Cited in Davison et al. 1982:163) Children have a lot of choices to be informed, educated or entertained by using different mass media. So, they are active audiences on the level of their ages, family status, and educational background and so on. According to Abel, some audiences are selective and goal oriented when watching television and some others are ritualized audiences who feel that television is important. This is true in children also.

The uses and gratifications approach stated that if an audience expects the media to be uninteresting or unpleasant, he/she will probably not expose himself/herself to it. Or, if they are exposed anyway, they will disregard or forget it. In the case of children, if they are not interested, they will immediately quit watching the particular medium.

Because there are different kinds of people and these people find themselves in so many different kinds of situations, the number of needs that the mass media can sometimes help to satisfy is enormous. It probably would be impossible to draw up a complete list. However, there are several lists of categories of needs for the satisfaction of which the mass media have been found useful. Bradley Greenberg's (1974) study on British school children aged 9, 12 and 15 years found that children use television for different purposes. These children expected the following seven needs to be satisfied by watching television: to learn, to be aroused (to be excited or cheered), to have companionship, to relax, to forget as a means of diversion (about school, to get away from family and escaping from problems), to pass the time and as a habit. A similar study carried out among children in the United States identified the same reasons why young people watch television: learning, habit or to pass time, companionship, escape, arousal and relaxation. We will examine some of these reasons.

Viewing to Learn

Learning not only achieved by informational or educational programs but by entertaining ones also. Children have a short attention span. If they are forced to learn, it makes them lose interest on the matter. Thus, the better way to teach children in television or in other media is through entertaining programs.

Through television, young people may learn about themselves, about life, about how to behave in different situations, about how to deal with personal and family problems and so on. In learning about life, television programs may be selected because they contain information about people, places and the way society interacts. They may offer insights into the way people in distant places feel and behave. The child may learn about different social and racial groups, different occupations, lifestyles and events that are happening in the outside world.

Gunter and McAleer stated the importance of television as follows:

Television programs can sometimes provide helpful suggestions about how to do things that you have not done before. They can provide young viewers with some indications about the appropriate ways to act in certain situations... Television can also be a source of advice for young people. Television programs may be selected because they can provide useful guidance for decision-making or problem-solving regarding some particular matter a child has to deal with in life. Television may offer some insights which can help young people to make their mind up what to do. (1997:21)

Viewing as a Habit or to Pass Time

According to Greenberg, one of the most prominent and important reasons for watching television is as a means of passing or filling time even if it differs with age. In his

findings, the reasons that the children gave for this is related with the type of programs they attend. Children who watch television out of habit or to spend the time are more likely to attend entertainment programs than others. (Ibid)

Viewing for Escape

The escapism function is one of the entertainment functions that television provides to its audiences. Television helps people as a source of distraction from everyday realities. It helps children to forget for the time being about school, to get away from family and escaping from other problems they faced. Through the fantasy material that television presents to its audience, viewers involved with the characters and events and act out in their minds ways of dealing with their problems. (Ibid)

Viewing as Source of Conversation

Those children who cannot talk about the latest happenings in the plot of a popular soap are not able to join in the conversation. Thus, a program may be selectively watched by children to ensure that they will not be left out should it be raised as a topic for discussion the next day (or at some later time). (Johnsson-Smaragdi, 1983, Cited in Gunter and McAleer, 1997)

Children watch television programs to make themselves familiar with their friends in their neighborhood or school. By attending the programs, they have got common experience with their friends. Thus, television becomes the source conversation material for the children.

Thus, children's reasons for attending television are multiple and varied as it explained above. For this particular study, audience satisfaction with Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program, the children will be asked for what purpose they are using the particular program.

2.6.2.1 Limitations of the Uses and Gratifications Approach

Despite the popularity use of this approach, the uses and gratifications, many scholars have pointed out its shortcomings. (Elliott 1974; Lometti, Reeves, and Bybee 1977; Swanson 1979) One of the criticisms forwarded to this theory is related to operationalizing major concepts like gratifications, needs, motives, media selection, media use and so on. These major concepts are not clearly operationalized or defined. (Emenyeonu, 1995) For example, there is no such agreement exactly what a ‘need’ is.

It’s something that people seem to want, but is everything that is wanted also a need? Does an interest reflect a need? And assuming that needs really do exist, can people specify what they are? We all sometimes experience feelings of dissatisfaction without knowing why. Is it because we have an unsatisfied need for recognition or for companionship, or is it a mild case of indigestion? (Davison and et al. 1982:159)

In addition to this, there is no clear picture of how the media can or will satisfy the need or interest of their audiences. “If the ability of a communication to satisfy a felt need depends on the capacity of the individual to give it an appropriate meaning, then it becomes difficult to relate particular communications to the satisfaction of particular needs.”(Ibid)

The other criticism of the uses and gratifications theory is that it focuses on the individuals and ignores the socio-cultural context in which people use media. (Davison et al., 1982) This is because it lacks sufficient explanation on the influence of external factors. For example factors that make the children to watch or not to watch the particular media. According to Sahilu (2008), factors outside media audiences like availability or lack of availability of media and the socio-political context which can influence media use can not be explained by the theory.

According to McQuail, studies based on the uses and gratifications theory have not “provided much successful prediction or casual explanation of media choice and use.”(2000:389)

The other drawback of the theory is on its emphasis on the concept of the active audience. Firstly, it is difficult to show to what extent audiences are active when using media. (Smurthwaite, 2004, cited in Abel, 2006) And secondly, the theory’s focus on active audience may make people ignore situations in which people can be less active when using media. (Davison et al., 1982)

Other criticisms have also been forwarded towards the theory. With all this criticisms, however, the theory has practical significance. Many researchers used this approach as their theoretical framework for their works. It can help media professionals to consider audiences’ preferences when undertaking media research. (Emenyeonu, 1995)

To identify the needs or expectations that the mass media can and will help to satisfy, different strategies are used. One of these is to ask people why they make use of one or more of the mass communications. The needs of the respondents can then be inferred from their replies. Sometimes the respondents like children will unable to specify gratifications they experience through media use. In this case, the researchers have to use different methods to find out the needs of those audiences.

2.6.2.2 Sources of Media Gratifications

According to studies, the sources of media satisfactions could be various. Katz et al. (1974) states that audience satisfaction can be achieved from three sources: media content, exposure to the media per se, and the social context that typifies the situation of exposure to different media. These sources are related to one another. “It is clear that the need to relax or to kill time can be satisfied by the act of watching television, that the need to feel that one is spending one’s time in a worthwhile way may be associated with the act of reading and the need to structure one’s day may be satisfied merely by having

the radio on.”(Waples et al. 1940 and Berelson, 1949) A wish to spend time with one’s family or friends can be served by watching television at home with the family or by going to the cinema or movies with one’s friends.

Each medium seems to offer a unique combination of (a) characteristic contents (at least stereotypically perceived that way); (b) typical attributes (print versus broadcasting modes of transmission, iconic versus symbolic representation, reading versus audio-visual modes of reception); and (c) typical exposure situations (at home versus out-of-home, alone versus with others, control over the temporal aspects of exposure versus absence of such control). The issue, then, is what combinations of attributes may render different media more or less adequate for the satisfaction of different needs. (Katz et al. 1974)

In addition, Katz and his colleagues stated that the specific uses of the media by members of the audience determined by the combined product of psychological dispositions, sociological factors and environmental conditions. However, these relationships differ from one level to another. Different scholars suggest the following social factors that may involved in media-related needs:

- Social situation produces tensions and conflicts, leading to pressure for their easement via mass media consumption (Katz and Foulkes,1962)
- Social situation creates an awareness of problems that demand attention, information about which may be sought in the media (Edelstein,1973)
- Social situation offers impoverished real-life opportunities to satisfy certain needs, which are then directed to the mass media for complementary, supplementary, or substitute servicing (Rosengren and Windahl,1972)
- Social situation gives rise to certain values, the affirmation and reinforcement of which is facilitated by the consumption of congruent media materials (Dembo,1972)

- Social situation provides a field of expectations of familiarity with certain media materials, which must then be monitored in order to sustain membership of valued social groupings (Atkins,1972)

2.6.2.3 Gratifications and Media Attributes

It is believed that some content serve certain functions to the audience or that one medium is deemed better at satisfying certain needs than another. This means that the relationship between the unique style of various media and the requirements of audience members that are capable, or incapable, of satisfying should be clear in order to satisfy their particular audiences. This, in turn, related to the fact that some media are more conducive or attractive than others in satisfying the specific needs and expectations of the audience and some elements of content help to attract the needs of the audience.

