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REPORTING A PANDEMIC

Admassu Tassew

***A Comparative Study of AIDS
News Coverage in African and
European Prestige Dailies***

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**A Comparative Study of AIDS News Coverage
in African and European Prestige Dailies**

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To my *father* and *mother*, Mr Tassew Geletta and Mrs Worqwoha Teferi; my *brothers* and *sisters*, Messers Fisseha, Teferi, Mesfin, Dereje, Wondwossen, Ms Genet, Ms Mewded; my dear *wife*, Misrak Gezmu; and all my *teachers* at all levels, who encouraged, assisted and followed my journey to the world of academia.

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Admassu Tassew Geletta
Göteborg, Sweden
December, 1995

PART ONE

OVERVIEW

PART ONE

OVERVIEW

The following text is a very faint and illegible scan of a document. It appears to be a list or a series of entries, but the characters are too light to be read accurately. The text is arranged in a vertical column on the right side of the page.

1

INTRODUCTION

The Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is known as a “long wave disaster” (Barnett and Blaikie,1992) by some, and as a “slow-onset news issue” (Rogers, 1988; Dearing and Rogers,1992) by others. It is understood as a ‘long wave disaster’ because of the longer time it takes “...in the making and in which the major effects have begun to occur long before the magnitude of the crisis is recognized and any response is possible” (Barnett and Blaikie,1992:56). On the other hand, it is discerned as a “slow-onset news issue” because of the longer time it took to rise to a mass media agenda and then to a public agenda.

The first mention of AIDS in the Swedish prestige daily *Dagens Nyheter* took place in December 15, 1982¹ (Fredriksson, et al, 1991; Jarlbro and Jönsson,1991:55). The reporting took place then, despite the fact that the spread of HIV infection was recognised earlier² (RRV, 1989:38; Blaxhult, 1993:7). The British prestige daily, *The Times*, also had its first news report on AIDS in April 23, 1983³, which was about British doctors’ concern and also five deaths reported in England and Wales. But, this was long after the first British cases of AIDS had been known⁴, and as the first death from AIDS in U.K. is said to have occurred in 1982 (Rocheron and Linné,1989:409). In the United States too, “...most of the public learned the important facts about AIDS, such as its transmission, within several months of its climb on the media agenda...*Most individuals developed their perceived risk of AIDS rather rapidly, based on media accounts of the disease...*” (Rogers, 1988:28, emphasis added).

The above mentioned Swedish, British, and American examples show that there is no simple relationship between what is happening in the real world and news media reporting. What makes the time lag important in such a public health risk communication theme as AIDS is that it might reflect the view of society on the disease, or the will of society or governments to realize the situation; notwithstanding its also being a “long wave disaster” and a “slow-onset news issue”. Furthermore, it can also be attributed to the media’s bias that results from the thinking that AIDS sufferers were outside the mainstream audience as the several months time lag in the American media’s reporting of AIDS has shown (Klaidman 1990a:123).

Aims and Research Questions Asked

Aims

This study primarily attempts to look at the news media's picture of AIDS, and the attention given to it by the news media's coverage of AIDS news. Furthermore it also tries to discern if the news coverage of AIDS is commensurate with the real world prevalence of AIDS in the four countries whose media is on the study, i.e. does the "media reality" match or correspond to the "AIDS reality" in the real world.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic whose reporting is the subject of this study is in full swing and its infection rate has been increasing rapidly at different parts of the globe. Although, its infection rate is increasing rapidly, the present day bio-medical sciences seem not in a position to control it. Therefore, so far the only way to check its spread is only (at least for the present) by giving out more public information - as to its transmission, prevention, etc. - and practicing 'safe sex'. The mass media by its function of reaching a vast majority of anonymous masses at different levels and sectors of society helps carry messages meant to check the spread of this disease. It is also assumed that AIDS news apart from being like any news report that is relayed by the news media, does also have a risk prevention and/or protection message embedded in it. Therefore, having understood this, the study then tries to find out the image the news media gave to AIDS in its reporting of the AIDS news. The study also attempts to look at the diffusion pattern of AIDS news via the media and shall also investigate if the media has had any role in setting the agenda for the issue of AIDS in at least one of the countries whose news media is in the study. This study shall then investigate four prestige dailies of the North and South parts of the world between the years 1983-1990.

The second aim of the study, which is investigating if there is any correspondence between what the news media presents as the AIDS reality and the actual prevalence of AIDS in the real world is examined through the years by the media. In order to find out both realities, i.e. 'media' as well as 'AIDS', the study looked at the reporting of AIDS news in the different prestige dailies, and the annual official statistics on AIDS prevalence from WHO and from countries whose papers are in the study.

This study then, shall comparatively analyse the AIDS news coverage in two European prestige dailies (*The Times* of Britain, and *Dagens Nyheter* of Sweden), and also two African prestige dailies (*Daily Nation* of Kenya and *The New Vision* of Uganda) between the years, 1983-1990.

Research questions posed

The questions that served as guidelines while conducting this study were:

1. *What does the media picture and attention of AIDS look like in different countries of the North and South parts of the world?*

In order to give answer to this query, this study investigated the AIDS news material of four prestige dailies of the North and South parts of the world from the *news value* perspective, by further enquiring: How much AIDS news material was covered during the studied years? What were the news angles that were covered most? What/Where was the arena of most of the AIDS news story in the different papers and years? What actors were used as news objects and what was the image they were given by the media? What was the type of news story (domestic or foreign) in most of the AIDS news items through the years and among the papers? Who was the source of most of the AIDS news story items? Who were the actors as subjects or main actors in the AIDS news that were covered by the newspapers through the years? What were the themes and references of the AIDS news articles?

2. *What does the news media's picture of AIDS look like in relation to the prevalence of AIDS in the real world?*

This part of the research problem was tackled first by looking at it from the perspective of the news value concept of news production concerning the selection and presentation of the AIDS news. Furthermore, as the selection and presentation of news is also affected by a newspaper's editorial policy, this part is also taken into account. In the South part of the world where some of the studied papers come from, the newspaper's selection, gathering and presentation of news has also have to take into account the country's politics and policy, as for example Kenya's "...President spent the first four years of the growing pandemic denying that there was any HIV around, and ascribing reports of it to a deliberate hate campaign against his country" (Gould,1993:73). Therefore, this part of the study has also taken

into account this factor which is absent in the other part of the world (North) where some of the studied papers come from. Finally, in order to give answer to this research question, the study also understands that it may also have to take into account the society's view on the disease as the newspapers' selection and presentation of an AIDS story could also be affected by its readers view on a certain subject (see for example, Rogers et al, 1991:13, where they say that the American media lagged on AIDS reporting as it sees it not as a threat to its audience, i.e. "white, heterosexual, middle class person").

3. *What does the mass media's picture of AIDS look like in relation to the public's understanding of AIDS?*

In order to discern the public's perception of AIDS as relayed by the mass media, the study used the agenda-setting research tradition in its investigation. The agenda-setting hypothesis notes that the media helps the audience learn about a salience of an issue by the amount of attention the media gives it (McCombs and Gilbert, 1986; McQuail and Windahl, 1981; Reese, 1991). Therefore, the study, after having examined the media attention given to the AIDS news coverage through the years in one of the countries whose media is on the study, i.e. Sweden, also looked at the public opinion figures regarding AIDS through the years. In so doing, it attempted to find out about the relations between the media agenda and the public agenda. It also searched documentary sources and tried to find out about the policy agenda in relation to AIDS pandemic in order to discern if there is any relation between the three agendas, i.e. media, public, and policy agendas.

4. *What is the news media's role and significance in risk communication activity? Does the news media have any role in risk communication while relaying AIDS news?*

AIDS news is a health risk communication as it includes "...messages and interactions that bear on risk decisions" (National Research Council, 1989:22). In communicating anything that is related to AIDS and HIV, one at the same time relays an information that has a risk message in it. AIDS news that talks about infection, prevalence, protection, ways of transmission, spread or the like tends to carry a risk prevention and protection message along with it. When news mentioning celebrities like Rock Hudson's death because of AIDS, and the AIDS' diagnosis of the son

of Zambia's president, and/or the death of an American girl who contracted AIDS from a regular visit to her dentist is relayed, it at the same time carries the message among others that AIDS is not only limited to specific groups or countries. Furthermore, the recurrence of AIDS news in the media with every new information keeps the issue of AIDS alive. Therefore, the study attempted to look at the significance of AIDS news in risk communication activity.

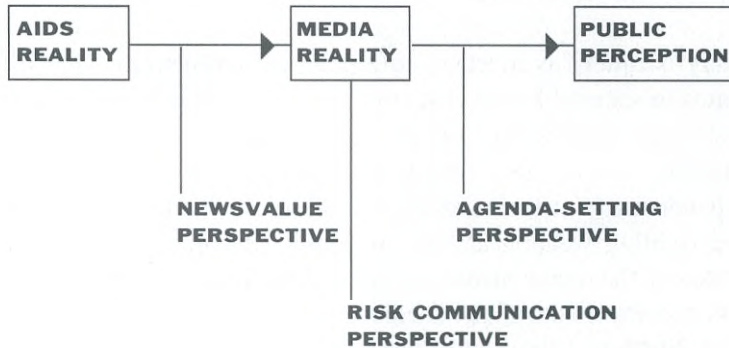
This study is timely as it relates to a practical problem of news diffusion that relates to societal health risk communication. It will undoubtedly help us enrich our knowledge of the news media's role in public risk communication. It is also timely and necessary because this century's deadly pandemic is at loose, and so far the most - and probably the only - effective fighting weapon at hand is health education/information which makes use of the mass media so often. Moreover, a study of this type, which is a comparison of the media reporting in four different countries (from the North and the South) has a lot to offer to the subject of health risk communication in the "global village" of ours.

When examining the risk communication role of the news media while relaying AIDS news, the study used the theory of risk/disaster communication in its analysis. Besides, it also looked at the management and the reactions set off by epidemics of the AIDS type throughout history.

While attempting to investigate all the above mentioned queries, the study was conducted based on the research traditions of news value concept, agenda-setting hypothesis, and risk communication theory. In its investigation and analysis of the AIDS news items through the years and the different prestige papers, the study used the above mentioned research traditions to probe at the AIDS reality, Media reality and the results of the news media reporting of AIDS on the Public perceptions of AIDS (Fig. 1.1).

Figure 1.1 Model used for studying and analysing the AIDS news communication by the news media in the studied years.

ANALYSIS MODEL



The study used the news value perspective in studying and analysing the *selection* and *presentation* of the AIDS news. It also utilized the risk communication theory while examining the *presentation* of the AIDS news in the media. And, finally the agenda-setting hypothesis was applied while looking at and analysing the *perception* of the AIDS news items (Fig.1.1).

The AIDS reality that is present in the real world conditions is believed to be mostly reflected by the official statistics. While reporting and presenting this reality, the media then passes through the news value litmus test where there takes place a rigorous selection and presentation process. Other than the media organizations' work of selection and presentation of news based on news value criteria, there also are other factors like a country's social system, that affect the process of news selection as for example the Kenyan government's restriction on reporting (at least in the beginning years) AIDS has shown.

This study shall investigate if the news media mirrors the reality while looking at the media reality. Does the media or the news reflect or mirror the reality or otherwise? If so, what does the reporting look like? Furthermore, the study shall also look at the media reality and see if AIDS news

has an aspect of risk communication in general and public health risk communication in particular.

Finally, this study shall ponder at the news media report, the AIDS reality and the public opinion data on AIDS and see if the agenda-setting process has been at work. This part of the empirical study shall concentrate in one of the countries' whose prestige media is in the study. Moreover, the AIDS issue and the agenda-setting process in general will also be touched upon while reviewing the literature on AIDS and the news media.

The study

In an attempt to give answer to the research questions this project study posed, the study looked at AIDS news stories from two European and two African prestige dailies. A random sample of four prestige daily newspapers starting from the week of 1983 (Monday, Jan.3 - Sunday, Jan.9) and ending in the last week of 1990 (Monday, Dec.24 - Sunday, Dec.30) was taken and searched for an AIDS news article. The AIDS news articles were randomly searched from all the four papers for one day per week. Among the studied papers, *Dagens Nyheter* came out seven days a week; while *The Times* and *Daily Nation* were published six days a week. The precursor of *The New Vision*, i.e. *Uganda Times* came out six times a week. And, *The New Vision* was coming out at very irregular intervals through the studied years (it was a weekly between March 19 and June 18, 1986; a bi-weekly from June 24, 1986 to October 23, 1987; a tri-weekly from October 26, 1987 to March 18, 1988; five times a week between 21 March to 15 April 1989; and finally six times a week since 15 April 1989). Overall, 557 AIDS news articles were collected representing 3353 papers during the eight years (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Sample Size and Estimated Number of AIDS News Articles in the four newspapers between 1983-1990*

Newspapers	Sample fraction	Sample size	Estimated number of articles	No. of copies in the studied years
Dagens Nyheter	1/7 = 14%	147	1029	2880
The Times	1/6 = 17%	231	1386	2480
Daily Nation	1/6 = 17%	111	666	2480
The New Vision	1/4 = 25%	68	272	1711

**The 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included as they were not available.*

Newspapers and Countries Chosen

This comparative research is conducted on the news media of two parts of the present day world which are economically, politically and culturally quite different. What is now called the North part of the world includes the economically affluent highly industrialized part of the world. Whilst the south is composed of countries with either underdeveloped or developing economies.

The two European countries whose news media is found in the study, i.e. Britain and Sweden, other than belonging to the North part of the world do also share a common Judeo-Christian heritage. On the other hand, the other two African countries, i.e. Kenya and Uganda, belong to the South part of the world, and do also have a common colonial past with Britain as their coloniser.

Though the study is on the news media's reporting in general, it nonetheless, chose to investigate the print media, i.e. daily newspapers, as opposed to the electronic media, because of the easy access of the papers in libraries and their prestigious status. Besides, the media material for the studied years will be difficult to obtain from the electronic media especially in the two African countries as it might not be available.

As to the choice made to study only the countries mentioned in the study, I believe that all the selected four countries can help do some comparisons in the study as one among the four at least has one thing which the other/s lacks. If for example, we compare the two African countries chosen for the

study, we find out that Uganda has officially recognized the problem of AIDS in its country earlier, and has taken a lot of measures to fight the epidemic. Whilst in the case of Kenya, the government at first was said to have denied some reports of the incidence of the disease among the populace fearing that it will hurt its tourist industry. Moreover, the high prevalence and severity of the existence of AIDS especially in the two African countries in the study can clearly be seen in the World Health Organization's "Weekly Epidemiological Record" of 15th January 1993, where the number of reported cases for Uganda was 34,611 and for Kenya 31,185 as compared to Sweden and Britain who had 743 and 6510 respectively.

The choice of Britain and Sweden who are both from the North part of the world is that they are countries with a free press and clearly defined AIDS policies and surveillance. In both countries there is a free access and availability of data and materials in a setting and language the author of this study easily understands. Besides, Britain's rather long contacts with the two African countries in the study (which extends to the colonial times) makes her the most likely candidate for a comparative study of an issue of AIDS, which in some circles is alleged to have had a rather long existence in the African continent (see Anderson, 1988:49, where he cites Dr. Gallo mentioning the existence of HIV for about 100 years in the African continent).

Among the four prestige dailies in the study, *The Times* of Britain is one of the two papers from the North. *The Times* newspaper is Britain's oldest and most influential daily. It started publication in 1785 when it was founded as *The Daily Universal Register* (Cook and Stevenson, 1988:135; Central Office of Information, 1993:417). It is owned by Rupert Murdoch's News International Group, which also owns *The Sun*, *Today*, *News of the world*, and *The Sunday Times* among other media companies. *The Times* is found among the "quality" papers of Britain with the highest circulation. The circulation average for this daily in 1992 was 390,323 (Central Office of Information, 1993:416).

The Swedish prestige daily in the study is *Dagens Nyheter*. It is among the prestige morning papers of Sweden with the highest circulation. Its circulation average for 1992 was 390,000. *Dagens Nyheter* is a Stockholm based morning prestige paper that was established in 1864. It is owned by the Marieberg group whose largest shareholder is the Bonniers family. This group does also own Sweden's largest evening tabloid, *Expressen*, among other media companies.

The Kenyan prestige daily in the study is the *Daily Nation*. It is a paper privately owned by The Nation Group of Newspapers which is again owned by Aga Khan. The *Daily Nation* newspaper was launched in March 1961 by the Nation Group of Newspapers, and is a prestige daily with the largest circulation in Kenya (Bhusan, 1980:168; Mak'ochieng,1993:92). According to the 1987 circulation figures of the ABC, the Daily Nation had an average circulation of 177,907 (Tassew, 1988:32).

The New Vision which is the Ugandan prestige daily in this study has its roots in a privately owned newspaper of the 1960s which was known as *Uganda Argus* (Bakibinga,1990/91:2). After having been nationalised by Idi Amin, this paper changed name to *Voice of Uganda*. Then, after the overthrow of Amin's regime, the name again changed to *Uganda Times*. The paper, due to uneasy relationship it had with the authorities and poor financial management, passed quite a hard time. "By early 1985, it had almost ceased to exist" (Nakawagale,1986:24). Nonetheless, it started coming out as *The New Vision* newspaper in March 19, 1986 as a weekly (every wednesday) to then become a bi-weekly (every tuesday and friday). Subsequently, it started coming out as a tri-weekly (every monday, wednesday and friday) and, finally, it became a daily since March 21,1988. Furthermore, there was no saturday edition before 15 April 1989, and the sunday edition started in March 21,1993.

The New Vision newspaper which is owned by the government has an average circulation of 30,000 copies, of which Kampala area has 63%, whilst 16% goes for North and North Eastern region, 9% for Western Uganda and 10% for Central region (Francis, 1991/92:37).

This study then, will investigate the attention and picture of AIDS in the media in a random sample of AIDS news articles from the above mentioned prestige dailies of the North and the South. At this juncture, it is worth mentioning that both the African dailies in the study are English language papers. English is the official language in both countries, even-though most people do speak and understand only their own ethnic languages. Mostly the policy makers and the urban elite could be said to be among the foremost target audiences of these two papers. Most of the present day Africa being a society where orders come from top to bottom without any involvement of a democratic process of discussion and debate, it could safely be said that most of the time things are set and left to work

by the policy makers. These papers which are in the study are also tuned to these groups (policy makers and urban elite) among others. Therefore, it is highly probable that the media agenda is set by the policy agenda and vice versa in the case of the issue of AIDS. Finally, it is also worth pointing that the two European papers are also widely read by the elite and the policy makers too.

The Time Period

The study chose to examine the AIDS news reporting from the beginning years of the 1980s to the beginning of 1990. As this study dealt only with AIDS news reporting of the prestige media, it was in the beginning years of the 1980s that these media started to report news about AIDS. For example, *The Times* of Britain had its first news report in April 23, 1983. The Swedish paper, *Dagens Nyheter* too started reporting about AIDS in December, 1982.

Therefore, being helped by The Times Index that indicated the exact date of AIDS reporting by *The Times* newspaper, and also taking into account the time of first AIDS reporting by *Dagens Nyheter* (i.e. December, 1982), the study decided to start coding for the AIDS news materials from the papers in 1983. The choice of 1990 as the last date is only to see and compare if the reporting pattern has stayed the same or if it has changed in the beginning of another decade, i.e. 1990.

Method

The study applied the method of content analysis for analysing the communication content of the AIDS news items in the studied papers. Furthermore, it also used documentary sources for acquiring and studying the statistical materials and other related matters.

The method of content analysis is a research technique used to make legitimate, correct and reproducible inferences by "objective" and "systematic" identification of specified characteristics of messages (Holsti, 1969:14; Krippendorff, 1980:21).

Its replicability and objectivity is concerned with coming to the same result by anyone applying the same data and technique at different occasions. This then in turn proves the reliability of the testing instrument used for measuring the data. Its being systematic also assures "...the inclusion and exclusion of content or categories...according to consistently applied rules" (Holsti,1969:4).

Analysis of any media content is done in one part of the communication process, i.e. the message. Its objective is to draw inferences on the process or persons involved in the production or on its "impact on audiences" (Hartmann,1987:17). The message contained in media content is said to help in understanding (taken as evidence) the style of work of the media organization, the society or culture it comes from, and its audiences including their interest among other things (McQuail, 1987:176).

Content analysis as a method is regarded appropriate in particular to research problems whose data are limited to documentary evidence; analyzing subjects as "psychiatric interviews" that require the language used to be looked into; and "in studies of newspapers, magazines, movies" etc. whose data volume is large (Holsti,1969:15-17) as exemplified by this particular study on AIDS news coverage in four prestige dailies of the North and South parts of the world.

Media content analysis has two approaches. One of these is quantitative content analysis which is mostly involved in counting and enumerating and according to Krippendorff (1980:13) dates back to the late 1600s. The other approach which is qualitative is "applied to the analysis of media content ranging from commonsense appraisals of the material, through different types of 'literary critical' assessments, to more structured kinds of analysis based on theories derived from linguistics and cultural anthropology" (Hartmann, 1987:19). The quantitative approach is limited to the study of the manifest content data of the text, whilst the qualitative approach is directed more to the latent content. Håkan Hvitfelt (1986) for example, has used a qualitative approach to decipher the latent contents of the news material he gathered on the press reporting of the diphtheria epidemic in Gothenburg, Sweden. Furthermore, these two approaches are also found supplementing each other when used together by detecting both the manifest as well as the latent content. A famous media control study which used these approaches and that proved their indispensability is the Glasgow University Media Group's study of British television news (Hartmann, 1987).

As the method of content analysis has its advantages and strong points as a research technique, it at the same time can have its weakness like having 'bias' and being not completely objective in the framing of categories and in the selection of items for study (Hartmann,1987:21; McQuail, 1987:184; Holsti, 1969:10). Nonetheless, despite these shortfalls, the method has been proved effective as a tool for studying especially newspaper contents as evidenced, for example, by Denis McQuail's 1977 study of British newspaper content, the UNESCO (1985) initiated study of foreign news reporting in 29 countries, Paul Hartmann and Charles Husband's (1974) famous study on 'Racism and mass media' in the British Isles, Kent Asp's (1986) study on the political coverage of the mass media in Sweden, and quite recently by studies of McAllister (1990) and Pitts and Jackson (1993) on the press coverage of AIDS and related items in the U.S.A and Zimbabwe respectively.

In this study too, for content analysing the sample AIDS news materials a coding schedule for recording data from each AIDS news item in the studied papers was prepared after having made a prior inspection of some of the study materials. The unit of analysis was the news item that was printed under a single heading. In the coding schedule, the place of the AIDS story in the newspaper, the number and coverage space of the AIDS stories, the story type, the main actors in the AIDS news as subjects and objects, the image of the HIV positive/AIDS victims in the AIDS news, the angle of the AIDS news item, risk prevention/protection activities in the AIDS news, and the different themes and references of the AIDS news among others was recorded from the studied newspapers (for more on the coding schedule, see Appendix 1). After having recorded the different AIDS news items in each of the coding sheets, the data was then analysed by a computer using the SPSS program.

The coding of the two European papers and the Kenyan *Daily Nation* was conducted in Sweden. Whilst it was necessary to travel to Uganda to do the coding of *The New Vision* and also study other relevant details - at the same time, through a few days stay in Kenya, official statistical data on AIDS prevalence in the country was also collected. The Ugandan newspaper in the study, i.e. *Uganda Times* (precursor of *The New Vision*), was coded at the Makerere University library (1983 issues), and the Makerere Institute of Social Research -MISR- library (most of the 1984 issues) as it was not able to find all the required issues in one place. Besides, all the 1985 issues were not at all available in all the research libraries in Kampala

(the librarians said that due to the civil war that raged in the country the paper neither did not come out regularly nor was it properly kept in a library). Furthermore, *The New Vision* which followed *Uganda Times* and that started coming out in March 19,1986 was coded at the newspaper's library.

Investigating the attention and image the prestige papers of four countries from the North and South parts of the world gave to AIDS and its victims through the 1980s, and also examining if the AIDS and media realities match, have been the subject of this dissertation. The AIDS news items from the prestige dailies of the four countries were searched and examined by the content analysis technique. Whilst, documentary sources were used for bringing to light the actual reality in the spread of AIDS and other related items used in the study.

Preview of the Chapters

This dissertation is divided into four parts and eleven chapters. The first part of the dissertation has three chapters and is an overview of the study. Chapter one discusses the aims and objectives of the study, and also previews the study project along with the methods used in the study. The second chapter presents the theoretical traditions used in the study. The literature on AIDS news reporting in the media is then reviewed in the third chapter.

The second part of this study has four chapters and deals with the empirical investigations of the AIDS news in the media. The media attention and picture given to AIDS news coverage and AIDS news is the subject that is empirically investigated in chapter four. This chapter presents and also discusses the empirical results concerning the attention given to the AIDS issue in the news media, the AIDS news coverage through time, the news angles used, the arenas and actors used as objects of the AIDS news articles in the newspapers. Chapter five examines the story types, sources, themes and references of AIDS news and also investigates actors as subjects or main actors in the AIDS news of the studied years.

The AIDS versus Media realities in the four countries whose media is on the study is investigated in chapter six. In this chapter, the spectre of AIDS in the four countries where the studied papers come from is discussed and the AIDS prevalence official statistics shown. Besides, the news media's coverage of AIDS news through the studied years is taken and compared to the official statistics that shows AIDS prevalence in the real world. In chapter seven, an empirical investigation is conducted to discern if the agenda-setting process had been at work in one of the studied countries, i.e. Sweden.

The third part of the study deals with epidemics and risk communication in relation to AIDS. Chapter eight of this part looks at epidemics and AIDS and then highlights the historical dimensions of epidemics and their management. While doing so, it attempts to look at the present day AIDS pandemic and tries to determine what makes the management of AIDS pandemic similar or different from the ones that had left their trace in the human society. Risk communication in general and public health risk communication in particular is discussed in chapter nine; and the role of the news media in risk communication and its significance to the public is dealt upon. Furthermore, in chapter ten the study empirically examines AIDS news as risk communication by probing at the AIDS news items used in the study.

Finally, part four of this study includes the conclusion chapters eleven and twelve of the dissertation. Chapter eleven is the concluding chapter of the study which has the summary of the problem and the findings of the study. Moreover, suggestions for further studies and/or recommendations for future handling of such type of studies are forwarded in this chapter. Chapter twelve is an afterthought that deals generally with the problem of AIDS and the measures taken to manage the pandemic at a world stage.

NOTES

1. According to Tina Fredriksson et al. (1991:6) it was in December 1982 that an article on *Dagens Nyheter* introduced the term AIDS to the public (December 15, 1982, P.7):

300 har dött

Dödlig sjukdom gäckar läkarna

En ny mystisk och obotlig sjukdom med en dödlighet som överträffar smittkoppor, har börjat sprida sig i USA. Hittills har 800 personer smittats sedan epidemin dök upp för ett par år sedan.

Sjukdomen har sedan dess spritt sig och nya fall rapporteras i accelererad takt.

Minst 300 av dem som har smittats av sjukdomen, kallad aids, har avlidit. Sjukdomen innebär att den som drabbas mister sitt immunförsvar mot infektioner. Den smittade blir ett lätt byte för infektioner som han annars skulle ha skakat av sig utan problem. Banala sjukdomar blir livsfarliga.

De som smittats av Aids faller också av någon okänd anledning offer för en annars mycket ovanlig form av cancer.

Amerikanska forskare vet ännu inte vad som har vållat den mystiska sjukdomen eller hur den kan botas.

De misstänker att det rör sig om ett slags virus som sprids via blodet.

Oron har den senaste tiden ökat, eftersom även barn har börjat smittas.

Till en början var det nästan uteslutande manliga homosexuella män som smittades av aids. Tre fjärdedelar av alla som drabbats är homosexuella.

Först trodde man att sjukdomen

var en följd av livsmönstret bland de homosexuella. Markant var att de som löpte den största risken att drabbas var män som hade många manliga sexualpartners.

Även narkotikamissbrukare visade sig löpa risk att smittas, speciellt sådana som injicerade narkotika. Av offren har 13 proc varit narkomaner.

Men sedan började fall dyka upp även bland andra, mer "normala", grupper. Av någon anledning har t ex invandrade haitier som betyder att de inte är homosexuella visat sig mottagliga för smitta.

Nu senast är det barn som smittats. Forskare försöker nu snabbt utreda om de smittade barnen kommer från familjer där det finns homosexuella eller narkotikamissbrukare.

En varning har nu gått från amerikanska centret för kontroll av sjukdomar om att barn som lider av blödersjuka är en stor riskgrupp.

Amerikanska forskare arbetar nu frenetiskt för att utröna vad som orsakar aids och för att om möjligt isolera det virus som tros vålla smittan.

Jämför man aids med andra sjukdomar som dykt upp plötsligt i USA på senare år finner man att aids är långt farligare.

För aids har man hittills registrerat en dödlighetsprocent på ca 40 procent. Men om man studerar dem som fick sjukdomen för två år sedan finner forskarna att knappast någon har överlevt mer än två år med Aids.

[An English translation of the headline and intro of the above article will look like this:

300 DEAD **DEADLY DISEASE BAFLES THE PHYSICIANS**

A mysterious and incurable disease with a mortality that surpasses the small pox is spreading in the U.S.A. Up to now 800 people have been infected since the epidemics was identified a couple of years ago]

2. A report by The National Swedish Board of Health and Welfare, which is edited by Malmquist and Ramgren (1992:11) notes that, "The spread of HIV-infection in Sweden began in 1979 among homosexual men living in Stockholm. The earliest known cases of infection via blood components followed a blood transfusion given in May 1980 and the administering of blood preparations to haemophiliacs in 1979-80. The first infection associated with intravenous drug misuse occurred in 1983". Furthermore, according to the report, "The first case reported in Sweden developed AIDS at the end of 1982 (in Stockholm)".
3. According to *The Times Index* of 1983, the first AIDS news reported in *The Times* of London was the following piece (April 23, 1983):

DOCTORS ASKED TO REPORT AIDS CASES

By our Science editor

The seriousness with which doctors in Britain view the emergence of the mysterious disease known as AIDS, an acronym of autoimmune deficiency syndrome, is reflected in this week's issues of *The Lancet* and the *British Medical Journal*.

A preliminary survey from the Government's Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre reports five deaths in England and Wales and nine other cases reported by specialist hospital departments.

The report urges doctors to inform the centre as soon as possible when a patient with AIDS comes under their care so that an up-to-date picture can be maintained of the extent and spread pattern of the disease.

Since it came into public prominence in the United States in 1981, AIDS has afflicted more than 1,300 Americans. More than half of those were stricken in the past year. There is no cure for the condition, which has a high mortality rate and includes a whole range of virulent infections.

The condition was thought at first to be restricted to homosexuals because it broke out almost simultaneously among homosexuals in New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Initially it was believed to have been caused because the body's natural defence system was almost battered down by repeated infection, by a group of viruses belonging to the herpes family, through drug abuse and sexually transmitted disease.

But that has been ruled out because cases among other adults and children are coming to light which are not connected with that pattern. In addition, the disease is no longer confined to the United States or to men.

The most sinister features of the condition are the number of infectious agents which have been identified in patients. It appears to be communicable primarily by physical contact.

4. According to the PHLIS AIDS Centre, Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre, and Communicable Diseases & Environmental Health (Scotland) Unit's unpublished *Quarterly Surveillance Tables No.21, September 1993*, it is written that in Britain "One AIDS case was diagnosed in 1979, 4 in 1981, and 13 in 1982. Three reports were received in 1982. One death occurred in 1981 and 7 in 1982." (Table 2, footnote 3).

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

News and the news value concept

The need to know what is new, and the reliance on this knowledge to make judgements affecting an individual's everyday routines and even other people's too, has become more pronounced in the era where the mass media is becoming central to our lives. We tune to the mass media to know about what is new concerning the weather before starting our work day. What is new in the big world we live in and even in our locality is also swiftly brought to us by the mass media, thereby facilitating our decisions on different issues (ranging from travel plans to engagement in local activities). This thing what we tend to refer to 'what is new' is what in other words is termed "news", and which according to Bernard Roshco (1975:4) and Leon V.Sigal (1973:1) has no definition that is accepted by all.

Nevertheless, Edward Jay Epstein (1973:30-34) attempted to highlight the definition of news from the point of the shared values of newsmen whom he interviewed. According to him, news is defined in terms of time, i.e. its "immediacy"; as "unexpected or extraordinary event, the man-bites dog phenomena"; and also as original reporting, i.e. it is gathered and relayed before others did (see also Sigal, 1973:7; Roshco, 1975:11; Hall, 1973:182). The definition provided by Epstein (1973), Sigal (1973), Roshco (1975), Hall (1973) and many others is among what Denis McQuail (1987:204) calls "...attempts to answer it by analysis of media...". The view entertained by the newsmen as to what they call news makes clear that the simple existence/happening of events alone does not at all make them news (Hartley, 1982:76).

Everyday, every hour and every minute, there are multitude of things happening of which only a few stand out to be news and get reported by the media. This picking out only a few among the multitude is performed by what some call an inter-pretative faculty called "news sense" (Rock, 1973:74), or "when transformed by the news perspective" which is a "narrative account with a beginning, middle and end" (Altheide, 1974:173), or because "news exemplifies values, and journalists work within increasingly well-researched routine constraints" (Schiller, 1981:2). If news is not value free, then, it could be said that it contains ideology that provide an

integrated picture of reality (Golding and Elliott, 1979:208-211; Gans, 1979:68; Westerståhl and Johansson,1994:75). Golding and Elliott (1979) in their study of the news in the broadcast media of Sweden, Ireland and Nigeria, have come to conclude that broadcast news corroborates what they call "the key elements of any ruling ideology" which are "...the undesirability of change, and its impossibility; all is for the best and change would do more harm than good, even if it were possible" (P.211).

Moreover, news is also at the same time a product made for sale. This then brings to attention influences like, commercialism, politics, technology and work routines in the making and reporting of news (Altheide,1974:173). Furthermore, it is Bennett's (1988:4) observation that "much of what passes for diversity in mass media news is largely a matter of packaging designed to deliver a product to market".

News, according to Golding and Elliott (1979:2) is also an "international commodity" where the production and marketing/selling of it can take place anywhere in the world - where an American produced news is sold to Europe or other parts of the world and vice versa. Nonetheless, the two British communication researchers at the same time make clear that:

...news production is rarely the active application of decisions of rejection or promotion to highly varied and extensive material. On the contrary, it is for the most part the passive exercise of routine and highly regulated procedures in the task of selecting from already limited supplies of information. (Golding and Elliott,1979:114)

In the final analysis, news having become a commodity sold on market, its selection, presentation and exchange do get subject to the market forces.

News acquires its existence after having been tailored institutionally (by the journalistic organizations) for consumption by the public (Gieber,1964:180; Tuchman, 1978a:4-5). Furthermore, Paul Rock (1973:73) also adds the sources of news as being responsible to its form of existence.

The news, which is a result of newsmen's shared values, commercial and political influence, and also journalistic organizations working practices, is not a mirror of reality or in Walter Lippmann's (1922:341) words "not a mirror of social conditions", contrary to journalists' claim of reporting/reflecting reality. Critically remarking on the notion that says tv news does mirror the reality, Edward Jay Epstein (1973:16) notes, "a mirror makes no

decisions, it simply reflects what occurs in front of it; television coverage can, however, be controlled by predecision or "policy" ". He then quotes a letter written to correspondents by an ABC evening news executive in March 1969 where not only what is seen but "also how it is depicted" was determined beforehand.

Having attempted to briefly touch upon some of the characteristics and inherent qualities of the news in the preceding paragraphs, we now end this section in the words of Paul Rock (1973:77) by saying that "much news is, in fact ritual", with a rather known and clear themes.

News selection, gathering, and presentation

Every newspaper when it reaches the reader is the result of a whole series of selections as to what items shall be printed, in what position they shall be printed, how much space each shall occupy, what emphasis each shall have. (Lippmann,1922:354)

News selection takes place actually at different levels. First, when selecting the type of event to be gathered and brought back to the news room, then by the reporter in deciding what to emphasize or omit and finally by the news editor when a last minute selection is done for presentation in the media proper (Roshco,1975:105). Though most of the selected and gathered news gets relayed more often; nevertheless, with the existence of several competing news, the selection process does also take place as to what to publish/broadcast and the prominence to be given.

This selection of events to stand as news per se require the events to be what is termed newsworthy. Newsworthiness, in other words is to be able to pass the test of the "news value". News values are the criteria used to select news for presentation and also the way they should be presented - what to emphasize and what to omit (Golding and Elliott, 1979:114; Miller and Williams,1993:137). News values are "...operational practices which allow editors,...to select, rank, classify and elaborate...in terms of 'his stock of knowledge' as to what constitute 'news'" (Hall,1973:181). And, according to Golding and Elliott (1979:115) news values are but "story values". On the other hand, as news values are said to be judged based on a feel for news and as there is a judgement which is relative, Denis McQuail (1987:208) then remarks that "...there must be strong elements of subjectivity" in the news values.

Eventhough, newsworthiness and news value could have a relative judgement and a subjective element, it nevertheless has been possible by many communication researchers to point out the most important conditions or news value criteria that make an event news. Among these important news value conditions/criteria that an event must fulfil to become news are found: Frequency - "a time span taken by an event"; Importance; Drama; Unambiguity - "the clarity of an event"; Proximity - "cultural as well as geographical"; Negativity - "bad news is good news"; Personalization - "news is about people and mostly individuals"; Elites - "big names and big nations"; Novelty, Oddity or the Unusual; Continuity - "the running story"; Composition - "the mixture of different kinds of event"; and, Consonance - "the predictability of, or desire for, an event" (Hartley, 1982:76-79; Golding and Elliott, 1979:115-123; Shoemaker and Mayfield, 1987:4; Galtung and Ruge, 1965:70-71; Westerståhl and Johansson, 1994:73 - though Westerståhl and Johansson discuss the significance of only importance, proximity and drama as basic news values).

Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge (1965) successfully tested and proved right almost all of the above stated news value conditions/criteria on four Norwegian newspapers and on events that emanated from the Congo and the Cuban crises of July 1960 and the Cyprus crises of March-April 1964. Media studies conducted by different researchers have also shown that members of this short list of news value criteria are really at work in the unfolding of an event to a news. Among these studies is found the classic study of Kurt Lang and Gladys Engel Lang (1953) where one of the conditions, i.e. consonance - the media expected something to happen and it happens - was shown at work with the MacArthur Day in Chicago where the media (TV) concentrated on what it expected to happen, i.e. "...a wild spectacle, in which large masses of onlooker would take an active part..." (P.5); eventhough the participant observers in the area had a differing experience. Even, at recent times, a similar study done by Halloran, Elliott and Murdock (1970) about an anti-vietnam war demonstration in London and the media treatment of the event also proved the same point. Edward J.Epstein (1973:199) after having discussed the news selection process in the NBC, CBS and ABC, also concludes that "the net effect is that the news selected is the news expected".

Moreover, Matthew P.McAllister (1992) in his study of AIDS, its medicalization and the mass media notes that stressing the "unusual" became the newsworthy slant of AIDS, thereby reminding us of that the "unusual"

which is also one of the news value criteria is at work. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the two U.S. news agencies were mainly responsible in disseminating the news of U.S. failures in Vietnam pointing to the fact that news which is negative (it is probable that other reasons like proximity, elite nation etc. could also account to the selection) passes the judgement of flow as it fulfils the news value criteria and is also sellable (Tunstall,1981:262).

Gaye Tuchman (1978a:37) also points out that in most American newspapers more national news as compared to international is carried - which she says is also so in the wire service. She then suspects that it is so because of "mutual accomodation" with the wire service. Nevertheless, alongside with the reason given by Tuchman, when one looks at the news value of cultural as well as geographic proximity, it is no wonder that the papers devote much space to domestic in contradistinction to foreign news. In his classic study of news selection, David Manning White (1964:166) writes that among the reasons given by the editor/gatekeeper -"Mr Gates"- for rejection of the news was found "too far away", which in turn reminds one of the news value criteria, 'proximity'.

Big names (Cohen,1963) are news and are amongst the most important criteria of news value as for example "...the biggest "name" of all the American press and its mass audience is the president of the United States..." (Roshco, 1975:75). Concerning elite/big nations too, it suffices to mention that "elections in France, Germany and Italy will receive more coverage than those in Latin America, Africa, etc." (Hartley, 1982:78). Furthermore, Miller and Williams(1993:138) argue that other than news values, there are space and layout considerations as to the selection of an item as news, and its importance is also decided by intervention of politics.

Last but not least, it is worthy to note what is described in this account of a veteran journalist who writes about his earliest experience of news selection while working in a newspaper's office:

Once I thought I had found such a spectacular squeal sheet - I think it included murder, rape, and incest - that I went directly to the homicide squad to check it out. After reading the sheet, the detective looked up at me in disgust, "Can't you see that it's 'black', kid? That's no story"...I had not known that atrocities among black persons did not constitute "news".

The higher the victim's status, the bigger the story: that principle became clear when Newark was lucky enough to get the biggest crime story of the summer. A beautiful, wealthy debutante disappeared mysteriously from the Newark airport, and immediately the pressroom filled with hot-shot reporters from all over the east..." (Darton, 1975:188-189).

The news gathering operation, on the other hand, has its own established routines in the news making institutions. News gathering in the first place must come in line with the working schedules/hours of a news producing institution - for example, it must fit the 24-hour cycle of operation of newspapers (Murdock, 1973:163; Tuchman, 1978a:212; Sigal, 1973:119; Roshco,1975:64). Furthermore, sources of news also have their influence in the news gathering process as reporters follow established routines thereby letting "...much of the task of selection of news to its sources" (Sigal, 1973:130).

The sources, who are mostly government officials¹ "...have adapted their practices to the standard operating procedures of newsmen" (Sigal, 1973:101), like exploiting newsmen's deadlines thereby mostly making sure that it is covered. In addition, reporters' requirement and urge to get access to sources like the American president can make them ensure that their stories don't offend news sources, print whatever the source gives out, and also let the officials take no "responsibility for the information they pass along" (Ibid:54).

Moreover, the news gathering experience, apart from the news making institutions and sources does also get some sort of pressure from fellow reporters - who are gathering news from the same beat - by their exercise of comparing notes and corroborating story angles to end up "reporting things the same way" (Bennett, 1988:115).

The selection and gathering and then selection and finally presentation of news in any medium, i.e. electronic or/and print media, is performed depending on organizational considerations like the cost, timetabling, market size and kind of advertisers among others (Cohen,1963:113-114; Epstein,1973:258; Rock,1973:76). Paul Rock (1973:75) going a bit further says that the layout making policies of a newspaper does even "predetermine" what is to be reported - in this instance, presentation is seen to predetermine even the gathering process, which incidentally reminds one of Daniel J.Boorstin's (1961:11-12) "news making" rather than news gathering activity.

On the other hand, presentation and even for that matter the very selection process is said to be influenced by the ownership and control of media, along with the role the advertisers play in the selection/presentation of the type of news by the media (Shoemaker, 1987:29; Murdock, 1973:158). At this juncture, it is interesting to see the power that could be exercised by the advertisers, as the following recorded case by Philip Meyer (1990:56) shows:

Paul Maccabe was the music editor of **Twin Cities Reader**, a weekly paper based in Minneapolis. He was sent to cover a jazz festival sponsored by KOOL cigarettes. "Strange bed fellows, cigarettes and jazz," he wrote. "Duke Ellington died of lung cancer." The publisher who fired him said he was afraid of losing the four to five weekly pages of advertising brought by the cigarette industry.

The presentation as well as selection of news even by the transnational news agencies had also been a point of discussion, whereby it is alleged that criteria for selecting news is based on maintaining "political and economic interest of the transnational agencies and their countries of origin" - as information that favours the maintaining of the status quo is highlighted whilst any criticism or call for a change is played down (Somavia, 1976). For the Chilean economist, Juan Somavia, a good example of this state of affairs and the news media's presentation of news was well reflected by the way the "...OPEC countries have been presented (as responsible for world inflation, as wrecking the international economic system, as irresponsible in the use of power conferred by the possession of oil)...OPEC actions have practically no positive elements in them and much transnational reporting of this theme has the flavour of anti-OPEC propaganda" (ibid:20).

News which is considered a "commodity for sale" (Righter, 1978:41; Bennett, 1988:3-4; Golding & Elliott, 1979:2&90) is measured by a scale, i.e. news value, which is calibrated by the journalistic profession - though the journalist do not define it as such. Before reaching their final form as news to be presented by the mass media to audiences, events pass through a process of selection-gathering-selection. This process of selection-gathering-presentation itself is made possible with the help of news values which according to Golding and Elliott (1979:115) are the results of "...perceptions of the audience and the availability of material".

Furthermore, Miller and Williams(1993:139) based on their study of HIV/AIDS news have this to say about the news which is the product of the news media:

To explain the output of the news media it is necessary to examine *the nature and process of negotiation between the reporter and his or her sources of information.* This examination has to be located in the context of the competition between sources as well as the organizational pressures on the reporter and the political-economic context of media production. (P.139, emphasis added)

Finally, it will suffice to say that “news is what newspapermen make it” (Gieber, 1964:180), and of course working under the regiments, routines and above all policies of the newsmaking institutions/organizations. This then will lead us to define and explain news from the procedures or/and policies followed in its making rather than from the end product itself.

AIDS as News

Having had a brief look at the concept of news and news value, when we inquire as to how it helps explain the selection and presentation of the AIDS news which is the subject of this study, we concur that in order for any new happening to be news it has to pass the news value criteria that is commonly understood by the journalistic profession. If so, why in the first place did AIDS become a news issue? Did the AIDS issue stay long in the news media? If it did, for how long did it stay prominent in the news media, and why? Did the prominence of AIDS' issue start to die out after some time? If it did actually start to die out, how can this state of affairs be explained?

The AIDS issue, in the beginning, is at least expected to fulfill the news value criteria of the unusual and/or the novel, among others, to be newsworthy and get reported². Besides, the infection of celebrities, famous people and the persistence of the epidemic in elite nations, the spread and devastating effect of the disease in the studied four countries and the world at large, the size of the offerings at present, and the future gloom prospect, the ever new happenings that are related to the epidemic, etc. do add more weight to the continuance and further stay of AIDS issue in the news media. Moreover, all the aforementioned queries get explained when addressed to the news value concept and application. And that is what this study did while analy-

sing the empirical findings concerning the attention and image the news media gave to AIDS news.

The news value concept and its application to the understanding of news has also a lot to offer in the analysis of the answers given to the queries : what were the news angles that were covered most? what/where was the arena and/or origin of most of the AIDS news? what actors were used as news objects? what was the story type of most of the AIDS news item? who were the actors as subjects or main actors? Moreover, as selection and presentation of news is also affected by newspaper's editorial policy, the social system of a country the newspaper comes from (e.g. as in Kenya where government intervention in AIDS news reporting was observed), and the society's or readers' view on the subject, among others, the analysis of the results that determined the relations between the AIDS and Media realities is also heavily assisted by the concept and application of news value criteria.

With the intervention of politics, the news selection and presentation at times and in different places is also supplemented by other political factors than the commonly understood news value criteria. This fact is better illustrated by the Kenyan case of denial at first, and openness later, partly because of the western world's persistent criticism and comments on the issues of human rights and democracy in Kenya. Furthermore, at the opposite side is found the Ugandan government's aggressive drive for all the available fund for fighting AIDS. The study then, shall incorporate these factors along with the commonly understood news value criteria in analysing the empirical results of this undertaking.

This study then shall employ the concept of news value in analysing the selection of the AIDS news stories from the point of journalistic practices, the working policies of the papers and/or the governments concerned; the presentation in the papers pages; the sources and story types; and also the conceptual frameworks as represented by the themes and references.

Agenda-Setting Hypothesis

The agenda-setting research tradition is based on a hypothesis that bypasses the established direct effects research tradition by supplanting it with the indirect effects alternative as the hypothesis affirms that the media have a public agenda setting indirect effect (Rogers and Dearing, 1988:585; Reese,1991:309). The most important point about the agenda-setting research tradition is that this hypothesis emphasizes on the audiences learning about issues from the media than attitude change per se. According to the agenda-setting hypothesis, the audience is said to be able to learn about salience of an issue/event by the importance and emphasis attached to them by the media (McCombs and Gilbert, 1986:4; McQuail and Windahl, 1981:62; Reese,1991:311).

This new form of approach in the effects research tradition (i.e. agenda-setting) hypothesized that "the mass media set the agenda for each political campaign, influencing the salience of attitudes toward the political issues" (McCombs and Shaw,1972:184). It was with this recognition of the media's role in sifting out an issue and then giving it more attention that the media's importance in the political election campaigns came to be clearly seen. Maxwell E.McCombs and Donald L.Shaw's 1968 Chapel Hill community voters study and subsequent research on the agenda-setting hypothesis showed that continual emphasis and attention on certain issues by the media does help single out these issues as important (Weaver,1981; Hall et al,1978; Funkhouser,1973).

At this juncture, it may be necessary to query as to what an agenda, issues and events are. According to Rogers and Dearing (1988:565), an agenda is "...a list of issues and events that are viewed at a point in time as ranked in a hierarchy of importance". Concerning issues and events, the two communication researchers give examples of "the war in vietnam", "watergate", "drug abuse", etc. as issues; and "the sahel drought", "earthquakes", and other natural disasters' etc. as events.

The term agenda-setting was first coined to the hypothesis by Maxwell E.McCombs and Donald L.Shaw (McQuail,1977:84; Rogers and Dearing, 1988:564) after their Chapel Hill voters study of the 1968 U.S. presidential election campaign. Besides, it is Walter Lippmann's book "public opinion"- that came out in 1922 (first American edition) and also later Bernard C.Cohen and his book "The press and foreign policy" that are frequently

cited in connection with news and agenda-setting function of the media (see for example, McCombs and Shaw,1972; McLeod et al, 1974; DeGeorge, 1981; Winter, 1981; Lang and Lang,1981; McCombs and Gilbert,1986).

The agenda-setting function of the media is mainly in letting the audience learn about what is there as an issue and also at the same time pinning down which ones are important. In their function of sorting out issues and also showing how important the issues are, the mass media in the words of Bernard C.Cohen may be "...stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about" (as quoted in McCombs and Shaw, 1972:177).

Rogers and Dearing(1988) in their article which analysed and summarised past agenda setting research discuss the agenda dynamics where the media agenda, the public agenda and the policy agenda each influence one another. In describing the dynamics of each type of agenda-setting, they say:

We call the first research tradition *media* agenda-setting because its main dependent variable is the mass media news agenda. We call the second research tradition *public* agenda-setting because its main dependent variable is the content and order of topics in the public agenda. We call the third research tradition policy agenda-setting because the distinctive aspect of this tradition is its concern with policy as, in part, a response to both the media agenda and the public agenda (Ibid:556).

The three agendas, i.e. media, public and policy, do influence each other and are seen to bring about tangible results. Asp (1983) in his study of the 1979 Swedish election campaign, for example, investigated the three agendas. In this study, Kent Asp has empirically shown that the policy agendas "...seem to be powerful agenda setters for the news media" (P.339). Furthermore, Asp (1988:29-30) in another study contends that he has found similarity between two different agendas - in this case between the media and policy (party agenda) agendas. And, according to Everett M.Rogers and James W.Dearing (1988:579), "the public agenda, once set by, or reflected by, the media agenda, influences the policy agenda of elite decision makers, and, in some cases, policy implementation...". The case of the Watergate issue is a good example where months of coverage by the media got it into the public agenda to be finally an agenda issue for the U.S. government policy makers.

Issues and events have their own objective/independent existence. But, the coverage and giving them due importance and emphasis by the media sets the agenda. However, according to Reese(1991:315) setting of an issue/event agenda by the media does not at all happen out of its free will as they have to be pushed to the agenda by “powerful sources and other bureaucratic organizations”. On the other hand, the media too may not set the public agenda if “the individual holds different news values than those reflected by the mass media” or/and if there is a “conflicting evidence from personal experience or other communication channels about the salience of the issue or news event” (Rogers and Dearing,1988:569).

William F.DeGeorge(1981) and Chaim H.Eyal(1981) mention of three different types of commonly understood and used models in the agenda-setting research. The first of these models is an “awareness model” where “...the public is primarily aware of those issues or topics which are reported by the media” - and if the media fails to report an issue it is most likely that the public will not be aware of an issue; the second model is the “priorities model” where the media’s coverage and display establishes the topics’ rank-ordering and thereby the priority ordering gets transferred to the public; and finally, the third one is “salience model” where the public gives due importance to topics following the lead of the media (DeGeorge, 1981:222).

At this instance it is worth noting that some of the empirical studies like Asp’s (1983:334) study where he asserts, “evidence indicates that the priorities of the mass media have become the priorities of the public”; and also McCombs and Gilbert’s (1986:13) assertion of the press setting the agenda for Jimmy Carter’s 1988 state of the union address by covering “issues prior to the state of the union address”, are good examples for the functioning of the above stated models.

Since the beginning of the agenda-setting research in the effects research tradition of the mass communication research field, it is the study of the media and voter behaviour that has dominated (infact been associated with) this form of research. Especially the U.S. political election scene is seen to be often investigated using this hypothesis. Likewise, the European and other western type political systems electoral campaigns are also the subjects of agenda-setting research, though not in the scale of the U.S.A.

Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald L. Shaw (1972) in their pathfinder article "The agenda-setting function of mass media" which was a result of a study of the 1968 U.S. presidential campaign, attempted to show the news media's agenda setting capacity among the Chapel Hill community voters. In their study, the authors of the article tried to show if the actual content of the mass media matched with what the voter thought to be the key issues of the campaign. The study though did not show correlations that prove the agenda-setting role of the media, but "...the data suggest a very strong relationship between the emphasis placed on different campaign issues by the media...and the judgements of voters as to the salience and importance of various campaign topics" (McCombs and Shaw, 1972:181). This according to the authors of the study "...is in line with the conditions that must exist if agenda-setting by the mass media does occur" (Ibid:184).

Furthermore, in the U.S.A., L. Erwin Atwood (1980) analysed press releases, political advertising, political discussion and also what voters said about their likes and dislikes of the candidates in 1974 congressional campaign. The data for this study was collected from five counties in the Illinois 24th congressional district. According to the author of the study, three points "seem important". First, in the short-run the newspaper agenda influence is direct while in the long-run the effect was indirect and it is through the discussion process (though it worked mainly on "negative voting reasons"). Second, interpersonal communication is important, "information moved from newspaper content to political discussions where it was evaluated. Following evaluation, the information became the voting reasons" (Atwood, 1980:479). Third, among the voters negative information handling process is more clearly defined than positive information handling process. In addition, L. Arwin Atwood in this study asserted that the news' direct agenda-setting effect is confined to the discussion content, whilst its combination with the "indirect effects over time" suggest agenda-setting for the candidate.

In the European continent, Kent Asp (1983) studied the agendas of party, media and voter in the 1979 Swedish election campaign. In his study, Kent Asp looked at the party favourite issues (which he calls "party agenda") of the five Swedish political parties at the time of the election. Then he studied the media agenda which comprises issues which had priority during the month before the election. And finally, he recorded the voters agenda based on one open ended question. Having done so, Asp proceeded with his analyses of the three agendas to find out their relationship. Consequently, his

findings showed that "in all cases but one, the media agendas match the voters' agendas better than the parties' agendas do" (Asp,1983:347).

Further, Karen Siune and Ole Borre(1975) tested the agenda-setting influence of the Danish general election campaign of 1971. They conducted their study based on data that came from a panel of 1,302 voters whom they interviewed before and after the election in September 1971. Furthermore, they also content analysed the radio and tv material pertaining to political communication during the election campaign. Having done so, they found out respondents' issue salience to be fairly persistent before and after the election, and also "a positive correlation between those issues prominent in the campaign and those referenced by the respondents after the election" (Siune and Borre,1975:72).

As this hypothesis is widely gaining ground in the communication research field, it appears to have become a sine quo non to researchers engaged in studying the influence of media on voters and/or candidates behaviour in political election campaigns. Its application in other non-election issues is also in the offing. Agenda-setting studies in environmental issues, societal issues like AIDS and on development communication are but some of these non election issues that are cropping up (see for example, Pritchard, 1986; Pratt and Manheim,1988; Rogers, Dearing and Chang,1991; Dearing and Rogers,1992).

In societies where people trace their sources of information to the media and where the media seems to have gained deceptive central role, the existence of agenda-setting function of the media has led many a study to discern this role in the different subject areas. A study conducted in the U.S. by David Pritchard (1986) to observe "the agenda-setting effect of crime news on prosecutors" is one of these studies. David Pritchard, unlike the many agenda-setting studies that are conducted on the general public, performed his study to see if press coverage of court cases may influence the decision making of prosecutors (media setting agenda on public officials not on ordinary citizens). While conducting his study, Pritchard(1986) analysed for about 18 months period police and court records and the newspaper coverage of cases of people arrested for homicide in Milwaukee county, Wisconsin. Having done so, he found out that the importance and emphasis given by newspapers coverage (as indicated by the amount of space given) of a criminal case helps set the agenda of the "...prosecutors who must decide which criminal cases to plea-bargain, and which to take to trial" (Ibid:143).

James W.Dearing and Everett M.Rogers(1992) in their study of AIDS and the media news agenda in San Francisco and the U.S. in general found out that there had not occurred an intermedia agenda setting -which otherwise is oftentimes the case- process in regards to the issue of AIDS. However, they instead found out that non mass media sources such as "interpersonal networks of concerned individuals, governments, community groups, scientific findings, and political leaders stand out in the present case as important determinants of news coverage about AIDS" (Dearing and Rogers, 1992:192).

Since the appearance of the pioneering work on the media agenda-setting hypothesis by McCombs and Shaw(1972), quite a number of studies either critically assessing the original work (see for example Becker,1982) or employing it are conducted. Of these studies written on the subject of agenda-setting role of the media, there are some that suggest differential influence by TV and newspaper owing to the medium character (their technological nature), presentation of news, media use habits and credibility attached to the medium etc. (Eyal,1981; Winter,1981; Weaver,1981). Furthermore, other conditions which some authors tend to call "contingent" conditions (Winter,1981; Becker,1982) are reported to affect or influence the agenda-setting process. Among these contingent conditions are found "obtrusiveness", geographic proximity and "duration of exposure" (Winter,1981; McCombs and Gilbert,1986). Illustrating further the nature of obtrusive issues (issues that have close personal contact) and unobtrusive issues (issues that are peripheral to personal experience), McCombs and Gilbert (1986) mention the issue of unemployment being obtrusive to "Ohio steelworkers" while it is unobtrusive to "wall street brokers in a bull market".

Moreover, among the queries addressed concerning the process of agenda-setting per se is the one that enquires whether it is done directly by the media or if it works through interpersonal communication (Weaver,1981; McQuail and Windahl,1981; Winter,1981). To this query, Weaver (1981) answers both interpersonal communication as well as direct personal experience serve the purpose of agenda-setting. Also Winter (1981:239) referring to Kisum Hong and Sara Shemer's finding says that a direct influence is brought about by the media on "interpersonal discussion" thereby "affecting personal agendas". Winter then continues with his explanation and mentions interpersonal communication to be an "intervening variable" between the two agendas, personal and media. On the other hand, McQuail and Windahl (1981:63) voice their uncertainty on the issue and assert that

“it is not, for example, always clear whether we should look for direct effects from the media on the personal agendas of individual members of the audience or whether we can expect agenda-setting to work through interpersonal influence”.

It is also worthwhile to note some sort of standard or similar form used in the open-ended questions in the agenda-setting research of three different studies in three different times and countries. The Gallup poll in the U.S. in the years 1964-70 used the question “What do you think is *the most important* problem facing America?” (Funkhouser,1973:69). In a Danish election study in 1971, the respondents were asked a question: “Which problem do you think is *the most important* today, which the politicians ought to take care of?” (Siune and Borre,1975:66). And in Sweden too, since 1987, the SOM (Society Opinion Media) surveys used the question, “Which problem/s do you think is *the most important* in Sweden today?” (SOM,1987-1993). At this instance, Funkhouser’s (1973) remark on this type of questioning and the limitations of the coded answers and respondents being expected to take their cue from the media while answering the question is also a point to be taken seriously as it suggests that preparation of questions has to be carefully done while conducting such studies (see also Rogers and Dearing,1988:583, on this point).

Concerning certain limitations found in the hypothesis pertaining to concept, methodology and measurement, there still are quite a number of articles written on the subject proper (i.e.limitations of the hypothesis) or that are included in the different agenda setting studies conducted so far (see McLeod et al, 1974; Eyal, 1981; Lang and Lang, 1981; DeGeorge, 1981; Becker, 1982; Behr and Iyengar, 1985). In regards to the conceptual problem found in the agenda-setting hypothesis, Lang and Lang (1981:449) write of the accepted distinction that exists amidst salience and content and ask if it is that easy to separate what people “think about” from what they think. Conceptualization of personal or public agendas whether as either an “intrapersonal” (“what a person thinks about”) or “interpersonal” (“what a person talks about”) or “perceived community salience” (“what they think other are talking about”) agendas is also one of the problems discussed in relation to agenda-setting (DeGeorge,1981:222; Eyal,1981).

Moreover, it is noteworthy to look at and ponder upon Oscar H.Gandy’s (1982:7) remark relating to the objectives and concerns of agenda-setting studies where he says, “...we have to go beyond agenda-setting to determi-

ne who sets the media agenda, how and for what purpose it is set, and with what impact on the distribution of power and values in society”. As if responding to Gandy’s queries, Stephen D.Reese(1991:312) asserts that “newsproducers...depend on powerful, self-interested external sources...” for their media material. Besides, according to Reese, media agenda setting is “an exercise in power”.

Further elaborating on source media relations vis-à-vis setting the agenda of the media, Reese(1991) discusses a typology of source/media relation and power dimensions (Fig.2.1).

Figure 2.1 Typology of source/Media relations (based on the discussion on typology of source/media relations by Reese, 1991:325-326).

		Source Power	
		High	Low
Media Power	High	1	3
	Low	2	4

According to Reese’s (1991) typology, “when powerful media encounter powerful sources, the result is often a symbiotic relationship...”(P.325). On the other hand, “when a powerful source encounters a less powerful media organizations, the result is often co-optation and manipulation”(P.326). However, when a source with a low power is covered by a media with a high power, “he media may marginalize a weak source,...may choose to provide innocuous life-style reports of average citizens...may intrude into the privacy of (low-power) individuals or damage their reputation...” (P.326). And finally with “...the low-power source/low power media cate-

gory...the best example may be the alternative press relatively low-power media using mostly low-power sources to do relatively inconsequential stories" (P.326).

Finally, after having attempted to glance at the agenda-setting hypothesis in general and media agenda-setting research in particular, one can conclude by saying that since its advent in the mass communication research scene with the Chapel Hill voters' study, this research tradition has proved the fact that the media agenda has an influence over the public or/and policy agenda. Furthermore, despite its limitations, agenda-setting research has remained relevant and alive in the mass communication research tradition.

AIDS issue and the Agenda-Setting Hypothesis

In this particular study, one of the research questions posed, i.e. what does the mass media's picture of AIDS look like in relation to the public's understanding of AIDS? will be tackled by the media agenda-setting hypothesis and practice. This investigation of the media agenda-setting process will be conducted in one of the countries from the northern part of the world, i.e. Sweden, where one of the studied papers comes from. At this juncture, the Swedish public opinion data through the years, the media's reporting pattern of AIDS news over the years and also the 'real world indicators', i.e. the AIDS official statistics, will be examined and then the study shall attempt to give an answer to the query : Has the AIDS issue become part of the media agenda in Sweden? The study will also attempt to discern if the AIDS policy agenda is commensurate with the media and the public agenda by looking at the time period of the government measures on AIDS policy along with the time period when AIDS issue was the media and the public agenda issue.

It was quite difficult to get hold of especially the public opinion data from the two countries (which is highly likely that it does not exist) in the southern part of the world, i.e. Kenya and Uganda, for conducting the agenda-setting study of the type conducted on Sweden. Besides, the author of this study believes that the news-papers in the study (which are in English language) are targeted mostly to the urban elite and policy makers. Therefore, an agenda-setting study of the media in these two African countries might concentrate mostly on the interaction of the media and policy agendas attempting to influence each other. In these two African countries where

the illitracy rate is quite high and also where people mostly speak and understand their own ethnic languages despite English being the official language, the print media's role in directly setting the public agenda is quite mini-mal if not absent (as interpersonal communication could probably play some role).

Furthermore, the Kenyan government's restraint on reporting domestic AIDS news and its denial is also believed to show the direct influence the policy agenda will have on the media agenda. This phenomenon is then quite the opposite when compared to the countries in the northern part of the world where the studied media relatively enjoy the freedom of expression, thereby giving no room for interference by the policy makers.

In general, this study used the agenda-setting hypothesis to investigate if the AIDS issue has become part of the media agenda, and if it has let the audience learn about AIDS as an important issue. Furthermore, by referring to government and other official documents as well as news items the study attempted to find out and infer if the media as well as the public agenda has set the policy agenda.

NOTES

1. In a study done on news sources in the New York Times and Washington Post, "numerically, the most important sources of information are officials of the U.S. government. They account for *nearly one-half* of all stories cited in the sample of Times and Post *page-one* stories..." (Sigal, 1973 : 123-124, emphasis added). Besides, according to Gans (1979 : 130-31), "all other things being equal, journalists prefer to resort to sources in official positions of authority and responsibility. They are assumed to be more trustworthy if only because they cannot afford to lie openly; they are also more persuasive because their facts and opinions are official".
2. For example, among the very earliest AIDS news stories in the Swedish prestige daily, *Dagens Nyheter* of December 15, 1982, P.7, col.5-6, AIDS is covered as a "*new mystical*" and deadly disease that is spreading in the U.S.A. (a copy of the story is found in the end note of the previous chapter).

3

AIDS REPORTING IN THE MEDIA: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Advent Of AIDS

The Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) which is a result of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) infection followed by what is called opportunistic infections - termed so because it attacks a person at an opportune moment, i.e. when the body immune system is suppressed - has been an issue of great controversy and importance since its advent. AIDS has carried hereto unseen characteristic features that makes it mysterious even to the present day relatively developed medical and biological sciences. This mysterious nature of the disease then has contributed to the proliferation of different theories/hypotheses as to its origin, transmission, cure etc.

The origin of AIDS has brought about several theories that suggest AIDS as coming out of CIA laboratories, African jungles, God's punishment of uncommon sexual acts, etc. Furthermore, AIDS according to Gregory M. Herek and Eric K. Glunt (1988:887) has resulted " ...in dual stigma: first, from identification of AIDS as a serious illness; second, from the identification of AIDS with persons and groups already stigmatized prior to the epidemic".

It is worth noting that the reactions brought about by spread of venereal diseases - especially syphilis - in the U.S.A. since the 1930 have some familiarity to the ones that surfaced with the onset of AIDS. Venereal diseases or sexually transmitted diseases (STD) - as they are commonly known today - were historically understood to be the disease of the "other" - be it social group, race, ethnic group etc. (Brandt,1985:23). However, it is interesting to note that the statistics in the early 1930s showed that "...approximately one out of every ten Americans suffered from syphilis" (Ibid:129), though it was considered to be the disease of the "others". By the same token, the present day mysterious disease AIDS is also understood to belong to the category of diseases classified for the "others" (Brandt, 1985:183; Watney, 1987:98; Hopper, 1990:42 & 302). Furthermore, the laws enacted to curb the spread of venereal diseases (STD) and

also the interpretation of existing laws in immigration like the Immigration Act of 1891 which excludes individuals with contagious disease from immigrating reminds one of the more or less exact similarity of the actions taken on AIDS sufferers or/and HIV infected individuals who were/are prohibited from entering the U.S (for more on the 1987 senate bill that bars people with HIV/AIDS from entering U.S.A. and related matters see Murphy, 1994:129-143).

On the other hand, the latent racism of Euroamericans came to surface when they suggested that Africanamericans are a "syphilis-soaked" race and the syphilis infection rate is increased by the promiscuous nature of the black race (Brandt, 1985:157). This incident then brings to attention why the Euroamericans and in general the West is looking for the origins of AIDS outside its race and region, and had Africa and its original citizens as a scapegoat. Talking about racist based concepts of understanding disease and racist based medical trials, it is worth noting the 1932 started Tuskegee study where 400 Africanamerican sharecroppers in Alabama were purposely left untreated for their infections of syphilis - though they were told that they are getting treatment - for 40 years of whom probably more than 100 died (Brandt,1985:157). It should also be noted that this secret experiment came to be known to the public when journalists reported it in 1972. As if confirming the saying that mentions history repeating itself, the present day Western scientists who are out to fight the disease AIDS, do also unashamedly want to do their experiments on Africans (see for example, Tassew, 1988:64).

The origin of AIDS is also pointed to be Africa giving evidence of blood samples stored in Kinshasa to which Cindy Patton (1990:80) questioningly points out that these samples "...have no patient history attached to them -this might as easily be the blood of Europeans, or of their sexual or injecting drug partners." Quinn et al (1986:956) also talk of the validity of these data being questionable as "ELISA (Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay) and Western Blot tests of banked specimens from malaria endemic areas" have problems of interpretation as inconsistencies have been observed in studies.

Furthermore, Christian Andersson (1988:49) cites Dr Gallo where he is mentioned to have said that studies have shown that HIV is about 100 years old and has been present in isolated African villages all the time. Having said that Mr Andersson notes that it is a mystery that the Portugese

(the former colonialists) who returned back to Europe did not show any sign of HIV while these former colonies have a fastly growing AIDS problem.

On the other hand, another theory suggests that the HIV virus has a European origin as the *visna-maedi* virus which is found in northern European sheep has similarity to HIV virus. This theory then implies that the virus transferred to "...humans by sexual contact between human males and sheep" (Shannon,1991:9). Nonetheless, there are some who assert that it seems unlikely to establish the precise origins of HIV, and even if the origin is at all established in North America, Africa, Europe or Asia one shouldn't blame the people of the area (Watney, 1989:97;Feldman, 1990b: 1-2; Sabatier,1988:33; Shannon,1991: 28; Kraft, 1991:7; and for more of the origin controversy, see also Pela and Platt, 1989:1-2 & 5).

The AIDS disease was first reported in the U.S. in 1981 and the HIV virus has been identified in the U.S. in blood samples dating back to 1969 (Rocheron and Linné, 1989:409; Morin, 1988:838; Kinsella,1989:159; Pela and Platt,1989:2). AIDS was/is believed to be concentrated in mainly three groups - homosexuals, intravenous drug users and black people of Africa or African origin. This manner of picking out certain groups of people as being exclusively affected ones, according to Laurence J.Ray (1989:256) has probably deceived the heterosexual group by "creating a false sense of security". Besides, it is a bitter truth that the media coverage about the disease and its marginalised victims like the homosexuals was alarmingly minimal. Randy Shilts (1987:xxiii) mentions that even discussion about this plague that increasingly attacked homosexuals was avoided by tv and newspapers "...until the death toll was too high to ignore and the casualties were no longer just the outcasts". To this fact, James Kinsella (1989:4) adds that the coverage was also kindled by the personal connection -by blood or otherwise - the AIDS victims have to a media personnel.

This chapter shall then concentrate on the review of the literature that dealt with the media's (tv, radio and newspapers) handling of AIDS news. In so doing it shall look at the media coverage regarding the aetiology, transmission, preventive measures, social and psychological questions that arose and other related items.

AIDS And Its Treatment By The Media

Heralding The Pandemic

The onset of a mysterious and very fatal disease like AIDS gets communicated to the public at large mainly with the use of the mass media; though interpersonal communication before or/and after the media treatment has also some role to play. AIDS has even been called a "media epidemic" confirming its rarity as a disease and the public's awareness of its existence mainly through the media (Rocheron and Linné, 1989:409-410; Rogers et al, 1991:21-22; Freimuth et al,1990:789; Berridge,1991:179).

Herzlich and Pierret (1989:1236) based on their study of the French press go further and assert that "without the press, AIDS would have, for a rather long time, concerned at most but a few thousand persons worldwide". Moreover, according to Anderson (1988:58) a study from Kigali, Rwanda confirms that radio is an effective weapon to diffuse knowledge on AIDS - as the six months' radio campaign has shown that people have learned a lot about the way the disease is transmitted (see also Feldman et al (1987:98) on radio's effectiveness based on their study in Rwanda, and Wilson et al's (1989:960) suggestion that radio be used much for AIDS campaign as it has considerable rural penetration).

In a study conducted by Singer et al. (1987:582) the authors have found out that a very significant percentage of the studied public in the U.S.A. gives a lot of credit to the media for providing information on AIDS (see also Rogers et al, 1991:24 & 42; Singer et al, 1991:177 and Freimuth,1992:9). In Australia too, in a national study conducted to assess the knowledge and attitudes towards AIDS, the mass media (TV, newspapers, magazines and radio) were found out to be the most important source of knowledge (Ross, 1988:1293). In another study conducted by Horst Stipp and Dennis Kerr (1989:99) on the public opinion determinants of the issue of AIDS, they mention of the media agenda setting the public agenda and vice versa. For example, it was the gay community of San Francisco who set the agenda for the media, whilst in the other parts of the U.S. it was the media that set the public agenda.

Though AIDS was first diagnosed in Sweden by late 1982, it took some time before it caught public attention, and it is due to the mass media that

the AIDS issue appeared to attract big attention first in 1985 (Nowak and Holmberg,1991:1; Herlitz,1992:10). According to Claes Herlitz (1992:10) the AIDS news transmitted by TT (the Swedish news agency) also showed a sign of increase - in fact trebled from 335 to 944 - between 1986 and 1987 (more about this trend, see also Jarlbro et al,1992:18-19). Besides, Claes Herlitz also credits the mass media for helping the Swedish people know that sexual intercourse and blood contact are the transmission routes of HIV.

A British polling data also confirms the media's information parting role by suggesting that the British public became aware of AIDS through the media (Rocheron and Linné, 1989:429). Dr Virginia Berridge (1991) nothing on the media's impact on the British health policy, i.e. in relation to AIDS, talks of the media agenda influencing the public and the policy agendas. She gives credit to the media for alerting the gay community who comparatively had a large number of AIDS and HIV positive cases. The media's concentrated reporting is then said to "...have helped to structure the response of central government" (Ibid:183). Furthermore, Jenny Kitzinger(1993) while studying "audience perceptions of AIDS" have come to understand that the mass media are the core "signifying agents" in the process of understanding AIDS, and also do possess "...the power to set the agenda and, in some cases, to structure people's thinking in spite of their own 'better judgement'" (P.299).

Nevertheless, according to Watney (1987:139) the AIDS information that was imparted by the British press is laden with these "misleading notions":

First, the idea of an "*AIDS-virus*", which condenses the distinct and crucial distinction between HIV infection and AIDS. Second, the notion of an "*AIDS-carrier*", which follows on from the idea of an "*AIDS-virus*", whilst making it impossible to distinguish between people with HIV infection, and people with AIDS....Third, the press talks of the "*AIDS test*", whilst never for one moment stopping to establish either the nature, or purposes, of the HIV antibody test." (emphasis added)

He, then continues and writes that the mainstream British press has not given due coverage to the problem which the nation's two million homosexuals consider an issue of utmost importance for their continued survival. It is also so that the issue of AIDS is not given due coverage and when covered (especially by the popular press) it was presented as "...a problem for a small minority of the population who in any case were responsible for their downfall through their turpitude..." (Murray,1992:29).

