

## **An Assessment of the Role and Impact of Media on the Prevention of Crime: The Case of the Police Program of South Television**

Assefa Ayele<sup>1</sup>, Mengistu Dinato<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

This study aimed to investigate the the role and impact of the South television police program in preventing crime. The study used a mixed method approach. The study also used the data tools, which includede data collection tools- a questionnaire, content analysis and in-depth- interviews- was used. A total number of 385 urban residents were randomly selected to complete the questionnaire. For in-depth-interview, 10 participants were purposively selected, including police program producers, legislature experts, and judicial professionals. The study found that the STV police program has limited role impact on crime prevention. The program only covers a few local crime issues and replays the same crime issue, which is about murders that occurred among family members. This focus on sinle topic has little impact on viewers' mind to distance themselves from criminal acts. In stead it could motivate crimes due to the law enforcement documets used. Additionally, the quality and format of the program are outdated. Therefore, to educate and equip viewers, the program should cover different types of crime and focus on issues that have significant law enforcement documents made against criminals. Professional trainings should also be provided to program producers, and all concerned bodies should work on the challenges the police program of the STV usually faces. Finally, based on the study's findings, law enforcement experts and related policy-making institutions should thoroughly review their rules and statements on criminals about crime issues regarding their role and impact on crime prevention.

Keywords: crime, police program, television, Ethiopia

### **Introduction**

#### **Background of the Study**

There is a direct relationship between the public perception of a crime and the media portrayals. Prevaious studies by Roberts and Doob (1990) and Surette (1998) ensured that the public's perception of victims, criminals, deviants, and law enforcement officials primarily determines the portrayals in the mass media. Thus, this indicates that the mass media have power to shape the minds of the audiences in either a negative or a positive way.

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<sup>1</sup> MA student, Hawassa University, Hawassa, Ethiopia; *Corresponding author:* [assiyeyele2008@gmail.com](mailto:assiyeyele2008@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Hawassa University, Hawassa, Ethiopia

In the present era, people learn a lot about crime and violence from the mass media (internet, television, and newspapers), as this is the most easily accessible source of information. It is where people hear about others and gain access to what is happening around them; it is also used as an entertainment tool (e.g., movies, reality TV). Television is a very important instrument in which people perceive criminals among these mass media. Using this as a chance, the broadcasters inform people about what is happening by talking about crime. Warr (2000) indicated that when the media misinform the public, people tend to firmly believe that the information provided is legitimate and that they know the risk. As a result of this information, viewers are sensitive and more afraid of victimization (Jewkes, 2011). Chiricos, Padgett, and Gertz (2000) similarly suggested that fear of crime is highly significant for people who frequently watch the news.

Oliver and Armstrong (1995) conducted a study on reality-based crime shows. The results showed that viewers who watched these programs frequently had more negative attitudes towards crime and criminals. However, those who watched fictional crime programs on television play a reliable role in creating a better understanding of crime prevention.

Television is a medium that shapes the content of what people watch. Techniques like quick zooming in and out and dramatic music and sound effects engage viewers' senses and influence their thoughts and emotion. As a result, they shape and mold perceptions about the work of police officers, detectives, criminalists, and forensic scientists (Berger, 2007).

In Ethiopia, different media outlets produce programs on crime stories, such as "Ketezegaw Dossie" on EBS TV, Addis Police on Addis TV, the police programs on the regional TV stations like Amhara, Tigray and South television stations. Radio shows like 'Police Ena Hibreteseb' on Ethiopian radio and 'Sheger 911' on Sheger FM also focus on crime. However, this study only focused on the STV police program. It is the only television police program in the Southern Nation Nationalities and People's Regional State (SNNPRS) that broadcasts crime issues.

South Radio and Television Agency has collaborated with the police since 1998 to broadcast news and programs on FM 100.9 twice a week. In 2013, the police program began airing on the South Television (STV) every Thursday night following an hour of the station's prime time news. The primary goal of the program is to provide the public with information about crime and tips on how they can safeguard themselves. The program covers various topics, such as the types of crime, court

measures taken against them, and what people can learn from them. Therefore, it is essential to assess the role and impact of the police program on STV in deterring crime.

### **Statement of the problem**

According to studies, most of the public's knowledge about crime and justice comes from the media (Roberts and Doob, 1990; Surette, 1998). The media has the power to inform and educate people, helping to prevent them from becoming victims of crime by exposing criminals and preventive measures. Ziglar (1999) explains how messages we receive can affect our minds and actions, and ultimately shape our future. Therefore, it is crucial to be mindful to the media messages we provide the others.

The number of violent television programs and the quality of information people receive influence their fear of crime, as discovered by Gilbert and Heath (1996). To reduce crime in society, television programs should focus on relevant issues rather than just showing violent programs. According to a study Brillon (1987), showing more local crime news increases public fear of crime. However, Liska & Baccaglini (1990) found that presenting significant non-local criminal news makes viewers in local areas feel safer. Furthermore, researchers suggest that fear of crime is stronger among people living in areas with higher crime levels where they view more local than nonlocal news (Chiricos et al., 2000). Thus, it would be more anticipated to see the types of crime given coverage in media to crime prevention, referring to the law enforcement bodies to teach viewers how to prevent themselves.