Katz et al. elaborate this fact as follows:

It is possible to postulate the operation of some kind of division of labor among the media for the satisfaction of audience needs. This may be elaborated in two ways: taking media attributes as the starting point, the suggestion is that those media that differ (or are similar) in their attributes are more likely to serve different (or similar) needs; or, utilizing the latent structure of needs as a point of departure, the implication is that needs that are psychologically related or conceptually similar will be equally well served by the same media (or by media with similar attributes).

2.7 How Do Children Watch, Follow and Understand Television?

In Ethiopia, as far as the researcher knowledge is concerned, there is no research on for how many hours or minutes per day or per week children watch television. However,

studies that are conducted on children of western countries revealed that children watch television on average between 2.5-3.5 hours per day according to their age and that the reasons why they watch are multiple and varied. (Gunter & McAleer 1997, Rosengren and Windahl 1989, Wolfe and Fiske 1949) To understand the nature of children – television relationship, it is also important to know the way they watch.

According to Svennevig, 1987 (Cited in Gunter & McAleer) viewing is carried on sporadically. This is related with when the individual doing another thing while the television is on or leaving and coming to the room where the set is on. “A major bone of contention among researchers... has been whether children’s attention to the screen is mainly an ‘active’ or a ‘passive’ phenomenon.”

Some scholars believe that television washes over children and disengages their minds and requires only shallow effort to follow what is happening on the television set. This view implies the children absorb the programs passively. (Singer, J 1980) However, in recent years, there has been increasing support for the active notion. Some scholars have proposed that the degree of attention that children give to the screen is actively and strategically guided by their attempts to understand and follow programs. (Anderson, D. et al. 1981) In other words, children actively choose to pay attention to television and that the choices they make depend upon their efforts to understand what they watch and on the other activities which are available in the viewing environment.

Children’s attention to the screen, then, is neither constant nor passive. The amount of attention they are prepared to give to individual programs is directly related to whether the visual and audio message has meaning specific to them, and whether they are given sufficient time to absorb that meaning. In this regard, the format of programs is all-important. Therefore, a major controlling factor over how and why they watch particular programs is to do with how well they are able to follow and understand the information they are offered. (Gunter & McAleer 1997:38)

In general, children's ability to follow and understand television is mainly depending on their age. As their age increases, their general understanding of their environment or their world outlook also develops (or began to take shape). In addition, they actively direct their attention to television content that has meaning for them. Researchers have found that young children's attention to television varies with a variety of content and presentation format features. In this regard, the content and presentation of the program has a role to play to get the attention of the child. In other words, children programming has the ability to attract the attention of the children through its content and presentation. (Ibid)

As the nature of children's attention to programs changes with age, their understanding of the programs develops and also their needs. The program – makers should understand this and match the content and presentation of the program with the children's needs. They also have to understand which segment/bit has meaning to the children. By doing this, the program that is intended for the children would have the ability to attract the attention of the audience in the way as it expected.

Chapter Three

Methodology and Design of the Study

3.1 Research Methods

The research method applied in this study is qualitative one. This is because as clearly indicated by Mytton this method helps understand about human attributes. Mytton states:

In quantitative research we have been dealing mostly with numbers, in qualitative research we are trying to discover or understand human attributes, attitudes or behaviors in a more exploratory or interpretive way. According to him, numbers can not describe or explain everything. Human behavior and everything else that can be said about people can not be fully encapsulated in or understood from numbers and percentages. (Mytton, 1999:126)

Moreover, quantitative method tends to focus on individual behavior within a household or family, where as qualitative research in focus groups puts the respondents into a social setting in which the personal influences that operate in social settings are reproduced and can be observed. (M.N. Marshall, 1999 and Mytton, 1999) so, as study on television audience, this particular study has taken up qualitative method of research as it is commonly used in media researches. According to these writers, this is because in order to “Discover and attitudes ranges that can be tested quantitatively; define areas for systematic research on a larger scale; provide insights into the way existing services and programs are used; provide a richer range of responses to particular press, radio or television content than is provided by the questionnaire methods so far; and provide ideas for communicators and planners.

Qualitative methodology is much more fluid than quantitative research methodology. The earlier represents a divergent paradigm of research tradition which is fundamentally

different from the later. In addition, qualitative methods are typically more flexible, allowing greater spontaneity and adaptation of the interaction between the researcher and the study participant whereas quantitative methods are fairly inflexible. (Natasha et al. 2005:4) Respondents or participants in qualitative research have the opportunity to respond more elaborately and in greater detail.

The other difference between the two paradigms is understanding and appliance of setting. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:270), the appropriateness of qualitative research in studying attitudes and behaviors is best understood within their natural setting. In quantitative research, however, the emphasis on the 'natural' is related to the 'normal course of events.'

In addition to this, the focus of qualitative researchers is in the description and understanding of actions and events. This is contrary to the quantitative one. Statistical descriptions make up the foundations of quantitative research. Fade states such variance further as "Qualitative research does not seek to show statistical associations or cause and effect relationships. Instead, the emphasis is on describing or illuminating social phenomena and human experience." (2003:140)

Another aspect that illustrates the plain disparity between the two paradigms is on the generalizability of the research findings. The center of attention in qualitative research paradigm is primarily on understanding particular events, actions and processes in their context rather than generalizing universals. (Ang, 1996 and Maxwell, 1992)

Generalizations in qualitative research usually takes place through the development of theory that not only makes sense of particular persons or situations studied, but also shows how the same process in different situations can lead to different results. (Maxwell, 1992:293)

Qualitative research methods do not rest their evidence on the logic of mathematics, the principles of numbers or methods of statistical analysis. Rather actual talk, gesture and

other social actions are the raw materials of analysis which lead to an in depth understanding of the question. According to Popay et al. (1998), on the subject of generalizability, “the aim is to make logical generalizations to a theoretical understanding of a similar class of phenomena rather than probabilistic generalizations to a population.”(Cited in Endalkachew 2008:36)

3.2 Research Procedure and Sampling

In qualitative research methods, researchers are expected to employ different procedures of data collection. As far as this study is concerned, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews were used as methods of data collection to reflect on the level of audience satisfaction with Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program.

The section below discusses these two methods. However, prior to discussing these stages of the research process, the researcher will discuss sampling selection, the sample size and requirement of groups.

3.2.1 Sample Selection, Size and Recruitment of Groups

The qualitative research tradition has a strong correlation with non-random sampling methods. Sampling in qualitative research is chiefly concerned with ‘information richness’ (Kuzel, 1992:20) in which two essential considerations-appropriateness and adequacy- take central stage. (Morse and Field, 1995) In other words, sampling in qualitative research needs the significance of identifying appropriate participants who can best report to the study and also the need to recruit adequate sources of information to successfully address the research question and develop a full-fledged description.

The researcher chose purposive sampling and snowball sampling to select the participants for the group discussions and individual in-depth interview. As it has been observed by Hansen et al. (1998:242), having representative samples in qualitative research may be

neither necessary nor desirable because the object of the study is simply to test a particular theory or hypotheses, such as social learning theory and the Uses and Gratifications theory in this case.

The researcher have employed snowball sampling in which initial contacts or participants provide further respondents for the researcher to approach and who, thus, in turn generate other contacts. In other words, it is a form of purposive sampling in which initial sample units are used as contacts to identify other units relevant to the sample. According to Deacon et al.,

“This method is consistently used in research into either very closed or informal social groupings, where the social knowledge and personal recommendations of the initial contacts are invaluable in opening up and mapping tight social networks.”(1999:53)

The subjects to this study are selected from five public schools in Addis Ababa. (Wondirad Primary and Junior school, Salayish Primary school, Yewket Bere Primary and Junior school, Kokebe Tsibah Primary and Junior school and Yewetatoch Genet Primary and Junior school) The researcher selected children from these schools whom she thought would provide rich inputs to the research question she raised. For this reason, participants were purposely selected using snowball sampling, placing particular focus on their residence and schools in Yeka sub-city around Kotebe, Megenagna, and Kebena.

This shows that the sampling is purposive or judgmental in that “selection of participants is made on the basis of their ability to provide relevant data on the area under investigation.” (Horsburgh, 2003:311) Thus, the informants were selected non-randomly because they possess particular common characteristic – they watch Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program. Purposive sampling technique was employed because it was hoped to enable the researcher to select the real television viewing informants – in this case informants who really watch Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program.

Along the lines of the United Nations ‘Convention on the Rights of a Child’, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, a child means “every human being below the age of 18 years.” (UNICEF, 1990, cited in Endalkachew, 2008:40) However, all the children from Addis Ababa interviewed fall under the age range of 9 and 15. This is because the program has supposed to have an audience from the age of 5 up to 15.