Furthermore, Kitzinger and Miller (1992:31) in their study of audiences, the media and African AIDS have found out that the media stands out to be the 'primary source of information' for the belief about the African origin of HIV. Nonetheless, Peter Beharrell(1993) in his study of "AIDS and the British press" says that, "the press reporting of AIDS shows both similarity and diversity. The coverage has not all been negative or simply sensational...The range of approaches to AIDS goes beyond a simple division between 'tabloids' and 'broad-sheets'. The differences within newspapers indicate the various demands and opportunities of format and journalistic specialism" (P.241).

On the other hand, according to Virginia Berridge (1991:180-81), the AIDS issue treatment by the mass media has passed different stages since the early 1980s. The earliest of these stages, according to Berridge was manifested by the press' presentation of AIDS as a gay plague. Whilst the period from mid-1983 brought into the picture a possible heterosexual spread as the issue of blood supply contamination and the supposedly African origin of AIDS surfaced. The media's talk of heterosexual AIDS had also begun pointing a finger at women as a risk group and "the new concern is the 'threat to the race' via reproduction, and the focus is on women in their child-bearing role..." (Ibid:181). Besides, according to Berridge, the media further can also be credited for helping define and establish AIDS as a "scientific issue" and thereby having an impact on the British AIDS policy - in other words, the media agenda is seen setting the policy agenda.

Concerning the African continent, the English journalist Ed Hopper (1990) in a very personal account of AIDS in Uganda (and his African promiscuous love affairs too) points out that "much of the foreign coverage of the African epidemic has been hysterical and ill-informed; much of Africa's domestic coverage has been chauvinistic and absurdly defensive" (P.206-207). Moreover, a Ugandan senior consultant dealing with AIDS quoted in the book also affirms that the press people 'have overdone it' and they are also quick to quote high seropositivity figures that are not based on proper studies but "based on biased series".

Talking about bias, it is worth noting Mr Hopper's observation in relation to an article and a photograph that came out in the Guardian by a certain Peter Murtagh about AIDS in Africa (see Chirimuuta and Chirimuuta, 1987:94-96, more on the article). In this said photograph, a picture of two

African girls from a bar appeared, though the picture was taken without telling the girls that it is for publication in the newspaper. This then resulted in ruining the reputations of these girls where they ended up being called "The AIDS Girls". But, in contrast, according to Hopper (1990:161), "other Western papers and magazines, incidentally, proved to have greater understanding of the potential implications of such photographs, at least for their own kind". For example, The Sunday Telegraph and Stern had photographs where they obscured or blanked out the faces of the white men and women, while leaving the faces of black men and women untouched. Richard C. Chirimuuta and Rosalind J. Chirimuuta (1987) having discussed the different AIDS and Africa news reports by people like the Guardian's Peter Murtagh assert that the possible or logical consequences of such racist reporting were highlighted "...when British fascists distributed a leaflet titled 'conspiracy to destroy our nation through AIDS' (P.100), and when some proposals to screen students from certain African countries surfaced.

Furthermore, in a research funded by the British Economic and Social Council, Jenny Kitzinger and Miller David (1992) conducted a study on the "production, content and audience understandings of HIV/AIDS media messages" on the main news-bulletins of October 1, 1986 and April 30, 1990 along with in-depth group discussions with fifty-two different audience groups' and concluded:

Our research shows both the power of the media and the pervasiveness of stock white cultural images of black Africa; it is easy to believe that Africa is a reservoir of HIV infection because 'it fits'. Journalists draw on these cultural assumptions when they reproduce and legitimize them. (P.49)

Having said that, we nonetheless hold to the fact that despite its often criticised handling of the news of Africa in general and now AIDS and Africa reporting, the media, however, is believed to have helped inform and highlight the existence of AIDS in this part of the world too.

On the other side of the Atlantic, it is suggested that AIDS news didn't get wide coverage as the media thought it doesn't affect its audience and that it is the problem of the minorities or the outcasts of society (Brown et al, 1989:99; Kinsella, 1989:2; Check, 1987:989; Altman, 1986:16; Shilts, 1987 :xxiii). Kinsella (1989:252) even goes further and says that when the U.S. media learned "...the fact that AIDS is not a threat to the average

white, heterosexual, middleclass person" its coverage of the disease dropped (see also Rogers et al,1991:13, and Watney,1987 about media's portrayal of its public). On the other hand, Dearing (1989:311) compares the AIDS issue with other news items like "unemployment", "inflation" and "defense spending" that are always present, though carrying different weight at different times - i.e. they rise and fall in "issue attention". But, he adds that AIDS differs from these because it is relatively new and is possible to trace its beginning as a disease and a public issue. On the other hand, according to Kramer (1988:10) the big amount of the coverage by the media is "...more reactive than reflective, not unlike coverage of major breaking stories like the Iran-Contra scandal or the Challenger disaster".

AIDS News Reporting and Public Reactions

Selection and coverage of any news (medical news like AIDS or others) passes the oft repeated journalistic professional practice of valuing news based on certain criterion like "frequency, threshold (size of an event), unambiguity, meaning-fulness, consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, reference to elite nations, reference to elite people, reference to persons and reference to something negative" (Galtung and Ruge, 1981:60). It is also so that news selection does reflect the media organizations' structure of ownership and management, the influence of prevailing cultural values and journalists' selection and handling of the news according to their value systems (Boyd-Barrett, 1980:73; Merrill, 1981:157). Its selection also depends on its sellability and fulfilling informational objective/s. Besides, medical news is selected for the human interest and personal appeal it has (Tassew, 1988:19). This fact of personal appeal or connection is markedly manifested in the AIDS news coverage by the media (see Kinsella, 1980 pp.26,73,87-88,157).

AIDS news did not get selected as important by the U.S. mainstream media for coverage in the very early days of the epidemic (Kinsella,1989:35). For example, the coverage of AIDS news by the foremost U.S. media agenda-setter, the New York Times, has lagged behind in the early years of the epidemic, because of what Rogers et al (1991:11) attribute to organizational and personal variables or what Check (1987:990) calls "homophobia". According to the New York Times, the disease AIDS which the paper's former editor thought was the "gay" disease was not for the paper's audience, and the New York Times has no place for a "gay" news story.

Therefore, because of the above mentioned reason, the first front page story about AIDS came out in May 25, 1983, only after "...108 AIDS cases had been reported to the Centres for Disease Control, about half of them in New York City" (Rogers et al, 1991:11).

Even when it started getting coverage, the mainstream press according to Patton (1990:28) carried reports of a sensational and erroneous nature. Besides, the coverage took a certain pattern suggesting a "...slippage, from "gay" to "AIDS" to "Death"..." (Watney, 1987:86; see also Jagodzinski, 1991:41 and Altman, 1986:108; McAllister, 1992:210-11). In a study of American print and broadcast news media, Dearing and Rogers (1992:184) note that between the years 1981 to 1987 the New York Times carried more AIDS stories when the news was sensational and of the human interest type.

In a two day seminar that discussed about the media and AIDS, the participants' observation was that there is a need for a new or changed approach for the media coverage of AIDS. In the seminar there was a suggestion for having a team or interdisciplinary approach so as to check some of the fragmented and contradictory nature of the reports. Besides, it is said that "AIDS is a business story when it involves the production of new drugs. It is a public story when it involves legislation, a legal story as the area of AIDS litigation grows" (Kramer, 1988:10).

According to Check (1987:987), there had been 'flaws' in the media reporting of AIDS which could be traced to the journalistic conventions. The journalistic conventions assume politics to be the proper study of journalists and teaches them to "appeal to authority". Jarlbro and Annelis (1991:57-58) have also observed this tendency of appealing to authorities by journalists in their study of HIV/AIDS reporting in the Swedish press. According to these two Swedish researchers, the role of the journalists in the AIDS reporting has been to "hold the microphone" for whom they call the recognized authorities on the subject. Appealing to authority, according to Check (1987:989) has led to "...unbalanced reporting on AIDS: single-source reporting; favouring quotable sources; crediting conspiracies; lack of follow-up; focusing on controversy; and emphasizing entertainment value". Therefore, journalists following the traditional style of reporting based on quotes of authorities are liable to stick to a single source and fail to follow other possible alternative sources and bring them to light.

Having said that, Check (1987:998) however, admits that “the profession of journalism has served remarkably well to inform the public about AIDS...”. Jarlbro and Annelis (1991:60) on their part also maintain that the Swedish press performance on the reporting of HIV/AIDS issues “has been quite “reasonable”, though the press “...sometimes opted to serve as faithful tools of the establishment...”.

Moreover, even when covering the AIDS news, words that are essential for the understanding of the phenomenon like “semen”, “penis” and “vagina” were avoided by the mainstream media (Kinsella,1989:3). This then reminds one of the 1930s where the mentioning of words like “syphilis” and “gonorrhoea” were evaded (Brandt,1985:136).

The mass media took maximum interest in AIDS news and made a significant perceptual shift when AIDS had one of its “worthy” offers - the film star Rock Hudson (Patton, 1990:18). According to Kinsella (1989) after Hudson’s death the media’s coverage of AIDS news increased in depth and numbers. “For instance, in 1985 ABC did four AIDS stories before the July 25 Hudson revelation, and twenty-eight after. CBS and NBC had similar leaps in coverage. Nationwide, media coverage tripled ...AIDS reporting in print media increased by 270 percent between Hudson’s diagnosis and the end of 1985” (Kinsella, 1989:144; see also Check, 1987:997). Finally, it also ought to be remembered that the AIDS news coverage by this time (i.e.Hudson’s diagnosis) has reached a new level, where AIDS and things to do with it have become newsworthy and sellable. This same tendency of increase in AIDS news coverage by the media around the same time is also observed by Herzlich and Pierret (1989:1236) in their study of six French dailies.

Rogers et al (1991:11-15) based on their study of six media for 91 months, add the case of the 13 year old boy, Ryan White to Hudson’s as causing maximum media interest. The controversy that ensued as to allowing a 13 year-old boy with AIDS to ‘attend public school’ was another issue that brought the media’s attention to AIDS. “Hudson’s familiarity to the American public, combined with the “boy next door” image of White, were enough to personalize and humanize the issue of AIDS...” which according to Rogers et al (1991:13) was not possible to accomplish with the publication of the statistics of the sufferers and deaths caused by AIDS (see also Herzlich and Pierret, 1989:1241).

This particular incident with Rock Hudson reminds one of the newsvalue litmus test that mentions of reference to elite people or/and nations making news - Check (1987:997) however, interprets this as "entertainment values dominating the reporting of science and medicine, including AIDS", but one queries if the same thing could not have happened if the famous/elite personality who was victimized had been a person not associated with the entertainment field. At this juncture, it is also interesting to make note of a study of five leading magazines by two researchers from Germany where they mention that they came to understand that all of the Galtung and Ruge "news factor" do not "hold true" in the articles that came out on AIDS. Nonetheless, they at the same time assert that their study has indicated that the U.S. dominated all the newsmagazines, which they think is due to the U.S. having most AIDS cases (threshold) and also being an "elite nation" (Grube and Boehme-Duerr, 1988:689). Furthermore, according to them, one of the hypotheses tested and that mentions about elite persons being news factors "could not be rejected" (P.688).

In a study conducted on Swedish press' handling of the reporting of HIV/AIDS news, it has been found out that the AIDS issue has been "largely male dominated" (Jarlbro and Annelis,1991:60). According to the two researchers, the women (prostitutes and IV drug users) that are portrayed in the AIDS issue are "...often depicted as hazards to their clients and threats to their clients families" (Ibid) , which in turn reminds one of the more or less same treatment the so called 4 H's face in the United States of America.

In regards to preventive measures and the search for cures, the media has also treated the issue in no less surprising manner. For instance, the New York Times of 18 March 1986 was carrying an article where it was written: "everyone detected with AIDS should be tattooed in the upper fore-arm, to protect common-needle users, and on the buttocks, to prevent the victimisation of other homosexuals" (quoted in Watney,1987:44 - Watney at this juncture draws a parallel with the Nazi's forcing people to be tattooed for their differing politics, race or sexuality). On the other hand, it is worth noting that in a study that has been conducted by the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation's audience research section (SR/PUB) since 1987, it has been found out that the majority or two out of three Swedes want all HIV-infected persons to be registered (Nowak and Holmberg,1991:3).

Moreover, on the side of the continued search for cure, the trials of differing drugs or/and vaccines was/is also covered as newsworthy item by the

media. None-theless, what is very distressing is the media's reporting of AIDS vaccine being experimented on Africans (Tassew, 1988:64) without even commenting on its being unethical (Kramer, 1988:43; see also Patton,1990:83-97 more on the trials).

It is worth noting that as media helped communicate the existence of AIDS, it at the same time is partly responsible for the way people reacted to it. Edward Albert (1986:135) studied AIDS news stories in a sample of United States circulation magazines between May 1982 and December 1984, where he observed the studied media creating "a new form outcaste" and also "distancing" the audience from "this subgroup in the population". According to Peter M. Nardi (1990) people's reaction to AIDS is a reflection of the way the media presented the issue of AIDS. In his article that deals with "AIDS and Obituaries", he affirms that "...the media reports AIDS using language that perpetuates the stigma attached to it and to the people dying from it" (Ibid:159). Furthermore, citing T.Mathiesen, Pål Kraft (1991:50) accuses the mass media of engaging in "a modern version of witch hunting" by the way it covered AIDS.

The association between homosexuals, Haitians and intravenous drug users has been repeatedly done by the media. AIDS then was suggested to be the disease of the 4-Hs', i.e. Homosexuals, Heroin addicts, Haemophilics, Haitians. The media's harping hard especially on AIDS and homosexuals might reinforce already existing anti-gay sentiments and then confine people from accepting the true facts of AIDS transmission even when relayed via the media. In a study Stipp and Kerr (1989) did on public opinion determinants of AIDS, they attest to this when they mention that "...preexisting attitudes limit the effects of AIDS information and education" (P.104). This in turn will take us back to the classic study of Erie county presidential election where Paul Lazarsfeld et al (1948:XX) mention of stability of attitudes exhibited by voters in exposing themselves to ideas they agree with, whilst shunning off from the ones they disagree.

On the other hand, the media's coverage of AIDS news has at the same time created hysteria and fears. The media's presentation of the spread of AIDS by a kiss, toilet seat, pens, etc. have also taken us back to look at the same practice in the reporting of syphilis and "syphilobia" (Brandt,1985:182; Kinsella,1989:136; Watney,1987:4). According to Pela and Platt(1989:1), the mass media in addition to their biased reporting on Africa and AIDS, have also exposed Africans to Western social values and

culture that brought about a change in sexual behaviour that in turn "...may have had an impact on the spread of AIDS in Africa".

There has also been a thinking that considers AIDS to be a disease that resulted because of violation of the sex mores, thereby getting punished for it. Therefore, the media, politicians, religious leaders, medical professionals and other interested parties went around talking about "safer sex". At this instance, it is worth noting Laurence J. Ray's (1989:250) observation that other than the above mentioned groups "...there are also powerful commercial interests involved in the promotion of 'safer sex'...". He further notes that due to this "safer sex" campaign the sale of condoms rose by thirty-eight percent in France alone as laws that prevent condom advertising were repealed. This practice of putting the blame on violation of the sex mores and sexual permissiveness is not new as the increase of syphilitic cases in the early seventies in the U.S. was then attributed to the "sexual revolution" of the 60s (Brandt, 1985: 175) - in this connection it is interesting to note that "the methodist preachers of England" had connected the 1832 cholera epidemic with drunkness, as the "nineteenth-century reformers" had also linked tuberculosis to alcoholism (Sontag, 1989:54).

Finally, it could be said that the media generally treated the AIDS news coverage with some sort of reservation (especially at the outset of the disease), prejudice, racism and sensationalism (many a time). The media's selection of AIDS news and its professional treatment does also reflect and brings home to attention what Allan M.Brandt (1985) had to say while writing about the social history of venereal disease in the U.S:

Fundamental to the notion that disease is socially constructed is the premise that it is profoundly shaped by both biological and cultural variables. Attitudes and values concerning disease affect the perception of its pattern of transmission, its epidemiological nature. Only if we understand the way disease is influenced by social and cultural forces - issues of class, race, ethnicity, and gender - can we effectively address its biological dimension. (P.5)

But, despite all the forces that had their influence on the media's handling of AIDS news, it remains true that the public at large came to be aware of the existence of AIDS and got more information about it through the media as studies suggest.

Summary

In the beginning, i.e. in the very earliest months and/or years of its advent, AIDS had minimal coverage concerning the disease and its victims; and even the coverage showed differing views as to its origin (Shilts,1987; Quinn et al,1986; Andersson,1988; Sabatier, 1988; Pela and Platt,1989; Patton,1990; Shannon, 1991). However, when AIDS passed the generally understood news value test, and the news media started covering it, then the media stood to be given a lot of credit for providing AIDS information, and also for setting the public as well as policy agendas in different parts of the world (Singer et al, 1987; Ross,1988; Stipp and Kerr,1989; Rocheron and Linné, 1989; Herzlich and Pierret, 1989; Freimuth et al,1990; Rogers et al,1991; Berridge,1991; Singer et al,1991; Nowak and Holmberg,1991; Freimuth,1992; Herlitz,1992; Kitzinger and Miller,1992; Kitzinger,1993).

A review of the literature on AIDS and the media also throws light on different issues that are associated with AIDS news selection, reporting pattern, and presumed effect on the public. Concerning the selection of AIDS news and its lagging behind in the early years of the epidemic, Check(1987) cites of "homophobia", whilst Rogers et al (1991) mention of "organizational and personal variables" being partially responsible for the lag in reporting by the foremost agenda setter of U.S newspapers, *The New York Times*.

As to the the reporting pattern, the reviewed literature mentions of AIDS news being sensational, hysterical, of erroneous nature, ill informed, biased, chauvinistic, and defensive among others (Patton,1990; Watney,1987; Dearing and Rogers,1992; Jagodzinski,1991; Altman,1986; McAllister, 1992; Chirimuuta and Chirimuuta,1987; Kitzinger and Miller,1992; Hopper,1990).

The reviewed literature also note that journalists' reporting of AIDS news has shown that they appeal to "authority" which in turn has lead to unbalanced reporting as they tend to serve the establishment, and end up neglecting other alternative sources (Check,1987; Jarlbro and Annelis,1991). Furthermore, some studies have found out that AIDS reporting has been "largely male dominated", and it has also portrayed women as risk groups that bring about a "threat to the race via reproduction" (Jarlbro and Annelis, 1991; Berridge, 1991).

As to the reactions the AIDS news have had on the public, the literature mentions of the AIDS news creating "a new form of outcaste" from whom the public has to distance itself (Albert,1989; Nardi,1990; Kraft,1991). Besides, the media's concentrated reporting on "safer sex" has helped some groups to put the blame on violation of the sex mores and too much sexual permissiveness, in addition to the commercial effect it has on condom sales (Brandt, 1985; Ray, 1989).

NOTE

1. On the other hand, according to the WHO's Weekly Epidemiological Record, no 14, 8th April 1983, "between 1 June 1981 and 15 September 1982, 592 cases of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), including 243 deaths, were reported" (P.101), in the United States of America.

PART TWO

EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATIONS

MEDIA ATTENTION IN AIDS NEWS COVERAGE

What does the media picture and the attention given to AIDS look like in different countries of the North and South parts of the world? This chapter and the next will attempt to deal with the above mentioned research question based on the empirical findings of the study. In order to find out the media attention and the image/picture given to the issue of AIDS, this chapter of the empirical section attempts to look at and analyse the number of articles covered, the news space given for the total coverage and the front page news, the news angle of each AIDS story, the arena or place of the AIDS story, the AIDS story actors as objects and the images they have in the news articles.

The number of articles and the amount of space used for coverage of AIDS news items point to the attention and importance the issue of AIDS has commanded. The issue of AIDS ought to pass the journalistic news value criteria and stand out as important to be carried as news. Once it fulfills the criteria and gets covered as news, then its frequent appearance as news item and the amount of coverage it gets (in the case of print media - news space) mark the attention it has received. Its getting covered as a news item in the first place, and also its continual coverage and amount of space allotted to its coverage is then understood and analysed from the journalistic profession and organizations' commonly understood and shared news value concept and other commercial and political influences as well.

The place of coverage allotted to AIDS news items does also point to the importance they are given. To be covered in the front page of a newspaper signifies the attention given to a story, as front page coverage has a comparatively high readership (Nafziger, 1948:113; Cohen, 1963:119). The arena or place of the story does also play a part in the decision the media has to make in order to carry a news item; as the frequently mentioned news value criteria notes, geographic or cultural proximity as being a big factor that is taken into account in the process of news selection. Therefore, the arena or place of AIDS news story also has an influence in the selection and presentation of AIDS news items in the studied media. In trying to find out if geographic or/and cultural proximity had influenced the selection of an AIDS news item, we enquire if the selection could possibly have been

carried out because of proximity among other factors. If the selection did not take place despite the fulfillment of geographic or/and cultural proximity, we then query why it did not take place, and look for other explanations like a country's politics and/or commercial influence, among others. Having done that, an attempt will be made to give answer to the questions; what were the arenas of the AIDS stories? Did the coverage of AIDS news items in each paper correspond to the oft understood news value criteria of geographic or cultural proximity or otherwise?

Finally, this chapter shall look at and analyse the empirical findings about the actors as objects, i.e. the news objects, and the images they were provided by the news. By doing so, it shall attempt to find out the actors as objects or objects of news that are discussed by the news media. It will also at the same time try to find out if they have been discussed positively, negatively or had a neutral image in the news reports. The actors as objects that are discussed in the news stories are examined in each paper as well as through the studied years. Besides, the image or the way these actors as objects are treated by the studied papers through the years is also looked at. The actors as objects category is about the actor/s that is/are discussed in the AIDS news story by the actor as subject (the main actor in the study) or by the news story itself (for more illustration, look at the categories discussed and the news paper article used as an example in the next paragraph).

In order to have a clear and better grasp of the categories used in this part of the empirical search, the following brief article from the Ugandan prestige daily, *The New Vision*, September 26, 1989, Page 2, column 1, will illustrate it best:

SEOUL ISOLATES AIDS PATIENTS

Pyongyang

South Korea has recently found four more AIDS cases, bringing the total to 60, according to Radio Seoul broadcast monitored here Saturday. South Korea reported the first AIDS case in 1985. Among the patients, eight have died one has gone overseas and the remaining 41 male and 10 female patients put in isolation.

[In this article, the page where the story is covered is not either the front page or a special page, therefore, it is coded other; the arena is Asia; the main angle of the story is protection; and the actor as object is HIV positive/AIDS victims and the actors as objects have not been provided neither positive nor negative image by the story, therefore they are understood to have a neutral image in the news story.]

In this empirical section of the study the AIDS news stories' focus or newsworthy aspect of the issue of AIDS is also studied, as it is indicated by the news angle and the arena or place of the AIDS story. Therefore, the study then shall examine the news angle and the arena of the AIDS story in each paper in the studied years, 1983-1990.

News media attention to AIDS issue

The amount of attention given by the media to the coverage of AIDS between the studied years of 1983-90 is discerned by the number of articles printed, the amount of space given to each article, and its place of coverage, i.e. front page or otherwise. Many studies have used the measure of count of articles, front page coverage of items and the space used for coverage as indicating the significance a newspaper gives to an issue. McAllister (1990) for example, looked at the total number of AIDS articles and the once at the front page in his study of medicalization of news as expressed by AIDS news coverage. In a study of press coverage of AIDS in Zimbabwe, M.Pitts and H.Jackson (1993) have also found out that the press coverage of AIDS had displayed an increase over the studied five years and the amount of space used for coverage has also showed a gradual increase. Kent Asp (1986) in his study of public opinion building and the powerful role of the mass media in the Swedish referendum on nuclear power in 1980, did also look at the number of news articles on issues such as nuclear power accident, oil price hike, and the negative picture of the economy that appeared before the referendum as indicating the mass media's reflection of the objective reality.

The attention given to a news is measured by the amount of space given to its coverage, by the frequency of its appearance as a news item and the place of its coverage, i.e. front page or otherwise. The amount of news space given to a news story in a newspaper usually varies depending on the weight of the news story. Items with a lot of news space point to the attention they got from a newspaper which otherwise is very conscious of space and word economy. Issues that get persistent coverage and get frequented do also point to the attention and weight they carry as news items. News stories that are covered in the front page do also denote that they have received attention, as they are found in a page with a high readership. For the purpose of the empirical investigation, the study

searched a random sample of two broad sheet British and Swedish prestige papers and also two other Kenyan and Ugandan prestige daily newspapers in a tabloid format, for an AIDS news article from 1983 to 1990 (in the case of the Ugandan paper all the 1985 copies were not available). Then it was possible to get 557 AIDS news items.

The frequency of coverage and the amount of space taken for the coverage of each AIDS news item was then investigated. Having done that, it was found out that the highest coverage in terms of numbers is exhibited by *The Times* of London, whilst the average column centimetres of space taken by each article is the highest in the case of *Dagens Nyheter* (Table 4.1). Many of the AIDS stories in *The Times* newspaper were only short briefs (especially if they are foreign ones). But, on the other hand, *Dagens Nyheter* which had more domestic AIDS news reported had the stories written in quite a detailed fashion. The difference in allotment of space for the stories in the two papers may also be due to the differing editorial practices of the papers. For example, in the case of *Dagens Nyheter*, it briefly introduces a story in the front page to then continue in the inside pages and discuss it in detail starting it anew. But, in *The Times*, a story which is continued from the front page to the inside pages will continue from where it stopped, unlike *Dagens Nyheter* which starts the story afresh.

Table 4.1 Number of articles and space used in each paper between 1983-1990*

Newspaper	Number of Articles	Estimated stories per publication	Space (col.cms.)	X Article
Dagens Nyheter	1029	0.36/day	53550	19 col.cms/article
The Times	1386	0.56/day	29910	12 col.cms/article
Daily Nation	666	0.27/day	17220	7 col.cms/article
The New Vision	272	0.15/day	9140	5 col.cms/article

*All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.

The present study shows that among the European papers, *The Times* of London had an AIDS news story every other day, whilst the Swedish prestige daily, *Dagens Nyheter* had an AIDS news story every third day. Nonetheless, despite the comparatively lesser number of stories it carried, the Swedish daily did allot quite a considerable amount of space to each article when compared to *The Times* (Table 4.1). Among the two African papers, the *Daily Nation* of Kenya had covered AIDS news every fourth

day (the *Daily Nation* came out six days a week), as compared to the Ugandan *New Vision*, which had AIDS news once every eight days. In the case of *The New Vision*, it was only possible to code from March 1986 to December 1990, as the paper in its new name started coming out in March 1986, first as a weekly (March - June, 1986), then a bi-weekly (June, 1986 - October, 1987), a tri-weekly (November, 1987 - March 18, 1988), five times a week (March 21, 1988 - April 15, 1989), and finally six times a week from April 15, 1989 onwards. Nevertheless, "Uganda Times", which was the precursor of *The New Vision* newspaper was searched for AIDS news stories; although, it was not possible to get hold of the paper's some issues of 1984, and none from 1985.

The study shows that there were more number of AIDS news covered, and also more news space was allotted for coverage in the two prestige dailies from the North as compared to the ones from the South part of the world. This being the empirical finding, on the other hand, the actual prevalence of AIDS as expressed by the official AIDS figures in the European and African continents is otherwise (for more on this see chapter 6).

The Swedish daily, *Dagens Nyheter*, had given 53550 col. cms. or 48% of the total space; which comparatively is the highest percentage of the total space used for coverage of AIDS news (Table 4.1). At this instance, it is worth noting that among the two European papers, *The Times* of London had carried the highest number of stories, but the space allotted for coverage, however, was 29910 col. cms. or 27%; which is rather small compared to *Dagens Nyheter* (in the case of *The Times* newspaper, there was no Sunday edition, whilst *Dagens Nyheter* came out seven days of the week, i.e. including Sunday).

The AIDS stories in *The Times* of London were comparatively brief and photographs or other illustrations were rather limited. Whilst, *Dagens Nyheter* dealt with many of the AIDS stories in rather detail and photographs and other illustrations appeared comparatively with more AIDS articles. To take an example, in *The Times* of March 4, 1987, there was a picture story only with a caption and a headline; when this captioned picture story is measured it was 60 col. cms. (the picture only was 54 col. cms.). In *Dagens Nyheter* of March 19, 1988, on the other hand, there was an AIDS article which had a rather quite big photograph in it; when the story along with the picture was measured, it was 140 col. cms. (the picture only was 61 col. cms.). Photographs and other illustrations were included in the measurement of the AIDS news stories in the studied papers.

On the other hand, the coverage of AIDS stories in the two African papers did not start as early as the European ones in the study. While coding the random sample of the newspapers in the study, in the case of the *Daily Nation*, it was only possible to start coding an AIDS news article in 1985; whilst it was in 1986 *The New Vision* newspaper was coded with AIDS news, as its precursor, i.e. "Uganda Times", had none in its 1983 and 1984 issues. Therefore, this will partly explain the big differences in the amount of coverage in numbers and the news space allotted for AIDS news in the European and African papers.

A news story that is given high priority and which is found out to be very "newsy" is displayed in the front page of newspapers. Therefore, in the studied papers, front page stories of AIDS news used 12% of all the space used by AIDS coverage (Table 4.2). Of the four papers, the Ugandan *New Vision* allotted 40% of its AIDS news space for coverage in the front page (Table 4.2). Incidentally, one can observe the Ugandan paper - which is owned by the government - allotting more space in its front page, thereby giving prominence to AIDS stories in accordance with the open policy of the government to AIDS issues. At this juncture, it is interesting to note that the Ugandan paper, *The New Vision* had the highest percentage of space allotted for the AIDS news articles covered in the front page giving the issue of AIDS more attention and importance, even when compared to the Swedish paper which has allotted more space for AIDS news coverage in general (in *Dagens Nyheter* 85% of the news is covered in other pages that are not either front or specialized). At this instance, it is worth mentioning that the Swedish paper's most front page stories were only briefs to be followed by a rather extended coverage in the inside pages. It is more of *Dagens Nyheter's* editorial policy to display the stories' brief in the front page and write a lengthy story in the inside pages.

Table 4.2 Space covered by each page in the newspapers between 1983-90* (percent)

Pages	Dagens Nyheter	The Times	Daily Nation	The New Vision	% Total Space
Front	6	11	10	40	12
Special	9	14	1	16	10
Other	85	75	89	44	78
Total	100	100	100	100	100
N=	7650	4985	2870	2285	17795

*All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.

The Kenyan as well as the other two European papers covered more than 75% of the AIDS stories in other pages, unlike the Ugandan prestige paper which displayed a little less than half of its AIDS news stories in the front page (Table 4.2). Uganda having an open policy concerning AIDS and being a country which is badly affected by HIV virus and AIDS, its news media's attention in regards to the issue of AIDS is then well displayed in the front page of the news media according to the findings of this study.

AIDS stories that came out in the newspapers and which were coded in specialized pages, did appear in the newspapers' medicine, science, research, politics (e.g. *Dagens Nyheter*), business and finance (e.g. *The Times*), sport (e.g. *The New Vision*) pages. All articles coded in the specialized pages were only the ones that came out in special pages that are classified strictly on subject basis, as for example, pages like "Stor Stockholm", "Home/overseas news" etc. are not included, and they are coded in other pages. The AIDS news in the studied newspapers and years were least covered in the specialized sections/pages as the empirical results show that they took only 10% of the total AIDS news space (Table 4.2). The *Daily Nation* newspaper had given the smallest percentage, i.e. 1%, of its total AIDS news space for the specialized pages. On the other hand, AIDS news items in the other pages of all the newspapers had the highest percentage of all the AIDS news space, i.e. 78% (Table 4.2).

AIDS news through the years

One of the aims of this study is to discern the trend of the AIDS news coverage through the years and then do comparisons between the studied years. By so doing, the attention the AIDS news has received through the years by the different prestige papers will come to be known. When was the AIDS issue high on the news media agenda? When was it at its lowest ebb? What was the trend in reporting of AIDS news through the studied years? These, then, are the questions this section of the chapter will attempt to answer based on the empirical findings.

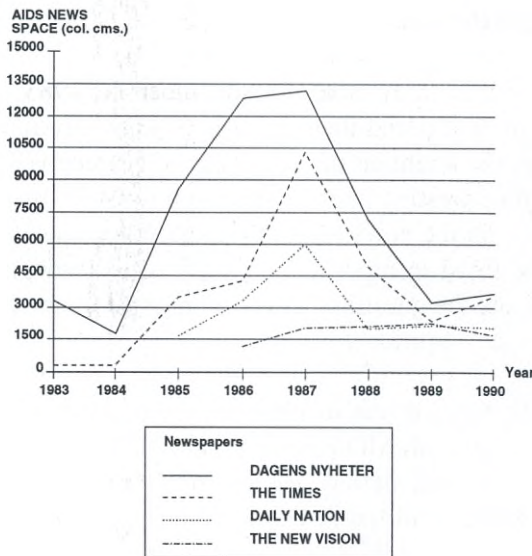
Of the studied eight years, it was in 1987 that the highest amount of space was allotted for coverage of AIDS news by all the prestige papers in the study (Figure 4.1). At this period, for example, *Dagens Nyheter* alone covered a high amount of all the AIDS news space (Figure 4.1). There is

also a correlation between number of stories and space allotted during this period as the total number of stories covered by the papers in this year was also the highest. The least column centimetres of space used for AIDS coverage was in 1984 (Figure 4.1), as also the least number of stories were observed then.

The Ugandan paper, *The New Vision*, exhibits two periods, i.e. 1987 and 1989, where the AIDS news coverage was at its highest (Figure 4.1). Whilst, the two European papers, i.e. *The Times* and *Dagens Nyheter*, and also the Kenyan *Daily Nation* show only one period, i.e. 1987, where the AIDS news coverage was at its peak.

A trend of using more space for AIDS news coverage was also observed between the years of 1984 and 1987 (Figure 4.1). This trend, though, did not keep pace as a sharp drop in the amount of space used was observed after 1987. At this juncture, it is interesting to note that the AIDS prevalence rate in the studied countries had steadily continued to increase during this time (i.e. after 1987). That being the case, one wonders why the AIDS news reporting did not continue to be high in relation to the prevalence; is it because the news value of AIDS is not as it used to be (i.e. its unusualness, importance, negativity, etc.) or could it be because AIDS news is no more sellable.

Figure 4.1 Amount of space used by AIDS news items in each paper between 1983-1990



News Angle

After having selected a certain issue to be covered, a newspaper organization then gathers it to be presented in a news medium. While presenting it, a story is written in such a way that first comes the introduction (commonly referred - "intro"), then the body of the story follows, to finally end up by the conclusion part. When a story is covered in the news medium, a "headline" is written by the sub-editor and then printed in a newspaper. The "headline" and the "intro" part of the news is arranged in such a way that they express the story's angle. The angle of a story indicates the focus and coverage attention put on the way the news story is viewed. This in turn reflects the image or the picture the news item carries about the news story.

In this study, the angle of the AIDS news stories is perceived and examined from the headlines and "intros" of the stories. The angles of the different AIDS news items are believed to point to the stories' focus and the picture of AIDS news in the news media. The presentation of AIDS news by the news media shades light as to how the media reflects the AIDS issue. Therefore, this study examines the angles of AIDS news presentation from the point of view of the origin of HIV/AIDS, ways of transmission of the disease, a news story about the individual victims, portrayal of infection rate statistics, a news story about protection or/and prevention, research on HIV/AIDS, and other factors regarding HIV/AIDS.

The following two brief news items from *The Times* of London, July 6, 1983 and the Swedish *Dagens Nyheter*, November 11, 1983 respectively, will illustrate as to how the coding on the news angles was done:

'AIDS' DEATHS

Brussels (Reuter) - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), the mysterious disease mainly afflicting homosexuals, has killed 11 people in Belgium. Ten of the victims were from Zaire and the other from Chad.

[The main Angle of this story is coded under the item infection rate (statistics)]

AIDS-sjuk baby nekas vård

TT-DPA. En 14 månader gammal svart flicka i Miami i USA som lider av immunsjukdomen AIDS har av fruktan för smitta förskjutits av fadern och avvisats från 20 vårdhem. Nu kanske hon inte heller längre får vårdas på sjukhus eftersom staten Florida inte längre vill betala de 400 dollar om dagen som vården kostar.

Flickan, som enligt läkare kan leva högst tre år, är ett av hundra barn i USA som lider av AIDS.

[This story's main angle is coded under the item victims (individuals), and the English translation of the story is as follows:

AIDS infected baby denied care

TT-DPA. A black 14 months old baby girl who suffers from AIDS has been rejected by her father and turned away by 20 nursing homes. She can not even be cared in the hospital, as the State of Florida is not prepared to pay the hospital cost which amounts to 400 dollars a day.

The girl, who is expected to live maximum three years according to doctors is one of the hundred children who are suffering from AIDS.]

In order to investigate the news angles of the AIDS news stories through the years in the different prestige papers, the study then posed the following questions : Which angle was dominant in the AIDS news that was reported by the studied papers and years? How was the trend in the choice of the news angles through the years? How do the newspapers differ or/and resemble in their choice and coverage of AIDS news angles?

The dominant news angle portrayed by the studied papers and years was the angle on protection as indicated by the amount of space allotted to the coverage of the AIDS news stories carrying this angle. This result also shows that AIDS items with a news angle on protection have attracted the newspapers' attention to be allotted a lot of space as a single item (Table 4.3). The percentage of news space used by the news angle on protection was also dominant through most of the years in the AIDS news reporting of *Dagens Nyheter*, *The Times* and *The Daily Nation* (Tables 4.3 and 4.4). Whilst, the Ugandan, *The New Vision* had the angle on prevention taking more percentage of the news space in most of the studied years (Table 4.3).