In 2018, a study was conducted by Ferezer on the EBC police television program Crime Reporting, which looked into its perceived social and psychological effects. However, the study only focused on the negative impact of the program content on the viewer's mental health. While it is essential to choose appropriate stories for Of course, for the target viewers, choosing stories is advisable depending on the type of program. However, crime hits everyone; therefore, contrary to the health problem of the above Ferezer (2018) work, this study focused on the strength of stories that can create awareness to teach viewers to prevent themselves and others from crimes. In addition, no studies have been conducted on the role and impact of the STV police program on crime prevention. Therefore, this study focused on the role and impacts of the STV police program in crime prevention.

## **Objectives**

### **General objective**

The main objective of this study was to explore the role and impacts of the STV police program in preventing crime as perceived by viewers and seen by stakeholders. The following specific objectives have been framed to achieve this general objective.

### **Specific objectives**

1. Identify the educational role of the STV police program
2. Assess the challenges of the STV police program
3. To identify the most frequent types of crime covered by the STV police program

### **Research questions**

1. What are the educational roles and impact of the STV police program?
2. What are the challenges of the STV police program?
3. What are the most frequent types of crime covered by the STV police program?

### **Scope of the study**

However, different media houses have programs focusing on crime stories. The scope of this study was limited to the South Television police program only. The study focused on the role of the STV police program in preventing crime. The urban residents of Hawassa City were the target population for the study. Similarly, an interview was conducted with only ten individuals based on their suitability to the crimes in the referred media. In addition, the one-year program, from which only 12 files were the focus areas, was the focus.

### **Limitations of the study**

Following the emergence of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, talking to participants, finding them to complete the questionnaire, and finding available interviewees took a lot of work. In addition to the respondents, the researcher also suffered a heart attack due to the virus. However, financial limitations made every step tough for the researcher, as since the beginning, the sponsorship has been covered by the

researcher himself. Of course, due to the strong commitment, those problems did not cause the researcher to despair.

## **Review of Related Literature**

According to the the definition of the Oxford dictionary, Second Edition, a crime is an unlawful act punishable by a state or other authority. The law dictionary also defines a crime crime as an act that is committed or omitted in violation of a public law, either forbidding or commanding it; a breach or violation of some public right or duty due to a whole community, considered as a community. Michalowski (1999) also provided two definitions regarding crime: crime is an action or omission that constitutes an offense that may be prosecuted by the state and is punishable by law. It is an action or activity that, although not illegal, is considered evil, shameful, or wrong.

Television is considered a powerful medium. According to Gerbner (1998), television is different from other mediums in its centralized mass production of a coherent set of images and messages produced for total population and in its relatively non-selective, almost ritualistic use by most viewers, as to Hewitt (1995), television has pacifying, or anesthetic, even narcotic effects. Similarly, regarding the power of television, particularly its power regarding crime reporting, Surette also said that 'If any medium contributes to crime and violence, television is the best candidate.' According to Surette (1998), audiences have been conditioned to receive the message the media provide without considering where this material comes from, its effect on their attitudes and perceptions, and how it affects society. Similarly, Jewkes (2002) says that, while we cannot make sweeping claims about media effects or the media being responsible for causing fear of crime, we can look at how media in general and television, in particular, are integral to the process of meaning-making by which we make sense of our everyday lives.

According to social constructionists, social problems are not inherent, but they become problems because certain individuals, called "claims-maker," bring them to the public's attention for their interests (Surret, 1996). This means that social problems are not always recognized as such until they are constructed and highlighted by agent, rather than being noticed independently. As for fear of crime, it is not solely caused by criminal minds, but rather by social process that occur at every social and psychological level (Howitt, 2011). According to Jackson and Gray's 2010 study, the behavioral response of people to fear can be helpful in

advocating 'functional fear', which encourages the alertness of an organism and 'stimulates precautionary activity' (Jackson & Gray, 2010). The Fear of Crime-Media Feedback Model assumes that individuals get information about crime via television shows (e.g., Forensic Evidence, Serial Killer Profile), news programs (e.g. BBC, CNN), newspapers, and other mass media sources. These sources include a disproportionately large number of severe and unusual crime types, which over-sensitize individuals to the chance of their victimization (Jewkes, 2011), and this uncertainty can drive to fear consolidation in those viewers who spend time watching such crime media. The consequences become even scarier as people reduce their outside activity to a minimum to decrease the risk of on-street victimization, which is associated with staying in the safe and familiar environment of their homes (Box, Hale & Andrews, 1988). It can be speculated that this phenomenon leads to spending more time at home watching more crime media, reading more newspapers, listening to the radio, and various other forms of in-house recreation, which only reinforces the feedback cycle. According to Liska (1990), fear increases forced behavior, which successively increases fear, and they become part of an increasing loop. In light of the above studies, it was essential to assess the roles and impact of STV police on crime prevention. In so doing, the stories of crime that have been taken into account to create fear and teach viewers and help them prevent themselves and others from crime and related activities were investigated.