As noted in the introduction session of this section, this research used focus group discussions and individual in-depth interview to examine the satisfaction/dissatisfaction of the children with Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program. The following part discusses these stages of the research process and data collection methods. The researcher will begin discussing with the focus group discussions.

3.2.2 Focus Group Discussions

Researchers agree that in qualitative research the most common research method is focus group discussions. Focus group are typically defined as bringing together a small group of people to participate in a carefully planned discussion on defined topic, the aim of the technique being to make use of group interaction to produce data and insights. (Morgan in Macun and Posel, 1998:115) People are selected and invited to meet together with a trained moderator to discuss some aspect of, in this case, media use and satisfaction. Powell et al. (1996:79) define a focus group as “a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic which is the subject of the research.” Lunt and Livingstone also states that “The focus group method involves bringing together a group or, more often, a series of groups, of subjects to discuss an issue in the presence of a moderator.”(1996:80)

According to Kitzinger (1995), the main purpose of focus group interviews is to draw upon respondents’ attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions, in a way which would not be feasible using other methods. By comparing with other research methodologies, Anita Gibbs (1995) stated that focus group elicits a multiplicity of views and emotional processes within a group context. So, as it helps to get audiences’ feelings,

attitudes and reactions, it is helpful to use focus group discussion to study audience satisfaction/dissatisfaction with Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program.

Fontana and Frey (2000) explained the benefit of the focus group interview over individual interviews by highlighting that group interviews are “are relatively inexpensive to conduct and often produce rich data that are cumulative and elaborative; they can be stimulating for respondents, aiding recall, and the format is flexible.”(2000:652) Nonetheless, as every other method, group interviews have their weak point which researchers need to watch out:

The results of group interviews can not be generalized; the emerging group culture may interfere with individual expression, and the group may be dominated by one person; and “group thinking” is a possible outcome. The requirements for interviewer skills are greater than those for individual interviewing because of group dynamics that are present. (Ibid)

The main goal of focus group interview is the deliberate and purposeful use of interaction in order to generate data. A focus group is a kind of group interview, as Mytton (1999) writes. It is not a structured conversation between an interviewer and a respondent like face-to-face interviews. The main point here is the interaction within the group. This interaction is based on the topic which is the subject of the research provided by the researcher or moderator. This interaction produces information and insights into the behavior and attitudes of people selected as research subjects.

Similarly, Kitzinger explained, as he argues about the importance of interaction in the focus group, it highlights the participant's view of the world, the language they use about an issue and their values and beliefs about a situation. He adds it enables them to ask questions of each other as well as to reevaluate and reconsider their own understandings of their specific experiences. In this particular study, to get children's viewing experiences and their satisfaction with Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program,

the focus group participants provided with various topics about the program to discuss and elicit strong notion.

According to Hansen et al. (1998:268), one should have a minimum of six focus groups, until comments begin to repeat themselves and little new material is generated. For this particular study, eight group discussions with participants ranging between four and six held. This was mainly due to the availability of resources and the willingness of the children to participate in the session. It is perhaps necessary the fact that in qualitative research scientific validity is obtained through systematic collection and interpretation of data neither by generalizing findings to other groups nor quantifying into an overall truth. In other words, “It is not necessary to know everything in order to understand something.”(See Greetz in Pitout 1989:74, Drotner in Pitout 1998:74 and Ruddock 2001:133)

Attempts were made to pick convenient interview settings where every participant felt relaxed. As a result, I managed to conduct the focus group interviews with the children in the three schools (Wondirad Junior and Senior Secondary school, Yewket Bere Primary and Junior and Kokebe Tsibah Junior and Senior Secondary school) that are near and convenient to them.

In order to pile up the data, I outlined an interview guide to make sure that the focus group discussions are rigorous on the themes relevant to my research. According to Dilorio et al.1994 (cited in Endalkachew, 2008:47), the purpose of the interview guide is to direct group discussion and to stimulate conversation about the research topic as well as to ensure that all the desired information is sought. According to Hansen et al. (1998:24), although they present flexibility and openness, the focus group must have a center and it is the trade of the researcher to “draw upon the basis of the definition of the research problem and issues and phenomena to be investigated – a guide or manual for the moderator to work from and follow.”

As a moderator, my role was to ensure that the conversation in the group did not stray from key themes in the research. In illustrating the role of the moderator in focus group interviews, Hansen et al. state that his/her task is essentially to facilitate, moderate and stimulate discussion. (1998:272) In other words, the researcher's role as a moderator was to interrogate the children's contented or discontented from the Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program. In this respect, the researcher saw her involvement in the group as an agent that makes sure the discussion is going in agreement with the topics and issues highlighted in the interview guide. The researcher maintained a steadiness in the group discussion so that neither participants are dominant nor are passive; and ensured that dialogue occurs among group members rather than between them and the moderator.

3.2.3 Individual In-depth Interviews

The other main form of qualitative research often used is the individual in-depth interview. As with most social research, to be sure focus group data should as far as possible be pooled and juxtaposed with a series of data gathered from different sources and using various research techniques, in the interest of as complete and reliable an answer to the research question as possible. (Macun & Posel, 1998:132) Carolyn (2006) defined qualitative in-depth interview as "a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program or situation." As he writes, we might ask participants, staff and other associated with a particular program about their experiences and expectations related to the program, the thought they have concerning program operations, processes and outcomes and about any changes they perceive in themselves as a result of their involvement in the program.

According to Mytton (1999), the aim of qualitative in-depth interview is to reveal or understand rather than to measure or describe. "It is characterized by open-ended, flexible, respondent-centered and designed to use respondent's creativity and

imagination. Like focus group, it is also used to attempt to go beyond those things which are on the surface.”

As far as the selection of the participants of the individual in-depth interview concerned, as Wimmer and Dominick (2000:181) note, in one-to-one interviews respondents are selected based on predetermined set of screening requirements hence candidates for individual interview were purposively selected from the participants in the focus group interviews. Particular attention was given to the most articulate and enthusiastic participants.

In this particular study, as the respondents are children, they might not probably comfortable in the focus group discussion. Individual interview is used as well to explore the experiences, expectations, satisfaction/dissatisfaction of those children. It provides much more detailed information. The researcher selected one participant from each focus group who exhibited better knowledge or experience about the particular program.

In addition to these, the editor and some of the producers of Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program will be interviewed to get the reasons why the children are contented or discontented with the program and how they produced the program.

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format in which the interviewees were encourage to speak freely to the thematic questions of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction of the research subjects from Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program. (Schroder et al. 2003:112)

3.2.4 Research Procedure

For this study, as it mentioned earlier, focus group discussions and individual in-depth interview methods used for collecting the research data. The first thing that the researcher did is to go to the schools principals to get permission to visit the compound. With the

support of the principals of each school and by using snow-ball sampling, the researcher found fifty children who are regular viewers of Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program. The researcher selected this much amount of participants because some of them may be unwilling to be interviewed after the interview session started. This is true that in the interview session, the subjects for this study were left thirty nine.

From the responses gained from the focus group discussions, the researcher selected eight respondents to conduct the individual in-depth interviews in order to clarify and gain more insight about their satisfaction/dissatisfaction about the particular program. In this way, the researcher was able to obtain most of the information I required.

Since the researcher had to conduct the group interviews in the schools compound, it was essential to arrange an appointment ahead of time. Then, she went directly to hold eight different sessions of group discussions. The duration for these interview lasted from one and one-and-half hours and five to ten minutes break between. But, it depends on the information provided by the respondents. I used two types of recording methods, written notes and tape recording at the time of the focus group discussions. The reason for using these two kinds of recording is to provide a back up copy in case a mechanical failure or human error occurs.

In this study, there are methodological questions to consider. To make children as subjects of the research like asking them their level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction from a particular program would raise methodological questions like: Do they really know what satisfaction means? Do children's cognitive abilities sufficient to understand the questions of the interviewer? Are their linguistic (verbal) abilities adequate to express what they want to say? And so on.

It seems doubtful that results from empirical studies with children could correspond to scientific standards like objectivity, reliability and validity. These methodological questions appear to be reasonable. However, some of the underlying assumptions have become subject to criticism, the core

of which being the construction of childhood in terms of deficiency (Prout & James, 1990; Shantz & Hartup, 1992; Zinnecker, 1996; Honig, Leu & Nissen, 1996). The critics claimed that a paradigmatic shift was necessary: childhood should no longer be defined as a developmental stage but as something in and off itself. This implies that children cannot be reduced to “not yet grown ups’ but they have to be seen and respected as subjects in their own right who develop their own and unique cultural milieus. These have been prominent especially in the discussions of sociologists and other social scientists. (Cited in Endalkachew 2008:51)

As a result, this argument tied up with my study on satisfaction of children with Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program. At every session of the interviews, the researcher explained the purposes of the study to the subjects and their consent was acquired in each case. All of them were willing to use their names in the study.