The two prestige papers from the North part of the world do show quite close results in the way they presented the news angles of their AIDS news

stories (Table 4.3). Nevertheless, one also tends to query why the Kenyan paper, which belongs to the South part of the world does also follow more or less the same pattern of reporting news angles as its Northern counterparts. This study then poses the following questions that point to the resolution of the matter as it does not have any available answer which is based on any empirical study: Could the reason be because the Daily Nation carried more foreign that could affect the coverage to be tilted to the angles used by the original source of the news (which mostly is from the North)? Or, does it point to any homogenization of AIDS news reporting even among countries belonging to the different parts of the world? Could it otherwise be explained by any common journalistic professional practice of selecting and presenting news in a certain fashion, despite having totally different audiences and conditions?

Table 4.3 Space used by news angles in the newspapers in 1983-90* (percent)

Angle	Dagens Nyheter	The Times	Daily Nation	The New vision
Origin	-	-	7	1
Ways of Transmission	2	4	5	5
Victims (individual)	3	4	4	15
Infection Rate	9	10	13	14
Protection	30	28	24	18
Prevention	8	6	9	20
Research	5	5	8	7
Other	43	43	30	20
Total	100	100	100	100
N=	7650	4985	2870	2285

**All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.*

Moreover, when looked through individual years and the AIDS news reporting of the newspapers, some variations in the dominant news angle/s for each year exists. Therefore, in Dagens Nyheter, the years 1988 and 1989 had the single news angles on infection rate and prevention respectively dominating the years, unlike the other years where the single news

angle protection was all through dominant. At this instance, it is interesting to note that in Sweden a new Communicable Diseases Act which suggested of tracing contacts, compulsory isolation, etc. among others was passed on 1st of July 1989 (Westphal Victor, 1991:119). Then, this being the case, it is probably prevention that was the story at that time as the Swedish paper's emphasis on prevention as opposed to protection showed. Furthermore, the other stress on infection rate before the passing of the communicable Diseases Act might also point to the alarm that was out before the passing of the Act.

In The Times too, the years, 1989 and 1990 had the single news angle on infection rate and research respectively being dominant in the AIDS news reporting. In the case of The Times too, the change of emphasis from the angle on protection to the reporting of the infection rate which is a result of the alarming increase in the prevalence rate (Table 6.1) is understandable. The stress on research concerning everything on AIDS (transmission, vaccine, etc.) was also probably a logical outcome of an alarm on the rising rate of infection.

In the Kenyan paper, Daily Nation, the year 1985 had the single news angle ways of transmission, and 1986 had the single angle on infection rate as the dominant news angles in the AIDS news reported. In the case of Kenya, the Kenyan press came out in public with AIDS in Kenya in 1985 (Fortin, 1987:908), therefore, it probably was why ways of transmission was the dominant news angle in the Daily Nation for that same year. As to the dominance of the angle on infection rate, we can not say a lot based on available official prevalence rates; nevertheless, there is still room to suspect that it may be due to rising infection.

Meanwhile, the Ugandan paper, The New Vision had the single news angle on protection being dominant in the years 1986 and 1990, the single angle on prevention dominating in 1987, the single angle on infection rate in 1988 and finally the single news angle on victims -individuals- in 1989. Interestingly, it is in The New Vision that the angle on victims is seen to be coming out as being a dominant news angle on AIDS news reporting in 1989 (it took 43% of the total AIDS news space for the year).

The angle on protection dominated the two extreme years of prevalence, i.e. 1986 and 1990, where simply tens and on the other hand tens of thousands of cases were reported respectively (Table 6.1); and the Ugandan

AIDS Control Programme office and later the Secretariat of Uganda AIDS Commission were set up. In both cases it probably seemed that it was the alarm of the coming and later its getting entrenched that let the dominance of the news angle on protection than prevention. The news angle on prevention on the other hand, appeared dominant when the official report jumped extremely high for the first time (Table 6.1). Then, the dominance of the angle on infection rate in 1988 was probably a logical outcome of a steeply rising prevalence rate among others. Finally, The Uganda paper's emphasis on the news angle of victims-individuals might probably be attributed to the country's open policy on AIDS where an individual with AIDS is not shunned off as the "other", thereby getting the chance to be discussed in an open public forum like any member of the society with or without problems.

The news angle that talks about origin of the disease AIDS or HIV virus appeared covering 7% and 1% of the AIDS news space in 1987 and 1989 in the two African papers, Daily Nation and The New Vision respectively (Tables 4.3). The appearance and treatment of these AIDS articles on origin of AIDS news angle in these two African papers - especially Daily Nation - reminds one of the case of Kenya where Alfred J.Fortin (1987:909) cites of Kenyan Medical Association Journal suggesting tourists introducing AIDS to Africa. This in turn indicates how the debate on the origin of HIV/AIDS was a sensitive and hot issue then. Moreover, AIDS news stories covering quite a very large amount of space have also appeared with other news angles that are not included in the coding schedule (Table 4.3 and 4.4).

Table 4.4 Yearly amount of News Space Taken by News Angles in the Newspapers* (percent)

ANGLE	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Origin	-	-	-	-	4	-	2	-
Ways of transmission	-	-	11	3	2	5	1	-
Victims	12	-	13	2	3	1	15	1
Infection rate	14	31	6	9	6	23	10	9
Protection	38	54	35	33	25	18	23	22
Prevention	2	-	2	7	13	6	24	5
Research	-	15	3	4	5	5	8	10
Other	34	-	30	42	42	42	17	53
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	540	295	2060	3400	5130	2585	1830	1950

**All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.*

Arena or place of AIDS story

The news value concept of selection and presentation of news in a news media alludes that events and issues that are closer (spatially and/or culturally) have more chance of coverage as their geographic or cultural proximity among other factors adds to their being chosen as news. This aspect is well expressed by David Manning White's (1964:166) "Mr. Gates" when he rejected the news because it is "too far away". The present study also attempted to empirically investigate the arenas/place or origin of the AIDS items reported in the four prestige papers. And the following questions guided the study in its examination: Where were the arenas of the AIDS stories? Did the coverage of AIDS news items in each paper correspond to the oft understood news value criteria of geographic or/and cultural proximity or otherwise?

In order to map out and analyse the arenas of the AIDS stories and the news space allotted to their coverage, the study prepared a coding category

where the newspaper's country of origin, and the different continents were outlined (see the coding sheet in Appendix 1). In the coding schedule, the arena or place of the AIDS story is the place - country or continent - where the AIDS story is described in the news article. In some of the AIDS news items one comes across, there might be no mention of a place where the story occurred; it may instead be a discussion only on the subject of AIDS - nature of the disease, transmission, etc. In such cases, it was coded no country or continent is mentioned. Otherwise, Sweden, Kenya, Uganda, Britain, Europe (excluding Sweden and Britain), Africa (excluding Kenya and Uganda), North America/South America, Australia/ Asia/ Oceania were the places to be coded. However, where the coding results are shown, the four countries where the studied papers come from are grouped in the category, newspapers country of origin (Table 4.5).

Results of the study point out that *Dagens Nyheter*, *The Times* and *The New Vision* have given more than 50% of their AIDS news space for carrying a story whose arena was their own country of origin (Table 4.5). Especially, in the case of *Dagens Nyheter*, it is about 80% of the space that is allotted to AIDS news items that have Sweden as a place of the AIDS story. On the other hand, the Kenyan, *Daily Nation* had allotted only less than half of its total AIDS news space for AIDS stories whose arena was Kenya (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 News Space Taken by Arenas of AIDS Articles in the Papers in 1983-1990* (percent)

Arena	Dagens Nyheter	The Times	Daily Nation	New Vision
Newspapers' country of origin	79	69	40	63
Europe	5	11	12	5
Africa	2	1	11	16
America North and South	12	15	22	12
Australia,Asia,Oceania	1	3	15	3
No country mentioned	1	1	-	1
Total	100	100	100	100
N =	7650	4985	2870	2285

*All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.

The three papers, *Dagens Nyheter*, *The Times* and *The New Vision* have proved that the news value concept of geographic proximity holds true as their coverage of AIDS news in the studied years showed. But, in the case of the Kenyan *Daily Nation*, the opposite was true as it carried 60% of AIDS news whose arena was not Kenya. This then leads one to inquire if what is exhibited by the Kenyan prestige daily was because of government control or due to the scarcity of domestic AIDS news or was it because of lack of resources and capacity to go around and gather the available domestic AIDS news (for example, in their seminal study of news in Sweden, Ireland and Nigeria broadcasting media, Golding and Elliott (1979:125) mention that there was too little provincial news in the case of Ireland, and cite Irish journalists mentioning that provincial news is difficult to collect).

AIDS news stories whose arena was North America/South America had also been allotted the next highest percentage of space for AIDS news coverage in all the four prestige papers (Table 4.5). Nevertheless, Africa which presently has some countries who are reputed to have an infection rate that is said to be among the highest was the least (along with Australia, Asia, and Oceania) mentioned arena of AIDS stories either by the two African papers or the two European ones in the study. At this juncture, one queries why the African papers write more AIDS news stories from the outside world as compared to the African ones (as the continent has cultural as well as spatial proximity to the African countries whose prestige media is on the study). Furthermore, one also wonders why the European prestige papers in the study have almost neglected the AIDS story whose arena is Africa, as we tend to live in a "global village" where one attempts to share the burden of problems of the scope presented by AIDS.

Actors as objects and their images

In any news story, there is/are main actor/s which in this study we call actors as subjects. Likewise, there are also news objects that are discussed in the news stories which this study calls actors as objects. The actor as object category is about actor/s that is/are discussed or talked about in the story. The actors as objects category is used to help find out the objects of the news that are mentioned and discussed in the news story. As the news space used and the frequency of coverage as well as the place used for presentation helped us pinpoint the attention the AIDS news coverage had

in the news media; the angle and the actor as object category shall also assist us in determining the character and feature of the AIDS news that attracted news media attention. Furthermore, investigating the image the actors as objects are given - i.e. are they talked positively, negatively or in neutral terms - by the news story does also shade light the way the media handled the news coverage in regards to the news objects.

The following news story from *The Times*, October 3, 1987 is an example that shows how the actor as object is coded:

DRUG ADDICTS USE 'JELLY BABIES' TO AVOID AIDS

Drug addicts are injecting themselves with tranquilaizers they call "jelly babies" instead of heroin to try to avoid the risk of AIDS, doctors report in *The Lancet* today (our Science Correspondent writes).

However, the belief that this will protect abusers from the human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV) is a myth, specialists from a Glasgow hospital say.

The drug temazepam, the most widely prescribed hypnotic in Britain, has shown a "spectacular rise in popularity" in Glasgow.

The capsules, known as "jelly beans" or "yellow eggs", have risen in price on the black market from 20 pence each a year ago to £2.50, the doctors at the Southern General Hospital's psychiatry department say.

The doctors say that drug takers report a "most satisfactory and controllable effect" from three capsules, costing a total of about £7.00, considerably less than the street price of heroin.

But some abusers have reported severe withdrawal symptoms.

[in this news story, the *actors as object* are, **drug abusers (risk groups)**; the image given to the objects of the news is **neutral**].

The following questions helped guide the study in its investigation of actors as objects and their images in the AIDS news : what is the dominant actor/s as object in the AIDS news stories through the years and the different papers? What was the image of this actor as object? Is there any observable yearly trend in the coverage of AIDS news with shifting of actors as objects? What was the image of the HIV positive/AIDS victim actors as objects in the different papers and years?

For empirical analysis of this study's findings, the items in the actors as object category were grouped, so that instead of 22 items as indicated in the coding schedule (see appendix 1) we now have eight items. Therefore, government health agencies, other government agencies/myndigheter, national non-governmental organizations dealing with AIDS, other national non-governmental organizations, WHO, government health officials and politicians are grouped under officials. Furthermore, medical researchers/experts and other researchers/experts are also grouped under experts. In addition, the man/woman in the street and other are grouped together under other. However, all the other remaining items in the category remain intact.

Besides, items like other UN organizations, international Red Cross, other international organizations and professional journals did not also show up as actors as object in the studied sample of newspaper articles. Furthermore, as it is shown in Tables 4.6 and 4.7, the total number of AIDS articles taken is 406, because in 151 of the AIDS news articles, there was no actor as object.

Table 4.6 Actors as objects in each paper between 1983-1990* (percent)

Actor as object	Dagens Nyheter	The Times	Daily Nation	The New Vision
Officials	5	6	3	8
Experts	2	5	10	8
The media	-	2	3	-
HIV (+) / AIDS Victims	43	39	45	51
Prostitutes (risk group)	2	2	3	2
Drug abuser (risk group)	6	3	2	-
Other risk groups	10	3	-	-
Other	32	40	34	31
Total	100	100	100	100
N=	124	165	68	49

*All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.

In the studied AIDS news stories, all the four newspapers had more percentage of HIV positive/AIDS victim actors as objects (Table 4.6). Especially, the Ugandan *The New Vision* newspaper had HIV positive/AIDS victims as objects of news in 50% of its AIDS stories. The dominance of HIV positive/AIDS victims as 'actors as objects' in the AIDS news articles covered by the studied prestige papers indicates that the objects of the AIDS news carried by these papers were dominantly HIV positive/AIDS victims. In comparison to HIV positive/AIDS victims neither all the risk groups, i.e. drug abusers, prostitutes, homosexuals, haemophiliacs, etc., nor officials and experts were not important objects of the AIDS news that was covered by these four papers.

As to the actors as object in the news coverage through the studied years, the empirical results show that HIV positive/AIDS victims prevailed through the eight studied years. Besides, there was no strikingly visible or observable trend shift in the appearance of HIV positive/AIDS victims as news objects. This trend in turn points to the fact that the AIDS news reporting through the initial and subsequent years had concentrated more on reporting about the HIV and AIDS victims. This empirical finding does also suggest that the AIDS news that commanded attention by the media through the years had HIV positive/AIDS victims as actors as objects in its coverage. The finding in turn marks that the AIDS news reporting in the four prestige papers and years has the victims of the disease as the object of the news. At this juncture, one can query why the HIV positive and AIDS victims attracted the attention of the AIDS news through the years and the media. We believe that firstly, it may be because of the unusual nature of the disease, and secondly, as the percentage of the infected ones in the northern part of the world shows it may as well be because the AIDS victims belong to a group that are termed the "other" -who also have a stigma attached to them.

On the other hand, the year 1984 had on one side officials and experts, and on the other side HIV positive/AIDS victims and other risk groups (homosexuals, haemophiliacs, etc.) dominating the AIDS news coverage as actors that were talked about (Table 4.7). This particular year was among the early years of coverage where knowledge of HIV/AIDS was scant and only a few could say what is known about it; therefore, it is no wonder that both sides, i.e. those who are affected or most likely to be affected and experts as well as sources in official position dominated the scene. Finally, the AIDS news coverage through the studied years, i.e. 1983-1990, depicts that

there was no visible/observable trend as it was the HIV positive/AIDS victims that dominated the scene of actors as objects (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7 Yearly trend of Actors as objects in the newspapers* (percent)

Actor as object	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Officials	-	25	-	9	6	2	6	10
Experts	7	25	-	2	7	7	2	6
The media	-	-	2	-	3	-	-	4
HIV + / AIDS victims	33	25	67	43	32	41	51	41
Prostitutes (risk groups)	-	-	2	-	3	2	6	2
Drug abusers (risk groups)	-	-	4	7	5	2	2	-
Other risk groups	40	25	2	4	3	2	-	6
Other	20	-	23	35	41	44	33	31
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	15	4	52	56	121	58	49	51

*All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.

On the other hand, while attempting to find out the image these actors as objects got in the news articles, the AIDS news stories were thoroughly read, and then the treatment of the actors as objects in each item was coded. Therefore, when the image given to the HIV positive/AIDS victim actors as objects was examined, it was seen to be mostly neutral in all the papers in the study (Table 4.8). When looked through the years there also seems no visible trend in giving images to the HIV positive/AIDS victims in the AIDS news that were reported by the four papers. In all the studied eight years the image given to the HIV positive/AIDS victims actors as objects was dominantly neutral (in 83% of all the stories that have HIV positive AIDS victims as their news objects). This in turn points to the fact that the AIDS news stories that came out in the four prestige papers and years treated the HIV positive/AIDS victim objects of news neither positively nor negatively in their news reporting.

Table 4.8 Hiv Positive / AIDS Victims with Different Images in Each News paper Between 1983-1990* (Percent)

Image	Dagens Nyheter	The Times	Daily Nation	The New Vision
Positive	6	-	3	20
Neutral	79	97	81	64
Negative	15	3	16	16
Total	100	100	100	100
N =	53	65	31	25

**All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.*

Summary and Discussion

The news media's attention in covering AIDS news was investigated in the four prestige dailies through the studied eight years. A comparative examination of AIDS news attention by each paper as well as among the years was conducted so as to discern the media attention. In order to measure the attention that was attracted by the issue of AIDS in the news media, the study looked at and analysed the number of articles, the amount and place of news space used for coverage. It also examined the AIDS news stories focus or the image/picture of AIDS news reporting by analysing the angle and arena of each AIDS news story, the actors as objects of the news stories and the images given to each of these objects of news. The study looked at the findings and then analysed them primarily from the news value concept of news selection and presentation.

AIDS news was given much attention (in frequency of coverage as well as amount of news space given for coverage) in the two European papers as compared to the two African papers. The degree of attention given concerning the amount of space allotted for coverage can be explained either by the differing editorial policies of the papers (as exemplified by the Times and Dagens Nyheter in the study) or by degree of news value it has - a good example of this could be Kinsella's (1989) observation where he notes that the depth and number of media coverage of AIDS increased in the American media after Rock Hudson's death (elite people make news). Furthermore, what the empirical results show is that the AIDS news has been selected and covered by the studied news media of the northern part

of the world comparatively earlier, and has stayed in the news media for quite a long time, though in varying degrees. As to the AIDS news front page coverage, it is only the Ugandan paper, *The New Vision* that has allotted the highest amount of its front page news space for coverage of AIDS news. Front page coverage, which has high readership (Cohen, 1963; Nafziger, 1948) is one of the measurements of the attention given by a media.

The selection of AIDS news for coverage and presentation can be due to the commonly understood news value criteria, i.e. because of its novelty, unusualness, geographic and/or cultural proximity and elite status (e.g. Rock Hudson) of victims, etc.; or it can probably be because of the role a country's politics plays (the Kenyan case that is discussed previously in this chapter is a good example). Moreover, other factors like commercial interests can also play part in selection and presentation of AIDS news. For example, Laurence J. Ray (1989:250) has observed in his study, that condom sale rose by 38% in France because of involvement of commercial interests in the "safer sex" campaign.

As to the trend in the coverage and attention through the years, the empirical results show that there had been an increasing trend in amount of news space used for coverage between the years 1984-1987, to be followed by a decreasing tendency between 1987-1990. This result, then seems to prove Walter Lippmann's (1922:341) observation where he noted that news is "not a mirror of social conditions", as the coverage (in numbers and amount of news space) of AIDS news dropped sharply after 1987, when the real world conditions show that the HIV and AIDS spread has not yet subsided.

The news stories' focus and image/picture of AIDS news is also discerned by the news story's angle of reporting, the image it gave to the actors as objects and also the place or arena of the AIDS item. The empirical examination in this study shows that the news angle on protection of the HIV/AIDS was dominant through the studied eight years. Among the studied papers too, it was the news angle that talks about protection in the form of screening, registering, isolation, laws, etc. which was allotted more news space. However, in the case of *The New Vision*, along with protection, the news angle that talks about prevention, i.e. information campaign, public education, counselling, etc., was equally dominant. One other observation of this study is that the two European prestige papers and

the Kenyan prestige daily do show quite close results in their choice of the news angles of AIDS news articles (for more discussion refer to the section on news angle).

The arena or place of the AIDS news coverage in the two European and the Ugandan prestige papers affirms the news value concept's criteria of selecting and presenting of news that have cultural and/or geographic proximity, as all the three papers gave more than half of their AIDS news space to items whose arena was the papers' countries of origin. But, the Kenyan, *Daily Nation's* coverage of AIDS news items was contrary to the commonly understood criteria of proximity, as it allotted 60% of the news space to AIDS stories whose arena was not Kenya. At this instance, one can query as to why this happened; could it be because of scarcity of AIDS news from Kenya? Is it because of shortage of resources and capacity to gather domestic news? Or is it because of intervention of politics - as the Kenyan government's denial and defensive policy on AIDS (Gould,1993:73) might have brought about an influence on the reporting?

The empirical result of the AIDS news stories in the four prestige papers during the eight years shows that the HIV positive/AIDS victims were the dominant actors as objects in the AIDS items that were carried by the papers and years. The AIDS news reporting of the studied years concentrated mostly on the reporting of HIV positive/AIDS victims as objects of the news. AIDS news primarily was news about the victims. They were the objects of the news in the northern as well as the southern part of the world in the AIDS news that was selected and reported. Furthermore, these actors as objects or the objects of news had also been dominantly portrayed neutral in the AIDS news of all the four papers in the studied years. The positive or negative image they were given was relatively small. The public education campaign conducted by the WHO and individual governments seems to have paid off when one notes the results of the reporting where the HIV/ AIDS victims were not left with a negative tag.

In conclusion, these empirical findings demonstrate that AIDS news has got more attention by the two European prestige papers (frequency of coverage and amount of new space) and the Ugandan daily (place of coverage) through the studied years. Besides, there was also a trend of giving more attention to the AIDS news reporting between 1983-1987, to show a rather sharp decline after 1987. The HIV/AIDS victims were the dominant actors as objects having a neutral image in the AIDS news reporting of all the studied papers and years. The AIDS stories focus and image was reflected by the news angle, protection, which the studied papers used for reporting the AIDS news through the years. Finally, the place of the AIDS stories reported was found out to be dominantly from the newspapers' country of origin, except the Kenyan prestige daily which has more AIDS news from outside Kenya.

5

AIDS NEWS: STORY TYPE, SOURCES, THEMES AND REFERENCES

In this second chapter of the empirical part of the study, the media attention of AIDS news will be further investigated in the four prestige dailies and the studied years to find out more of the characters and features of the AIDS news items that were covered. The study tries to find out the type of AIDS news stories, i.e. domestic or foreign, that were carried by the different newspapers and analyses the finding based on the concept of news value - did the AIDS news coverage reflect the news value criteria of cultural and geographic proximity? It shall also try to find out if there are any other factors that have influenced the coverage of the story type, as politics and commercial influence among others are believed to influence coverage of news as some studies suggest (Ray,1989; Fortin,1987).

There shall also be an attempt to find out and analyse the sources of the AIDS news in the prestige dailies and the studied years. The study shall investigate if the AIDS news that is covered by the papers was gathered and produced by the papers' reporters and correspondents as a result of a request by each paper. If so, the likelihood of the news being covered is high (Golding and Elliott,1979), as each paper invests a considerable amount of manpower and financial resource to produce it. Therefore, this study shall investigate the source of the AIDS news covered in the four newspapers and the eight years by asking; was the AIDS news that was covered by the papers and years produced by the papers' own correspondents and reports, or was it the result of a news agency dispatch?

The actors as subject or the main actors in the news are also the subject of investigation, in this study of the media attention of the AIDS news. People in positions of authority and responsibility such as experts and officials tend to attract journalists as they are seen to be main actors in the news (Gans,1979; Sigal,1973; Gandy,1982). This observation is also proved to be true of the AIDS news story reporting as Rogers et al (1991) mention scientists or experts to have been the "prime news sources" at the earliest years of coverage. In this examination of media attention of AIDS news, the study then shall enquire; who or what were the main actors as subject in each newspaper and each individual year? It shall also investigate if experts and officials were the dominant actors as subject in the AIDS news

that were reported by the papers and the studied years, as suggested by different studies?

Finally, the study shall examine the themes and references of the AIDS news stories. The themes and references are believed to show the stories' conceptual framework. The items found in the themes and references category are determined based on the subject matter of the study; and are selected after prior inspection of some of the stories associated with the subject matter. In attempting to define the themes and references used in covering the AIDS news in the studied papers and years, the study was guided by these research questions: What were the dominant themes and references of the AIDS news stories in the papers and years? Is there any discernable trend in the appearance of the different themes and references through the years? What are the observed differences and similarities in the themes and references displayed by the different papers?

The following two AIDS news stories from the Kenyan prestige newspaper, *Daily Nation*, 8th April 1985, and *The Times* of London, 9th April 1987, respectively show how the coding of the AIDS news items for analysing the AIDS stories was done:

1. AIDS VICTIMS REACH TWO MILLION

London, Sunday

The discoverer of the deadly AIDS virus said today that two million Americans were infected by the disease and that the number of sufferers in Europe would reach the same level within two years.

In an interview in the *Observer* newspaper, US scientist Dr Robert Gallo said: "Science has reacted at the speed of light to combat AIDS, but we have still not kept up with the disease. There are going to be a lot of deaths."

His figure of two million Americans suffering from AIDS was almost 10 times the official estimate.

"People will accuse me of being alarmist," Gallo told the newspaper.

Gallo, who met doctors in London and Oxford during a visit to Britain over the last week, also warned that second epidemic, produced by a virus similar to the one that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), was imminent.

The virus, HTVL-1, causes the cells which protect the body against infection to multiply, causing a cancer called T-cell leukemia. The AIDS virus destroys those cells.

Both were discovered and isolated by Gallo, head of a government backed AIDS research programme in the United States. (Reuter)

[The news agency that was coded was, **Reuter**; the arena was, **Britain**; the type of story was, **foreign**; the actor as subject was, **medical researcher**; the actors as object were, **HIV positive/AIDS victims**; the image was, **neutral**; the main angle of the story was about **infection rate (statistics)**; the theme and reference that was present in the story was, **AIDS research**].

2. The London Rubber Company, which claims a 95 percent share of the British condom market, said sales had increased by 9 per cent since last year, with almost half that increase occurring since the launch of the Government's "safer sex" campaigns last November.

[In the news agency category it was coded, **bylined, or without mention of agency**; the arena was, **Britain**; the story type was, **domestic**; the actor as subject was coded **other** as the main actor of the story, i.e. The London Rubber Company, could not fit in any of the 20 items found in the actor as subject category; the actor as object was also coded **other** for the same reason in the actor as subject category; the image was, **neutral**; the main angle of the story was coded **other**, as the angle of the story, i.e. profit making, does not fit in any of the listed seven items of the main angle of the story category].

While conducting this empirical part of the study, the following research questions guided the investigation: How much of the AIDS story that was carried by the papers and years was domestic and/or foreign news? What/Who was the source of the AIDS news story items? Who were the actors as subjects or main actors in the AIDS news that were covered by the newspapers through the years? What were the themes and references of the AIDS news articles?

Story type

The commonly understood news value criteria usually favours the selection and coverage of news that is nearer and closer to the culture and area the media comes from. Therefore, unless otherwise the news fulfills most of the other news value criteria and gets picked up, most of the time it is the news that has relevance to the culture and area of the news gatherer and the news media's audience that is covered (Hartley, 1982:77). In this study, an attempt is made to investigate the type of AIDS story that is covered by the papers through the years. The study also tried to find out the type of story, i.e. domestic versus foreign, that was dominantly covered by the papers and the studied years.

The AIDS story type was searched from the AIDS news items printed in the studied prestige dailies and years. The AIDS story's type is investigated if it is discussing about an event or issue that happened in the country where the paper comes from or not. If it is about an event or issue in the paper's country of origin, it is coded domestic, otherwise it is coded foreign. For example, in the AIDS news story that came out in *Dagens Nyheter*, 13th June 1988, during the time of the AIDS conference in Stockholm, the arena of the story was Sweden, whilst the type of the story was foreign, as the story was about the general AIDS situation in the world.

According to the study's findings, there were comparatively more news space covered by the domestic AIDS stories reported by the two European and one African paper (Table 5.1). Among the papers, *Dagens Nyheter*, *The New Vision* and *The Times* did allot more percentage of space to the domestic AIDS news. Whilst, the Kenyan paper, *Daily Nation* carried and also gave more percentage of space to foreign AIDS news as compared to the domestic ones. The amount of space used to cover either domestic or foreign news does also correlate to the number of stories used in each of the papers in the study. This is unlike what is observed between the total number of stories and amount of space used by each paper. For example, if we compare *The Times* and *Dagens Nyheter* newspapers, there are more number of stories but less amount of space in the former and the opposite is true of the latter (for more, see the section on News Media Attention to AIDS Issue in chapter 4).

Table 5.1 News Space Covered by Domestic and Foreign AIDS News in the Newspapers between 1983-1990* (percent)

Story Type	Dagens Nyheter	The Times	Daily Nation	The New Vision
Domestic	73	66	41	61
Foreign	27	34	59	39
Total	100	100	100	100
N =	7650	4985	2870	2285

**All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.*

The percentage of space covered by domestic AIDS news through the studied years, i.e. 1983-90, was also higher for each individual year (Table 5.2). In fact, in the beginning, i.e. in 1983, more than 80% of the AIDS news for that year was about domestic events.

Table 5.2 Yearly coverage of news space by domestic and foreign AIDS news in the different papers on the study* (percent)

Story Type	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Domestic	82	71	63	77	57	61	76	54
Foreign	18	29	37	23	43	39	24	46
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	540	295	2060	3400	5130	2585	1830	1950

**All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.*

The dominance of domestic AIDS news in the two European and the Ugandan paper as well as through the years proves that the news value criteria of geographic proximity was at work in the selection and coverage of AIDS news. News that is nearer or closer to the papers' area is getting attention and being covered. However, in the case of the Kenyan prestige daily, the news value criteria of proximity seems not to be at work as other factors like politics might have influenced the AIDS news coverage. For example, Alfred J. Fortin (1987) notes that "in October 1985, Kenyan government leaders....protested through the national press that the reports about AIDS in Kenya were alarmist and untrue" (P.908). Furthermore, Peter Gould (1993:73) cites the Kenyan president ascribing to Kenyan AIDS reports as being "...a deliberate hate campaign against his country".

Nonetheless, when each newspaper and each individual year is scanned, some variations are observed. For example, in *The Times* of London, in 1984 and 1990, the space covered by foreign AIDS news was more unlike the other years where domestic AIDS news had covered more news space. The same is also true of *Dagens Nyheter* in 1990 and *The New Vision* in 1988 where foreign AIDS news dominated the total news space covered. On the other hand, in the case of *Daily Nation*, in 1989 and 1990 there was more news space allotted to domestic AIDS news, unlike the preceding years where the foreign AIDS news was dominating the AIDS news space. At this instance, one tends to ask why the *Daily Nation* carried more domestic AIDS news unlike the preceding years, i.e. pre 1989. Could it probably be a sign of relaxation of the reporting environment where the government fully accepted the problem caused by AIDS? Or did the newspaper find the domestic AIDS story to be newsworthy and easily accessible? Having queried so, this study would like to admit that at this point in time it is not able to furnish answers that have empirical as well as theoretical grounds.

News source

A news medium most of the time gets its news material from news agencies who are engaged in producing and selling news to their media customers. If news that is covered by any media is not produced by the media's correspondents or reporters, then the source is mostly the news agency. Despite the fact that every country has its own national news agency, it is the multinationals like, REUTERS, UPI, AFP, AP, and the then TASS that dominated the news scene as sources.

This study, then looks at and analyses the trend that is followed by acquisition of AIDS news, i.e. who was the source of the AIDS news stories in the prestige papers on the study? It enquires if the studied papers used their own reporters/ correspondents or the news agencies as the source of most of the AIDS news covered. And if they have used a particular news agency as their primary source of news, the study then queries why they used and frequented a particular agency. It shall then attempt to find out if this can be explained by factors like politics, commerce, cultural links, etc.

The news source this study looks at is, the news agency or/and the papers correspondents/reporters bylined AIDS news article. Therefore, to facilitate the coding of each news article, there were nine items enlisted in the category of *news agency* in the coding schedule. These nine items were, REUTERS, AFP, UPI, AP, TT (the Swedish news agency), Kenya News Agency (KNA), Uganda News Agency (UNA), Other Agency, and finally, Bylined or Without Any Mention of Agency. Of these mentioned source items, UPI and UNA were not at all cited as sources of news in the studied AIDS news articles.

The studied papers and years show that 86% of the AIDS news space was covered by bylined or without any mention of agency stories (Table 5.3). This result in turn reflects the fact that the papers have given more priority of selection and coverage to the AIDS news produced by reporters or correspondents at the papers' own request. Among the agencies looked at, it was only Reuters that covered relatively more news space which is only 4% of the total space used for the AIDS coverage (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 Amount of news space covered by different agencies in the studied newspapers between 1983-1990* (in col. cms.)

Agencies	Space (col.cms.)	%
Reuters	745	4
AFP	205	1
AP	190	1
TT	485	3
KNA	175	1
Other agency	630	4
Bylined or without mention of agency	15360	86
Total	17790	100

**All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.*

While examining the source of news items in the news papers, it is found out that the Swedish paper *Dagens Nyheter*, excepting for the news that were bylined or without any mention of agency, had used the national news agency *TT* as the single main source of AIDS news and had also allotted relatively large news space for a single news agency in the studied years. AIDS news stories that were acquired from *TT* have used 6% the AIDS news space; and this news agency was used as a source for about 15% of all the stories in *Dagens Nyheter*. Out of these number of stories more than half were domestic stories. Moreover, about 83% of all the AIDS stories were bylined or without mention of any agency; and they had been allotted 93% of the AIDS news space used for AIDS news coverage in *Dagens Nyheter*.

For the British daily, *The Times*, and the Kenyan paper, *Daily Nation*, excepting for the AIDS news that were bylined or without any mention of agency, *Reuters* was the single main agency used as source and whose AIDS news story was allotted quite a large news space. For the Kenyan newspaper which dominantly covered foreign AIDS news as opposed to domestic ones, it was not the *Kenyan News Agency (KNA)* which was the dominant source of news. Instead, it was *Reuters* that supplied the AIDS news, thereby leaving one to wonder if it is the old colonial connections that made *Reuters* the single most important provider of information to the Kenyan newspaper. In *The Times*, all the AIDS news stories that had *Reuters* as a source were foreign AIDS news stories. Besides, *The Times* had about 88% of the total AIDS stories that occupied the greatest share of the AIDS news space which were bylined or without mention of any agency. Whilst, the amount of AIDS news space used to cover these stories was about 96% of the total news space allotted for AIDS news coverage.

The *Daily Nation* used the *Kenyan news agency (KNA)* as a source of AIDS news stories for only 5% of all the stories, and these stories covered 6% of the AIDS news space. All of these stories acquired from *KNA* were domestic stories. Furthermore, 66% of all the AIDS news stories that came out in *Daily Nation* and which occupied 56% of the AIDS news space were bylined or without mention of any agency. Interestingly enough, unlike the other three papers where the AIDS news stories that were bylined or without mention of any agency were dominantly domestic, the bylined or without mention of any agency AIDS news in *Daily Nation* were dominated by foreign news.

The Ugandan paper, *The New Vision* had no single agency as being the dominant source of the AIDS news reported by it. The paper had 78% of AIDS stories that were either bylined or without mention of agency. And these stories covered 79% of all the available AIDS news space. Of these bylined or without mention of agency AIDS news stories that came out in *The New Vision*, more than half were domestic AIDS news.

The amount of space covered by the AIDS news items that came from different sources over the studied years indicates that more than 80% of the total space allotted for AIDS news coverage in the four papers is filled by AIDS news stories that were bylined or without mention of any agency. The dominance of bylined stories in the studied sample reminds one of Peter Golding and Philip Elliott's (1979:102) study where they mention that "first among eligible stories for selection are those produced by reporters and correspondents working for the newsroom. The fact that these are normally produced in response to a desk request adds to the likelihood that they will be used". The two communication researchers further give an example from their study in Nigeria where they say, "in Nigeria...it was rare for a reporter to have his story spiked unless it was totally unusable" (Ibid).

Actor as subject

The actor/s as subject are different groups who being the main actor/s in a news tend to attract journalists engaged in selection and gathering of news. Studies suggest that most of the time, it is officials and experts who are the main actors of the news (Sigal, 1973; Gans,1979; Gandy,1982). People in places of authority and responsibility also usually tend to be the main actors as "they are assumed to be trustworthy if only because they cannot afford to lie openly; they are also more persuasive because their facts and opinions are official" (Gans, 1979:130-31). Likewise, experts are also mostly the main actors of news, especially of a scientific nature (e.g. HIV/AIDS pandemic) as they are the only people who can talk about it with full authority.

In this study, an investigation of the AIDS news was conducted as to find out the main actors of the news, i.e. actors as subject. The study also attempted to investigate if officials and experts were the actors as subject in the AIDS news studied as most studies on news suggest. Therefore, in

order to determine the main actor/s in the news in the studied news articles and years, the AIDS news stories were read and analysed. Then the main actor in the news was coded as the Actor as Subject.

To give an illustration of what is coded in Actor as Subject category, for example, in the following AIDS news story of the *Daily Nation* of 18th November 1986, what is coded as Actor as Subject is, **the Media** (i.e. Newsweek magazine):

AIDS PLAUGE HITS AFRICA

New York, Monday

Around five million Africans are carriers of the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) virus, and 10 to 30 per cent of them will die because of it, *Newsweek* magazine reported in its latest issue.

World Health Organisation figures for the 11 countries covered by *Newsweek's*, investigation record 50,000 AIDS deaths to date.

In a report called "Africa in the plague years", *Newsweek* said that in the main hospitals in Kinshasa, capital of Zaire, one baby in seven had the virus.

Up to 40 percent of hospital beds in the 11 countries surveyed were occupied by patients with AIDS, the magazine said.

Referring to the sexual transmission of the disease, it estimated that an African victim of AIDS had an average of 32 sexual partners. (AFP)

[In this news story, the actors as object are **HIV positive/ AIDS victims**; the image given to the objects of the news is, **neutral**; the theme and reference mentioned in the article is **Africa**; the main/head theme and reference of the article is **Africa**].