### **The Media, Crime, and Criminal Justice Relationship**

The media affect the imagination of the viewers about the justice system. This can be true for the experiences people perceive from media outlets. Among experiences, knowledge of crime is the most confusing issue that needs special attention. The determinant factors are how the media frames the criminals and the job of law enforcement bodies through their coverage to work on viewers' attitudes toward crimes. Therefore, an increasing number of sociologists, criminologists, and media scholars have been concerned with the effect of media representations of crime and criminal justice. As Ray Surette (2007) notes, the media, crime, and criminal justice must be studied together because they are 'wedded to each other in a forced marriage'. The argument that crime is a heavily covered topic and its coverage affects public views about illegal acts and criminal justice is also widely accepted by the international scientific community (Mason, 2003; Potter and Kappeler, 2006). Research indicates that the media create a picture of a society in which crime is frequent and is constantly and overwhelmingly on the increase, no matter

what statistics show. It is also argued that the media misrepresent the nature of crime. Violent crimes are particularly often presented as the norm in tabloid newspapers and commercial television programs, providing millions of people with a daily diet of information on murder, rape, and drug abuse (Greer, 2005).

The literature on crime, criminal justice, and the media often focuses on 'effects'. The most substantial media effect we can think of is on behavior. Surette (2007) argues that, because media content is dominated by crime and immorality, it may spur deviant individual behavior. Fredric Wertham, a psychiatrist, was possibly the first to advance this direct effects argument. His research, which was conducted in the mid-1950s, concentrated on the influence of crime comics and television on the minds and behavior of children. Despite criticisms (Schramm et al., 1961; Surette, 2007), Wertheim's core concept has lived on, for example, in the campaigns against violence in the media that have been launched in several countries.

The moral panic tradition states that the media amplify or overstate antisocial actions; this feeds our fear of crime, which in turn may lead to more state control and increasingly punitive measures (Altheide, 1993; Cohen, 1972; Fishman, 1978; Hall et al., 1978). The term 'moral panic' was coined by Stanley Cohen (1972): it is a reaction of the majority of the population based on false or exaggerated perceptions fueled by media bias. Studies suggest that intense exposure to crime stories in the media is directly related to a heightened fear of crime (Cohen, 1972).

Gerbner's empirical studies demonstrate that heavy TV viewers (those who watch television for more than four hours a day) are likely to feel like they live in a violent and crime-ridden society. Gerbner's cultivation hypothesis emphasizes the influence of the media on attitudes: heavy consumption is seen as cultivating attitudes that are more consistent with the world of television programs than with daily life (Gerbner et al., 1986: 18). Gerbner's original empirical study to support his cultivation theory has been thoroughly scrutinized. The details of his methodology were criticized (Cumberbatch & Howitt, 1989; Sparks, 1992; Zillmann & Wakshlag, 1985), for instance, for how he related viewing television fiction stories to the fear of crime. Both the choice of stories and the direct causation that he assumed were criticized. However, a consistent finding remains that people who watch a lot of crime on television tend to be both fearful of crime and supportive of law-and-order measures (Doyle, 2006).



The original cultivation argument that television is most centrally positioned to facilitate cultivation outcomes has not been dismissed, but radio (Chiricos et al., 1997), newspapers (Jaehing et al., 1981), film, and new media (Perse et al., 1994) have also been shown to cultivate fear and perceptions of crime (Grabe & Drew, 2007: 152). However, from comparisons between different media channels, television news emerged as more fear-inducing than other media (Chiricos et al., 1997; O'Keefe & Reid-Nash, 1987; Romer et al., 2003).

Generally, the media has a role in shaping public attitudes towards crime and the justice system. However, this role is difficult to grasp and conceptualize. However, data suggest that increased media consumption (especially television news and tabloid media) is related to increased fear of crime and more punitive attitudes. Unfortunately, only a few studies explicitly link media consumption to trust in justice, although some results suggest that media consumption does affect trust in justice institutions (Eschholz et al., 2002). The aforementioned studies and ideas helped the researcher to see the role and impact of STV police in crime prevention in relation to the media-crime-law enforcement relationship.

## **Theories of Media**

There are several important theories that fall under the umbrella of 'media effects'. It is beyond the scope of this article to elaborate on all of them. The following is a brief overview of some of these theories.

### **Third-person effect**

The fact that researchers' study 'media effects' should give a relatively clear indication that the media have some kind of effect. However, even though media consumption levels have grown exponentially since the early twentieth century, it is natural for individuals to think that the media are not affecting them. Instead, the assumption is that the media are affecting others. However, it is evident that these 'other' individuals would say the same about people they perceive as 'others', which would inevitably include the original individuals. This paradox of media effects is known as the third-person effect. The assumptions of people who exhibit this effect are (1) that communication stimuli have a greater impact on other individuals and (2) that behavior must be changed to match the assertion that the media have a more significant influence on "others" (Perloff, 2002). Based on this, it is indispensable to see the roles and impact of the STV police program on crime prevention.



## **Framing theory**

Several influential scholars in the evolution of framing theory, including Entman (1993), define the concept of framing as selecting some aspect of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicating text to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, and moral evaluation. Robert Entman, one of the founders and fathers of framing, defined the term as the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation.