The interviews were conducted in Amharic language. So, it was transcribed and translated into English. The researcher tried to keep the sense of the meaning the children provided in their own language.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation, Discussion and Analysis

This chapter highlights the presentation, discussion and analysis of data and results. As already mentioned, the study was focused mainly on audience satisfaction with Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program. Focus group discussions and individual in-depth interview used for collecting the research data. To know who really the audiences of the program are, I used purposive and snowball sampling methods.

The data collected by means of focus group and individual in-depth interviews are presented and discussed under the following major themes: the children watching habit, reasons of watching Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program, children's program preference, children's association with role models and what must be done to minimize dissatisfaction and to maintain satisfaction.

4.1 Respondents Watching Habit

According to Buckingham (1998), today children spend more time watching television than they do in school, or indeed on any other activity apart from sleeping. This means that children have their own watching habit. However, there is no evidence or research for how many hours or minute's children in Ethiopia spent watching television. In this study, the researcher first tried to explore, in short, the watching habit of children in Ethiopia, especially in Addis Ababa with reference of the particular program.

The subjects of this study asked how often they watch the program. The responses differ from one individual to the other. The respondents in one of the focus group discussions indicated their watching habit of the Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program.

Dawit (9 years old): I always watch ETV Amharic children's program. It is the only children program I watch because I don't have the access to others. I don't want to miss it. Sometimes, even if I don't understand the language, I attend Afan Oromo (Oromo language) and Tigrigna children's program.

Dawit watches the program without any complains because he doesn't have any other options. Respondents like Birhanu attend the program many times. Unlike Dawit, he has used the program in order to have a better understanding of his own cultures.

Birhanu (12 years old): I have satellite dish in my home. I have got the chance to watch children's programs on it. Most of them are very interesting. But, I attend ETV Amharic children's program also. This is because the program is transmitted in Amharic language which I understand more than the English language and I'm proud of my language.

Birhanu's response indicated that children should hear, see and express themselves, their culture, their language and their life experiences, through television programs which affirm their sense of self, community and place. Children's programs should also promote an awareness and appreciation of other cultures in parallel with their own cultural background.

Yonas (10 years old): I often watch the program and I expect the program to be present about children who live in nation and nationalities of our country and out of Ethiopia. I need to know more about other children who have different culture, language and life styles.

The above responses suggested that the children's watching habit is more or less related with their interest in knowing their own and others cultures.

Robel (13 years old): When I watch television with my family, they have their own programs which are prepared especially for them and which does not interest me at all. So, when I attend Saturday's and Sunday's children program, I feel like I have my own. The main reason that I watch the program is the feeling that it's mine.

Robel seems to watch the program irrespective of whether he is satisfying or not. Like Robel many respondents (both in the individual and focus group interviews) appeared to have the notion of belongingness to this specific program. They stated that since it is broadcasted specifically to them, they don't want to miss it in any time.

Zelalem (14 years old): The only good thing related with the program is that it exists at all. The children like me, who do not have DVD, VCD or satellite dish are more dependent on the program to get what we want. I like films. So, I wait for the program whether it has films or not. I'm happy when they present films.

Others relate their watching habit with other programs which are prepared for grownups. These respondents assumed that the program is presented specifically for them as others watch their own programs. Abrham, fourteen years old, watch the program because his parents are eager to watch the rest of the station's program. By watching his parents talked about what they are seen, he tried to follow and understand the children program. By doing this, he feels that he will understand what they are saying.

When we compare with other media outlets (print and electronic media), some respondents are inclined to watch television particularly the children program. For these informants television is the best medium to attend.

Eyasu (12 years old): Television is my favorite media. I read children's section in Addis Admas newspaper. It has interesting part. But, I

prefer the ETV children's program. It has pictures that help me to understand everything by watching them.

Dagim (12 years old): I prefer television than radio. I listened to radio's children program. They have only sounds. When we come to television, in addition with sounds we will be able to see pictures.

The respondents like Dagim prefer television than other media and this is mainly because its nature of combining images with sounds. An image accompanied by sound – audio visual – is the reasons the children favor television than other type of media like radio and newspaper.

4.2 Reasons of Watching Ethiopian Television Amharic Children's Program

For many years, researchers have talked about the media's role to satisfy various needs of their consumers-to be informed, to be entertained, to have company, to relax, to escape and so on. According to Gunter and McAleer, such needs may direct people to seek out particular mass media or, in the case of television, to choose to watch particular kinds of programs. Television viewers are therefore motivated to watch television in order to satisfy their various needs and desires at the time. This does not mean that viewing behavior is always pushed by strong psychological drives, but, for most of the time, that people watch television and they do so for a reason. This applies to the children too.

In this perspective, we will see the reasons the respondents forwarded that make them motivated to watch Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program. The reasons may be as simple as to spend the time. But, the main point is that the viewing motivations vary from individual to individual.

Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program was viewed by the respondents for companionship. It helps them to enjoy themselves with their family and friends. Gunter and McAleer support this idea that watching television can provide company by bringing the whole family together to get pleasure from the program and by sharing the fantasy with their friends. Television creates a pleasant association for the children with others.

Hiwot (12 years old): I don't have a best friend. I watch the program because I feel lonely. When I attend the program and see children on the television screen, I feel I have got a friend. I watch each and every segments of the program. I feel the presenters of the program are also my friends. I don't want to miss the program. Once if I miss it, I feel that I lost my friend.

Other respondents are also inclined to watch the children program simply for companionship.

Wossen (10 years): My two elder brothers are fond of this program even if it is produced for kids. They told me that it was interesting when they were kids. Now they criticize the program that, they believe, it is not satisfying. When I watch with them, they explained things that are not clear for me. Whether I like it or not, I'm happy to watch with my brothers. If they are not present, I'm not eager to watch the program.

In relation to this, McQuail and his colleagues argue that audience turn their television on in order to develop a sense of belonging, to have a substitute for a real life companionship, to avoid loneliness and to have social empathy.

Other respondents gave multiple reasons for watching the program. Hanna and Eyasu, twelve and thirteen year old respectively and seventh grader, seem to watch it for entertaining.

Hanna (13 years old): I watch the program to entertain myself. I am from a poor family. We don't have television set in our home. I watch the program in one of my friend's house. When Saturday and Sunday comes, I'm very happy. Because it is the only days I go to my friend's house. I watch the program from the beginning to the end. I don't care whether it is interesting or not. It's the only entertainment program for me.

Like Hanna, Eyasu used the program for the same purpose. Both of them admitted that their needs, to be entertained, are not always addressed by the program. The needs and expectations of the children are not fully fulfilled due to the attractiveness of the program. However, they are eager to watch the 'only' entertainment children program they are accessed to. According to Schramm and his colleagues, television offers a fantasy world in which the child can escape real-life boredom and problems. Children would sit with absorbed faces when watching favorite programs. They use television program to the positive pleasure of being entertained.

Unlike the above respondents, some of the children insist that even if they are using the program as an entertainment, they are selective. According to the uses and gratifications approach, audiences are active and purposeful watchers of the particular media. Rubin (1994) states that "people intentionally participate and select media or messages according to their expectations. These expectations emanate from personal traits, social contents and interactions." According to Gunter and McAleer, children often actively select what to watch to satisfy particular needs or moods.

Molla is eleven years old. He watches Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program with his parents. His parents taught him what kind of television program he has to watch in his age. This helps him to select what kind of program helps him to get what he wants. He needs to be entertained. However, he selects the segments from the program that make him satisfied. Otherwise, he quit watching. If his needs of entertaining is not fully

addressed by the program, he stop watching and starts to do other activities like playing with friends.

McQuail (1998) and other scholars believed that one of the main objectives of any media is to entertain and educate its customers. If a medium like Ethiopian Television particularly Amharic children's program failed to attract its audiences as they expected, it will be very unlikely for its audiences to sit and watch the program. Yared is one of the respondents who lost his attention to the program because he didn't get what he wants from it. In this respect, he watches it simply to kill his time. He turned on the television because he did not have anything to do and anywhere to go.

Yared (14 year old): I watch Ethiopian Television children's program for many purposes. First of all, some of the programs have educational values. When Abbaba Tesfaye was in the program, he told to children what to do and not to do. He gave us constructive advices that help me to change my bad behavior. I had the habit of insulting elder people. Now, I quit this bad thing because once Abbaba Tesfaye told me about respecting elders. But, now I use the program just to spend the time I have on Saturday and Sunday.