The items in the Actor as Subject category are grouped as in the case of the Actor as Object category in the preceding chapter. Therefore, instead of 21 items used while coding, they have been grouped into seven items (for more information see the coding schedule and Tables 5.4 & 5.5). Items like government health agencies, other government agencies/myndigheter, national non-governmental organizations dealing with AIDS, other national non-governmental organizations, World Health Organization, other international organizations, government health officials, other government

officials and politicians are grouped under Officials. Medical researchers/experts and other researchers/experts are grouped under Experts. Furthermore, the man/woman on the street and others are grouped under Other. Having said that, it ought to be mentioned that other UN Organizations, International Red Cross, and drug abusers (risk groups) have not at all shown up as actor/s as subject in the studied sample of AIDS news items.

In all the studied Papers, Officials were the dominant actors as subjects in all the four papers (Table 5.4). The dominance of official sources as the main actors in the news does remind one of Sigal's (1973:123-124) and Gans'(1979:130-131) remark where they say that officials are the dominant news sources. Besides, Experts were also one of the main actors in the AIDS news stories (Table 5.4). The dominance of both Officials and Experts in all the studied papers was remarkable, as their presence was more than 60% for each of the papers. This condition in turn calls to our mind an observation that was made by Jarlbro and Annelis (1991:57-58) in their study of HIV/AIDS reporting in the Swedish press where they mention journalists' role as "holding the microphone" to the "authorities on the subject". The reliance and dependence on official and expert sources does also remind one of the experience with disaster/risk research where media are said to prefer a source "with official status" and "relevant expertise" (Sood et al, 1987:34-35). Finally, it suffices to mention that the finding of this study where it is shown that all the studied papers had Officials and Experts as the Actors as Subject in the AIDS stories covered through the years is in accordance with the findings of some of the studies on news (Sigal, 1973; Gans,1979; Sood et al, 1987).

Table 5.4 Actors as Subject in each newspaper between 1983-90* (percent)

Actor as Subject	Dagens Nyheter	The Times	Daily Nation	The New Vision
Officials	41	43	41	48
Experts	32	17	30	22
The media	2	3	6	4
Professional journals	3	6	1	3
HIV positive / AIDS victims	2	1	-	3
Prostitutes (risk groups)	-	-	-	2
Other risk groups	1	-	-	-
Other	19	30	22	18
Total	100	100	100	100
N =	147	231	111	68

*All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.

Other actors as subject - which are wide ranging - had also a frequent appearance as the main actor in the AIDS news (Table 5.4). Actors as subject that are included in the item Other are the ones that are not outlined in the category of actor as subject in the coding schedule (see appendix 1). From the studied sample of AIDS news they include, for example, David Bowie-the rock star, British Airways, "polisman"- a police officer, Defence attache in the French embassy in Kenya, report published by John Hopkins School of Medicine, London Rubber Company, "en undersökning"-an examination or investigation, Stockholms bishop Stendahl, Dr J.Habgood archbishop of York, US embassy spokesman in China, insurance spokesman, among others. The HIV positive/AIDS victims were Actors as Subject in only 1% of the AIDS stories in contradistinction to their dominant presence in Actors as Object category.

When the actor/s as subject of AIDS news are glanced through the studied years, Officials come to be dominant actors as subject between the years 1987-90 (Table 5.5). Whilst, it was Experts who had a significant place as the actor as subject through the earliest years of coverage, i.e. 1983-86. And especially in the initial year of the study, i.e. 1983, it was Experts who were the dominant actors as subject. The year 1983 being among the earliest years when AIDS epidemic has set on, it probably was why those who were thought to know more about the epidemic (i.e. experts) had become the dominant actors as subject. Rogers et al (1993:40) have also

observed the same trend in their study of the AIDS coverage by six major U.S. mass media over 91 months where they write that “scientists were prime news sources” during the “earliest years of coverage”. However, during the subsequent years, the Officials tend to dominate the AIDS news as main actors. The mystic nature of the HIV/AIDS epidemic seemed to subside as more came to be known about the nature of the virus and the disease. At this stage, the role of the experts was overtaken by officials who were busy in formulating policies to curb the spread and manage the pandemic.

Table 5.5 Yearly appearance of Actors as Subject in the newspapers* (percent)

Actor as subject	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Officials	19	57	33	38	46	44	48	48
Experts	63	29	29	30	22	19	17	22
The media	-	-	1	3	3	6	5	3
Professional journals	-	14	7	3	3	4	3	3
HIV positive/AIDS victims	-	-	-	-	1	3	3	-
Prostitutes (risk groups)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Other risk groups	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	12	-	29	26	25	23	22	24
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	16	7	63	88	167	81	64	71

**All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.*

Themes and references

The themes and references that are coded are believed to indicate the stories' conceptual framework. The mentioning of a word or a phrase that has association with the subject in the study helps determine the references or themes of a certain news story. In this study of the AIDS news too, the presence of certain words and phrases are believed to point to the references or/and themes attached to the story; thereby pointing to the conceptual framework of the news story. The themes and references of a study are picked and arranged based on a prior inspection of some of the studied materials. Therefore, the themes and references found in this study too are picked and then arranged after first inspecting the AIDS news articles (for

example, phrases like Zero Grazing that have to do with avoiding multiple sexual partners are found mainly in the Ugandan prestige daily - for more on the different items present in the themes and references category, see the coding schedule, Appendix 1).

The coding of themes and references in each AIDS news article was done while reading the story. Each story can have one or more themes and references or it can also be without any theme and reference. The themes and references were coded only and only if they were present word by word. For example, in the following AIDS news story that came out in *The Times* of April 9, 1987, the theme and reference that was coded was drug addict as the phrase was present in the article:

Britain's first needle exchange clinic for drug addicts opens today in an attempt to halt the spread of AIDS in Edinburgh, one of the worst affected cities. (P.3)

Among the studied papers, *Dagens Nyheter* had a high percentage of drug addicts as a theme and reference. While for *The New Vision* the highest percentage of theme and reference was Africa (Table 5.6). On the other hand, the *Daily Nation* had AIDS test and homosexual, and also *The Times* had homosexual, in high percentage among the themes and references (Table 5.6). At this juncture, it is interesting to note that both the *Daily Nation* and *The Times* had homosexual as a theme and reference in a high percentage; but one wonders why *Daily Nation* had homosexual as a theme and reference in such an amount as HIV/AIDS is not that much associated with homosexual practices in the African continent. This in turn brings to attention Peter Golding and Philip Elliott's (1979:153) observation on the Nigerian media, where they note:

Because of its reliance on an emulation of Western news sources, Nigerian media replicate the agenda defined by those sources. The relative prominence of industry and agriculture is a case in point. News in Nigeria about the production of goods is almost entirely confined to the small industrial sector, while the productive activities and problems of 80 percent of the population go unrecorded.

Table 5.6 Themes and References in each paper between 1983-1990* (percent)

Themes and References	Dagens Nyheter	The Times	Daily Nation	The New Vision
Haiti	2	1	3	2
Africa	6	5	14	21
Heterosexual	7	11	11	8
Homosexual	30	24	15	7
Promiscuity	3	4	1	10
Prostitution	9	5	9	10
Zero Grazing	-	-	1	3
High risk behaviour	-	-	1	2
High risk group	9	5	6	2
Drug addict	22	18	7	7
Haemophilic	9	21	12	18
AIDS research	1	-	5	5
AIDS test	12	6	15	5
Total	100	100	100	100
N =	235	179	81	60

**All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.*

Having said that, we wonder if the dominance of homosexual theme and reference in the Kenyan, *Daily Nation*, could probably be because it was found in the foreign news covered by the paper; as the Kenyan paper had covered more foreign news as opposed to domestic ones. The high presence of themes and references like homosexual and drug addict in the two European papers points to the fact that this two groups are known to have been mostly associated with HIV and AIDS in this part of the world; whilst the case with the African continent is different as homosexuality or drug addiction is not a problem in the continent. In the African continent, HIV/AIDS is not associated with homosexuals as it is the heterosexuals who had been its offerings so far.

Overall, homosexual, drug addict, and haemophilic have high percentage of themes and references in the AIDS stories reported by the studied papers (Table 5.6). This, in turn brings to our attention the concept of risk groups that has become common in AIDS literature, and where these three groups are often mentioned.

When the trend of AIDS news coverage with the different themes and references through the studied years is glanced, homosexual has been the dominant theme and reference of the AIDS news articles (Table 5.7). The theme and reference, drug addict also had a high percentage of appearance with the AIDS news between 1986 and 1988. Besides, the word haemophiliac has had a significant appearance as a theme and reference of the AIDS news stories between the years 1984-1985 and 1988-1990 (Table 5.7). And, in 1987, it was the theme and reference AIDS test that was dominant. At this juncture one notes that 1987 was the year where there was a peak in AIDS news coverage. The findings show that in the initial years of the study (and for that matter AIDS reporting), it was the themes and references homosexual and haemophiliac that had high percentage of coverage. This, then reminds one of the suggestion that was common in the beginning, that talks about AIDS being the disease of the 4H's, i.e. homosexuals, heroin addicts, haemophiliacs, and Haitians (for more on this see Chapter 3, especially the section on Communication and reactions).

Table 5.7 Yearly trend of Themes and References in the studied papers* (percent)

Themes and references	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Haiti	5	-	3	2	1	-	-	-
Africa	5	9	4	10	8	7	15	19
Heterosexual	8	9	6	6	9	12	12	15
Homosexual	36	27	23	17	15	15	19	15
Promiscuity	8	9	3	2	4	5	-	9
Prostitution	-	-	6	8	10	8	12	6
Zero grazing	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-
High risk behaviour	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-
High risk group	8	9	11	5	5	8	2	6
Drug addict	15	-	17	18	17	20	16	9
Haemophiliac	15	27	20	13	9	15	16	15
AIDS research	-	-	2	2	2	-	6	-
AIDS test	-	9	5	15	18	10	-	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	39	11	108	89	152	74	49	33

*All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.

The appearance and frequency of themes and references in the different papers in each year of the study also gives another interesting picture. Generally, the two European newspapers, *Dagens Nyheter* and *The Times* both frequented the theme and reference homosexual, and also drug addict, and haemophiliac in the respective order. Whilst, the two African newspapers, *Daily Nation* and *The New Vision* frequented themes and references homosexual, AIDS test and Africa, haemophiliac respectively. Besides, it is noted that *The Times* and *The New Vision* both had also frequented the theme and reference haemophiliac. It is also interesting to mark that the theme and reference homosexual which was frequented at least in one of the studied years by one of the three other papers was not at all that highly mentioned in the Ugandan *The New Vision*. Instead, what were frequented in *The New Vision* in all the studied years were only two themes and references, i.e. Africa and haemophiliac.

Main theme and reference

The main theme and reference was first picked out from the story as one picks out any of the themes and references, when it was present in the story word by word. But, the reason why a theme and reference is coded as the main theme and reference is because it is thought that the whole story is mainly about this coded theme and reference. The coding of the main theme and reference is done after thoroughly reading the whole news story. As any one story can have one or more themes or be without any theme and reference, the same applies to the Main theme and reference. Furthermore, a story with themes and references can either have one Main theme and reference coded or be without any, depending on the subject of the article (i.e. if it is about any particular theme and reference that is coded).

To illustrate how the coding of the main theme and reference was done, we shall look at the coding of the following AIDS story that came out in *The Times* of 7th November 1987:

More drug abusers should be given free heroin in an attempt to slow down the AIDS epidemic through prostitution and the use of dirty needles, Dr David Baxter, a specialist in community medicine at Stockport, told the Drug Abusers and AIDS conference in Manchester. (P.2)

[In this story the main theme and reference that was coded was *drug abuser*, whilst *prostitution* was also coded as a theme and reference along with *drug abuser*.]

Therefore, in *Dagens Nyheter*, there was a high percentage of homosexual and drug addict as the main themes and references (Table 5.8). In *The Times* it was haemophilic that was the dominant main theme and reference of some of the AIDS stories. For the *Daily Nation*, it was AIDS test that was the most frequented main theme and reference. And finally, for *The New Vision*, it was AIDS research that was the most frequented main theme and reference (Table 5.8).

Table 5.8 Main themes and references in each newspaper from 1983-1990* (percent)

Main Theme and references	Dagens Nyheter	The Times	Daily Nation	The New Vision
Haiti	-	-	-	-
Africa	4	3	6	17
Heterosexual	-	7	-	-
Homosexual	28	3	-	17
Promiscuity	-	-	-	-
Prostitution	4	7	6	17
Zero Grazing	-	-	-	-
High risk behaviour	-	-	-	-
High risk group	4	-	-	-
Drug addict	28	17	6	-
Haemophilic	8	33	12	-
AIDS research	2	-	12	49
AIDS test	22	30	58	-
Total	100	100	100	100
N =	50	30	17	6

*All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.

In the two European papers, some of the AIDS news items indicated that homosexual, drug addict and haemophilic to be the main themes and references of their AIDS stories, thereby pointing to the general conceptual framework of their AIDS news stories to have been associated with what is called "risk groups". On the other hand, in the two African papers, some of the AIDS news articles had AIDS test and AIDS research as their main themes and references suggesting the conceptual framework of the AIDS news stories to have been gravitating towards demystification, prevention, and protection of the disease.

An examination of the yearly AIDS news coverage shows that there is a most visible trend in the reporting of AIDS news with particular main themes and references that mirror the story's conceptual framework (Table 5.9). In the initial years of reporting, i.e 1983-1985 some of the AIDS news stories have homosexual and haemophiliac as the main theme and reference, thereby reflecting the earliest years theory of AIDS as a disease of the 4H's (i.e. homosexuals, heroin addicts, haemophiliacs, and Haitians). Some of the AIDS stories, especially in 1983, had homosexuals as the main reference and theme of the news stories, as if affirming the then prevalent belief that AIDS is a gay plague. In the following years, i.e. 1986-1990 drug addict was consistently reflected as the main reference and AIDS story theme to be found in some of the AIDS stories. During this period, AIDS test (especially in the years, 1987-1988), and haemophiliac (in 1990) were also the main references and themes of some of the AIDS news stories. This in turn tells us that through the years risk groups and risk protection activity were the main reference and themes of some of the AIDS news stories.

Table 5.9 Yearly trend of Main themes and references in the newspapers* (percent)

Themes and references	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Haiti	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Africa	-	-	7	12	-	13	-	20
Heterosexual	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	-
Homosexual	100	33	7	18	-	25	13	-
Promiscuity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Prostitution	-	-	7	-	6	-	20	-
Zero grazing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
High risk behaviour	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
High risk group	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-
Drug addict	-	-	14	29	20	25	21	20
Haemophiliac	-	33	37	12	9	-	13	60
AIDS research	-	-	-	6	6	-	20	-
AIDS test	-	33	14	23	59	37	-	-
Total	100	99	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	7	3	14	17	34	8	15	5

*All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available.

The presence of homosexual as the main theme along with haemophiliac and AIDS test in 1984 was the reflection of the initial years of AIDS news reporting, where these two groups were among the identified risk groups and where a talk about testing every suspect for AIDS was common. Later, the appearance of other risk group, i.e. prostitute, and also a talk on research on AIDS per se was also a reflection of the development of the state of affairs with the progression of the pandemic, i.e. recognition of more risk groups and the need to fight the disease systematically.

Summary and Discussion

This chapter tried to look at and analyse the story types, news sources, and the different references and themes of the AIDS news stories.

Domestic AIDS news stories were the ones that covered most of the AIDS news space in the two European prestige papers and the Ugandan, *The New Vision* newspaper. The finding in these three papers affirms the news value criteria of cultural as well as geographic proximity to have been at work. The AIDS news which is spatially and culturally nearer or closer to the country where the newspapers come from was mostly covered. However, in the case of the Kenyan prestige daily, *Daily Nation*, it was the foreign news that dominantly covered the AIDS news space, unlike the other three papers in the study. This observed incident with the Kenyan daily, i.e. not following the commonly accepted practice of news value criteria, then forced the study to query if other factors like the country's politics have influenced the coverage - for example, the country's president is reported denying AIDS reports in Kenya (Gould,1993), and government officials are said to have confiscated entire shipment of 9 November 1989 issue of *The Herald Tribune* (Fortin,1979).

Having seen the coverage pattern of the story type in the studied papers, when we look at the pattern through the studied years, it shows a uniform pattern. The percentage of space for coverage of domestic news throughout studied years was higher for each individual year.

The study has shown that the source of most of AIDS stories were not the different news agencies. The findings indicate that the studied papers through the years have given more than 80% of the news space to AIDS

news that were produced by the papers' reporters or correspondents. This in turn proves observations made by Golding and Elliott (1979:102) where they remark that "first among eligible stories for selection are those produced by reporters and correspondents working for the news room."

All the studied papers had officials and experts as actors as subject in more than 60% of the AIDS news stories. And when looked through the years, experts significantly appear as actors as subject between the years, 1983-1986. Whilst, officials were dominantly present as actors as subject between 1987-1990. This finding then is in line with some of the observations made by researchers (Sigal,1973; Gans,1979; Sood,1987; Rogers et al, 1993).

Concerning the references and themes of the AIDS news stories, the Swedish and the British papers mostly had themes and references drug addict and homosexual respectively, in the AIDS news stories covered by them. The Ugandan paper had Africa as a theme and reference to its AIDS stories. The Kenyan paper too had AIDS test and homosexual as references and themes of its AIDS stories. The trend of coverage through the years shows that homosexual was the dominant theme and reference in the AIDS news coverage throughout the studied years. Besides, the theme and reference drug addict had appeared many times between 1986-1989. And the theme and reference, haemophiliac was also frequented between the years 1983-1985 and 1988-1990. Furthermore, the risk protection activity, i.e. AIDS test, was the dominant theme and reference in 1987. The dominant presence of homosexual, drug addict and haemophiliac as themes and references over the years points to the fact that these groups were mostly associated with HIV/AIDS and are thought to be the risk groups. The appearance of AIDS test in the year where the news media coverage of AIDS was high, i.e. 1987, does also reflect the risk protection activity discussed to contain the pandemic.

The main theme and reference of the stories in *Dagens Nyheter* was homosexual and drug addict. In *The Times*, it was, haemophiliac. For the *Daily Nation* and *The New Vision*, it was AIDS test and AIDS research respectively. During the studied years, homosexual and haemophiliac were the main themes and references of the AIDS news stories of 1983-1985. Whilst, drug addict was the main theme and reference of the AIDS news stories between 1986 and 1989-1990. In 1987 and 1988 it was *AIDS test* that was the most frequented main theme and reference. The studied AIDS news stories show that what are termed as "risk groups", i.e. homosexual,

haemophiliac, drug addict, and also risk protection activity, *AIDS test*, were the dominant main themes and references of the AIDS news items through the studied years.

In conclusion, the empirical findings of this study show that the AIDS news that has received media attention confirms to the news value criteria of cultural and geographic proximity except in the case of the Kenyan daily which in turn probably be explained by other factors, like politics. The studied papers have also given preference of coverage to the AIDS news stories that were produced at their request. People in places of authority and responsibility were the main actors as subject of the AIDS stories. And finally, the commonly known risk groups such as homosexuals, drug addicts, haemophiliacs and the risk protection activity, *AIDS test*, were the themes and reference of most of the AIDS stories throughout the years and papers.

6

AIDS VERSUS MEDIA REALITIES IN THE FOUR COUNTRIES

This chapter will study, compare and analyse the AIDS news reporting of the prestige dailies as well as the AIDS situation in the two European and two African countries through the studied years. By so doing, the study shall attempt to discern what the news media's picture of AIDS looks like in relation to the prevalence of AIDS in the real world. The following research questions then guided the study in its undertaking: Does the AIDS news reporting of each paper match the real world conditions of AIDS prevalence in each country? Is there any correspondence between AIDS news reporting and incidence of AIDS in each country and years?

The analysis and comparison of the AIDS news reporting of the prestige news media was conducted based on the concept of news value. The concept of news value maintains that a story is selected and then presented as news after having passed the news value "litmus test". The news value perspective of news selection and production attests that there are commonly understood and accepted criteria for valuing stories and taking them up as news. The subject of this study, i.e. AIDS news, is also found among those items/stories that have to be taken as news by fulfilling the news value criteria. As some studies suggest, in the early stages of coverage, AIDS was news because it was novel and/or unusual, or because it affected big nations and individuals like the U.S and Rock Hudson (McAllister, 1992; Patton, 1990; Kinsella, 1989; Check, 1987). Even in the papers and countries in this study, AIDS was news either because it affected the population in these countries - thereby being selected and presented due to cultural or geographic proximity among others - or because it was new and mystic as one of the earliest AIDS news coverage of the Swedish prestige daily showed (see the article in the end note of Chapter 1). This study then queries why the AIDS news was selected and presented in the studied papers; and shall also investigate and attempt to find out if the real world conditions concerning the incidence of AIDS do affirm the selection and presentation of the AIDS stories by the papers and years.

The real world conditions concerning the prevalence of AIDS in each country was acquired from the respective government's official statistics of AIDS cases, as well as from WHO's *Weekly Epidemiological Records*. The study concentrated in investigating and analysing the AIDS cases only (and

not the HIV infected ones) because of the availability and easy access of the AIDS cases statistics in all the four countries. The AIDS cases per million population in Kenya, Uganda, Britain, and Sweden are 2049, 2643, 141, and 112 respectively (based on the AIDS figures of 1993). These government official figures in themselves point to the gravity and seriousness of the incidence of AIDS especially in the two countries from the south who each have a population less than 20 million. Having said that, in the case of HIV infections, even though it was possible to get real figures from the two European countries, the study could at best get only trends and projections from the Ugandan and Kenyan official documents. Furthermore, the study chose to deal only with the AIDS figures than the HIV ones, because the world wide projections of HIV figures at times gets inflated, therefore, making it difficult to conduct a reasonable comparative study.

The AIDS situation in the two continents, i.e. Europe and Africa, where the studied papers come from will be overviewed in the first part of this chapter. The second part, then, will discuss the incidence and management of AIDS to then compare the AIDS and media realities in the four countries, i.e. Britain, Sweden, Kenya and Uganda.

The Spectre Of AIDS In Europe And Africa

The HIV/AIDS pandemic spread over the globe and attacked people of every walk of life and everywhere irrespective of race and location. The HIV according to WHO's Weekly Epidemiological Record of 29th November 1991, has thus far infected two million in North and South America (one million each), six million in Sub-Saharan Africa, 0.5 million in Western Europe and over one million in south and south-east Asia. Having noted that, the WHO Weekly Epidemiological Record points out that between HIV infection and AIDS there is on average 10 years lag, therefore, if a conservative estimate is used it is expected to have over a million AIDS cases and deaths when the 1990s are over. And it is this state of affairs - its transnational activity and infection rate - that makes the HIV/AIDS situation in the two African and the other two European countries worthy of comparative study.

The AIDS disease according to Findahl (1989:44) was noticed in the European continent and Sweden in the middle of the 1980s. Thomas C.

Quinn (1987:286) even goes further and says that cases of Africans in Europe were recognized not long after the discovery of the existence of AIDS in the U.S.A. The two old continents and their inhabitants have also become offers to the HIV/AIDS pandemic more or less not long after its recognition as a new and deadly infection.

The appearance of HIV infection and the AIDS disease in the four countries mentioned in this study can not at all be looked at in isolation in this "global village" of ours where there is swift and unpredictable movement of people. For example, though it was in 1981 that the AIDS disease was first reported in the U.S.A., it did not take long for its appearance in Europe and then Africa.

Eventhough it has almost been the order of the day to look for a scapegoat and always some other country of origin (other than ones own) for the HIV and thereby the disease AIDS, facts and figures have shown that no one country, culture or race is immune against or for that matter responsible for causing the HIV/AIDS pandemic. So, instead of talking about blames regarding origin of the disease one has now turned to talk of risk factors that are associated with HIV infection. Nonetheless, not going very far from the blame concept, one talks of risk groups which for example point to "persons from Central Africa", "lorry drivers (in Sub-Saharan Africa)" and "military recruits" among others (Westphal Victor,1991:11). Other than risk groups, the risk factors also include what is known as risk behaviour. These suggested risk behaviours are prostitution (or having multiple partners), unprotected intercourse and sharing syringes and needles among others (Okware,1987:727; Quinn,1987:287; Westphal Victor, 1991:11).

Having said that when we look at the AIDS situation in the African continent, we find 80-85% of the transmission occurring through heterosexual contact unlike the homosexual dominance of either the U.S.A. or Europe (Larson,1990:6; Okware, 1987:727; Kreiss et al, 1986:414). It is also noted that the AIDS victims in Africa are people in their productive age, so that death at that age means a big loss not only to the family but also to the nation at large (Hopper,1990:206; Okware, 1987:727).

According to Feldman (1990a:50) AIDS in Africa is primarily an urban disease and there is rather "low seroprevalence in rural Africa" which seems to baffle the outsider. Nevertheless, the number of reported cases of AIDS in the African continent by April 1991 has reached 90,646 (Barnett and Blaikie, 1992:152).

Furthermore, noting on the AIDS situation in Africa and the universally proposed recipes for prevention efforts against HIV/AIDS, Alfred J. Fortin (1987:918-919) has this to say:

...the African AIDS situation is further complicated not only by the political struggles but by the cultural ones as well. The language of AIDS in Africa is one derived from the West. It is a transplanted language that is dependent on the West for its meaning and continued development. It speaks in Western symbols and with a voice that was born from that cultural cosmology. It is not indigenous to Africa and thus is blind to the African world of meaning. For example, there are cultural practices, traditional rituals including a host of communal eating and drinking practices, that seems to be coming under what may be called the negative influence of AIDS preventive efforts.

On the other hand, according to the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (1986:1), in the European continent, "since the beginning of the AIDS epidemic in 1981, prevalence has increased exponentially, with a doubling time of 6-12 months. By september 1985, a total of 1573 cases had been reported to the WHO collaborating centre for AIDS in Paris. Of these, 92% were males and 42% were in the age group 30-39 years". Also, unlike the African continent it is said that by september 30, 1985 among the AIDS cases in the European continent, a great majority, i.e. 69%, were male homosexuals or bisexuals (ibid:3).

Having said that, when we look at the prevalence of AIDS in the two European and the other two African countries in the study, a progressive increase is marked in the studied years, i.e., 1983-90 (Table 6.1). The official reported cases by WHO particularly in the year 1987 do also show a doubling (UK & Sweden), ninefold (Kenya), and even a thousandfold increase in the case of Uganda (see the reporting pattern in Table 6.1). AIDS cases for the years 1983-85 were also absent in the official reports of WHO for the two African countries. Whilst, at least in the case of Uganda, the government has officially published figures going back to 1983 (see Table 6.3).

Table 6.1 AIDS cases reported to WHO from the four countries between 1983-90

Countries	1983*	1984	1985	1986**	1987	1988	1989	1990
Britain	24	108	287	512	1170	1862	2717	3884
Sweden	4	16	42	79	156	235	346	487
Kenya	-	-	-	101	964	2732	6004	9139
Uganda	-	-	-	29	2369	5508	7375	7422

Source: Collected from Weekly Epidemiological Records, beginning October 1983 and ending January 1991.

*Reported as of October 1983

**Reported as of 14 November 1986.

All the remaining others are reported as of December 31 of each year.

The increase in the number of AIDS cases in all the four studied countries went on unabated through the studied years. However, the yearly amount of increase in numbers was radically high in the Southern part of the world when compared to the ones from the North (Table 6.1). At this juncture, one wonders if in this finding there is a suggestion that it is possible to manage the rapid spread of the disease in one part of the world than the other. Or, one can also query if the level of development the countries from North find themselves have played a part in the management of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In other words, does the availability of well developed infrastructure for conducting public health services, health education and public health information campaigns put the two countries from the North in good position to manage the pandemic? Yes, what we are observing is that a sound and healthy economic situation insures the well being of a populace as it provides all the basic amenities, facilitating the effort made to avoid the spread of the pandemic (for example, in the South part of the world, HIV infections are known to result due to repeated use of syringes because one can not afford to use disposable syringes).

AIDS vs media reality in the countries on the study

The incidence and management of AIDS in the four countries where the studied prestige papers come from is discussed in this part of the chapter. By incidence, we mean as to how many people are infected by HIV and how many AIDS cases have been reported through the years. Whilst, by

management, we refer to the measures taken by the respective governments to check/control the spread. Management of the disease could range from setting up special organs for AIDS surveillance and control (who among other things, conduct information campaigns) to enforcing legal measures as to curb the progress of the disease.

Besides, the news media's coverage of AIDS news through the years will be investigated and then compared to the actual figures concerning HIV/AIDS cases through the years. The two realities, i.e. AIDS versus Media, as reflected by the official statistics of AIDS cases through the years that is published by the respective governments and also the results of the empirical investigation of this study which shows the amount of space used by each paper for covering AIDS news through the years, will be analysed and compared. This following section of the chapter shall very briefly introduce the countries whose media is on the study, and then attempt to investigate, discuss and analyse the AIDS situation to finally compare the news media and AIDS realities in each country.

Kenya: AIDS and the News Media

Kenya is a country found in the eastern part of Africa. It has a total land area of 584,000sq.kms. which is twice as large as Britain. The country's population is estimated to be 19.5 million. The annual population growth rate is 3.5%. The urban population is 12.6% of the total.

A Ugandan journalist in his mid thirties who was admitted to the Kenyatta National Hospital in August 1983 was said to have fulfilled the Centers for Disease Control's definition of AIDS (Chirimuuta and Chirimuuta, 1987:103). This account in the East African Medical Journal then heralded the onset of AIDS in Kenya.

It was in 1984 at Kakamenga in Western province that the first Kenyan AIDS case was diagnosed (The New Vision, 1989:2; Kenya AIDS Newsletter, 1992:1). Then in January 1985 the Kenyan press came out in public with headlines "Killer disease in Kenya" and "Horror sex disease in Kakamenga" making HIV and AIDS not confined only to the medical public and literature (Fortin,1987:908).

The following months after the press announcement were known to have been months of denial or at worst silence. But, the state of silence did not last long, as September of the same year saw an unofficial acceptance of the treatment of 20 AIDS victims in Kenya by the country's Ministry of Health. And yet still, according to Fortin (1987:908), "in October 1985, Kenyan government leaders, concerned about jeopardising the local industry (which generated 600,000 visitors in 1986) protested through the national press that the reports about AIDS in Kenya were alarmist and untrue".

In the beginning it was not only the Kenyan government which was suspicious of the alarmist and rather exaggerated Kenyan and in general African HIV/AIDS reporting by the Western media. According to Hopper (1990:302) in a chat he had with four medical doctors in Kenya in regards to AIDS, he cites one of the doctors as saying that AIDS is a disease of foreigners. Even going further the Kenyan Medical Association official journal has also suggested in its editorial that it is tourists from the outside that have introduced AIDS to Africa (Fortin, 1987:909). Nevertheless, Kreiss et al (1986:417) respond to this type of thinking by citing their study conducted on Nairobi prostitutes where they have not been able to find any association between HIV and nationality. Further pointing to the government's response to the Western media's reporting of AIDS origin being Africa, Fortin (1987:909) mentions of the Kenyan officials confiscating the entire shipment of the 9 November 1989 issue of the International Herald Tribune.

On the other hand, the Kenyan press itself also had to mainly rely on official sources which is rather the routine practice of the media and journalists elsewhere in the world¹. But, what makes the difference between the Kenyan and the democratic Western world's media is demonstrated by the reaction of the respective governments, in which case the Kenyan type hardly tolerated criticism of any sort.

Still harping on the AIDS discourse in the African, especially the Kenyan context Alfred J. Fortin (1987:918) notes that the voice of AIDS sufferers is also sacrificed, as there is no group, literature or popular media (unlike the Western world's Gay and other risk group organizations) that talks for them. Besides, he adds that "current AIDS talks reinforces heavy discrimination against women in Kenya and in other African countries" (Ibid), as they are considered to be carriers of the disease.

On the other hand, it is worth noting that the Kenyan AIDS prevention campaign and the national AIDS committee have already been embarked in the Autumn of 1985 (Fortin, 1987: 914; Sabatier, 1988:128). At the start of this prevention campaign a large group of prostitutes from Nairobi took part where they discussed control and prevention of AIDS mostly by promoting condom use.

In an official executive summary that reviewed the Kenyan National AIDS Control programme medium term plan 1(1987-1991) it is noted that "...public awareness in respect of major modes of transmission rose from near zero in 1985 to about 80% level in 1991 in the country" (Kenya AIDS newsletter, 1992:3).

Having said that, when we look at the incidence of HIV/AIDS in Kenya, it is thought that 750,000 Kenyans are believed to be HIV positive (Ibid:2; Africa confidential, 1993:7). Whilst, the number of AIDS cases up till 1993, according to the Kenyan National AIDS Control Program is 39,952 (for yearly incidence and reporting sites, see Table 6.2). At this juncture, it is interesting to note that the following Kenyan government official figures for AIDS cases and the WHO official statistics for AIDS cases in Kenya (1983-90) shown in Table 6.1 have a significant difference between them.

Table 6.2 Yearly reporting of AIDS cases from different regions/provinces in Kenya (1987-1993)

Region	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	Total
Nairobi	295	403	728	759	1684	1497	609	5975
Central	3	16	105	419	660	772	390	2365
Coast	804	1440	2439	3062	3010	1649	63	12467
Eastern	0	23	95	273	807	1437	1027	3662
N.Eastern	1	0	6	23	11	5	0	46
Nyanza	133	337	1010	1953	1775	3123	1289	9620
R.Valley	0	43	125	361	1153	1032	762	3476
Western	10	64	89	770	299	643	366	2341
Total	1246	2326	4697	7620	9399	10158	4506	39952

Source: Data collected from Kenya National AIDS Control Programme office, 23 september 1993 (unpublished computer print out).

With regards to the sex distribution of AIDS cases in Kenya, 56% are male, while 44% are female. And out of the male and female AIDS cases more than 50% are in the age group of 20-39 years old.

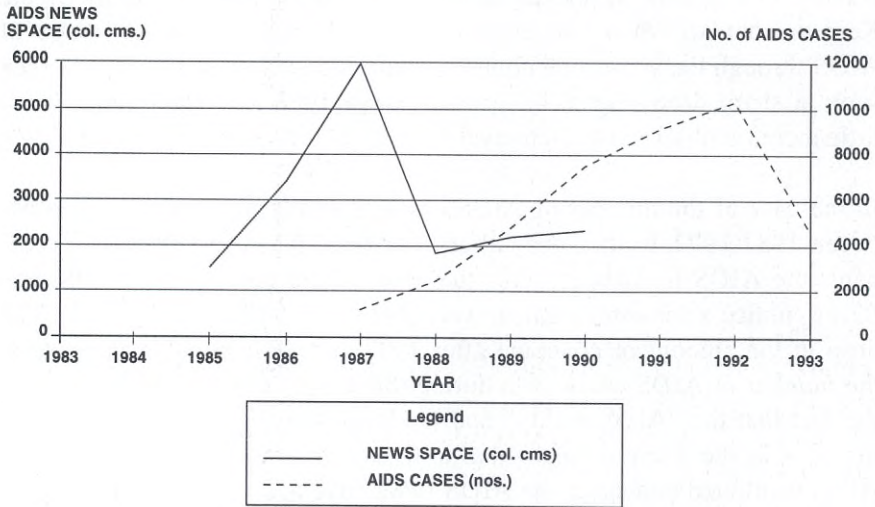
As to age distribution, 8% of the AIDS cases are between the ages of 0-4, 1% between 5-14 years old, 36% between 15-29, 37% between 30-49, 4% between 50-98, and also 14% have no age recorded.

Having had a look at the incidence and management of AIDS in the Kenyan context, when one examines Kenya's news media coverage of AIDS through the years, one notices a sharp increase up until 1987, to then show a sharp drop (Fig. 6.1). And, between 1988 and 1989 there was a little increase observed to then level off.

In the case of the number of AIDS cases, a steady increase was seen between 1987-1992, to then drop after 1992 (Fig. 6.1). And when one compares the AIDS incidence versus the news media coverage of AIDS, one fails to notice a consistent match except between 1985-1987 (Fig. 6.1). The drop in the amount of coverage after 1987 and the continued increase in the number of AIDS cases even during this time (i.e. after 1987) points to the fact that the "AIDS reality" and the "media reality" did not match all the time in the Kenyan case - that is to say that though the incidence of AIDS continued unabated, the AIDS news coverage on the other hand did not show a uniform and continued increase in the use of the amount of space for coverage through the years. At this juncture, one can query if the newsworthiness of AIDS has diminished despite the rise in the number of cases. This again reminds one of a discussion of the same nature where Shoemaker and Mayfield (1987) note that "Perhaps strikes and lockouts are covered in proportion to their true existence *only as long as they remain newsworthy; when strikes become common, then they are less likely to be covered*" (P.7, emphasis added). At this juncture, it is interesting to note that the AIDS issue has also started getting the media treatment like such issues as traffic accidents, malaria infection/deaths (in the tropical countries of the South), unemployment etc. which do not get selected and covered all the time and in great quantities even though these issues are almost always present. Nevertheless, the newsworthiness of the AIDS issue is always enhanced when new information which "...enable writers and editors to recast the issue in a new way" (Rogers et al, 1981:3) is found.

What is noticeable in the AIDS news coverage of the Kenyan, Daily Nation and the other three prestige dailies in this study is that all had a peak in the amount of space in AIDS news coverage in 1987 (which incidentally indicates the setting of media agenda), to again show a sharp drop immediately after (Fig. 6.5).

Figure 6.1 Kenyan AIDS and Media realities through the years



- Sources: 1. The AIDS cases data used in this graph is collected from the Kenyan National AIDS control Programme office where the figures for official AIDS cases started coming out in 1987.
2. The data representing the Media reality is the one gathered for this study by the author which covers the period,1983-1990. Nevertheless, it was only from 1985 onwards that it was possible to find and code AIDS news items from the paper.