The media setting accordingly points to how issues are selected and accentuated in and by the media. Entman further elaborated that fully developed frames typically perform four functions: problem definition, causal analysis, moral judgment, and remedy promotion (Entman, 2004). Framing works to shape and alter the interpretations and preferences of audience members through priming. That is, frames introduce or raise the salience or apparent importance of specific ideas, activating schemas that encourage target audiences to think, feel, and decide in a particular way (Entman, 2007). In this regard, it is essential to assess how the STV police program frames crime issues to teach viewers how to help them prevent themselves and others from crimes .

## **Cultivation Theory**

It is a media theory developed by Professor George Gerbner in the 1960s. It claims that, regardless of channel or genre selection, those who watch more television tend to develop some beliefs about social reality based on consistent portrayals. Gerbner (1976) tried to study how watching television may influence viewers' ideas. McQuail (2010) divided media effects into three. These are cognitive, productive, and behavioral effects; basically, a cognitive effect deals with effects that impact knowledge and opinion. Similarly, effective effects are those related to one's attitudes and feelings, and behavioral effects are related to someone's behavior. Here, awareness creation can be considered as a cognitive effect; either pro or anti biases regarding a given story could be taken as a productive effect, and behavioral effects could simply refer to the decision after consuming a given crime show.

The theory believes that television is responsible for shaping or 'cultivating' the ideas of social reality of viewers. Along with cultivation theory, television viewers are separated as 'heavy viewers,' 'medium viewers,' and 'light viewers.' As the theory utters, television cultivates the heavy viewers into adopting distorted beliefs about social reality closer to

television reality (Gerber & Gross, 1976). Watching many television programs, regardless of channel and program selection, would enable viewers to develop a set of beliefs and attitudes about a reality.

Hawkins and Pingree (1981) argued that different genres differ in messages and structures. For example, as they said, crime dramas have messages different from soap operas, game shows, or comedic programming. To elaborate this fact, they said: The strife and heroes of crime adventure, the misunderstandings and embarrassments of comedy, the grasping idiocy and chance of game shows, the event-centered definitions of news – all may cultivate different views of the World. Other researchers indicated that, concerning perceptions and fear of crime, the cultivation effect of nonfiction genres is stronger than that of fiction genres. Especially (Holbert, Shah, & Kwak, 2004) claimed police reality shows as the strongest shows in predicting fear and protective behaviors.

According to Shrum (2004), there are two different types of cultivation effect or judgments known as first-order and second-order effects. First-order effects refer to the facts that audiences can learn from television programs and their content. Shrum (2004) said that these effects can be compared to real-world equivalents and objectively verified or falsified. He also added that such effects are memory-based effects. They do so because they are dependent on recalling information in long-term memory. He also described the second-order effects. According to Shrum, second-order effects shape the attitudes, values, or beliefs of the audience.

Mostly this effect is considered as online judgments, which only can be formed when the information is first encountered, as Shrum said. Hence, in the case of second order effect, memory has little or no impact on the process. As Shrum (2004) states: the first-order judgments are specifically constructed because of the Over portrayal of stories or depend on its frequency of viewing on television. Here, the frequency of viewing could influence the tendency of the stories to be recalled. Scholars agreed that direct personal experiences may influence first- or second-order effects. There is also another construct, i.e. perceived reality; it should be considered in the case of perception analysis. Kim (2007) defined the term perceived reality as the degree of perceived similarity between mediated characters and situations and real-life characters and situations (p.6).

According to Potter (1988), perceived reality has three components. The first component is known as the magic window. It refers to one's belief in the literal portrayal of media content and messages. Here, the perceived reality could be conveyed from the information's delivery style. For instance, if one watches news, drama, crime shows etc. He/she might develop different perceptions depending on the type of story. The other component is called utility. It focuses on the relationship between what is shown on television and how it applies to one's own life. And the final component is identity, which refers to the attachment to a character seen on television. That character may become a part of the viewer's real life and imitate his personality. But Potter (1988) states that variables such as identification with TV characters, IQ, and informational needs of the viewer affect cultivation. That means that different people may react differently to a given TV content, and these different reactions in return would determine the strength of the cultivation effect. Therefore, in light of cultivation theory, it is important to assess how the STV police program produced and presented crime stories to equip the viewer about crime. Therefore, since this study aims to evaluate the role and impacts of the STV police program in crime prevention, the theoretical frameworks mentioned above are helpful.

## **Research Methodology**

Research design is a plan that guides research in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting observations (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The design of this study was descriptive. Descriptive design is a research design that enables the researcher to obtain facts and answers from a large sample of respondents and increases the validity and generalizability of findings (Creswell, 2003). Additionally, this descriptive research design ensures that quantitative and qualitative data are captured in nature. Mixed qualitative or quantitative approaches were used for data collection and analysis to examine audience perception and content analysis of the police program, respectively, to explore the roles and impacts of the STV police program in crime prevention.