Others also watch the program as a habit. Zelalem, as he started watching the program at the age of four or five, he does not want to miss it now. Nowadays, he did not have interest in most of the segments that are presented in the program. But, even if his interest is not addressed by the program, he watches it most of the time.

The program also used as a source of learning for the respondents. Children, who do not know how to cope with school and family problems, they may learn how to do from the program which is intended especially for them. Firmayie, Abubekir and Fares, thirteen, twelve and thirteen years old respectively, argue on the role of television especially the children program in learning process.

Firmayie: When I attend the program, I watch it attentively because I consider the program as one of learning materials like my books. It has an advantage for children to know about the world and about ourselves just like we get from school.

Abubekir: I attend not only the children program but also other programs of Ethiopian Television. But, I don't understand some of them. In order to make myself familiar with new things that happened around the country or the world, I watch the children program attentively. I don't want to miss it especially the news. It tells me about the children who live abroad (what children around the world do and think and what is their life style looks like).

Fares: The main reason that I watch Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program is that it gives me advice on how to protect our environment, how to deal with health problems and how to be successful in education. Some of the dramas give me a lesson on how to live with my family, friends and teachers happily. I don't remember the title now but after I saw a drama that focused how children forced to live on street, I have got strong feeling towards children who live in the street and how to help them.

The responses of these respondents, Firmayie, Abubekir and Fares, indicated that these children are eager to watch the program in order to learn. They use it to know something they do not know before. According to them, some of the segments in the program like drama teach them something which is significance in their lives. Learning is not only obtained from the school, but also learning motivations of the children also achieved through entertainment. The information they get from the program supports what they know before and what they learn in their formal schools. Gunter and McAleer stressed these statements as follows:

Television's dramatic characterizations and plots, for example, may convey lessons about how or how not to deal with other people, solve personal or family problems and disputes, make friends and influence people, and get on in life-professionally and personally. In other words, not only does learning from television consist of improving one's knowledge of what is going on in the world-that is, political, economic, industrial and foreign affairs-but television is also a major source of social learning. This learning may be an incidental by-product of watching ostensibly for entertainment-oriented reasons, though for many people it may be the most significant kind of learning from television.

Nevertheless, respondents argued on the programs which are designed to educate the audiences. According to some informants, programs that are intended to educate the children should have to entertain the audience also. Through entertaining the children easily learn from the programs/segments.

Temesgen (14 years old): From Monday to Friday we learn in regular classes. When I watch the program on the weekend, I don't want it just the same as I had in the school. The program has to entertain us. Mere education is boring.

Some children watch the program to get something to talk with their peers or friends. These respondents, they were only two from the total subjects, argued that the program serve them as a source of communication or conversation in the next morning. They have been attending it purposely to create communications with their friends that are found at their neighborhoods or at school.

Zebiba (14 years old): Every Monday, my friends in the class discuss about what happened over the weekend. The children program is one of their issues. If new and interesting segments were presented,

it will be the source of their conversation. To be part of the conversation, I have to see it whether it's boring or not.

4.3 Children's Program Preference

Even though some programs are very popular or preferable and seen by many people, the particular combination of programs that audiences choose differs from person to person. Different people might have their own program choices for different reasons. It may be because of their various backgrounds – age, sex, educational background and other reasons. Children also have program preferences – some segments of a program may be watched more often and liked by the children more than others. In this regard, Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program is chosen by the respondents as it is intended especially for them.

The program, as already mentioned, is composed of a variety of segments or sections with different contents. The subjects of this research have their own choices or segment preference within the program for many reasons. This is, according to Barwise and Ehrenberg, mainly because in television programs, individual tastes vary widely.

Yared: I like to watch the news and films. From these two I prefer the news. It tells me the information about children, different places and ideas that I'm not acquainted with. I have got the information about different cultures of other nations. Because of this, I prefer the news more than any thing.

Other respondents like Zebiba and Robel approved Yared's view. According to them, the news tells everything that is related or appropriate for children.

Zebiba: I don't have any idea how children other than my neighborhoods live. My history teacher told me that there are different cultures

around the world. So, I want to know the life style of the children and what they do and play in their own cultures. The program helps me to get what I want.

Robel: The news increase/improve our knowledge about current and recent events related with children.

In relation with this, Gunter and McAleer explained that in learning about life, television programs may be selected because they contain information about people, places and the way society operates. They may offer insights into the way people in distant places feel and behave. The child may learn about different social and racial groups, different occupations, lifestyles and events that are happening in the outside world.

On the other hand, Robel, as his program choice is news, argued on the consistency of this segment.

Robel: I prefer news from the program. It helps me to understand what other children do. But, I have doubts on the coherence of the program each weekend. I'm disappointed when the news is not transmitted on the time and the way I expected. I wrote many letters to the program producers about it. But, still now there is no improvement.

From the responses of the informants, the program they prefer – in this case the news – did not have consistency each week. This shows that some of the segments do not have consistency. If the children do not get what they expected on the right time, they will not sit and watch the program. In this respect, their needs are not satisfied or gratified by the particular media they select – Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program in this case.

An anonymous producer (1) of the program admitted this problem. The news is sought to be broadcasted every Saturday. However, according to her, nobody care what the children expected. Because of this, the news is substituted by another segment. Not only the news, but other segments of the program also faced the same problem. No one cares about the children program. It is the least program that gets attention in the station and there is negligence among the producers, she said. This is because the producers did not have support from the above bodies. The good thing, as the producer said, is that it is there for children who do not have access to other programs or channels that are available for the children.

For Hanna, a segment that shows talented children is her favorite. From the children program, there are segments that present children who have especial talent in sport, music, dance, education and so on. According to her, those talented children motivated her to bring out her talent. She has a talent of writing poems. “After I saw these children, I’m encouraged to write more and more poems and read for classmates.” Eyasu has also preferred the same segment. However, the transmission time is not convenient to him.

Eyasu: I go to church every Saturday and Sunday mornings. The program started at 8:30 a.m. I may not come back at that time. However, the time is not fixed. It differs from one week to the other. In that time I have got the chance to watch it.

According to anonymous producer (2), the editorial policy of Ethiopian Television states that the children program should be transmitted at times which is convenient to the children. By nature, children are impatient and get bored easily. So, the program should be transmitted at times where children are awake and alert. This is not the case in the children’s program. In addition, she said, the time of transmission do not have consistency. It could be transmitted any time between 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. This is because the station allowed the time to other programs or sections that have relevance more than the children program. The above statement also contradicts with ‘The Children Television Charter’ which declared “Children’s programs should be aired in regular slots

at times when children are available to view, and/or distributed via other widely accessible media or technologies.” In this respect, the time of the transmission with its fluctuations distract children so as they will not attend it appropriately. If the program do not starts at the usual time, the children lose patience and turn to other interesting things.

Some respondents appeared to be selective in their choice of program. These respondents do not have permanent preference. If the segments they choose to watch do not satisfy them or the content is not interesting, they choose another segment that satisfies their needs and wants. The uses and gratifications theory consider the audience as they are driven by their individual needs and wants. It proposes that audiences were active in choosing the media that interested them. (Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974)

Abubekir: From the segments/programs, I prefer drama and sometimes film. I like drama because it has educational purpose. But, the dramas I watched before are transmitted again and most of the time there is no drama at all. I choose film to entertain myself. If I have access to satellite dish or other media, I immediately change my watching habit of this program.

Kitnesh: Films are my favorite. I like especially cartoon films. I’m eager to watch it. But, the films that are intended to children of 3 or 5 are not interested me. I’m 15 now. So, I need to see films that are appropriate with my age. Not only the films, but also other bits of the program are not fit and suitable with all ages.

As it indicated in the review literature, Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program is supposed to be transmitted for children between the ages of 3 – 15. As the above response suggested, the segment in the program would not appeal all the target audiences equally. Children who are 14 or 15 may not be interested in the part that appeals children of 4 or 5 and vice-versa. From this it is clear that the program should not have segments that appeal all the target audiences.

David Buckingham (1998) stated that children make up a very large and diverse category within the mass audience. But, even children struggle to have the media recognize their special needs. The general public concern about their viewing activities is not matched by a commitment to provide good quality programming for children.

Anonymous producer (1) told to the researcher that the children have their own preferences and they write about it every time. In their letters they suggested how to improve the program so as to achieve their needs and interests. If their needs and expectations are achieved by the use of the particular program, they are satisfied or gratified. However, she said, no one have cares about it because it's just the children program. Anonymous (2) also agreed on this.