The Ugandan AIDS Situation and the News Media

Uganda is a country in the eastern part of Africa bordered by Sudan in the north, Kenya in the east, Rwanda and Tanzania in the south, and Zaire in the west. It has a total land area of 236,036 sq.kms. of which 44,081 is fresh water area. The population of Uganda is estimated to be 16.6 millions. The annual population growth rate is 2.5% (AIDS Control in Uganda, 1993:3). About 90% of the population lives in rural areas.

It was during the end of 1982 in Kasensero, a village on Lake Victoria, that a number of businessmen died which caused people to suspect that it happened so because of AIDS (Okware, 1987:726). Thereafter, in the following year, 17 cases were reported, and the number subsequently reached 3,824 in 1987 (for more see Table 6.3). And, thus did the Ugandan tragic spectacle of HIV/AIDS infection cum death continue to proceed.

Setting aside the relatively quick U.S. and European reactions to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in recognizing its existence and preparing to fight it, it is Uganda which comes out first from the African continent in reacting accordingly. It even does stand in the forefront in its openness and also in starting to collaborate with WHO and the taking up of national prevention and control measures (Goodgame, 1990:383; Sabatier, 1988:89; Barnett and Blaikie, 1992:108).

When the existence of AIDS was perceived, the Ugandan government committed itself to fight the pandemic, and then set up a national AIDS committee which is meant to assist in policy formulation and other issues raised by AIDS (Okware, 1988:33). Then came the AIDS Control Programme (ACP) that was established within the Ministry of Health in 1986. And, finally in 1992 there came into being the Uganda AIDS Commission whose task is to facilitate what is called a "multi-sectoral approach". Under this "multi-sectoral approach", according to the commission's publication, it is believed to bring about "first...the active participation in AIDS control activities by all members of society individually and collectively, in the public and private sector, with coordination by government from the highest political level. Second, the approach seeks to address not only prevention and control of HIV/AIDS but also the management of all possible consequences of the epidemic" (AIDS Control in Uganda, 1993:10).

The Ugandan government, its prime minister and the independent AIDS support organization (TASO) have set an example in going out open in the recognition and control of the pandemic which is increasingly attacking its people and the inhabitants of the world at large. This effective Ugandan non governmental organisation - TASO, The AIDS Support Organisation - is a result of a group of volunteers who gathered to provide "...counseling, education, nursing and medical care as well as some limited material assistance to people with AIDS and their families" (Barnett and Blaikie, 1992:157). Furthermore, this organisation also involves the HIV positive or/and AIDS patients in its activities as active workers.

AIDS in Uganda, as in most other places is believed to have resulted following a certain pattern associated with what are called risk factors which include risk groups - homosexuals, haemophiliacs etc.- and risk behaviours - sharing syringes and needles, unprotected sexual encounter with different partners etc. But, unlike many other places, the AIDS situation in Uganda makes the concept of risk group irrelevant, as "old and young, men and women, rich and poor, rural and urban, married and single are commonly infected" (Goodgame,1990:383).

According to the study done by the national AIDS committee, more than 80% of the AIDS cases occurred in the age group of 19-40 years and also cases were not evidenced between the ages of 5-14 years or over 55 years (Okware, 1988:33). And in a recently published report of the Ugandan STD/AIDS Control Programme, it is mentioned that of the 43,875 clinical AIDS cases reported as of 31st December 1993 (for each year report see Table 6.3), 91.8% were in the ages of 12 years and above, whilst 8.2% were in the ages of 11 years and below (HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, June 1994, P.1).

Furthermore, it is pointed out that among the 39,420 adult AIDS cases the overall mean age for women is 30.37 years, while it is 34.29 years for men (ibid). Besides, of these reported adult AIDS cases 52.3% were women, while 47.7% were men (Ibid) - incidentally one can compare this with UK and Sweden AIDS cases sex ratio, to find out that the number of men outnumbering the women. A Ugandan national UNICEF publication remarks that taking into account the official reported AIDS cases, the number of girls in the age group of 15-19 is six times more than the boys; and it is also twice as many in the age group of 20-24 (UNICEF's response to HIV/AIDS in Uganda,1993:3). And concerning HIV infection, a Ugandan AIDS Commission publication notes "women to have a much higher rate of HIV infection than men, with sex ratios ranging from 1:1.12 to 1:1.8". Nonetheless, it remains a fact that everyone irrespective of sex, ethnicity, race, belief and occupation is in danger.

In Uganda, it is said that HIV is transmitted in three main routes (AIDS Control in Uganda,1993:4). Among these three routes, the hetero-sexual contact is responsible for about 80% of the infections, whilst mother-to-child transmission accounts to 7.5%, and 8% of the infections is due to infected blood and blood products. Having noted that, what one certainly understands about the mode of transmission is that it is mostly through

heterosexual contact in contradistinction to the common North American or European homosexual transmission (Okware,1987:727).

HIV infections are at their highest in urban areas of Uganda. In Kampala city and Mbarara town, for example, "...24 and 36% of antenatal mothers at main hospitals are HIV positive" (New Phase of UNICEF support for AIDS control in Uganda,1992:15).

Though, AIDS is considered to be a disease of urban areas in Uganda (Okware, 1987:727), the government is trying many and different measures to teach AIDS prevention and control even to its rural and mostly illiterate people. As Sabatier (1988:130) and Okware (1988:34) note, the government tries to reach and extend AIDS education to this large section of the population through the church (92% of the population are regular church goers), the Resistance committees that are found in every village, and through schools, notwithstanding the virtual use of political rallies and other 'public meetings' when situations allow.

The number of reported AIDS cases in Uganda has risen to 43,875 in 1993 from its late 1980's figure of 13,339 cases (Table 6.3). This number, i.e. 43,875 cases and a further one million and half HIV-seropositive, which is 10% of the Ugandan population, makes it among the highest hit countries in the continent of Africa. AIDS has created large number of orphans in Uganda (New Phase of UNICEF support for AIDS control in Uganda, 1992:16).

Table 6.3 Cumulative AIDS cases by year in Uganda (1983-1993)

Year	Number of cases
1983	17
1984	29
1985/86	910
1987	3824
1988	7249
1989	13339
1990	19955
1991	30190
1992	38552
1993	43875

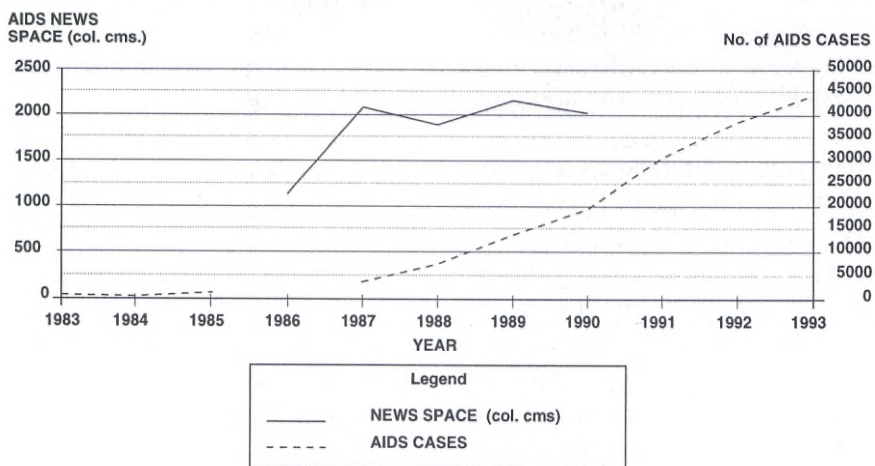
Source: HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, June 1994, STD/AIDS Control Programme, Ministry of Health, Entebbe, Uganda, P. 7, Table 6.

Furthermore, when one considers that most of the infected belong to the very productive age, it is easy to grasp that their death carries a great burden to the nearest kin and the country at large. Moreover, according to the Uganda AIDS Commission:

The effect of the epidemic is already visible in the areas which were affected by the first stages of the epidemic in the early 1980s. In the districts of Rakai and Masaka there has been an increase in the dependency ratio, i.e., in the numbers of children being cared for by elderly adults. There are homes in these areas with no resident older than 15 years, or with toddlers and old people only. Fields can be seen which have gone fallow after the death of the people who used to tend them (AIDS Control in Uganda, February, 1993, P.8).

If the incidence and management of AIDS in Uganda has the above discussed picture, then how does the media reality in relation to AIDS news coverage in Uganda look like? The AIDS news coverage of the Ugandan prestige daily in the studied years shows an increase in coverage of space between 1986-87, to then drop down immediately; and then show an increase between 1988-89, to be followed by a decrease after 1989 (Fig. 6.2). The study shows that unlike the Kenyan Daily Nation, there are two peak periods in the coverage of AIDS news by The New Vision, i.e. 1987 and 1989 (Fig.6.2). The Ugandan media reality of AIDS news coverage does *not all the time* correspond to the AIDS reality of the country which is reflected by the number of AIDS cases through the years (Fig. 6.2). Nonetheless, what makes the Ugandan media reality different from the Kenyan media picture of AIDS is that it has highlighted the problem by giving it more attention, though at different periods, i.e. 1987 and 1989 (Fig. 6.2).

Figure 6.2 Ugandan AIDS reality versus Media Reality through the years*



* The AIDS cases data for the year 1985 and 1986 was one and the same, i.e. 910 in HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, June 1994, Entebbe, Uganda, P.7, Table 6.

Source: The data representing the Media reality was collected by me and covers the period, 1983-1990. Nonetheless, it was only from 1986 onwards that it was possible to find and code AIDS news items from the paper.

Britain: AIDS and the News Media

Britain is an island found in the north west coast of the European continent. The country's land area is 242,500 sq.kms., which is about the same size as one of the four countries in the study, i.e. Uganda. Britain's population is 57.4 million by mid-1990 estimates. The population of Greater London in mid-1990 was 6,794,400. There are also some urban centres that have a population of more than half a million (e.g. Birmingham, Leeds, Glasgow and Sheffield).

Britain, because of its close contacts with the different peoples and countries of the world during the colonial times and afterwards, would have been expected to be among the very first to have recognized and probably experienced the HIV/AIDS as it is said that the virus have been around long back as some scientists suggest. Nevertheless, the first diagnosis of AIDS in Britain was done in 1979 (Public Health Laboratory Service [PHLS] AIDS Centre et al., 1993: Table 2) and it was first reported in 1982

(Ibid:2; Freeman, 1992:54). Besides, according to the WHO's Weekly Epidemiological Record of 7th October 1983, P.305, a homosexual AIDS case was described in England in December 1981. And also an identification done retrospectively on stored blood samples showed the first British HIV positive drug injector in 1983 (Stimson,1990:331).

AIDS was considered as a national threat and had set the mass media agenda in 1985/86 in England (Findahl,1989:12). In Britain the number of HIV/AIDS cases were duly registered, and also the transmission routes were identified. According to the PHLS AIDS Centre-Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre, and Communicable Diseases and Environmental Health(Scotland) Unit, Unpublished Quarterly Surveillance Tables No 21, September 1993; the total number of HIV positive persons up till the end of September 1993 was 20,590 (For further information see Table 6.4). Out of these, 61% resulted because of homosexual intercourse, 14% by heterosexual intercourse, 12% by injecting drug use, 1% by IDU and homosexual intercourse, 7% by blood factor(haemophilia) and transfusion, 1% from mother to infant and 4% by other/undetermined transmission routes (PHLS AIDS Centre et al., 1993:Table 1).

Table 6.4 Yearly trend in reports of HIV-1 infected persons:*
Area of reporting laboratories in Britain (1985 to September 1993)

Year	England	Wales	N. Ireland	Scotland	Total
LAB (+)	312	20	2	19	353
1985	2251	12	21	610	2894
1986	2291	28	11	325	2655
1987	2141	28	8	249	2426
1988	1513	46	8	139	1706
1989	1610	30	12	114	1766
1990	2032	69	12	135	2248
1991	2322	35	15	161	2533
1992	2257	46	17	137	2457
1993 (x)	1710	30	10	120	1870
Total	18127	324	114	2025**	20590**

* Newly confirmed tests of HIV-1 antibody positive persons reported to CDSC and CD(S)U.

(+) Number of laboratories sending anti HIV positive reports to CDSC or CD(S)U.

** Total includes 35 HIV-1 infected persons with date unknown.

(x) First nine months only.

Source: Adopted from AIDS/HIV Quarterly Surveillance Tables, No.21: Dates to end September 1993, Table 5, Public Health Laboratory Service AIDS Centre and the Communicable Diseases and Environmental Health (Scotland) Unit, 1993.

Considering the age and sex distribution of the HIV positive cases in the UK, more than 50% of male and female HIV positive cases are found between the ages of 25-40 (For more see PHLS AIDS Centre et al., 1993:Table 20). And of the 20,590 HIV positive cases, 17,870 are male and 2673 female, whilst 47 reports have sex not recorded (Ibid:Table 1).

In regards to the AIDS cases in the U.K, the above mentioned report points out that up to the end of September 1993, there had been 8115 AIDS cases diagnosed in the UK; out of which 5153 are known to be dead (see Table 6.5, and compare this UK Govt. official data in the table with WHO data in Table 6.1). As to patient characteristics, 6043 persons have acquired the virus through homosexual intercourse, 854 through heterosexual intercourse, 404 through injecting drug use, 132 through injecting drug use and homosexual intercourse, 468 through blood factor (e.g. haemophiliacs) and blood/tissue transfer (e.g.transfusion), 99 are children of HIV positive mothers and 115 are acquired through other/undetermined means (PHLS AIDS Centre et al., 1993:Table 1). Out of these 8115 AIDS cases, it is only 619 who are female. And among the male AIDS cases, the great majority have acquired it through homosexual transmission (Ibid). Furthermore, regarding sex and age distribution of the AIDS cases in UK, more than 50% of the AIDS cases from both sexes are in the age group of 25-39, and it is less than 1% of the male and 1% of the female cases that are found between the ages 5-14 (PHLS AIDS Centre et al., 1993:Table 20).

Table 6.5. UK AIDS cases by year of diagnosis*report and death* (1982-1993)

Year	Diagnosis	Known Deaths**	Report	Known Deaths**	Date of Known Death
1982 or Early (+)	18	17	3	3	8
1983	33	32	26	24	15
1984	106	98	77	74	46
1985	239	224	158	147	118
1986	463	426	298	279	269
1987	664	593	641	592	342
1988	882	756	756	679	407
1989	1046	851	842	707	653
1990	1187	812	1268	947	765
1991	1273	694	1359	806	889
1992	1376	480	1485	590	942
1993 up to 3rd Quarter	782	44	1202	305	662
Quarter Unknown (++)	46	26	-	-	37
Total	8115	5153	8115	5153	5153

* Reporting of recent diagnosis and deaths is incomplete.

** Of the cases diagnosed or reported in each particular quarter, these are the numbers known to have died by end September 1993.

(+) One AIDS case was diagnosed in 1979, 4 in 1981, and 13 in 1982. Three reports were received in 1982. One death occurred in 1981 and 7 in 1982.

(++) Two AIDS cases were diagnosed sometime in 1984, 2 in 1985, 5 in 1986, 3 in 1987, 5 in 1988, 5 in 1989, 4 in 1990, 4 in 1991, 1 in 1992 and 1 in 1993. Both the year and quarter of diagnosis for another 14 were also unknown. Two deaths occurred sometime in 1985, 1 in 1988, 3 in 1989, 1 in 1990 and 2 in 1991. Both the year and quarter of death for another 28 were also unknown.

Source: Adopted from AIDS/HIV Quarterly Surveillance Tables, No. 21: Dates to end September 1993, Table 2, Public Health Laboratory Service AIDS Centre and the Communicable Diseases and Environmental Health (Scotland) Unit, 1993.

Having had a very brief look at the HIV/AIDS cases and the transmission routes in Britain, when we enquire at the management of AIDS pandemic in the U.K., Virginia Berridge (1992:304) points to us three policy phases where the first (1981-86) showed policy formation at a local level through gay groups and the like. The second (1986-87) one took AIDS as a clear political priority and it was characterised as the period of war time emergency. Whilst, the third one which began 1987/88 and extended to the present is a time where AIDS was taken in the normal policy and institutional processes.

In U.K. a public health education campaign to improve knowledge of HIV/AIDS and also to increase public awareness of HIV/AIDS was initially launched in 1986 (Brewin and Gunter,1988:111; Wober,1988:24; Findahl,1989:45-46; OHE Briefing, 1988:6; Hagard, 1988:41-42; Marková and Power, 1992:113). In the beginning, the 1986 nationwide campaign was out to inform the British public about the spread of AIDS. The campaign used newspaper advertisements and leaflets. The campaign continued and it further used the electronic media, the print media and others (e.g. billboard advertising). In addition, leaflets were distributed to more than 23 million households (OHE Briefing, 1988:6; Hagard,1988:42). Furthermore, according to Olle Findahl (1989:22) in the U.K, at the beginning of March 1987, for example in one week a total of 14 programmes were shown by the four British TV channels. These programmes were transmitted in such a fashion that they did not compete for each others time. Aside from these special programmes aimed at AIDS information, also there had constantly been news and other programmes related to AIDS that came up in the radio and the print media.

On the other hand, evaluation surveys conducted on the TV programmes of the campaign showed that the programmes have helped increase knowledge about AIDS (Wober, 1988:19; Findahl,1989:23; Hagard,1988:42; Brewin and Gunter,1988:111). And, according to Olle Findahl (1989:23), the observed increase in AIDS knowledge is significantly related to the frequency of viewing the AIDS programmes on television. Going a bit further, Wober (1988:24) asserts his belief that increased knowledge "...provides the rationale for the reduced perception of risk which has occurred". On the other hand, there were some studies which accepted the fact that an increase/improvement in knowledge about AIDS have been brought about by the campaign, though they maintain that it was not effective in changing sexual behaviour and misunderstandings about HIV/AIDS (Marková and Power, 1992:114).

Chris R. Brewin and Barrie Gunter (1988) had also done a telephone survey of a sample of 126 journalists and programme-makers to know if the 1987 public health education campaign on AIDS in U.K had been effective. Then, the two researchers found out that the sampled media professionals "...over-estimated the amount of attitude and behaviour change, but underestimated the acceptability of the campaign and the increased knowledge that it helped to bring about" (Ibid:116).

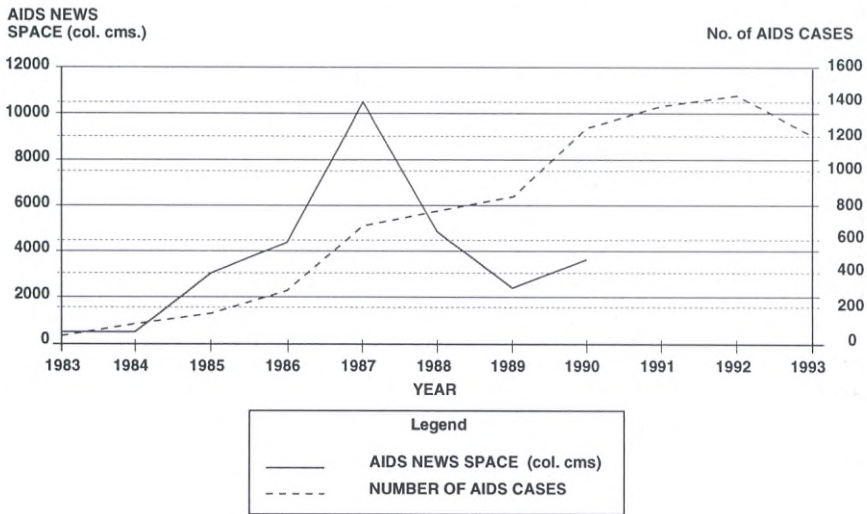
When we consider the U.K. public health strategy to combat AIDS, we find out that it is aimed at giving service to those infected and also conducting preventive measures in the form of taking control measures (e.g. screening) or informing and educating the public (Hagard,1988:41). The U.K. experience in combatting and checking the AIDS epidemic, according to Dr Spencer Hagard (1988:43) shows the importance of pre-planning for a better use of limited resources and also the media's working in partnership unlike the normal competitive working practice.

Discussing about the British public information campaigns and the period of national emergency on AIDS and the media's role in it, television is singled out to have played a particularly significant role by "reinforcing the consensual liberal approach" (Berridge, 1991:184). Whilst, the press, especially the tabloid ones reflected the "new right's" rhetoric of protecting the family and its haemophobic stance towards HIV/AIDS and its victims (Berridge,1991:183-4; Murray,1992:35-36). The Health Education Authority in its public information campaign had also undermined the press' (especially the tabloid press) heavy engagement in criminalizing homosexuality in general or its campaign of calling for a measure of quarantine of HIV positive by its warning of the transmission of the virus between heterosexuals (Murray,1992:40). Nonetheless, Peter Beharell (1993) in his study of "AIDS and the British Press" remarks that "studies of audience groups indicate that while some SUN readers were aware of the prominent "no heterosexual risk" view, it was discounted because of its context in that particular newspaper..."(P.243). Furthermore, it is also worth noting Dr Spencer Hagard's (1988:43) point that the public information campaign's success had also very much relied on government leadership, which acted as a catalyst in achieving public acceptability among others.

In Britain, the incidence of HIV/AIDS has been well documented and also the management of AIDS pandemic has been given due importance and measures like public health education campaign were launched at the

national level. The British media too covered the AIDS news along with the public advertisements that came out of the health information campaign undertaking. The British prestige daily's coverage of AIDS news grew steadily from 1984 up till 1987 where it reached its peak point (Fig. 6.3 - compare this with the observed same trend in the other three papers in the study). But, after 1987, there was a tendency of going down sharply, to again increase the media attention in the AIDS news coverage after 1989. Throughout, the period on this study, i.e. 1983-90, the incidence of AIDS, on the other hand, kept increasing, thereby, pointing to the fact that the AIDS and media realities did not correspond to each other all the time as it happened in the two papers from the African continent (Figs. 6.1-6.4, for a brief discussion of this phenomena refer to the summary at the end of the chapter).

Figure 6.3 Britain's AIDS and Media Realities through the years



Sources: 1. The AIDS cases figures used in this graph are taken from the official government statistics that is presented in Table 6.5 of this Chapter.

2. The data representing the Media reality is gathered by me and covers the period, 1983-1990.

The Case Of Sweden, AIDS and the Media

Sweden is found in the northern part of the European continent. It has a land area of 450,000 sq.kms. The country is larger than Britain and Uganda, and a bit smaller than Kenya. Sweden has a population of 8.5 million which is sparsely scattered over the total land area of the country. It is only three Swedish cities, i.e. Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö, that are the biggest urban centres of the country with a population of more than 200,000.

The first AIDS diagnosis in Sweden was done in 1982 not long after the first case was reported in the U.S.A (RRV,1989:38; Blaxhult, 1993:7). Anders Blaxhult (1993:7), going a bit further specifically says: "when serological antibody testing against the etiological agent, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), became available in 1984-85, it was shown that a patient with HIV had been cared for as early as 1978". Furthermore, according to the Swedish Auditor General's commissioned report (RRV,1989:38), HIV infected homosexuals and bisexuals during the end of the 70s, and the intravenous drug abusers in 1983 were found to have contacted the virus (see also Malmquist and Ramgren,1992:11).

As Sweden has a rather well developed and long tradition of keeping statistics on everything, it was not at all difficult to follow up the development and find out the HIV/AIDS cases through modes of transmission. So, between 1983 and 1993, 44% contacted the HIV virus through homosexual/bisexual modes of transmission, 18% were infected through Intravenous Drug Abuse (IDA), 2% had it through blood transfusions, 3% got it through coagulation disorders, 31% contracted HIV through heterosexual infections, 1% of the cases got it from mother to child, and another 1% were with undetermined transmissions out of the total of 3700 (Smittskyddsinstitutets Årsrapport 1993, P.28). Besides, the number of HIV positive cases among the male population was very high compared to the female ones (Table 6.6).

Concerning AIDS patients, 948 cases have been known between the years 1983-90, of which 549 are known to be dead by December 31, 1993 (Smittskyddsinstitutets Årsrapport 1993, P.10&28). Of these AIDS cases 857 were men, whilst 91 were women (for yearly incidence, see Table 6.7 and compare it with WHO figures in Table 6.1). Among these AIDS cases 621 were a result of male homo/bisexual transmission, 89 by IV drug abuse, 33 through coagulation disorders, 39 through blood transfusions,

154 through heterosexual infections, 5 from mother to child, and 7 by transmission routes that are/is undetermined. It is also noted that homosexual/bisexual men are the majority among the AIDS patients in Sweden (HIV-Aktuellt,1992:24; Westphal Victor,1991:97; Brorsson and Herlitz, 1988a:67; RRV,1989:12; Herlitz,1992:6; Smittskyddsinstitutets Rapport 1993, P.28). Furthermore, according to Malmquist and Ramgren (1992:13), of the AIDS cases in record, "two thirds" are said to be in the Stockholm county; whilst Malmö showed more cases compared to Gothenburg which is the second largest city.

As to the age distribution, it is noted that about 1% of the HIV positive cases are between the ages of 0-4, 1% between 5-14 years old, 38% between 15-29 years old, 52% between 30-49 years old, and finally 8% are between 50-70 years old (Ibid:28).

Table 6.6 Yearly breakdown of HIV cases by sex in Sweden

Year	Male	Female	Total
1983	6	-	6
1984	10	-	10
1985	245	67	315
1986	860	105	965
1987	329	68	397
1988	240	66	306
1989	234	70	304
1990	253	82	335
1991	213	115	328
1992	241	109	350
1993	257	127	384
Total	2891	809	3700

Table 6.7 Yearly breakdown of AIDS cases by sex in Sweden

Year	Male	Female	Total
1983	6	-	6
1984	10	-	10
1985	26	-	26
1986	47	1	48
1987	64	5	69
1988	84	13	97
1989	110	11	121
1990	119	12	131
1991	123	14	137
1992	117	9	126
1993	151	26	177
Total	857	91	948

Source: Smittskyddsinstitutets Årsrapport 1993, P.28, Tables 12 and 11 (For Tables 6.6 & 6.7, respectively)

The onset of AIDS in Sweden has brought about different organizational and legislative measures meant to manage the pandemic by curbing its spread. To coordinate the HIV/AIDS prevention work in the sphere of research, information, setting up laws and resource allocation, the Swedish AIDS Delegation was set up in May 1985 (RRV,1989:37). Furthermore, HIV infection was put under the Swedish law of venereal diseases which requires every infected individual to consult a physician, and where the physician is also required to notify partners and also register the patient. This law does also necessitate that any individual in a risk of transmission be forcibly hospitalized (Westphal Victor,1991:104; Herlitz,1992:6). According to the law those who refused cooperation could be forced to see a physician.

The legislative process did not end there as a new Communicable Disease Act was passed on 1st of July 1989. This law, according to Birgit Westphal Victor (1991:119) allows all screening to be voluntary -except for rapists- and further "...tracing of contacts is enjoined, and compulsory isolation for a limited period of time is possible as an extreme recourse, but all care is aimed at reintegrating the patient with society by means of qualified individual psychotherapeutic care adapted to his/her needs". Having noted that, it also ought to be marked that in Sweden, for that matter in all Nordic countries all AIDS cases once identified are registered (Westphal Victor,

1991:100). The Swedish practice of registering everything and rigorous book keeping practice of the nation's available resources and maintaining statistics on all might have come in hand to this identification and registration of the AIDS cases.

Swedish overall prevention and fight against HIV/AIDS is not only limited to setting up appropriate organizations and passing legislative measures. The country's overall health policy objective does also incorporate the fight against HIV/AIDS among others, and the war is planned to be waged by giving out information to combat the spread of infection (Westphal Victor, 1991:101). Sweden has also had conducted the AIDS information campaigns of the type that took place in Europe and North America in 1986 and 1987. The campaigns aimed at bringing the problem of HIV/AIDS to people's attention, raising people's knowledge of HIV/AIDS and most of all trying to change people's sexual behaviour - e.g to avoid multiple sexual partners and have protected sexual intercourse (Findahl, 1989:44; RRV, 1989:54).

The information campaigns especially the ones conducted through the mass communication, according to RRV (1989:18) "have given at least somewhat distorted picture of the risks. The goal of avoiding prejudices seems to have been given more weight than the aim of curbing the spread of infection. Here, one can question if caution in information presentation can in a way counteract prejudice. But, on the contrary, prejudices can have difficulty to flourish in 'an open and reasonable culture'" (translation mine). Besides, according to The Swedish Auditing General (RRV), at the beginning of the campaign among the HIV infected in Sweden 50% were homosexuals or bisexuals and about 30% were intravenous drug abusers. This being the case, in the pictures and texts prepared for the campaign, it was only 9% that was targeted to the homosexual or bisexuals, whilst the Intravenous drug abusers had 1% of the messages directed to them.

According to RRV (1989:18) and Findahl (1989:20), these information campaigns are said to be prepared and presented by advertising agencies and professionals in a way these organizations try to sell new products. In addition, the RRV (1989:109) remarks that very little is known as to how the Swedish AIDS information campaign has been attended to by the public. Nonetheless, Claes Herlitz and Bengt Brorsson (1990) in a study conducted just before the March 1987 national public education campaign attempted to find out police officers, nurses and the Swedish general

public's reactions to the disease AIDS and its offerings. In this study, the two researchers found out that a "...good knowledge of verified carriers of HIV infection" (P.916) existed in the studied sample of police officers, nurses and the general public. Moreover, the study showed that police officers almost 9 out of 10 demanded compulsory measures towards 'homosexuals' and persons infected with HIV.

The measures directed at managing AIDS pandemic has also been a focus of research to find out their effectiveness and other related items. Bengt Brorsson and Claes Herlitz (1988a:68), for example, conducted a survey to detect people's awareness of "sources of infection, status of the epidemic, and current legislation concerning AIDS" among others. The two researchers did their study in three surveys -in 1986 and 1987- in a random sample of 4000 people between the ages of 16-44. The results of their survey show that "the confidence in the way the mass media describe the development of the AIDS epidemic has increased" (Ibid:70). And even the percentage of the respondents that say the mass media exaggerates the risks involved in HIV/AIDS infection has also decreased from 39% in 1986 to 29% in the 1987 two surveys. Moreover, in another study set to examine peoples' opinions on mandatory HIV testing, Claes Herlitz (1992:27-29) found out that 58% of the interviewed respondents favoured mandatory testing as opposed to voluntary testing which was favoured by 36% of the respondents. This interview was conducted in a randomly selected sample (from the SPAR population register) of 1052 persons with a 70% response rate.

In addition, a survey was conducted by Testologen Inc. between November 1985 - January 1986, November 1986 - January 1987, and April - June 1987 to find out the "public opinion towards the AIDS epidemic and other social problems". These three consecutive surveys were conducted on a random sample of 2850 people each between the ages of 15-70 years. The results of the survey show that a big percentage of the surveyed sample thinks that AIDS is a very important social issue at the time of the survey. It is also noted that the percentage of those who think so rose from 63% to 74% a year later, and then ended up being 87% in the third survey - spring 1987. Brorsson and Herlitz (1988b) in their letter to the editor do also confirm that "no other issue attained such a high level of public concern during the survey as did the AIDS issue..."

The AIDS pandemic in Sweden other than igniting legislative, organizational and other necessary issues meant to curb its spread has also incurred a huge amount of financial cost in the sphere of medical care. For example, the 1986 and 1987 estimated cost for the AIDS epidemic in Sweden was 140 million and 313 million respectively (Herlitz and Brorsson, 1989:42). And, according to Anders Blaxhult (1993:17) in 1987 the Swedish government's massive testing programme was estimated to cost about 124 million Swedish Kronors, whilst 57 million Kronors was the estimation for HIV/AIDS patients' care. Herlitz and Brorsson (1989:45) also maintain that AIDS care is mostly "concentrated on inpatient care". Therefore, in the coming few years, AIDS patients "requiring inpatient care" will be in the number of 200-300 which in turn needs 30-45 hospital beds (Malmquist and Ramgren, 1992:21).

Malmquist and Ramgren (1992:60) also maintain that the anticipated annual county council costs for somatic care between the years 1990-95 is 200-300 million Swedish Kronors, "assuming the number of known (live) cases of HIV infection remains constant (in both absolute and clinical stage distribution terms)...". And if 100-200 million Swedish Kronors meant for psycho-social measures (2,000 cases) is added to this, the total expenditure will come to 300-480 million Swedish Kronors.

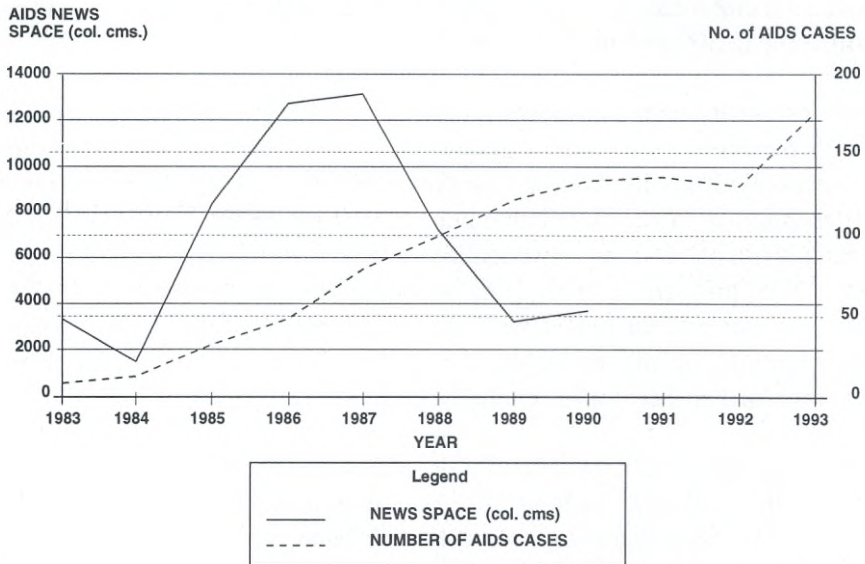
Besides, what one never passes without mentioning in the management of AIDS pandemic as related to giving out information/news is the question or necessity of giving AIDS a face (Windahl, 1989:31). As Rock Hudson is oft mentioned in the AIDS literature as having given AIDS a face and taking it out of obscurity, Sweden also had to wait for quite a time to give her AIDS problem a face. But, what remains questionable is if E.B. Carlsson (an official linked with the Prime minister Olof Palme murder investigation) or the trend setter Sighsten Herrgård have given it the required face or there still is a long way to go.

AIDS pandemic has triggered off quite a number of measures ranging from information campaign to legislative measures for managing the pandemic by the Swedish government. On the other hand, the Swedish media too, has been covering AIDS news along with the health information campaign advertisements. Dagens Nyheter's coverage of AIDS news shows more or less the same trend as the other European prestige daily, i.e. The Times (Fig. 6.4 and 6.3, respectively). In both cases, there is a sharp increase of news space for AIDS news coverage from 1984 up until 1987 to again

sharply drop and then again rise between 1989-90. Nonetheless, what makes the Swedish paper a bit different from its British counterpart is that in the initial stage, i.e. 1983-84, there has been a drop in allotment of news space in the AIDS news coverage (Fig. 6.4). Otherwise, the two European prestige papers display the same trend in their portrayal of the media reality in AIDS news coverage.

Having said that, when we attempt to compare and see if media reality does correspond to the AIDS reality in the case of Sweden, we find out that the media reality does not match the AIDS reality all the time. A steady increase in the number of AIDS cases is observed when one looks at the AIDS reality picture in Sweden; whilst, the media reality, on the other hand, shows a sharp increase and then a sudden drop in coverage (Fig. 6.4). This then highlights the point that the AIDS issue did not stay on the media agenda all the time, while, on the other hand, the AIDS pandemic persisted in the real world without showing any sign of curbing its advance.

Figure 6.4 AIDS and Media Realities in Sweden through 1983-1990

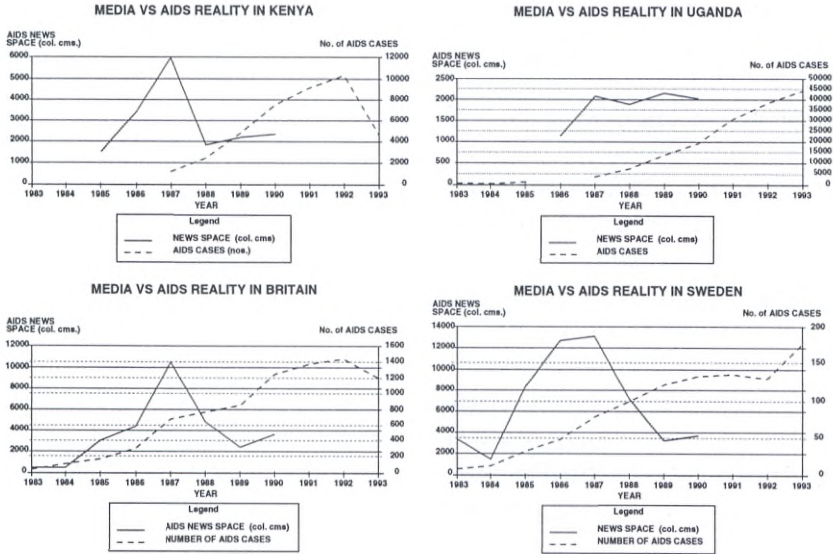


Sources: 1. The AIDS cases figure was taken from the official government statistics that is found in Table 6.7 of this Chapter.