Three data tools: questionnaire, content analysis, and in-depth interview were used for data collection. In the study, 385 questionnaires were distributed to participants in Hawassa City. The questionnaires were prepared based on the Likert scale, where every item has five scales ranging from '1' which stands for 'strongly agree' to 5 in which stands for 'strongly disagree' Osuala (2007) explain the Likert scale, which is named after its inventor R. The Likert scale was used in such a way that items

were provided to respondents to rate their responses in terms of agreements and disagreements. The researcher used five categories of coding: 1 (strongly agree), 2 (agree), 3 (neutral), 4 (disagree), and 5 (strongly disagree). The researcher used this scale to not restrict the respondents' feelings of response on the questions.

Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating printed and electronic documents (computer-based and Internet-transmitted). Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires data that can be examined and interpreted to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Content analysis is also used as the main data tool for this study.

Silverman (2006) amplifies the effectiveness of in-depth interviews by saying: The primary strength of interviewing as a method is its ability to range over multiple perspectives on a given topic. Therefore, for this study, an in-depth interview was used to balance the data obtained through a questionnaire and quantitative content analysis.

### **Target Population**

Through a questionnaire, the target population for this study was urban residents of Hawassa city. According to the socio-economic and geospatial analysis of the city administration finance and development data of the 2011 Census population, the population of Hawassa City in its 8 sub-city is male 215,978 and female 203,677, for a total of 419,655. Among this, urban residents are male 143,911 and female 135,213, for a total of 279,124 (Hawassa City Administration, demographic information for 2011). Therefore, for this study, only urban populations of a younger age were targeted.

### **Sample size**

Of the targeted population, 385 sample sizes were taken. The sample chosen for the study was listed in the table for clarity. For this purpose, the following formula developed by Yamane (1967:886) was used to determine the sample size with the possibility of using the precision level (variability) of  $\pm 3$ ,  $\pm 5$ ,  $\pm 7$  and  $\pm 10$ . Therefore, a confidence level of 95% (giving us an alpha level of  $\pm 5$ ) was chosen as it can produce a sufficient sample size and fits the time and budget constraints.

### **Sampling technique**

For this study, the researcher used probability and random probability sampling among its subdivisions for the questionnaire. For content

analysis, the year lottery method was used to choose, and after that, the researcher used the systematic sampling technique to select the total number of program files for the study. For in-depth interviews, the purpose sampling technique was used.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Quantitative data was descriptively analyzed. After collecting data, quantitative data was entered into computer software called SPSS version 15 and coded, leaked, and verified. Descriptive statistics tools such as tables, frequencies, and percentages were used to present the data collected through the questionnaire. The mean and standard deviation were used to present and analyze the closed questions. The higher the mean scale, the less satisfaction of respondents was briefly put on both the data presentation and analysis. Content analyzes were performed on the basis of the parameters designed earlier to achieve the specific research objectives. The interview data was also analyzed to supplement the data with questionnaire analysis and content analysis.

### **Procedures for Data Collecting**

First, a questionnaire was prepared in English and then translated into Amharic language because the latter language is commonly spoken and understood by most residents of the city. Second, relating the relevance of all the questions to the study objective, the questionnaire was printed and distributed to the selected sub-city on the count of the sample size of each. For the distribution and filling process, 75% of the researcher ran the research in case the participants might miss the main point and the data would not be valid as a result, and the rest 25% was run by teacher friends who had a better understanding of how to communicate the participants instead of the researcher. Finally, all completed questionnaires were collected and validly completed ones were used for analysis.

Second, for content analysis, selected programs were placed to show the targeted files underlined on a paper. Then the request for permission was written in Amharic language and directly given to the SRTA General Manager in person. Putting his signature on it, the manager referred it to the direct reference body of the technology case director, and finally the researcher got those program files for the study. Having the criteria for content analysis on those programs in hand, the researcher viewed the files in the work station room of the organization, as it is impossible to allow sharing of the files in CD or Flash. Finally, based on the objective

of the study and the criteria designed earlier for content analysis, the researcher analyzed the files.

Third, for an in-depth interview, a copy of the university's letter of cooperation for student data collection was shown to the organization's higher body. Then, after accepting and putting the permission signature, the letter was referred to the direct personnel of the organization. Showing the letter to that of the concerning body, the researcher continued the procedure as follows.

Before starting the interview, the purpose of conducting this particular interview was mentioned to the participants. The medium used for the interview was Amharic because it is the official language and can be easily understood by the interviewees. During the interview, volunteer voices were recorded and photos of some interviewees were taken with their consent. During the interview, the researcher motivated the participants to feel free and to express what they really feel about the topic. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2013), a good qualitative researcher asks probing questions, then listens, then thinks, then asks more probing questions to get to deeper levels of the conversation. Finally, after completing the interview with all selected individuals, the researcher translated their response into English. All the questions asked to the interviewees were done in a similar way. The researcher used an interview guide that helped keep the discussion relevant to the topic under study. Therefore, in all parts of the process of this study, the researcher followed the expected role and discipline of a good researcher.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

This section is devoted to the discussion of the results of the study concerning the three research questions: what educative roles the STV police program plays, what the challenges of the STV police program are, and what the most frequent crime types covered in the STV police program are. The results obtained from the different tools will be integrated so that the readers can see the full picture of the matter. Upon integration, the close-ended results of the questionnaire data will be put in tables by mean and standard deviation based on their relevance to the key strategies under each specific research question. In addition to open-ended question results of the questionnaire, the results of other data tools: in-depth interview and document analysis will be integrated accordingly.