Anonymous (2): when we want to produce especial segment like local entertainment ones to appeal the audience, camera or the cameraperson would not be available. Budget is not allocated to buy films. Interested children or we - the producers brought films by our own pockets. Priority has to given to other sections of the station. The children are boring to see the same segment with different contents. There must be different segments that satisfy the needs of our audience. But, that is not the case now.

Tsion (2008) in her research also found that one of the problems the children program faced is that less attention is given to the program. This is confirmed that the station allocated the minimal budget to the program.

In related with the respondent's program preferences, the researcher asked the subjects of the research on the presentation and contents of the program. This is because the researcher believed that the children's preferences or choices of segments/bits from the program stemmed from its content and presentation. Some of the respondents have

doubts on presentation of the program. Wossen and Michael, participants in one of the focus group discussions, had different views on the presentation of the program.

Wossen: When Cherry⁷ and Abbaba Tesfaye were the presenters of the program, the program attracted many children including me. This is because they have the skills to grab the attention of children. Now, as the presenters are the same ages with me, I'm not really satisfied on what they are saying. The style of the presentation is also not conducive to learning and understanding.

Michael, on the other hand, did not have doubts on the presenters of the program. His concern was on the language.

Michael (13 years old): Concerning the presenters (whether they are grown up or young children), I don't have doubts. But, the clarity of language they use in some of the segments raises question on the effectiveness of the program. The repetition of some words or phrases also a problem.

In related with the repetition, Hanna added that most of the segments of the program have the same contents. This, she said, make her boring to watch it. Zebiba also expected some contents that have the ability to achieve her desire and needs. She needs to watch cultures and life styles of other children especially those who live far away.

Zebiba: I expect the program to present different cultures. But, it is not the case now. They did not transmit that. Even about the children who live in our country. There is unnecessary repetition of contents. I hate to see segments which have the same content. Instead of

⁷ Cherry is a toy presenter of the program. The toy, represented as a girl, is purposely designed to make the children learn and entertain through her.

repeating contents, they should include new contents that interest the children.

Regarding the content and presentation of the program, some respondents have different view. Robel is one of them. As far as he gets what he wants from the program, he did not care about the content and presentation. He watches segments that seem attractive to him. However, almost all of the respondents admitted that their preference or choice of programs/segments is not fully satisfied because of the presentation and contents of the program.

Studies suggest that how well viewers - young children and old - are able to learn and remember from television can depend significantly on how the information is presented. If the information is presented in a way to attract the desire audience, it may, in some way, play the role to achieve the needs and expectations of its audience. If it is not, the opposite may occur. (Gunter and McAleer) In respect of this, the presentation and contents of Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program failed to attract its audiences.

4.4 Children's Association with Role Models

The children were also asked whether they have role models in the Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program or not. They have their own models in the different segments of the particular program. But, it differs from individual to individual.

Mesay (14 years): I remember when Abbaba Tesfaye presents old stories that had suggestive advices to children. I was eager to watch him every Saturday and Sunday. I like him most. When I saw him in the television, I thought he was watching me and I followed attentively what he was trying to say.

Other respondents were also having the same explanation with Mesay's view. Robel and Hanna was one of them. They thought Abbaba Tesfaye were their teacher. They followed what he said to children. They want to be what he told them to be or to do. They want to be the good characters from the stories he told them. Because, according to them, what he said is true and that is what their families or the society wants them to be. Hanna said that she feels that Abbaba Tesfaye was her grandfather. She listened everything what he said.

In relation to this, Gunter and McAleer stated that

Television is another prevalent potential source of social learning. Characters on television can provide role models whom children may strive to emulate. Even if they do not directly copy their favorite characters, children may acquire certain values, attitudes or rules from them.

If the needs and expectations of the children is not fulfilled with the particular media they select to watch, they immediately stop watching that media. The main mechanism to catch the attention of the audience for the particular media is by making the program attractive. Otherwise they stop watching or they change their watching behavior toward other programs or channels. For these respondents the program presenter who came after Abbaba Tesfaye will not be the same. However, even if they lose him, they didn't stop to watch the program. The reason is that, they said, Abbaba Tesfaye or someone who have the same skill will be back one day. If these children lost their role model or the one who help them to acquire good character or behavior, they may lose interest towards the program. This seems matched with the response of Yared who lost interest to watch the program. He used it just to pass the time he has.

The chief-editor of the program responded to these children need as follows:

Abbaba Tesfaye served as presenter for many years. Many children, who were in that time, loved him. They wrote letters to the program to show

their affection for him. But, now he was retired. Because of his age, he was unable to update what is telling to the children. Now, children are familiar with many things. They want to watch and attend program that is appropriate in their modern world. At present, we have talented children who present the program. We choose them because these children know what the audiences want from the program; they have in the same age level with the children who watch the program. And, most importantly, it is appropriate if the children say about themselves through their words.

Other respondents disagree on the above respondent's responses. They argued that Abbaba Tesfaye was not in the position to tell stories that are relevant to the now generations. Samson is one of them.

Samson: Abbaba Tesfaye told different stories without changing the mood how to tell. The language he used was not modernized. We – the children – need simple and clear language that helps us to understand everything easily. But, he was not used it. I'm happy to see someone in the program that tells us old stories sometime.

Anonymous (2) producer agree on Samson's response. According to her, what Abbaba Tesfaye said is outdated.

Anonymous (2): The words what he said is difficult to understand for the new generations. The new generation is familiar with films. No one is eager to know or hear old and new stories. I understand that most of the children do not wants to know about their culture. Old stories are parts of culture.

Nevertheless, other respondents indicated that they learn from the good thing they watch from the particular program. Every time they watch someone who achieve success in what he/she is doing, they consider that person as their role model and they tried to be

just like that person. But, the segments the children find their models differ from one person to another. Fares identified a character as his model in one of the drama he saw in the children program.

Fares: From the drama which I saw in the program, I forget his name now but the boy who acted as stepchild is my role model. I learned from him how to behave myself in socially acceptable manners and, of course, how to solve problems I have with my family and friends.

Like Fares, Molla also identify ‘the little musician’ as his role model because he has similar or likable behavior with the character - the little musician.⁸ He wants to be a prominent singer but his parents do not allow him to do that. He said “They do this because they want me to be successful in my education.” After he saw the drama, he gets the idea how to cope his problem – studying hard and using the spare time to sing.

According to McQuail, media especially television has an advantage in the child’s social interaction. Through television children learn about the wider world, helps in forming an identity and learning of pro-social attitudes and behaviors. One of the social uses of the media is social learning and identification with role models. In this respect, television especially the Ethiopian Television Amharic children’s program, should serve as a learning tool for pro-social attitudes and behaviors. In addition, Gunter and McAleer affirmed that para social interaction is especially likely to occur with those television celebrities who appear frequently and whose performance stimulates face-to-face conversation with the viewer at home. In relation to this statement, the respondents identified their role models.

Michael: I like Cherry very much. She was my favorite character. I was attracted to the program because of her. When I grow up I want to be just like her. She has the talent to entertain many children. From

⁸ ‘The little musician’ is a drama that was transmitted in the children’s program. It was all about a little boy who has a talent of singing.

Cherry I learn how to speak mannerly, how to respect elders, how to study hard and how to interact with other people. When I saw her at the television, I thought she talked just for me. I was very disappointed when Cherry is missed from the program.

As it indicated in literature review, the basic idea of Bandura's social learning theory is that learning takes place through watching other people model various behaviors. A child can observe someone engaged in certain behavior on television and can then practice that behavior in his or her own life. In other word, children can learn behaviors by observing it from the mass media especially television. In addition to parents, brothers, sisters, friends, teachers, and others, television has socializing effects on children through the adoption of various models of action. Television also has the contribution in the children lives to form the attitudes and beliefs about the society.

4.5 Children Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction with Ethiopian Television Amharic Children's Program

The central focus of this research is to explore the satisfaction/dissatisfaction of children with Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program. The participants of the focus group discussion and individual in-depth interviews were asked to reflect their level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the program.

As it was mentioned in the research methodology, some scholars have doubts on children's ability to express their own feelings in the way they wanted to say. According to these scholars, children faced difficulties to describe the level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with a certain aspects. With regard to this, they said, it should create methodological question on the reliability and validity of the research findings. On the other hand, other scholars argued that children have their own ability to express what they wanted to say. Children can express concern about an issue or even about a specified

aspect of an issue, in this case the satisfaction/dissatisfaction for different reasons. It necessarily tell us very much about the nature and range of their feelings.