2. The data representing the Media Reality is collected by me, and covers the period, 1983-1990.

AIDS versus media realities: a summary

Figure 6.5 AIDS and Media realities in the countries whose media is on the study



AIDS prevalence and the total amount of news space given to AIDS coverage by the prestige dailies of the four countries in the study also shows a *general trend* whereby the total number of AIDS cases steadily increased, whilst the media coverage showed a sharp increase to again drop down fast (Figs. 6.1-6.4). The media coverage was at its most in 1987, having shown a continued increase in AIDS news space coverage between the years 1984-1987 (Figs. 6.1-6.4). But, the subsequent years showed an opposite trend when compared to what had happened to the AIDS reality (Figs. 6.1-6.4). This finding then proves the point that “because only certain types of events, therefore, may receive coverage, the news media picture of reality may be incomplete and misleading” (Perry, 1981:439). Though, we do not expect the media to go on carrying AIDS news all the time in great quantities, nevertheless, we think the drop in coverage when the number of cases did not show any sign of decrease begs a plausible answer. At such instances, one wonders if it is because AIDS news has ceased to fulfill the news value criteria of being novel, negative, important, etc., to be selected and presented as news.

Having said that, when the media reality in individual papers and years is investigated, what one comes across is that after the increase observed by all papers through 1984-1987, the two African papers showed a sharp drop in allotment of AIDS news space between 1987-1988; while the European papers had displayed a decrease between 1987-1989. Then the *Daily Nation* displayed an upward trend in coverage of space between 1988-1990. *The New Vision* newspaper showed an increase in the year 1988-1989. *Dagens Nyheter* and *The Times*, in turn showed an increase in allotment of AIDS news space between 1989-1990. Overall, all the papers had 1987 as the peak year in allotment of AIDS news space for coverage. Besides, *The New Vision* also had another peak period in 1989. In general, the trend of allotment of space for AIDS news coverage in the two European papers and the Kenyan one show more or less the same pattern; whilst the Ugandan one differs in having two peak periods of coverage and a rather sharp drop after 1989.

The answer to the research question which queries if there is any correspondence between AIDS news reporting and incidence of AIDS in each country is simply, no there is no correspondence all the time. The findings of this study demonstrate that the media reality of AIDS news coverage was in par with the prevalence of AIDS starting from the earliest years up until 1987 (Fig. 6.5). But, after 1987, both realities, i.e. Media and AIDS, show variance among the papers and years and do not match most of the time. When we query why, Shoemaker and Mayfield's (1987:7) remark where they say that "explanations for the media's not mirroring reality at times can be found in journalistic routines, journalists' socialization, and influences from advertisers and audiences..." readily comes at hand. On the other hand, one can also argue that when a news media covers an issue or event which at a specific time and place fulfills the news value criteria, it often attempts to do an in depth analysis of the matter based on background material and also future projections, so that it can avoid repeatedly writing about the issue. The case of the nuclear fallout is a good example, in which case the media did not keep writing about its dangers constantly after having shown its consequences and projected the dangers that are at bay. In the case of AIDS too, the same argument can be forwarded by some², saying that the media attempted to cover about the AIDS problem when it became news and at the same time it also tried to show the future of the pandemic based on the development then.

NOTES

1. This standard practice is noted by Oscar H.Gandy Jr. in his book "Beyond Agenda Setting: Information Subsidies and Public Policy", where he mentions that because of personal relationship developed through regular contact, economic considerations (journalists tight working schedules call for such considerations) and also because some sources are considered as reliable, journalists tend to go after "official bureaucracies, or bureaucratically organized institutions". He then cites a study done on the front pages of New York Times and The Washington Post by Leon Segal where "of nearly 1,200 stories, 58.2% were identified as coming through routine bureaucratic channels-official proceedings, press releases and conferences, and non spontaneous or planned events" (Ibid,1982:12).
2. The media's role in reflecting the reality that is about to come or in the making, is a point that is raised by Professor Kent Asp of Gothenburg University while discussing the subject with him - incidentally, Professor Asp is the author of the book "Måktiga Mass Medier" (Powerful Mass media), in 1986.

MEDIA SETTING THE AIDS AGENDA

What does the mass media's picture of AIDS look like in relation to the public's understanding of AIDS? Has the agenda-setting process been at work with the issue of AIDS? In order to tackle these research questions, the study used the agenda-setting hypothesis which says that the importance or prominence of an issue/event comes to be discerned by an audience when the media gives more attention and attaches more emphasis in its coverage (McCombs and Gilbert, 1986; McQuail and Windahl, 1981).

The media's agenda-setting role for different issues/events had been a subject of many a study (McCombs and Shaw, 1972; Pritchard, 1986; Dearing and Rogers, 1992). The media by giving emphasis and importance to an issue/event are said to make it salient, thereby setting the agenda. The media's agenda setting role is in letting the audience learn about an issue and its importance.

This study then attempts to find out if the agenda-setting process had been at work with the AIDS issue in the studied years and countries. To do so, it chose to take one of the four countries in the study (i.e. Sweden) as it is hardly possible to get any public opinion survey data from the two African countries. Besides, in the two African countries, it is radio not the print media that is more effective, as it bypasses illiteracy and because its rural penetration is relatively high (for more on radio's effectiveness in such societies, see Andersson, 1988:58; Feldman et al, 1987:98; Wilson et al, 1989:960). Moreover, as the studied two African papers are tuned to the policy makers and mostly the urban elite, their agenda setting effect seems rather limited to a certain group or category of the populace. Therefore, the study could not perform an investigation of the agenda-setting process in the two African countries whose prestige media it probes. As to Britain, though it is not impossible to get the public opinion and the media data; the study, nonetheless, chose to concentrate and investigate only the agenda setting process in Sweden. It chose so, because of the availability and easy access (especially public opinion data) of the materials for the study, and also because the study thinks that one example from the North part of the world is enough to show that the issue of AIDS has initiated the agenda setting process in that part of the world.

The agenda-setting investigation of the study looks at the empirical data collected from the Swedish prestige daily *Dagens Nyheter* between 1983-1990, the Swedish Tv Channel Two news program (*Rapport*) between 1983-1988¹, the Swedish public opinion survey data (SOM) from 1987-1993, and finally at the actual prevalence of AIDS according to the official statistics of AIDS cases between 1983-1993². Having done so, it then tries to find out the relationship each had with one another, i.e. if the media coverage and public opinion show the same or different trends; and if the reality of AIDS incidence does go in par with the AIDS media coverage or/and public opinion surveys. At this juncture, it is worth mentioning that there are little variations between the time span of the different studied items, i.e. *Dagens Nyheter* (1983-1990), *RAPPORT* (1983-1988), SOM (1987-1990), which is because of lack of any better data.

The Swedish public opinion survey (SOM) which is conducted annually started to include the open ended question, "which problem/s do you think is the most important in Sweden today?" in its survey questionnaire since 1987 (SOM,1987). Therefore, the responses for this classical agenda-setting question regarding AIDS problem were used in this investigation of the AIDS issue and the agenda-setting process.

However, it ought to be noted that according to the Swedish public opinion survey data, AIDS was not considered that big a problem compared to others like the state of Swedish economy, the environment, health care, unemployment, immigration, etc. For example, even compared to alcohol and narcotic problems, AIDS was not comparatively that big a problem in the eyes of the Swedish public as the SOM survey data indicated (Table 7.1).

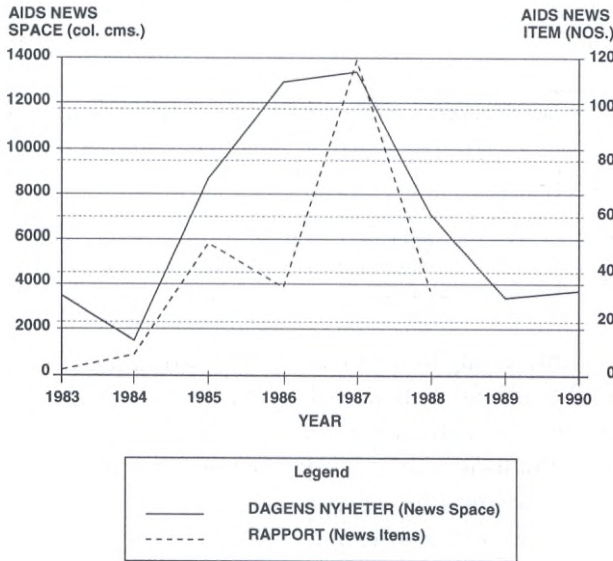
Table 7.1. Percentage of respondents that indicated AIDS and alcohol/narcotics as most important problems in Sweden in 1987-93

Problem	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
AIDS	8.8	1.2	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0
Alcohol/narcotics	10.1	13.0	9.6	5.3	4.0	2.7	1.7
No. of respondents	1673	1423	2409	1582	1573	1889	1857

Source: Collected from SOM survey data, 1987-1993. Department of Journalism and Mass-Communication, and Department of Political Science, Göteborg University, Gothenburg, Sweden.

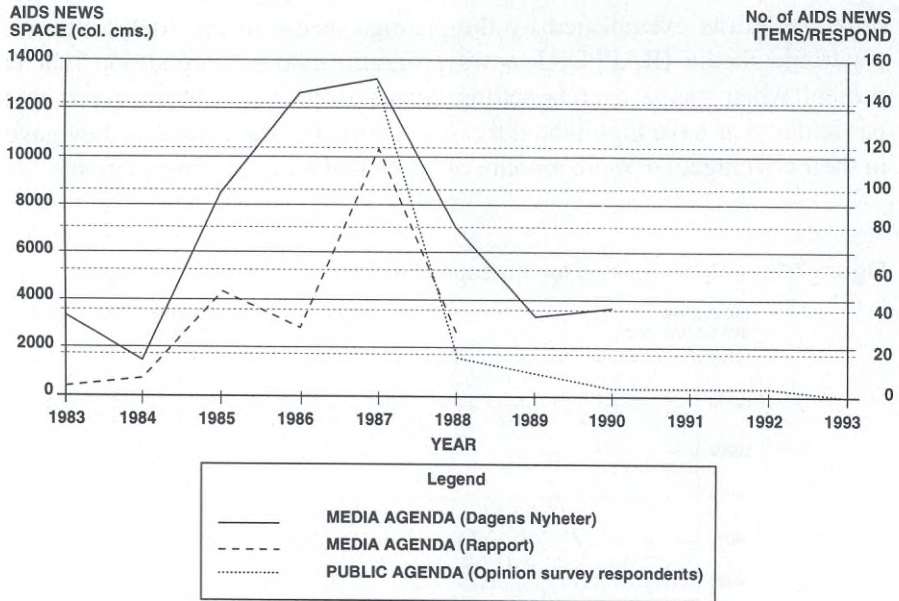
It is worth mentioning that the AIDS issue however, has set the media agenda in Sweden as the findings of this study suggest. In 1987, both the print media (as exemplified by the prestige media in the study) and the electronic media (RAPPORT news program) exhibit a condition that is present when media agenda setting occurs (Fig. 7.1). The media at this particular year have highlighted the AIDS issue by the emphasis they gave in their coverage, i.e. more amount of space and number of news items.

Figure 7.1 Media Agenda for the issue of AIDS



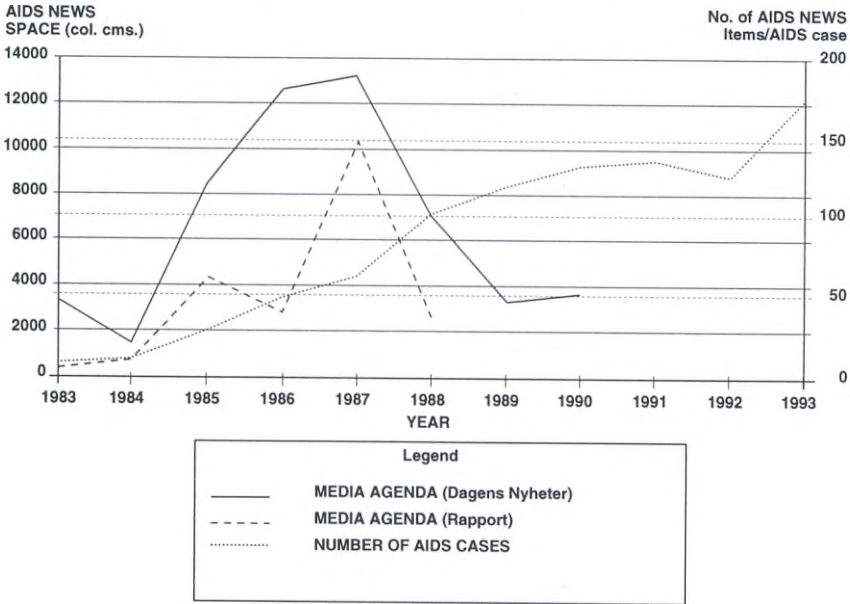
The AIDS coverage of the media (*Dagens Nyheter* and *Rapport* - media agenda) and the public opinion survey (*public agenda*) do also exhibit a classic case of agenda-setting where the coverage and the percentage of public responses regarding AIDS as a problem do show similar trend, i.e. a high peak in 1987 and a downward trend in the successive years (Figure 7.2). At this juncture it is worth noting that 1987 was the year the Swedish AIDS information campaign undertaking began; thereby indicating that AIDS even was an agenda issue for the government to respond to it by launching the AIDS information campaign (*policy agenda*).

Figure 7.2 Media Agenda vs Public Agenda for the issue of AIDS in Sweden



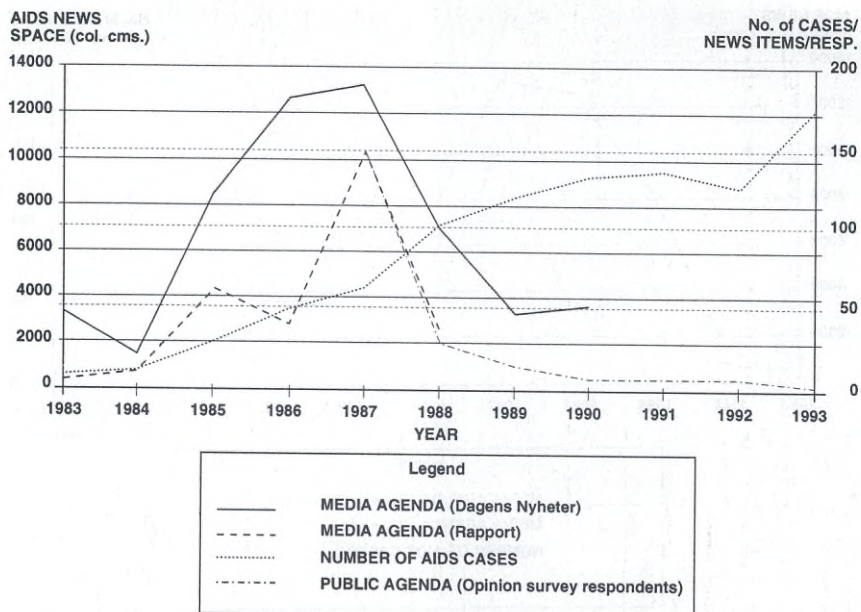
Moreover, it is interesting to note that the real-world indicator of incidence of AIDS, i.e. the official statistics of AIDS cases, did not show the same trend as the media coverage or the state of the public opinion (Fig.7.3). The actual reality in the incidence of AIDS manifested a steady increase in the number of cases; whereas the media coverage showed a decreasing trend after 1987. “Several past studies have found similarly that a real-world indicator plays little or no role in the agenda-setting process. For example, the drug issue rose to an important position on the U.S. national agenda during the 1980s, while the real-world indicators (the number of drug-related deaths) did not increase” (Rogers et al, 1991:32, emphasis added).

Figure 7.3 Media Agenda vs Real World Indicators for the issue of AIDS in Sweden



On the other hand, though the AIDS media coverage and public opinion peaked high in 1987, the actual incidence of AIDS cases continued its increase and reached its highest peak in 1993 (Fig. 7.4). This trend then reminds one of Stephen Reese’s (1991) remark where citing Funkhouser’s study he says that Funkhouser “...found little correspondence between issue coverage and the underlying conditions, even those event based issues: American involvement in Vietnam peaked in 1968, whereas news coverage peaked in 1966. Urban riot articles peaked in 1967, while the number of civil disturbances peaked in 1968” (P.314).

Figure 7.4 Media Agenda vs Public Agenda vs Real World Indicators of the issue of AIDS in Sweden



Summary

The annual trend of AIDS news coverage by the Swedish prestigious daily *Dagens Nyheter* as indicated by the news space given to AIDS news stories, the number of AIDS news items in the Swedish TV Channel 2 news program - *Rapport*, and the annual Swedish public opinion survey data trend clearly exhibit the agenda-setting process at work (Fig.7.4). Rogers and Dearing (1988:565) point out that an agenda is "...a list of issues and events that are viewed **at a point in time** as ranked in a hierarchy of importance" (emphasis added). In this study too, it was in 1987 that the media coverage and public opinion survey results peaked high, displaying the condition that will be present when agenda-setting has occurred (Fig. 7.2). Compared to the other years, the public and media both emphasized and gave importance to the issue of AIDS in 1987, thereby, suggesting the setting of public as well as media agendas. Incidentally, it was also in 1987 that the Swedish government launched the AIDS information campaign, thereby reflecting the importance and emphasis attached to the issue of AIDS by the policy makers, which at the same time also reflects the setting of the policy agenda.

The findings of this empirical study suggest that the media agenda setting process can be functional at least in the countries of the Northern part of the world who incidentally have a free media which is increasingly assuming a central role in the everyday lives of the populace. In this part of the world, people tune to the media for the weather forecast so that they can plan their day, for briefing themselves about what is going on in their area and the world, for knowing what is the latest fashion, for their entertainment, etc. Therefore, the media are assuming increasingly important informational role in the societies of the North. Whilst, in the South part of the world the role assumed by the media is rather limited due to its meagre presence and also because of the technological and economic backwardness of this part of the world.

Furthermore, as the African papers in the study are mostly tuned to the policy makers and the urban elite, it is rather the setting of the media and also the policy agendas that is expected to occur there. Moreover, in these countries, it is the electronic media, i.e. radio, that relatively reaches the rural population which is the mainstay of the population. Besides, the relative freedom of the media in this part of the world is in question as it is pointed out in the discussion of the findings of the study (Chapters 4-6, in relation to the Kenyan prestige daily).

Finally, what the findings of this empirical study suggest is that the conditions which will be present when agenda setting occurs are observed in one of the countries whose prestige media is on the study, i.e. Sweden.

NOTES

1. The AIDS news data collected by Professor Kent Asp of Göteborg University, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication from the TV channel two news program, *Rapport*, was used for this study. And the data that was available was only between the years 1983-1988.
2. The statistical data used for constructing the graph was the one found in Chapter 6, Table 6.7 of this dissertation which was collected from *Smittskyddsinsitutets Årsrapport 1993*, P.28, Table 11.

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PART THREE

EPIDEMICS, RISK COMMUNICATION AND AIDS

In this third part of the study, it will be attempted to give an answer to the research questions: *what is the news media's role and significance in risk communication activity? Does the news media have any role in risk communication while relaying AIDS news?* News of the AIDS type are believed to relay health risk messages in their reports. Therefore, the study shall then empirically investigate and analyse the AIDS news, i.e. media reality (see the analysis model in Fig. 1.1) to find out if they do carry risk communication messages dealing with risk *prevention* and *protection*. In order to understand the health risk prevention/protection messages that are carried by the news media regarding our foremost present day epidemic (AIDS) better, this study shall also attempt to have an overview of the history and management of epidemics in general. The study then discusses management of epidemics in history in relation to AIDS risk management in chapter eight.

In chapter nine, the study shall briefly discuss risk communication in general and public health risk communication in particular. In this part the study shall also show the role the mass media plays in management of public health risk of the AIDS type and others. The mass media while fulfilling its function of informing, educating and entertaining; also has a bigger role to play in risk communication as it can reach many people at the same time with the same message. Finally, in chapter ten, there will be an empirical examination of AIDS news as risk communication. The analysis and discussion in this chapter is based on the data collected from the prestige dailies of the two African and two European countries from 1983-1990.

8

EPIDEMICS AND AIDS

The appearance of epidemics and the consequences they brought about on human society, and also their management will briefly be dealt in this chapter. In the ensuing general discussion on epidemics, the management of AIDS - the present day's epidemic - is also briefly compared along with the management of epidemics from historical perspective.

AIDS, which is the epidemic/pandemic of our time, has shown its gravity and devastating effect on the lives of people. The consequences of this pandemic's debilitating effect is well explained by the words of Barnett and Blaikie (1992) based on their experience of Uganda:

...AIDS threatens almost every aspect of the normal expectations of family life from birth to death and beyond in the sense that proper burial and memory of the individual in the collective consciousness are threatened....Widows and orphans may face insecurity of ownership or access to land and property. Food supplies may be disrupted because of a lack of labour and cash. (P.52)

The popular reactions and the resulting measures suggested and/or taken to manage the spread and effect of the AIDS pandemic in different countries as well as individuals reminds us of more or less same steps taken for managing epidemics at different times and places. Therefore, this chapter shall try to find out which types of measures were taken to manage the AIDS and the foregone epidemics in the world stage. By doing this, it is thought that it might probably help better understand the present day popular reactions that have been brought about by the AIDS pandemic.

Epidemics in history: A brief overview

History is full of events and happenings of varying scales. Wars of the type that were fought mainly in the European continent (1st and 2nd world wars), floods of significance that even found place in the holy books, drought and famine of the scale seen in the Horn of Africa, epidemics that occurred at different centuries in different parts of the world are but a few examples that left their trace in the historical annals of the Homo Sapien community.

Among these historical events and happenings, this chapter will concentrate on epidemics of the AIDS type, their occurrence and to some extent the effect they had on societal life. Having said that, when we turn to the subject proper and inquire what is meant by an epidemic, the New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary of the English Language (1991) defines an epidemic as "a disease which becomes widespread in a particular place at a particular time" or/and "an occurrence, generally unpleasant, which is widespread or intense". And in this study, we will be using the first description that relates to disease.

Epidemics in general and the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in particular have made their appearance in the world stage as one of the familiar historical occurrences. The human society and for that matter among the beasts too (see for example, Ranger, 1992) epidemics have played important part in shaping historical development (McNeill, 1976:232; and as to the especial role played by an epidemic in changing the American continents' settlement patterns, see also Ibid:2 & 251).

Having said that, when we query about the how, when and why of the occurrence of epidemics, we come across a "complex interplay of biological and social factors" thereby facilitating the development of "favorable ecological niches" that permit epidemics to thrive at large (Risse, 1988:56). Besides, the successful growth and life of epidemics is also accentuated by biological mutations, growth of world trade and transport and the evolution of civilization thereby resulting in things like growth of cities, pollution etc. (McNeill, 1976:223; Risse, 1988:56; Evans, 1992:150 & 161).

Furthermore, the biological research that is conducted in the military laboratories is also believed to aid in letting loose some germs that might be responsible for causing epidemics (McNeill, 1976:289-90). This type of thinking is also observed among the many theories put forward concerning the origin of AIDS.

According to McNeill (1976:223) epidemics and diseases that have become familiar in some parts of the world, e.g. in Europe, due to increased and efficient communication have also ended up becoming only childhood diseases, whilst older persons acquired immunity as a result of prior exposures. According to McNeill (1976:224) "...we should view the "domestication" of epidemic disease that occurred between 1300 and 1700

as a fundamental breakthrough, directly resulting from the two great transportation revolutions of that age - one by land, initiated by the Mongols, and one by sea, initiated by Europeans". Therefore, the communication factor that facilitated the spread of epidemics at the same time has also helped in domesticating diseases thereby lowering the destructive capability of epidemics (see for example, the smallpox epidemic that raged in Mexico during the Spanish conquest and how it attacked the native population as compared to the Spaniards, McNeill, 1976:2).

Among the type of epidemics known to have left their mark on history, the smallpox epidemic which was brought by the Europeans and that hit the Americas; the Tuberculosis surge of the 17th century , the Plague (widely known as Black death) of 14th century and the Cholera epidemic that attacked Europe; the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918-19 that assailed Europe, North America and Africa are but a few examples. These epidemics and others of the type have had a direct or/and indirect contribution in changing the face of the earth as evidenced by what had happened in the American continent:

White settlement along the frontier was assisted also by the fact that destruction of Indian populations by infectious diseases, of which smallpox remained the most formidable continued unabated. The ravages of smallpox among Indians may in fact have been assisted by deliberate efforts at germ warfare. In 1763, for instance, Lord Jeffrey Amherst ordered that blankets infected with smallpox be distributed among enemy tribes, and the order was acted on. (McNeill,1976:25)

The smallpox epidemic that raged in Mexico during the Spanish conquest had a devastating toll on the native American population. Smallpox is also said to have affected "some African peoples as a result of European activities" (Ranger, 1992:247). In ancient times too, i.e. around 427 B.C., plague is said to have wiped out a third of the Athen's city population and a quarter of the land army (McNeill, 1976:105; Longrigg, 1992:21). According to McNeill, in the ancient Republican Rome, around 387 B.C., about eleven cases of pestilential disaster and in China too about two major epidemic outbreaks in 161-62 A.D and 310-12 A.D had had a devastating effect among the populace.

The fourteenth century Europe and the Black death - which is the result of the Plague - caused the extinction of some small communities, the reduction of the population by 40 percent in 1380 and by nearly 50 percent

at the end of the century, and the discrimination of special groups of people like Jews and immigrants to name a few (McNeill, 1976:166; Slack, 1985:15 & 131; Risse, 1988:35-37; Tuchman, 1978b:92-125). Manchuria and China also suffered a lot of casualties due to pneumonic plague in the years 1910 and 1917 (Crosby Jr., 1976:9). Tuberculosis which reached its summit in the 17th century had also a disastrous effect on the European population (McNeill, 1976:253). Cholera which is said to have stretched at from Bengal also had its heavy toll in Britain in 1831 and 1832 (Morris, 1976:79).

In addition, the influenza epidemic of the 1918-19 having touched very many places around the globe had killed "twenty million or more" (McNeill, 1976:288). This influenza epidemic (known as Spanish influenza) had even reached and affected a lot of places like Ethiopia - there it was called "Ye Hedar Beshita" - that was then thought to be too isolated (Pankhurst, 1989 & 1977 & 1975).

The influenza epidemic too is thought to have entered Africa "from without" (Ranger, 1992:247). In the case of the United States of America, according to Crosby Jr. (1976:207) the number of people lost to the Spanish influenza in short a time as ten months is said to be very high even compared to the Americans dead in world wars and other major conflicts.

History has shown us that epidemics have always played a greater role in shaping the face of continents by mostly contributing to economic and cultural deprivation by attacking the population at its productive age; notwithstanding the part it also had on domesticating certain infectious diseases.

Reaction To Epidemics

Peoples of different countries and continents reacted to the epidemics that raged in their areas first by linking their source either to divine origin or/and looking for a scapegoat. This type of reaction is well observed even at the present time when the AIDS epidemic surfaced and got out of control.

As experience shows the origin of any disease of epidemic proportions is sought somewhere from without, thereby ascertaining ones flawless nature. This state of affairs is clearly illustrated by Sander L. Gilman (1987) when

he draws the picture of the then existing attitudes that explained the cause of syphilis in the Europe of the 15th century. According to him, "...syphilis was first understood as resulting from the malevolent influence of the Zodiac. But it quickly came to be linked to...Columbus' voyages of discovery to the Americas'. Syphilis was seen as society's punishment for transgressing the God-given boundaries of human endeavor, a divine scourge that punished Europe for the collapse of the feudal system..." (Ibid:100). More or less the same argument had also been presented by a Royal Army Medical Corps Colonel Lambkin to the causes of syphilis epidemic in Uganda. In the *Lancet* and *British Medical Journal* of 1908, the colonel wrote the causes of this epidemic of syphilis to be "...the introduction of christianity, the abolition of previously severe punishment for sexual offences and the opening up of the country to traders from the East" (Vaughan,1992:269).

Furthermore, the origins of the plague which attacked Europe and had a devastating effect, and also leprosy of the medieval Europe were thought to be because of "Divine Wrath" (Tuchman, 1978b:103; Conrad, 1992:95; Musto, 1988:69). Pre-Islamic Arabs also looked for the origin or cause of epidemic diseases in the activities of the JINN, whilst post-Islamic Arabs considered it as God's punishment (Conrad,1992:83 & 91). The Spanish influenza or as it is known in Ethiopia "Ye Hidar Beshita" (disease of Hedar - Hedar is the month of October-November) was thought to have been caused by the "use of poison gas during the European war" according to modern Ethiopians (Pankhurst,1975:111).

In addition to assigning the cause or origin of epidemics to divine authority, there also used to appear some scapegoats or groups of people to be blamed for its genesis. This practice of looking for a scapegoat or someone to blame also goes well with the practice of searching for the origin from without. When Europe was struck by the plague, the scapegoats were foreigners - as in the Rome of 1656 where Jews and the poor were the offering (Risse,1988:39; Tuchman,1978b:109). The cholera epidemic of 1832 had also immigrants and the poor to blame (Risse, 1988:47-48; Musto, 1988:74).

In the 1916 epidemic of poliomyelitis in New York, despite the contrary confirmation by the inquiries undertaken by some of the authorities, the poor Italian families, lower East side Jews and Poles were the scapegoats. The fact is that "*the stranger, the Jew, the poor, the immigrant* - all were victims of discrimination..." (Risse, 1988:58, emphasis added). In the case

of Spanish influenza's origin, for example, the Germans were blamed by many Americans (Crosby,1976:216). This practice of blaming others for a cause of an epidemic is again observed even in the present time in relation to the AIDS pandemic as if confirming the saying that claims history to repeat itself.

The reactions brought about by an outbreak of epidemics is varied and is also felt on all levels, i.e. psychological, cultural, or/and on economic levels. For example, on the economic level, the plague had played a part "by disrupting wage and price patterns sharply" and also manifesting "harsh collisions between social classes" (McNeill, 1976:183). Taking the fourteenth century's experience of plague as an example, we observe that "at the psychological and cultural level European reactions were obvious and varied" as the fear of imminent death were seen to bring about the break up of ordinary routines and customary restraints - the sick dying unattended, not observing burial rites, refusing burial in churchyards, etc. (McNeill, 1976:182; Longrigg, 1992:43-44; Slack,1985:19). Besides, the plague broke the bond that is thought to be found among family and friends, people who died of the plague could not find the usual burial grounds, and even if it was possible to bury in the usual grounds it was recorded that "a single graveyard received 11,000 corpses in six weeks in Avignon" (Tuchman, 1978b:94; Slack,1985:19).

The Spanish influenza epidemic (Ye Hedar Beshita) in Ethiopia was also observed to have had such a similar effect on the Ethiopian society as observed by a local Ethiopian scholar, Aläqa Kinfu, where he notes: "Just as a brother would walk over the corpse of his brother on a battlefield so nobody troubled to bury the dead by the roadside. They simply walked by" (as quoted in Pankhurst,1975:106). The 1770 smallpox epidemic in Xhosaland was also noted to have shown a similar experience where people were seen to avoid touching dead bodies, and the dead being left in the bush to "expire" (Ranger, 1992:244).

Management Of Epidemics

Concerning the management of epidemics, it is seen that epidemic diseases at differing times were explained and understood in natural or supernatural terms and the cure then is sought in the same manner. For example, there

was a case of a dragon representing "...an animal that embodies or causes the disease" whilst a saint depicted a force that stood to restore salubrity to the area by "...confronting the dragon and taming or killing it..." (Horden,1992:71). Moreover, there also was a St. Roch who according to Tuchman (1978b:108) was attributed with "special healing powers" so that it was maintained that God will cure of the plague if one calls his name.

The management of epidemics in different places and at different times in history also took other forms such as use of quarantine, inspection of incoming travelers and ships and issuance of health certificates (Risse,1988:35 & 37; Morris, 1976:33). The plague in England prompted a royal proclamation of 13 January 1518 which resulted in marking of houses with infected ones "by bundles of straw" and the residents "carrying a white stick" when going out of the house (Slack, 1985:201). Even later during the cholera epidemic this practice of marking houses - this time painting the door with the word "sick" - persisted in England (Morris, 1976:34). In addition separation of the diseased during an epidemic was also a common practice. Again in Britain, during the cholera epidemic, quarantine was common.

By 1550, segregation of plague victims in their own houses or in special pesthouses was proclaimed (Slack, 1985:204). Furthermore, the 1604 Act gave force to the practice of isolation by providing the first penal sanction. Therefore, it became clear that "anyone with a plague sore found wandering outside in the company of others was guilty of felony and might be *hanged*; anyone else going out could be whipped as a vagrant rogue" (Slack,1985:211, emphasis added). Moreover, in other places like Milan, the plague epidemic was managed in not very different manner than the prevailing practice in England. The Archbishop of Milan Giovanni Visconti of the 14th century was said to have "...ordered that the first three houses in which the plague was discovered were to be walled up with their occupants inside, enclosing the well, the sick, and the dead in a common tomb" (Tuchman,1978b:108).

In addition to the above mentioned methods of managing epidemics, physicians and other people involved in public service resorted to wearing gloves, headgear, masks and the like while attending victims of epidemics (Risse,1988:38; Musto,1988:71; Crosby, 1976:102). For example, Risse (1988:38) talks of cleaners who were supposed to clean out the house of a plague victim being dressed in "special vests" and "their faces covered

with sponges soaked in vinegar". This then reminds us of what came out in The Times of London in November 9, 1985 mentioning about English prisoners who had AIDS and who were supposed to be escorted to prison by police that demanded *especial gear* (a story that came out in the Swedish daily Dagens Nyheter of 19 March 1988 does also show of the Swedish police with a special fit out to protect themselves from HIV infection).

Popular reaction to epidemics also has been manifested clearly based on the belief the populace has on the transmission pattern/s of particular disease/s. Brandt (1988:150) notes that at the first decades of the twentieth century, gonorrhoea and syphilis were thought to be transmitted by pens, pencils, toothbrushes, towels and bedding which made people over-cautious and at times very uncomfortable while using these utensils at public places. The most recent pandemic raging the human species at will, i.e. AIDS, has also brought about similar popular reactions, despite repeated notices that it is not spread by sharing such utensils with those infected by HIV.

One can also note that the management and control of epidemics has also been performed using the established mass media of a country that has experienced an epidemic. During the cholera epidemic of early nineteenth century, the print media in Britain kept on informing the populace about the cholera deaths around the world. Besides, there were posters and handbills that circulated bearing information, regulation and warning about the disease. People were asked to change their behavior and follow the public health policy, and were also encouraged to seek treatment (Morris, 1976:115).

The plague epidemic had also drawn the media into the management practices of the disease and its consequences. To fight the plague, the English government in 1570 copied outlines of the regulations from Northern Europe and used the printing press among others to uniformly familiarize these regulations (Slack, 1985:208). Besides, the print media was also used to further the special forms of prayers imposed when the plague reached London in 1563.

Reactions And Management: A Post-Script

Epidemics throughout the human history have created different beliefs concerning their origin as seen in the case of the plague in Britain and the belief in its importation from outside, the Spanish influenza in the U.S.A. and the blame put on Germans for its appearance on American soil and at present the AIDS pandemic and its alleged African genesis. Besides, epidemics of the sexually transmitted diseases of the type gonorrhoea, syphilis and now AIDS have all the time been presented in association with sin and moral decay.

Social groups or races of people such as the Irish immigrants during the yellow fever outbreak in New York of the last century; the Jews for the Black death (plague) of Europe; Haitians, Africans or/and Homosexuals for the AIDS pandemic have been taken as scapegoats. In general, strangers or outsiders were the ones blamed for the epidemic that raged in any one country.

As to checking their arrival or/and controlling their transmission, the methods being used have not shown any sign of significant change through time. As David F. Musto (1988:84) has correctly pointed out, for example, in the case of AIDS "...past quarantine efforts - association with feared social groups, transmission through means the public has deemed unlawful or distasteful..." are practiced. Asking people to change their behaviour, which was one of the methods used during the cholera epidemic in England of early nineteenth century is also being echoed again during the AIDS pandemic at the present time. Moreover, the language used in reporting of the AIDS pandemic does also remind one of more or less the same words like scourge, mysterious, desperate, etc. which were used in the articles written about the cholera epidemic of early nineteenth century Britain.

Having said that, when we glance at the effect the epidemics have had in human society at large, we encounter the grim fact that it has affected the social fabric by causing tension and mistrust among the diseased and healthy, among family members and further relatives. Besides, it had also an effect on accepted customs and beliefs when one recalls the way the victims of epidemics were handled - denial of burial rites, isolation, refusal of church grave yards etc. Last but not least, the requirement of public identification for those infected as in plague stricken England of 1518 is also being advocated by some for AIDS sufferers in the form of tattooing upper forearm and/or buttocks.

Finally, when epidemics are scanned from the historical perspective, despite the familiarity of the public reactions, beliefs and control measures, the contemporary methods of managing epidemics are more glaring due to their maximum utilization of the mass media. The mass media are used to set the public and policy agenda by giving a salient slant to the issue of epidemics and by diffusing them as a public risk.

NOTE

1. This theory is doubted according to an article, "Findings counter theory of syphilis", that came out in the Washington Post, November 9, 1992 edition where it says that syphilis was present in Europe before the time of Columbus and to affirm this there has come out an evidence which "...consists of "classic" pathological scarring seen on the skeletal remains of two people who lived in England in the 1400s and whose bones have just been examined by experts" (P.A10).

RISK COMMUNICATION AND AIDS AS A PUBLIC HEALTH RISK

This part of the study shall investigate and analyse the AIDS news stories of the studied papers from a risk communication perspective (see the model in Fig. 1.1). The present chapter then shall briefly discuss the risk communication concept and practice in general, and public health risk (of the AIDS type) communication in particular. An introduction and a brief discussion of the concept of risk and public health risk communication will be conducted in this chapter, while, an analysis and a discussion of the empirical part of the study that deals with AIDS as risk news shall be performed in the next chapter.