### **The educative role of the STV police program plays an important role.**

The study showed that the STV police program implemented three key strategies: equipping viewers to protect themselves, creating fear about crime, and requiring viewers to refrain from criminal action.

#### **Equipping viewers to protect themselves**

Table 01: Responses of Equipping Viewers to Safeguard Themselves

No	Variable(s)	Mean	Std.Dev
1	Police program of STV warns the viewers about crime	2.09	.672
2	In its prevention messages, STV police program awakens the society about how to fight against crimes	2.30	.854
3	STV police program on local crimes shape the attitude of the viewer against crime	2.74	1.029

*Source: Researcher field study for 2020*

As shown in the above table, the results through the questionnaire have shown a positive feeling about the 'STV police program that warns viewers about crime' and 'in its prevention messages, the STV police program awakens society about how to fight crime'. However, as its mean means (2.74) can be seen from the table above, the role of the STV police program in local crimes to shape the attitude towards crime has been negatively recorded. This shows limitations.

Linked to this, the interview result from the participant Intv.9 showed though STV police awaken the viewer with the help of its message to fight against crime, the messages are not as strong as they should be because of the primary set punishment grounds of law. He strengthened the idea like this: No fixed punishment weight or length for a particular crime committed. It is open for 5-10 years, depending on the intention of the criminal to commit a crime. The results of open-ended questions have also shown that the STV police program in its message is not as awakening as expected. So, focusing on the content production on the STV police program that can stimulate the viewer how to fight against crime needs to be stronger. In addition to this, the results of the interview with Intv.1 showed that there are some limitations in their job; for example, Intv.1 said: 'Criminals are not willing to take photos and to express regret for the crime they committed, so they have never tried it with an example to work on the attitude of the viewer.' Therefore, this



means that there are educational roles for the STV police program to equip the viewer; because of the production of low court decisions by criminals and journalists unwilling or lack of creativity to work on better educative issues and ideas, the educational messages of the STV police program still have weaknesses.

### **Fear creating**

Table 02: Responses to creating fear in mind and making viewers distance themselves from crime

No.	Variable(s)	Mean	Std.Dev
1	In viewers' minds, STV police program creates fright Of crime	2.72	.960

*Source: Researcher field study for 2020*

As shown in the above table, the results through the questionnaire have shown a mean of 2.72 showing the limitations of the STV police program in its educational role strategy of creating fear. Therefore, this figure shows that more than half of the scale of the respondents is not satisfactory in their educational role of creating fear to teach the viewers. When it comes to the findings of the open-ended question, a respondent who has an MA degree gave her response, saying, "Beyond narration, the educative role and the choice of stories have not been given focus regarding law enforcement decisions. This motivates viewers to commit a crime instead of creating fear (see Appendix E). The content analysis extracted the complaint of the victim's neighbor about the length of the penalty, which was about "a son killed father". (See Ape-C or taken from) the content analysis template (file of Pgmpol060212). Therefore, due to the choice of story that has little court penalty, the above findings indicated that the STV police program in its educational role strategy of creating fear in the minds of viewers has major limitations.

### **Making the viewer refrain from the story**

Table-03: Responses to making the viewer refrain from the story

No.	Variable(s)	Mean	Std.Dev
1	Police program in STV plays its role in flashback memory of empathy in viewer	2.34	.787
2	STV police program on criminals has effect on third person	3.07	1.320

*Source: Researcher field study for 2020*

As it is put on the above table, the findings of the questionnaire data have indicated, a positive scale has been recorded about the Police program in its role of creating empathy in viewer based on what happened to others. With this in mind, the content result could be stronger. Regarding its effect on a third person or viewer, the data on the above scale have shown limitations, since its mean is 3.07. When it comes to the results of the open question, a respondent put his response saying 'I believe the STV police program plays its role to teach the society with short air time, but the court judgments to the criminals that have been disseminated are not considered regarding the subsequent effect. About this, the interview result said: 'The in-hand caught criminals have not been shown on the television screen; as a result, the educational role of making an effect on the third body is less or almost zero. In addition, content analysis has shown inaudible voices, videos, and photos not including the regretting expressions or faces of the criminals in the viewed program sample.

Therefore, even though the STV police program has positive roles in its educational strategy of making the viewer avoid the crime story, there are limitations in that the choice of crime story has not been taken into account to make the viewer feel empathic and positively affected not to commit crime or reduce carelessness in activities that could lead to victimization.

### **Challenges to the South TV Police Program**

This section will discuss the challenges of the STV police program, including airtime, presentation and format quality, repeating a crime story, and the need to work on current and local issues as problems.