One of the assumptions of the uses and gratifications approach is as follows:

Methodologically speaking, many of the goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves – that is, people are sufficiently self-aware to be able to report their interests and motives in particular case, or at least to recognize them when confronted with them in an intelligible and familiar verbal formulation. (Lundberg and Hulten, 1968, cited in Katz et al., 1974)

This statement also works for young people also. That is what the researcher also found. They have the ability to express their interests and motives. But, it depends on the attention they give to the particular media. Anderson and Lorch (1983) stated that children actively choose to pay attention to television and that the choices they make depend upon their efforts to understand what they watch and on the other activities which are available in the viewing environment.

In light of this, respondents gave their own responses on the level of their satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the specified program. Satisfaction/dissatisfaction can not be achieved equally. It differ form one individual to another. They use the same television program in different ways and for different purposes. Some respondents revealed that they are often dissatisfied with the overall aspects of the program. According to these informants, repetition of segments (the same content with different people or schools) is the main reason for the unattractiveness of the program.

Surafeal (13 years): Every week I want to see new things. But, it (the program) prepared shows or festivals in one of the kindergarten or primary schools. They do this every week. The content remains the

same. I hate repetition. If I have any access to other programs, I will not hesitate to change the channel.

Yared: I watch the program to get knowledge and to entertain myself. There were segments/bits that have educational purposes. For example, stories Abbaba Tesfaye told us had lessons that helped for our future lives with the society. After he quit, I didn't get such kind of stories and information as I wanted. So, I'm not satisfied with the program because it doesn't address my preference.

Other subjects also their own reasons on their discontented with the program. For Zebiba the time allotted to the program is not enough. According to her, as the program transmitted on limited time, the children did not get all they want in the short time. She also dissatisfied on the fluctuation of the time of transmission. The time of transmission, as it mentioned earlier, is not permanent. It differs week by week. "They started it on the time they want, not we (the children) wanted. Because of this, I'm tired to wait the program to begin."

Michael has his own view when he replied whether he is satisfied or not with the program.

Michael: I'm not satisfied at all. I don't think they give much attention to the program. They transmit drama or film that has episodes. When we expected to see the next episode on the next week, they aired another segment. How can they forget what they transmitted last week? I do not forget to do my home work at the right time. But, they are. I think nobody cares about the program at all.

Satisfaction is gained when expectations and needs of the children fulfilled through media interaction. It might be explained by the viewer's gratifications gained from the television programs like Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program. So, audience

satisfaction is a gratification audiences achieve from the particular television program. In this case, most of the response of the respondent suggested that their expectations and needs were not gratified by the overall performance of the program.

Abrham and Fares indicated that they have their own reasons to watch the program. However, they did not gain what they want from it. According to them, the contents of the program were not adequate and did not consider their audiences' needs. These respondents assumed that the program is presented as if the children's expectations are fulfilled. However, they said, it is not. Because of this they are not satisfied. Jacobs (1995) and Assael (1998) stressed out this fact and describe that satisfaction can be achieved when program or service performance is greater than expectations; on the contrary, when expectation exceeds performance, dissatisfaction overtakes.

Almost all of the respondents have not fully attained the desired needs and wants from the program. They offered complaint about it. McQuail stated that audiences with high level of satisfaction are expected to have their levels of viewing becoming more and more frequent accompanied by less and less complaining behavior. On the contrary, viewers who do not get television programs attractive and satisfying as they expected are not supposed to watch since weak performance reduces the level of satisfaction.

Mamush (13 years): I wrote letters to the producers so as they produce segments that interests the children including me. But, there is no change. Most of the segments are not attractive as I expected. So, I watch films in VCD at my home.

Rediet (12 years): I do not always watch the program because I'm not happy about it. It is always the same program. It failed to satisfy the needs of the audiences. I don't think many children love it. It's boring. They just attend to spend the time, I think.

Satisfaction can be achieved when audiences get some thing they want from programs whereas dissatisfaction occurred when the television programs failed to fulfill the needs and expectations of the audience. The responses of the informants revealed that the Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program do not meet the needs and expectations of the children. So, they are dissatisfied and this resulted from the program being unable to meet the needs of its audiences.

One of the factors, as it stated in the review literature, that depends whether children learn from television or not is the way the program is produced. The children's program, according to the respondents, should not qualify this. It is not used attention – grabbing production techniques. This means that the way the program is presented should take into account the audiences' preferences and expectations. In the case of ETV children's program, it did not design to have the ability to attract and hold the attention of the children and to be something they could follow and understand.

According to Leykun, 1997, the main purposes of Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program are to educate and entertain children. It is believed that children, through entertainment, would learn about the world around them. In order to meet these purposes, the program should have to relate the goals with the needs and expectations of the children. To make this happen, the producers must have the know how to meet or satisfy the children's needs. This confirmed in the uses and gratifications approach "...represents an attempt to explain something of the way in which individuals use communications, among other resources in their environment, to satisfy their needs and to achieve their goals." The children's television charter also states that "Children should have programs of high quality which are made specifically for them, and which do not exploit them. These programs, in addition to entertaining, should allow children to develop physically, mentally and socially to their fullest potential." (UNESCO, yearbook 1999)

Nevertheless, the response of the informants revealed the other side of this statement. Abubekir agreed that the producers understand the purpose of the program. But, he did

not agree on whether they are striving to match the needs and expectations of the audience with that of the goals of the program.

Abubekir: If they have the motivation to know and satisfy the needs of the children, they may present the program as it should be.

Molla also has the same idea. According to him, the program is supposed to be designed to motivate children in all aspects of their life. However, instead of doing this, the program made them discontented. Because of this, he continued, he and his friends lost courage to follow each and every segments of the program.

A few informants said they are satisfied with the program because they got what they want. Hanna is satisfied with the program. She gave her reason that it is the only children's program she accessed to. She used the program to entertain herself. She has got the chance to watch television only the children's program. She did not want to raise complaints about it. The only thing that makes her satisfied is watching the program attentively. However, the over whelming majority is not satisfied as it should be.

According to the uses and gratifications approach,

The media compete with other sources of need satisfaction. The needs served by mass communication constitute but a segment of the wider range of human needs, and the degree to which they can be adequately met through mass media consumption certainly varies. Consequently, a proper view of the role of the media in need satisfaction should take into account other functional alternatives. (Katz et al., 1974)

Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program, in this sense, competes with other sources of need satisfaction like other children's program or other activities that are available in the viewing environment. It is true that children have alternatives media to educate, entertain or inform themselves. Some of the respondents changed their channel

to watch interesting programs if the ETV children's program failed to satisfy their desire needs and wants. Yonas was one of them.

Yonas: If I'm not interested with the program, I will not sit and watch it. I may go to friend's house to play or to see movies together. Instead of watching uninteresting program, I prefer to do other things.

From the subjects of the research, some of them, because of their dissatisfaction, are on the way to forget the program at all. They are trying to find other alternatives like children's program transmitted in satellite dishes. But, these alternatives are possible only for them who find it easily. From the respondents, however, more than half of them were not access to these kinds of media. So, they have no chance but watching it.

The most important part in children program understands what appeals the audience – the children. ETV children's program should also understand what appeals or satisfies the children and have to take measures to keep them. It should compete with other media by gratifying the needs of its audience.

4.6 What must be done to Minimize Dissatisfaction and to Maintain Satisfaction?

The respondents offered their own suggestions in order to smooth the relationship of the program with its audiences. The producers also suggested their opinion on how to improve the program so as to attend or fulfill the children needs and expectations. As the responses differs, the researcher tried to sum up the responses in the following ways:

- The program has to consider the needs and wants of the children. This means that the media should play its role by providing gratifications to its audiences. This is done partly by assessing the needs and preferences of the children regularly. It should fit into their world.

- It is difficult to fulfill the needs of all audiences. But, at least, it should achieve most of them.
- Comments and suggestions of the children have to be considered. They have to be asked what they wanted to see and expect from the particular media. Regular research is needed.
- Segments that are presented in the program should not be repeated. Instead they include different contents that attract the audiences.
- Consistency and sufficient time for the segments/programs is needed. It has to be presented on specific time so as the children will not boring to wait the program to begin.
- The time allotted to the program must be improved.
- Qualified journalists, who have the skill in children and television, have to be their in order to understand the children needs and expectations. If they know and understand the theories and trainings in the field of children broadcasting, it is easy to fulfill the children's needs so as they are satisfied and become loyal audiences of the program.
- Attention has to give to this program just like other programs of the station. Children program should not be neglected. If it is prepared as it is expected, it has a great role in the children's day to day life.
- Make sure that local as well as foreign segments/bits that are presented in the program have the purpose or the capacity to entertain and educate the children. This is coincides with the goal of the program.
- The program should be done in such a way that the children enjoy it from the beginning to the end.
- Children are part of the society. In order to be successful, the program makers should involve the people around them as well.
- NGOs and government organizations that are working with children should support how the program is useful and satisfactory to the children.
- The station as well as the program has to find a way how to get sponsors so as to make the children gratified by the program.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

This chapter summarizes some of the most important issues and findings that come up in the discussion so far. The researcher try to recapitulate what this research has been all about, how it was undertaken and the prevailing themes that came out at the end of the endeavor.