#### **Airtime**

As the results of open-ended questions and interviews have shown, 'airtime insufficiency' is the main challenge to the STV police program. Intv.1-4 said: 'One of the challenges of our program is the shortness of air time. We have only 30 minutes with which to disseminate the complete narration of a crime story. 'Intv.9 and Itv.10 said: 'Airtime shortness is a challenge for it in addition to the lack of enough human resources.' On this basis, in content analysis, too, the extremely fastest speed of transitions from one point to another point was realized. The police program journalists all grieved on SRTA saying: 'Our programs have not been aired on time some days, or some other days cutting the program in the middle and linking live from ETV scenes are common.' Therefore, the shortness of the basic length of the air time the STV police program has on one hand and the SRTA not respecting the schedule of the police

program, on the other hand, are the challenges of the STV police program about time.

### Quality of Presentation and Formats

Table 04: Responses to the problem of presentation and formats

No.	Variable(s)	Mean	Std-Dev
1	STV police program format and presentations are attractive	3.08	.948

Source: Researcher field study for 2020

As seen in the above table, the questionnaire findings showed a negative limitation, that is, (mean = 3.08) in the format and presentation of the STV police program. In addition, the results of open-ended questions have shown that the format and presentation quality of the STV police program could be more attractive, referring to: 'Its format is as it was at the beginning.' The presentation style is also the same and does not attract viewers. Viewers have multiple choices to view and, as a result; can change the channel to other TV channels. Similarly, the content analysis findings have shown unclear photos and inaudible sound, in some areas no or extremely fast bridges, and viewing similar readers many times in the program. According to the findings obtained through the interview, the quality of presentation and format, the lack of professional human resources for the program, the lack of studio and enough materials for production and logistic limitations were the problems of the STV police program. Therefore, despite having positive things, the STV police program has the question of quality and format.

### Repeating crime stories

As the results of open-ended questions, content analysis, and in-depth interviews have shown, the STV police program often repeats a crime story. For instance, content analysis showed that the killing committed by son on his father (file- pgmpol060212) aired twice on 06/02/2012 and 11/03/2012(see Ape-C.) This was seen on the sampled program files, but there surely be more times that particular program repeatedly aired. In addition to this, in an in-depth interview, for example, Intv.9 said, "Though there are several crime issues to cover, the STV police program repeats previous programs so many times. ' In the questionnaire, a respondent whose educational level is secondary school and whose divorced marital status repeated the same response as Intv.9 in the in-depth interview: Consequently, all the above findings showed that the

STV police program repeats the same crime stories more than necessary to cover the air time.

### Not working on the current and local crime issue

Table 05: Not working on the current and local issue

No.	Variable(s)	Mean	Std. De.
1	STV police program stories match the crime activities we see, hear, and face in our surroundings	3.74	1.016
2	Police program in STV works on current or recent issues timely	3.57	1.077

*Source: Researcher field study for 2020*

As seen in the table above, the findings through questionnaire have shown limitations or negative responses on STV police program stories that match the crime activities we see, hear and face in our surroundings 'and the police program works on current or recent issues timely'. The mean values of both variables are negative. About STV police program stories matching the crime activities we see, hear, and face in our surroundings, a participant in the open-ended question responded: 'We see many crime acts such as a motorbike, luggage, and mobile phone that drive around, but I have not seen such stories given account in the STV police program'. Regarding the STV police program stories matching the crime activities we see, hear, and face in our surroundings', another respondent in her Amharic handwritten response saying 'generally' added, ' '(Appendix E).' Similarly, in the interview, Intv.6 said: Thieves who compel mobile and luggage should be shown on the TV screen and the STV police program work on these acts. Regarding this, content analysis, however, 42% Ape-C) of its result showed promoting the police organizations, the rest figure from the total figure seen focused on local crime issues that have been experienced around. Therefore, together with some of the findings of the open responses to the questionnaire, the above (mean result = 3.74), which is very negative about the STV PP crime coverage with reference to what society or people experience in their surroundings, and the (mean result = 3.57) which is also a negative response.

About the in-depth interview, Int.10 said: 'I had reservations about timely coverage of current crime issues.' This individually expressed his grievance on the weaknesses of the STV PP saying: 'In contrast to many areas crime issues around them, they do not focus and provide coverage. The STV police program, in addition to the SRTA agency itself, is

always late for reports. When it is the festival season in the area, they focus on celebrating that is aimed at entertainment. For this, the content analysis results have not shown any exemplary story as well. For example, pgmpol170811- was only about the special program of the Easter Festival special program; no crime story was included (Apdx-C). But this season is known for muggings, according to the respondents on open-ended questions. Therefore, the findings have shown limitations in the activity of the STV police program to work on the current and local crime problem.

### **Types and frequency of crimes covered in the South television police program**

In this section, the types of crime, the frequency of crime coverage and related issues were described that received a wider range of coverage.

#### **Types of crime**

Table 06: Responses of Crime Types Covered

No	Variable(s)	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Police program in STV covers different crime types	2.86	1.318

*Source: Researcher field study for 2020*

As can be seen in the table above, the questionnaire findings indicated an averagely limited result on the 'STV police program covers different types of crime' as the mean shows (2.86). Linked to this, the results of open-ended questions and interviews have ensured that the STV police program does not focus on different types of crime. For example, Intv1-4 responded that they focus primarily on murder. Similarly, participants responded that the STV police program focuses mainly on homicides that especially happened within the family: between a son and a father, or a husband and a wife. In this regard, the finding from the content analysis showed that murder was the focus (Ape-C). Therefore, the above discussions have shown that the STV police program needs to give more coverage to different types of crime.

# Frequency of Crime Coverage

Table-07: Frequency of Crime Coverage

No.	Variable(s)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	The frequency, STV police program covers the crime types, is ample enough to teach.	2.77	.859

*Source: Researcher field study for 2020*

In terms of the frequency of crime coverage on the STV police program, the table above shows (mean = 2.77). The mean result is slightly more than average, which clearly shows that there have been limitations on the frequency of different types of crime coverage of the STV police program. About this, the findings from content analysis have shown that 25% of the story coverage was about a murder that was committed among family members and 8% was about physical assault- a father- on his son.(see Ape-C). But as can be seen from ( see Ape-C), the most frequently covered issue was not about crime, it was about police organizations and prisons of different zones and towns, and its total share was 42%.( see Ape-C). In terms of the results of the open question, the STV police program focused little on crime issues; instead, it widely covered individuals and organizations that promote programs or news. Therefore, findings have shown limitations on the activity of the STV police program in working on different types of crime considering its frequency of coverage.

According to the above results from all data tools, the STV police program has limitations based on its educational role in raising awareness of the society against crime . Some propose that the media, by influencing the level of fear, the level of avoidance behavior, and that the Fear of Crime Media Feedback Model can contribute to a decreasing level of victimization (Cashmore, 2012). But, as the findings have shown, the STV police program has little role in influencing and creating fear that distances viewers from being interested in doing crime or how to protect themselves from criminals having this alluring message of fear as an advantage.

Regarding the frame of crime and criminological issues based on law enforcement sentences and other teaching angles, the educational lessons of the STV police program are left with much to do. Entman (1993) defined the concept; framing, as a process of selecting some aspect of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicating text in order to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, and moral evaluation. Entman further elaborated the term as: Fully

developed frames typically perform four functions: problem definition, causal analysis, moral judgment, and remedy promotion (Entman, 2004). As Ray Surette notes, the media, crime, and criminal justice have to be studied together because they are 'wedded to each other in a forced marriage' (2007: 2). The argument that crime is a heavily covered topic and its coverage has effects on public views about illegal acts and criminal justice is also widely accepted by the international scientific community (Mason, 2003; Potter and Kappeler, 2006).

As the findings have shown from the indicated data tools, the STV police program has not played its role in teaching the third body. Offenders also sometimes demonstrate an anticipatory effect. Often, after extensive media coverage of a type of crime, offenders may abstain from committing that crime in anticipation of a law enforcement crackdown Surette (1996). To do so, the literature shows that the STV police program has challenges and limitations. It has not used the power of television to teach the viewer. Hewitt (1995) said, 'Television has pacifying, or anesthetic, even narcotic effects' (p. 50). Similarly, regarding the power of television, particularly its power regarding crime reporting, Surette also said that "if any medium contributes to crime and violence, television is the best candidate"(p.117).

## Conclusions

Based on the results of this research, it can be concluded that, regardless of its roles and impacts on crime prevention, there are some positive achievements and the results mostly showed limitations on the STV police program.

Regarding its educational role in raising awareness of society against crime, there is considerable limitation in the police program, the STV. Concerning equipping viewers to protect themselves from crime acts, especially regardless of working on local crimes to shape the viewer against crime, this study has yet to discover enough. Generally, due to the production of low court decisions on criminals, the educational messages of the STV police program have not been strong, as it has been supported by previous literature. For example, 'However, often after extensive media coverage of a type of crime, offenders may abstain from committing that crime in anticipation of a law enforcement crackdown' (Surette, 1996). Data from this study clearly showed that in terms of fear strategy, due to the choice of the story that has a lower court penalty, the STV police program has significant limitations. Thus, the STV police program, beyond its narration, has little role or impact. In this regard, the



stories of crimes it produces are more about motivating viewers to commit crime than fear it.

In terms of different types of coverage of crime issues, there are also limitations. For example, although there are various types of crime and illegal acts in urban areas, the STV police program focuses mainly on rural ones. This shows that the STV police program has limitations in working on current and local crime issues. Similarly, instead of producing programs on educational crime messages, the STV police program has been busy working with a promoting organization that has little role and impact on viewers to prevent themselves from crime. Finally, as a challenge, the air time of the police program STV needs to be longer to fully cover different crime issues or the story of a crime issue. With regard to quality of presentation and format, the police program STV also has considerable limitations. Therefore, generally, the STV police program has significant limitations in its educational role and impact on the prevention of crime. Thus, to solve this limitation, the program, besides addressing different types of crime, should select issues that have considerable law-enforcement statements made on the law-breakings. In addition to providing professional trainings to the program producers, all concern bodies should work on the challenges that the STV police program usually faces. Additionally, law enforcement bodies or institutions should deeply check and recheck the rules they follow and the statements they make on crime issues regarding the impact and role it can have for the prevention of crime generally. Finally, interested researchers can use this work as a bench march and conduct further studies on media or law enforcement related issues.

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