5.1 Summary

The central focus of the study was to explore the extent to which Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program satisfy the needs and preferences of the audiences – children under the title audience satisfaction with Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program. The study tried to find answers to - Why children watch Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program? Are they satisfied with the program? Do they have an interest on the program and are their needs or preferences addressed? And what are the factors that make the children contented or discontented with the program? In fact, it was the assumption of this research project that Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program is not satisfying its audiences. In other words, the children who watch the program do not attend or fulfill their needs and expectations from it.

To undertake the research, attempts have been made to refer various literatures written in relation with the topic. Since the study is about the satisfaction of audiences, the researcher believed it appropriate and valid to discuss concepts related with children and television and social - learning and the uses and gratifications theories as the theoretical framework of the research. The study attempts to explore the satisfaction of the audience with this perspective.

In order to find out the satisfaction/dissatisfaction of the children with the program, qualitative research methods such as focus group discussions and individual in – depth interviews were used. These interviews have allowed the researcher to understand the children's feelings towards the program. The children were selected purposely. Their

responses indicated that most of them often watch the program. They watch it because they don't have any options.

One of the major outcomes of this research is that the respondents regularly watch Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program as they were selected. This is mainly because they don't have any other options; they have the feeling of belongingness to it; they understand the language better than other programs; they expect the program to present cultures of other nations or states and so on. Some of these respondents watch the program irrespective of whether they are satisfied or not.

The other finding of the research is that the children watch the program for: companionship, entertaining, learning, to pass the spare time or as a habit and communicating with their friends. They also have their own program preferences or choices. Despite the reasons and preferences, the content and presentation of the program did not enable to gratify the viewer's needs. Segments/bits repetition, the same content with different people or places, inconsistency and insufficient time to each segment, lack of attention and lack of regular research to assess the needs and expectations of the audiences are some of the problems the children forwarded. The segments were more concentrated on education. However, mere education makes the children easily boring. It should have to entertain them through education and information. From the responses the children gave, one easily conclude that the program was not in the position to gratify its audiences. The children were not satisfied by the program.

Personal Remarks

From the findings of this study, Ethiopian Television Amharic children's program should reconsider the interest of its audiences by making them contented with what it presents. Any program that is intended to a particular audience has the duty to satisfy its audience. This is mainly done by reconsider the needs and wants of the audience. Thus, ETV children's program regularly assess the needs and expectations of the children so as they achieve satisfaction. By taking other effective children's program as a model, like

Sesame Street⁹, the program should participate the children in program – making. If the children are participated in the program – making, it is easy to find and achieve their needs. Children should be seen and heard. Their voice is mainly reflected on media. The media has a role to play to reveal the children’s needs. From the results the researcher finds in her study, many children watch or attend this program because they don’t have any access to other media. This shows that the program has a lot to do in attracting the children. ETV has to give due attention to such research work to smooth its relation with the audiences – the children. Regular research, even if it costs much amount of money, is needed in order to get the feelings, attitudes and perspectives of the young children in the program that is produced specifically for them. This may be done with the support of other organizations that have interest in children – media relationship and related fields. The producers as well as the editors of the program have to make sure that the program address’s the children’s needs. From the researcher perspective, children’s program should be the major concern of the program producers in specific and the station in general.

⁹ Sesame Street is children’s television program that is produced in United States. It uses a combination of animation, puppets and actors to teach and entertain children. Researches found that it is the most watched program among children in the world. (<http://www.sesamestreet.org/home>: accessed on May 30, 2009)

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Appendix – 1

List of respondents with their respective profiles

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Grade Level	Schools
1	Eyasu Tekle	Twelve	Male	5 th	Wondirad primary and Junior
2	Michaele Getaneh	Thirteen	Male	5 th	//
3	Yonas Abebe	Ten	Male	3 rd	//
4	Abubakir Ansar	Twelve	Male	4 th	//
5	Molla Goshu	Eleven	Male	5 th	//
6	Zebiba Awel	Fourteen	Female	6 th	//
7	Zenebech Alemu	Thirteen	Female	4 th	//
8	Kitnesh Meshesha	Thirteen	Female	3 rd	//
9	Dagim Ayele	Twelve	Male	4 th	Salayish Primary
10	Wubit Almie	Nine	Female	3 rd	//
11	Firmayie Abera	Thirteen	Female	6 th	//
12	Mesay T/Markos	Fourteen	Male	6 th	//
13	Abrham Nigussie	Fourteen	Male	5 th	//
14	Ziyada Ajura	Eleven	Female	3 rd	//
15	Muna Tadesse	Eleven	Female	4 th	//
16	Zelalem Mulugeta	Fourteen	Male	4 th	//
17	Fanos T/Markos	Ten	Female	4 th	Misrak Bere No.1 Primary
18	Wossen Siyoum	Ten	Male	3 rd	//
19	Yared Assefa	Fourteen	Male	6 th	//
20	Samson Tsegaye	Fourteen	Male	6 th	//
21	Temesgen Arage	Fourteen	Male	5 th	//
22	Abi Teklu	Fifteen	Female	4 th	//

23	Michael Mulugeta	Thirteen	Male	4 th	//
24	Hiwot Abebe	Twelve	Female	3 rd	Kokebe Tsibah Primary and Junior
25	Solomon Sintayehu	Fifteen	Male	6 th	//
26	Lemlem Ayele	Eleven	Female	3 rd	//
27	Robel Tesfaye	Thirteen	Male	5 th	//
28	Arayasillassie Samuel	Eleven	Male	3 rd	//
29	Fares Tilahun	Thirteen	Male	5 th	//
30	Tigist Abrham	Ten	Female	4 th	//
31	Surafeal Wondimu	Thirteen	Male	4 th	//
32	Rediet Mesfin	Twelve	Female	5 th	Yewetatoch Genet Primary
33	Tsion Kassahun	Twelve	Female	5 th	//
34	Birhanu Tessema	Twelve	Male	5 th	//
35	Selam Dagnie	Ten	Female	3 rd	//
36	Hanna Muniye	Thirteen	Female	4 th	//
37	Hilina Jejaw	Nine	Female	3 rd	//
38	Mamush Getnet	Thirteen	Male	4 th	//
39	Dawit Assefa	Nine	Male	3 rd	//

Appendix – 2

In Depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion Guide

1. Personal information

- Can you please kindly tell me your name, how old you are and which grade you are?

2. The watching habit (Ethiopian television Amharic children program)

- Do you remember when you have started watching?
- What do you know about the program?
- How often do you watch?
- How is your access to other media – radio, newspaper and others?
- Whose television set do you usually watch – your own, relatives, friend's neighbors, others?

3. Reasons for watching, role models, segments/bits preference and satisfaction (one may choose more than one)

- For what purpose you are watching the program? Or why you watch the program?
- Did you learn something from the program? Explain.
- Did your reasons for watching is satisfied?
- Is there anyone in the program you like most and wants to be your role model? Or who is your role model?
- Which segments of the program do you attend to most (which one is your favorite)
 - informative
 - educative
 - entertaining
- Why do you attend to those categories? Please explain?
- Which segments/bits do you like most and which are not? (Which one is your favorite segment and why?) Which segments satisfied/dissatisfied you most? Why?
- What do you expect when you watch the segments/bits of your own choice?
- Are your preferences always the same all the time? Why? Please elaborate.

- Which one of the segments you watch do have strength and which one have weakness?
 - Content
 - Presentation
- Did you suggest anything you like to be transmitted in the program? If any, please elaborate.
- Do you think the content and presentation of the program do match with your expectations and needs? . Yes . No
- If your answer to the above question is ‘no’ what are the problems for the mismatch?
- Do you think you like the program? Or do you think it satisfied you?
- If you are dissatisfied, what do you suggest (what must be done) so that the program meet your needs and expectations?
- Have you ever give feedbacks or suggestions to the program? If so, how often do you do that?
- Are there any improvements because of your feedback?
- Do you discuss with others about the weakness and strength of the program?
- How do you find the transmission time of the program?
 - Convenient with your activities
 - Overlap with your activities
 - Enough to get what you need
 - Not enough to satisfy your needs and expectations
- Is there a time where you decided to quit watching the program? . Yes . No
- If your answer is ‘yes’, what is your reason?
- What do you suggest to make the program preferable to the children?
- Is there anything more you would like to add?

Thank you.