The study shall then discuss risk from the point of health, i.e., AIDS risk (its spread and transmission). The AIDS risk has shown clearly how a perception and understanding of risk can influence policy debates and resource allocation. Besides, the transmission and spread of AIDS has also required people to enquire more on their sexual behaviour. Accepted and hitherto unquestioned sexual behaviours and/or life styles have been put to question. The AIDS risk also seems to have brought out again the same old clichés of scapegoating and blaming others. The risk of AIDS is also discerned on the individual as well as the societal level.

In order to discern the news media's role in risk communication in general and AIDS risk communication in particular, this study attempted to give answers to the following queries: What is the news media's role and significance in risk communication? Does the news media have any role in risk communication while relaying public health risk news of the AIDS type? The study, then, shall only discuss these research questions in this chapter, whilst the next chapter will empirically investigate and analyse the AIDS news as risk communication.

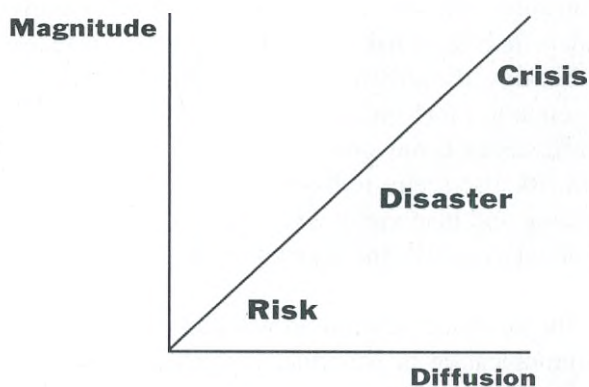
Risk communication

It is mainly through the mass media that society learns what to expect, what is going on or/and what has happened in regards to a risk and disaster

(Quarantelli, 1988:34 and 1989:5). Furthermore, according to Lang and Lang (1980:277) a population can be mobilized by the mass media during disasters (or for that matter public health risks of the AIDS type) as the print media is good on feeding facts and TV is best at rallying emotions.

Before delving into the detailed discussion of risk communication per se, the study shall first define and explain what the subject and concept of *risk* is. Risk, according to Stig-Arne Nohrstedt and Admassu Tassew (1993:12) is related to disaster and is also complimentary. In organizational and societal levels a risk qualitatively changes to a disaster with increased magnitude and diffusion (Fig. 9.1). Risk in general is a “possible threat” that is in view (Ibid).

Figure 9.1 A conceptual scheme over the concept Crises, Disaster and Risk (adopted from Nohrstedt and Tassew,1993:12)



The National Research Council Committee (1989:258) that examined risk management and communication activities, admits that the definition of risk is controversial as it can influence “policy debates”, “resources allocation” and above all “distribution of political power in society”. Furthermore, as risk is seldom just a single consequence, definition of risk based on a single dimension will do more harm than good as it may “...favor technologies that do their harm in a variety of ways (as opposed to those that create a lot of one kind of problem)” (National Research Council, 1989:259). This conceptualization of risk as a “quantifiable attribute of technologies” is one form as there are others who look at risk based on the wider social and

political contexts and consider it as an "individualized subjective experience" known, felt and judged by both expert or otherwise (Otway,1987: 128-129; Douglas,1990:7-8).

Risk communication, on the other hand, is any type of communication that has something to do with a risk message. In other words, "risk communication includes all messages and interactions that bear on risk decisions" (National Research Council, 1989:22). Risk communication according to Alonzo Plough and Sheldon Krinsky "...can be defined broadly as any public or private communication of individual or social risks, with or without intentional goals conveyed from any source to any recipient through any channel" (as quoted in Baker, 1990:342). This is a broader view of risk communication that does not require the source on being an expert and the message an intentional one. It allows the messages to move not only from the expert to non expert or vice versa, but among non experts as well.

Moreover, there are also others who discuss risk communication as the intentional conveying of information from experts to nonexperts (Vincent T.Covello et al, as cited in Rogers,1988:9; see also the "injection perspective" in Nohrstedt and Tassew, 1993:15). Furthermore, looking from the technological risk aspect, Frank N.Laird (1989) attests that risk communication should be understood as "...a set of activities that are adjunct to environmental conflict resolution over facility siting and regulation" (P.544). Risk communication, in this context is then the one directed for "conflict resolution".

Getting away from the previously held understanding of risk communication as only a "one-way" process where messages are addressed from experts to non-experts, the Committee on Risk Perception and Communication, instead views "...risk communication as *an interactive process* of exchange of information and opinion among individuals, groups, and institutions" (National Research Council,1989:2, emphasis added; see also Slovic,1987:285 where he entertains the same idea). Furthermore, Mileti and Fitzpatrick (1991:20) on the same tone talk of risk communication fulfilling two purposes; one of educating or informing about risks and the other warning to "elicit protective actions". Having said that, they then show a model of the "theory of public risk communication" where it is shown and understood that:

...risk communication is a dynamic process. Engaging in protective actions and seeking additional information about the risk is a direct result of the understanding, belief and personalization of risk which a public comes to possess in the context of receiving communications about risk. Public risk perception is a product of people interacting with risk information and each other. These interactions are directly influenced by the content and style of the message communicated. Perceptions are simultaneously influenced by the context people are in when risk information is received, as well as by various personal psycho-social characteristics. (P.23)

Mass media functions during risk and disaster situations have been a subject of study by many a researcher (see for example, Hiroi et al, 1985; Wenger and Quarantelli, 1989; Rogers, 1988; Sood et al, 1987; Waxman, 1973; National Research Council, 1989). Sood et al (1987:34-35) in one study showed that the media during disaster periods prefer an information source "with official status" and "relevant expertise" (see also Rogers, 1988:20 where he cites Dennis Wenger remarking that "what is covered is the 'official view' of the disaster..."). In this present study too, the empirical findings show that in all the studied four European and African prestige papers officials and experts were present as the main actors (actors as subjects) in more than 60% of the times (for more see, Table 5.4).

Hiroi et al (1985:41) note that the media have a tendency of comprehensive coverage when reporting disasters as they "...pay attention to the most prominent cases such as the seemingly most damaged spot, the most miserable victim, or the most tragic incident, and are inclined to report them in detail" (we think that this observation also applies to the reporting of public health risk as demonstrated by the different reports of the recent Ebola viral infection and/or AIDS). Besides, the media are said to display content inaccuracies when they tend to overblow and "overdramatize", "spread rumors" and "create myths" about disasters - and presently for health risks of the AIDS type (ibid:1985; Rogers, 1988:21). Moreover, the media's role of overheating is seen by their usage of words/expressions like, panic, tragic, miserable, very much and by overblowing the effect of the damage, and by extreme conclusive remarks.

Furthermore, James D. Goltz (1984) empirically attempted to prove if the assumption that the news media stress the negative or the "social breakdown behaviors" as opposed to "rational and altruistic elements" is valid. He conducted his study on a sample of domestic and foreign news that

came out in the Los Angeles Times and The Santa Monica Evening outlook (two Southern California newspapers). Having conducted his study, he noted that the anticipated social breakdown imagery is common in foreign disaster coverage of the news; though, the American disaster news coverage showed otherwise. In addition, according to Wilkins and Patterson (1987:89) risk portraits of journalism puts emphasis on "novelty", "lacks a comprehensive systems view" and also has provocative images.

Risk and disaster news communication, on the other hand, has a high audience interest as some American studies like the 1973 survey of the American Newspapers Publishers Association indicated (Sood et al,1987:28). Besides, its diffusion rate is also known to be very rapid.

According to the Committee on Risk Perception and Communication report (National Research Council, 1989:104-5), the mass media organizations do seem to tolerate news reports by reporters who do not understand what they are reporting about; whilst the same is not true of reports about sports or business. Having said that, the report, nonetheless, notes that "some criticism of the news media emerges from a failure to examine the structure of the media industry or how journalists work" (ibid:104; see also Hiroi et al,1985 on this subject). To the understanding of most reporters, what they are engaged in is reporting news and not education; therefore, they do not expect themselves to be wrong in what they do while reporting risk news. As a result, the committee suggests that organizations that prepare risk messages ought to make sure that "...their organizations improve their understanding of the role of intermediaries, particularly media reporters and editors, including an understanding of *the factors that make a risk story newsworthy, of the practical time and space constraints, and of the limited technical background of most media personnel*" (National Research Council, 1989:11, emphasis added).

Public Health Risk Communication

To inform about the existence of risk of a disease and the protective measure to be taken, the matter is communicated via the available and expedient media. If the risk is of high proportions where any member of a society has an equal chance of being touched, then the use of the mass media to reach as many people as possible is preferred.

When it is a disease that causes a health risk "...its symptoms, modes of transmission, infectiousness, incubation period and the range of outcomes in those infected" is communicated (Barnett and Blaikie, 1992:6). Sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS that call for a restraint from sexual jamborees, use of protective devices (like condoms) during sexual act among others are communicated through information campaigns and other forms via different types of media of which the mass media is the mostly used.

News happens to be among the many and varied forms of communication used by the mass media. The media news is known to give meaning to a "...news event, by interpreting the event for the media's audiences" (Rogers, 1988:20). Nevertheless, according to Klaidman (1990b), it is not any disease or health risk that gets good media coverage by any media as long as it is not perceived "...as a threat to everyone, or to "us" and not "them" " (P.64). Therefore, it is clear that coverage of any health risk news item must pass the litmus test of news value where rigorous selection and presentation work is done. This then leads us to the discussion of the main actors in the communication process - who they are and how they perform their tasks. And it is this discussion of the main actors and their tasks in relation to communicating risk (especially health risk) that the following paragraphs shall dwell upon.

The Journalist

The communicator/source in the context of our discussion is an organization or an individual that prepares and sends out a message that has an information about risk. Concerning the individual risk communicators, our study shall deal mostly with journalists, though other communicators are also generally looked at.

Reporting risk, other than reflecting issues of political and institutional nature that are associated with the event, does also have to surmount some organizational constraints according to Dorothy Nelkin (1988). The organizational constraints of newswork do also force journalists to rely on authoritative sources in the form of press releases, press conferences etc. (Nelkin, 1988:12; Sood et al,1987:34; Rogers, 1988:22).

Moreover, the journalists understanding of their being objective in reporting, has required them to balance diverse points of view. Nonetheless, to experts/scientists this practice of balancing is understood to have more harm than good while reporting risk, as any claim about risk has to be first verified by empirical evidence before it is communicated (National Research Council, 1989:105; Nelkin, 1988:12&15).

On the other hand, Morgan and Lave (1990:355) query if risk communicators from organizations' side or/and journalists part are concerned about their audience when they relay a risk message. They wondered if both parts cared if what they communicate is put to application, as "for example, the Surgeon General was trying to induce specific changes in sexual behavior with his AIDS brochure. In contrast, some journalists are concerned only with attracting readers' and editors' attention to their work" (ibid). Furthermore, to Ann Fisher (1991) the challenges risk communication has confronted the communicators with, can be looked at as being: defining the purpose of the risk communication activity, making clear the scientific evidence of a risk to the audience, recognizing the risk concerns and infusing them in the decision process and also working together with researchers thereby bringing about "more convergence between judgements of seriousness by experts and nonexperts".

Media Content

Risk messages that have any type of information about risk and that are communicated largely by the mass media are the ones we shall briefly look at in this section. Messages of risk in a form of news or/and other formats are communicated to an audience with a purpose of informing, warning, and bringing about protective and/or preventive measures, etc. While doing this, the first thing that comes to mind is the audiences' capacity in understanding and also interpreting the messages (Morgan and Lave, 1990:358; National Research Council, 1989:11). In addition, the formulation of messages in a clear, accurate, and fairly elementary perspective (National Research Council, 1989:1; Klaidman, 1990a: 125) is a sine quo non as "the substance and form of a communicated risk information plays a dramatic role in determining the perceptions which people form and their subsequent behavior" (Mileti and Fitzpatrick, 1991:22).

The mass media and journalists based on their professional working rules of valuing news treat risk events as news once they find them newsworthy. Accidents and tragedies that are part of a risk event are considered newsworthy, and also a human interest story of the type that talks about a cure for a health risk of the AIDS sort is newsworthy too (Nelkin, 1988:10). Despite this being the general understanding, a study by Nancy Signorielli (1990:104), however, found out that television programs display "...an unwritten agreement to refrain from anti-smoking messages so as not to offend the cigarette companies who spend many millions of dollars on commercials for their noncigarette products such as beer and foods".

The Mass Media

The mass media, according to "most scholars" have the responsibility of communicating risk (Wilkins and Patterson, 1987:80). As the mass media are also important carriers of risk communication, the lay audience as well as experts depend on them (Nelkin, 1988:8). However, according to Klaidman (1990b:63) health risk reporting by what he calls "elite news media" is treated by a different logic that fits the media's "core middle class constituency". For example, as Klaidman noted, AIDS news initially was not worth covering as the media's constituency was not perceived to be at risk as opposed to the homosexuals, haemophilacs and Haitians who were perceived to be the only ones affected.

Harold Issadore Sharlin(1986) in an article based on a report by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) about a public information activity by the Agency on the risks of the pesticide, Ethylene Dibromide (EDB) analysed the transmission of the message by the different media. Television, which is one of the medium that treated the matter is said to have created dramatic images in its handling of the issue. As to the press, the report divides it into two - national and local - and discusses the reporting behaviour. For example, one of the national press, i.e., The New York Times is remarked to be "...consistently more accurate and detailed than local newspapers on technical questions..." (P.63). The local press, on the other hand, tried to handle the news in the local interest. Therefore, it is said to have portrayed a limited state-wide perspective.

Nancy Signorielli's (1990:104) observation is that the print media plays down risk messages in relation to cigarette smoking as the bulk of the

advertisement comes from cigarette advertising; and in 1983 alone "1.5 billion" dollars was used for their promotion. Moreover, Gene Burd (1989:112) talking about "preventive journalism" and AIDS editorials, notes that the press emphasizes on technology rather than behaviour to solve the AIDS risk.

Risk communication is still conducted mostly through the mass media, despite some of the problems like the ones discussed above. It is the mass media which is proving again that a mass of people are able to be contacted quickly with the same message at the same time.

The Audience

Health risk communication like any disaster news diffuses rapidly; notwithstanding the probable confusion and ambiguity it might entail among the recipients (Signorelli, 1990:99). The public's perception of a risk communication can also vary from person to person, despite being exposed to the same message (Mileti and Fitzpatrick, 1991:21). This has been made clear by different public reactions to the AIDS risk message where some thought it does not concern them as they perceived AIDS to be the disease of "the others" - like homosexuals, Haitians etc.

Moreover, recipients of risk messages tend to verify the information they received by further looking out for more information to use it for a particular decision or/and broaden their general understanding (Morgan and Lave,1990:355; Mileti and Fitzpatrick,1991:21). Furthermore, Michael Ryan et al (1991) looked at the print media's reporting of two situations that were risky (one was about relationship of coffee consumption and pancreatic cancer) and attempted to see if the reader's "scientific sophistication" had a role to play in the inclusion of cognitive information about risks. They then found out that the audience's sophistication was not a good predictor of the inclusion or otherwise of such information.

Still harping on audiences, we come across the phrase "target audience" which is a favourite term for some risk communicators. However, one ought to take into consideration the fact that preparing and relaying risk communication using this term tends to bring about unexpected adverse results like leading the target audience to stigmatization (Widdus et al,1990:183). It might also create the wrong perception, as young American college students

are seen not exercising preventive behaviour against AIDS as they consider themselves to be not at risk (Rogers, 1988:10). Moreover, the practice of stigmatization does also glaringly show the fact what the reporting of AIDS did to certain groups, classes and/or races of people.

Health risks of the type AIDS, have evoked a reaction tinted with blame, scapegoating or/and looking for a guilty party. This search for guilt, blame etc. goes on at different times and stages of a disaster or health risk, notwithstanding the altruistic and fine qualities that disasters/risk bring out of people. According to Drabeck and Quarantelli (1967:12) there is a tendency in humans "to seek the cause in WHO - rather than a WHAT" during natural disasters. This looking for a scapegoat and putting blame on others during disasters and health risks has made its appearance quite a number of times in history when plague, leprosy etc. attacked Europe and where immigrants, the poor, Jews, Poles were the victims (for more on this subject, see the preceding Chapter on Epidemics and AIDS). Even at present time with the spectre of AIDS, initially it was the homosexuals and Blacks of African origin (e.g. Haitians) that were selected for blame, guilt and scapegoating.

Conclusion

Having briefly glanced at risk communication in general and public health risk communication in particular, we then are reminded of the present day pandemic, AIDS, its gravity, and the need for more public health risk communication by any available media in any form of communication. The news and the news media are among these several communication forms and media that could be used. When relaying public health risk news of the AIDS type by the news media, at the same time a public health risk communication activity is performed. Besides, the issue of AIDS will be kept alive and going, when everytime AIDS news is communicated by the news media.

The next chapter then shall empirically attempt to find out if AIDS news on the study has performed the task of risk communication. In its probe to find out the risk communication function of AIDS news, the study shall analyse and compare the findings in the studied papers and years.

10

AIDS NEWS AS RISK COMMUNICATION: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION

This chapter of the study attempts to look at AIDS news as part of a risk communication undertaking which "...involves multiple messages about the nature of risk and other messages, not strictly about risk, that express concerns, opinions, or reactions to risk messages or to legal and institutional arrangements for risk management" (National Research Council, 1989:21).

In its examination, analysis and discussion of the risk communication aspect of the AIDS news, the study shall pose the following queries and then attempts to give answers based on the empirical findings of the study. Do the studied AIDS news carry risk communication messages in their stories? If so, how often do these risk prevention and/or protection messages appear in the news reporting? Which type of risk prevention and/or protection activities are mentioned? Is there any visible trend in the reporting pattern of the risk prevention/protection activities? If so, what is the yearly trend of reporting these risk prevention/protection activities in the different papers? What is the similarity and/or difference observed between the prestige papers in the reporting of the risk prevention/protection activities through the years?

While reading the different AIDS news stories in the studied prestige papers, it was able to observe that the news coverage of AIDS had discussed the management of the AIDS risk in various ways ranging from vaccine development to banning AIDS carriers from a public health swimming pool. In other words, it was able to see that the AIDS news coverage was tinted with risk prevention and protection measures meant to curb the rapid spread of the AIDS pandemic. Therefore, this chapter shall empirically examine and analyse this aspect of the AIDS news reporting in the studied papers and years.

AIDS news stories in the study were investigated to see if they contain the discussion of any risk prevention and/or protection activities. The news items were read and analysed if they contain a discussion of the risk prevention and/or protection activities outlined in the coding schedule. In the coding schedule that was prepared to code and then prepare the data for analysis, there were five items to choose and code under the category of

risk prevention/protection activities. The items were: information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy; screening, registering, isolation, new laws; condom usage; avoiding multiple sexual partners, and other. The first group of items, i.e. information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy, are meant to represent the prevention aspect of risk communication. The second group that comprises screening, registering, isolation, new laws, condom usage, avoiding multiple sexual partners, does stand for the protection aspect of risk communication.

In the item other, the coded activities are many and varied from one newspaper to the other and even within a newspaper. For example, in *The Times* of London, some of the activities found in the item Other include: researching the disease, testing blood extracts to eliminate risk of AIDS virus, discontinuing blood donation by partners of haemophiliacs, suspending movements of prisoners because of the death of the Chaplin, AIDS vaccine development, refusing AIDS victim a post mortem, trebling budget for curbing the spread of AIDS, needle exchange clinic for drug addicts, banning from a public health swimming pool, cleaning the communion cup after every use, dismissal from job of an HIV positive person's wife, protective clothing¹. In *Dagens Nyheter* too, activities such as shutting/banning gay sauna clubs, avoiding anal and oral sex and using protective gloves and other protective outfit² are among the mentioned risk prevention and/or protection activities. In *Daily Nation*, testing of potential AIDS vaccine on humans and behaving responsibly are among the activities that are found in the item other. And finally, in *The New Vision*, activities such as AIDS research and deportation were among the activities that were coded in the item other. Having said that, it ought to be mentioned that there can be one or more risk prevention and/or protection activity present in an article, or there might as well be none at all.

To have a closer look at some of the examples of the coded risk prevention/ protection activities, here are some of the AIDS news stories found in the study -*Daily Nation*, 21 March 1988 and *The New Vision*, 3 October 1986 respectively:

BOOST FOR AIDS FIGHT

By NATION Reporter

The Belgium Government has given Sh 14.6 million for Kenya's campaign against AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

An agreement for this was signed last month in Nairobi by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, Mr Charles Mbindyo and the Belgium Ambassador to Kenya, Ms Christina Sunesnopen.

The money will go to the national AIDS programme and other STD control programmes

The grant will also finance publicity campaigns to educate the public on the significance and prevention of the diseases.

It will also be used to provide health workers at all levels with knowledge and skills on treatment and management of patients afflicted with such diseases. The training will be provided locally and in Belgium.

[This AIDS news articles's *Risk prevention and/or protection activity* is coded under the item, **information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy**. Besides, the *main angle* of this AIDS news story is, **prevention**].

Minister launches drive:Uganda may screen Britons

AIDS WAR BEGINS

By Ben Ochan

All Britons entering Uganda will be screened for AIDS or slim. The deputy minister of health, Dr. I.J.Batwala, said yesterday at the launching of a seminar on health education campaign against AIDS and the inauguration of the Uganda National Committee for prevention and control of AIDS.

Dr. Batwala said that this measure would be a reciprocation to Britain if it decided to screen Ugandans for AIDS. The Britons will

be screened at Entebbe International Airport and at all entry points into Uganda.

"It is inconceivable that Britain should be thinking of screening travellers from East Africa with fewer cases of AIDS before screening her neighbours and allies with thousands of confirmed cases of AIDS", Dr. Batwala said.

Dr. Batwala said that a June 1986 World Health Organisation (WHO) report confirmed that East Africa and Uganda did not have the largest number of AIDS victims in the world. "But Americas had 22,406 cases, Europe 2,442, Africa 378, Oceania 222 and Asia 50 cases. Even if poor diagnosis and reporting is taken into account, East Africa and Uganda does not have the largest number of victims in the world", Dr. Batwala added.

He said AIDS as a universal problem was first spotted in USA and Western Europe in 1981, adding, "five to 10 million people all over the world are affected with about six million victims as carriers".

Dr. Batwala said that Britain's unilateral screening measures were discriminatory and not justifiable. He said that Uganda will abide by WHO's advise that the testing and certification of international travellers was not necessary to prevent AIDS spreading.

Dr. Batwala said AIDS was not the main cause of death in Uganda. He said that preventable diseases like measles, malaria, malnutrition and tuberculosis were bigger killers. He said the Ministry of Health would continue to provide facilities for sterilising needles, gowans and gloves to all health units to control AIDS.

He appealed to health workers to reduce prescriptions involving injections. If prescribed, he said, then the needles, syringes and other instruments should be sterilized. Dr. Batwala advised the public to stop pressurising doctors to prescribe injections as the best method of treatment. He advised that tablets were safe and effective.

Dr. Batwala said indiscriminate blood transfusion should be discouraged. He said that blood should be given in extreme life saving emergencies such as severe or fatal bleeding that follow child birth. He assured the public that no AIDS contaminated blood would be given to anybody.

He asked health personnel to maintain confidentiality about AIDS patients. He assured the public that blood screening facilities were available in Mulago and other city hospitals. He said plans were underway to purchase more blood screening machines called "Elisa readers" to screen blood in each of the ten regional hospitals.

Dr. Batwala said that research on AIDS would be carried through community surveys and that any new advances, good or bad, would be passed to the public.

Dr. Batwala appealed to religious leaders, teachers, chairmen and members of Resistance Committees to spread the campaign against AIDS. He noted that although it was unusual to talk publicly about sex in Uganda, "this time we must, since this is the most important route of transmission". He warned those who took sex as a form of mental and physical recreation, as a hobby and as a business to stop forthwith as they would spread AIDS like wild bush fire.

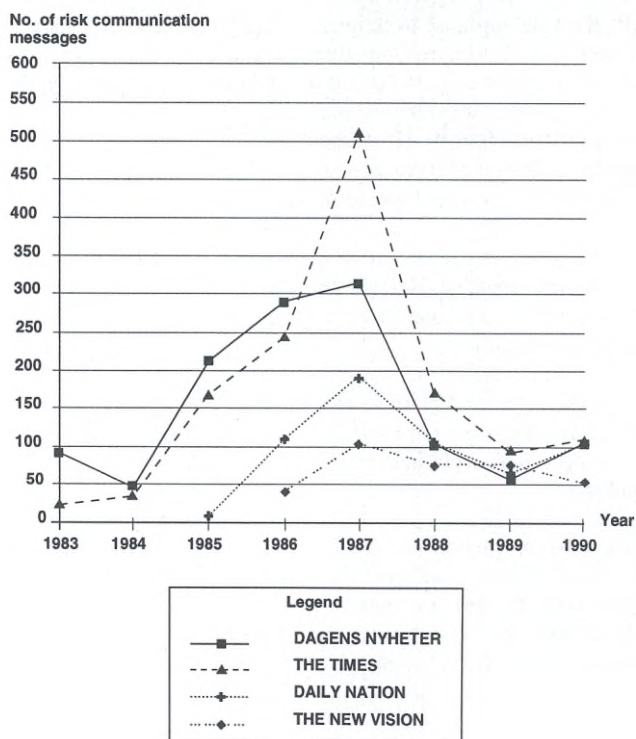
He said that at present evidence shows that AIDS is basically transmitted sexually. He said that there was yet no cure for the disease apart from controlling it by "Zero grazing" or sexual limitation to one partner.

Dr. S.I.Okware the Chairman of the AIDS Committee explained that "Zero grazing" does not mean abstention from sex. "We are merely advising you to avoid indiscriminate free-ranging sex relations", he added.

[The Risk prevention and protection activities coded in the above AIDS news article are: **education campaign, screening, sexual limitation to one partner**; the Main angle of the story is **Protection**; and the themes and references are: **Africa, zero grazing, blood transfusion**]

Having said that, when we query if the studied AIDS news articles had carried risk prevention/protection messages, i.e. risk communication, the empirical investigation shows that the AIDS news stories have actually carried risk prevention and/or protection activity items (Table 10.1). Furthermore, when we look at the number of risk prevention and protection activities in the different newspapers among the studied years, the study shows that all the papers covered relatively high amount of risk prevention/protection activity messages in 1987 (Figure 10.1). And when scanned through the individual papers and years, between 1984-1987, there is a general trend of covering more risk prevention and protection activities in both the European papers. And this trend also holds true for the other two African papers before 1987. Then, there is a general drop in coverage between 1987-1989 in all the studied papers. Then, there was a rise in coverage of risk prevention/protection activities in 1990, in the case of the two European and Kenyan papers; while the Ugandan paper's coverage showed the opposite (Fig. 10.1).

Figure 10.1 The yearly amount and trend of communicating risk prevention and/or protection messages in the studied papers



The empirical examinations further display that one of the European papers in the study, i.e. *Dagens Nyheter*, carried a higher number of **risk protection** activities such as screening, registering, isolation and new laws, and also numerous risk prevention/protection items that can be included in the item other, as they are not individually listed in the coding schedule (Table 10.1). On the other hand, one of the European newspapers, i.e. *The Times*, and the two African dailies, carried quite a good number of single **risk prevention** items such as information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy, and also several risk prevention and/or protection activities that are included in the item other (Table 10.1). Overall, among the single risk prevention or protection activity messages carried by the newspapers, it was the preventive aspect, i.e. information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy, of risk communication that was reported most (Table 10.1). Nevertheless, when the single risk prevention and

protection activities in the coding schedule are grouped under the general items of either prevention or protection aspects of risk, what the empirical results show is that totally there were more single risk protection activities (i.e. screening, registering, isolation, new laws; condom usage; avoiding multiple sexual partners) discussed by all the papers as compared to the single risk prevention activities such as information campaign, public education and counselling/therapy (Table 10.1).

Table 10.1 Risk prevention/protection activities discussed in each newspaper between 1983-1990* (percent)

Risk prevention and protection activities	Dagens Nyheter	The Times	Daily Nation	The New Vision
Information campaign, Public education, Counselling/Therapy	22	30	24	35
Screening, Registering, Isolation, new laws	27	25	19	23
Condom usage	8	7	5	1
Avoiding multiple sexual partners	8	1	2	6
Other	35	37	50	35
Total	100	100	100	100
N =	173	227	99	88

*All the 1985 copies of the Ugandan newspaper are not included, as they were not available

The investigations show that all the prestige dailies in the study communicated the highest number of risk prevention/ protection activities in 1987, as they also did report the highest number of AIDS news then (Cf Fig. 10.1 and Fig. 4.1). This also was the year where a very significant amount of increase was observed in the officially reported AIDS cases (Table 6.1). Therefore, the intensive discussion of risk prevention/protection activities in 1987 is then quite understandable.

In regards to the coverage of the different risk prevention/protection items, for example in *Dagens Nyheter* there were more risk protection activities discussed concerning screening, registering, isolation, new laws; condom usage, and avoiding multiple sexual partners in the years 1983-1986, 1988 and 1990. Especially during the early year of reporting, i.e. 1983, the

discussion on the protective aspect of risk communication was more on avoiding multiple sexual partners. Furthermore, the protective aspect of risk communication, i.e. screening, registering, isolation, new laws were also covered most in 1984-1986 in *Dagens Nyheter*. At this juncture one ought to note that the Swedish AIDS Delegation was set up in 1985 and HIV infection was put under Swedish law of venereal diseases (Westphal Victor, 1991:104; Herlitz, 1992:6). Besides, the preventive aspect of risk communication, i.e. information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy was covered more in 1987, which incidentally was the year the Swedish AIDS information campaign undertaking began. Furthermore, in the *Dagens Nyheter* newspaper the different risk prevention and/or protection activities that are lumped in the item Other have peaked high in 1985 and 1988-90.

In *The Times*, there were large number of risk prevention activities such as, information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy discussed in 1983 and 1986. Incidentally, in Britain, the public health education campaign with regards to HIV/AIDS was launched in 1986 (Brewin and Gunter, 1988:111; Wober, 1988:24; Findahl, 1989:45-46; Marková and Power, 1992:113). The protection aspect of risk messages such as screening, registering, isolation, and new laws were also widely discussed in *The Times* newspaper in 1985, 1987 and 1988 along with Other risk prevention and protection activities. Besides, in sharp contrast to the Swedish paper in the study, i.e. *Dagens Nyheter*, the London *Times*' discussion of one of the commonly talked about risk protection activity, i.e. avoiding multiple sexual partners, was scant. This we think also probably reflects the attitude both societies (as reflected by the papers presentation) have on an open discussion of matters relating to sex. In the case of Sweden it seems that there happens to be no inhibition or societal pressure to discuss matters relating to sex openly, while in Britain the opposite is true as demonstrated by the difficulties that arose in trying to discuss the use of condom and other sexual matters in AIDS prevention commercials in British TV.

Risk protection activities such as screening, registering, isolation and new laws were largely discussed in the risk communication of the Daily Nation in 1985 and 1987. Whilst, risk prevention activities such as information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy were the frequented risk communication messages in 1986 and 1989. Besides, other risk prevention/protection activities that are grouped under the item Other were also communicated most in 1986-1988 and 1990.

In The New Vision, risk protection activities like screening, registering, isolation, new laws were the frequented risk communication messages in 1986. Whilst risk prevention activities like information campaign, public education, counselling/ therapy were the risk messages that were mostly communicated in 1988 and 1990. In 1987 the risk prevention activities such as information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy and also risk protection activities like screening, registering, isolation, and new laws were largely covered along with other risk prevention and protection messages that could be grouped under the item Other. And in 1989, risk prevention activities of the type, information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy and Other risk prevention and protection activities were also discussed most.

Overall, one notices that risk prevention and protection activities like; information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy, screening, registering, isolation and new laws were dominantly discussed in the AIDS news stories reported by the two European and two African newspapers from 1983-90. Whilst, condom usage and avoidance of multiple sexual partners were relatively least discussed risk prevention/protection activities in the AIDS news articles of the four newspapers in the studied years. Nonetheless, when the above mentioned risk prevention and protection activities are grouped under either protection or prevention activities and the empirical results scanned; the results show that through the studied years, it were the risk protection activities of the type, screening, registering, isolation, new laws, condom usage, and avoiding multiple sexual partners that dominated the AIDS news reporting of the two European and the Kenyan prestige dailies in the study. On the other hand, the Ugandan prestige daily that is also in the study showed that it was risk prevention activities information campaign, public education, and counselling/ therapy that were discussed most through the studied years.

This study has shown that health risk communication is not only an undertaking left to consciously organized information campaigns and/or other public education forums. The news which is the professional and institutional product of the mass media organizations can also depart a health risk message in its reporting and discussion of a health risk news story of the AIDS type.

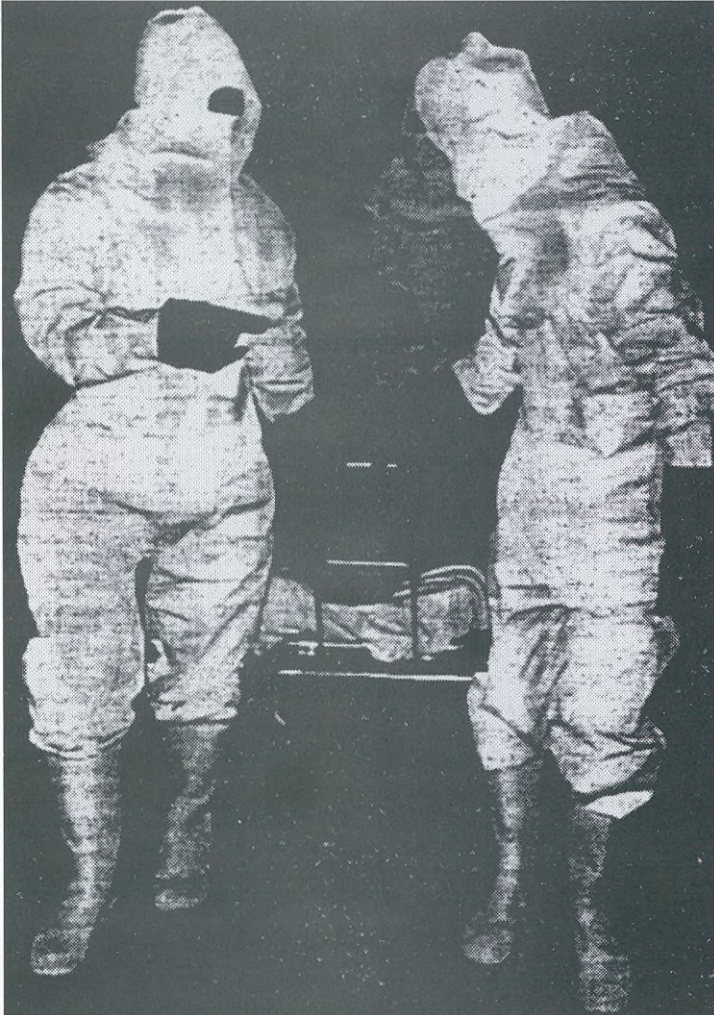
AIDS news having been found newsworthy and being covered for quite many years at a stretch (e.g. this study years, 1983-90) has been carrying health risk messages to inform, warn and bring about risk prevention/protection measures. The studied AIDS news articles discussion of risk prevention and protection activities were dominated by preventive aspects like information campaign, public education, counselling/ therapy and protective aspects like screening, registering, isolation, new laws which are provided or performed by an expert or as O'Riordan et al say a "top down" exercise "in which experts attempt to educate an apparently misguided public..." (as quoted in Nohrstedt and Tassew, 1993:21-23). Furthermore, the studied news media have also clearly shown the mass media's responsibility of being the major vehicle of risk communication (Wilkins and Patterson, 1987:80; Nelkin,1988:8) when they imparted risk prevention/protection information alongside the AIDS news stories.

Last but not least, it has to be pointed out that though this study is out to discern the media attention of AIDS news coverage as reflected by the reporting pattern of AIDS news in the two European and two African newspapers through 1983-90; it also has attempted to look at the risk communication activity undertaken by the AIDS news articles of the four papers in the studied years. In doing so, it was possible to find out that the AIDS news per se does also perform a risk communication activity in the process of imparting AIDS news information.

NOTES

1. This captioned AIDS news story that talks about protective clothing and expelling people with "serious infectious diseases" was carried in The Times newspaper of March 4, 1987:

Hong Kong Aids protection



Ambulancemen in protective clothing wheeling a patient suspected of having Aids into a Hong Kong hospital. Newspapers identify the patient, aged 43, as an African embassy employee in Peking. Meanwhile, Bulgaria announced that foreign victims of serious infectious diseases will be expelled, an apparent move to halt the spread of Aids to the country.

2. The following picture that came out in an AIDS story in Dagens Nyheter of March 19, 1988 is about the Swedish police using a disposable outfit that could protect them against the HIV infection:



Med den här utrustningen skulle polismännen vara bättre skyddade mot HIV-smitta. Skyddsombuden prövar engångsutrustning från landstinget.

PART FOUR

CONCLUSION



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The primary aim of this study has been to investigate and compare the attention and image media gave to AIDS news in two African and two European prestige dailies through the years, i.e. 1983-90. In all the categories the study used to analyse the AIDS news items, it made comparisons amongst the studied prestige papers and years as well. The study also attempted to find out if the Media and AIDS realities that are present in the study do correspond to each other. Besides, it also tried to compare the Media and AIDS realities through the studied years and countries.

Summary of findings

This study of media attention and picture of AIDS by the news coverage of two African and two European prestige dailies through the years of 1983-90, investigated the media's AIDS news items and other relevant information from the perspectives of news and news value concept, agenda-setting hypothesis and also risk communication concept and practice (Fig.1.1).

In trying to give answer to the queries put forward in the first research question concerning the attention media gave to the coverage of AIDS news, the study attempted to look at the prevalence of AIDS in the four countries as reported by WHO and/or from the official statistics that came out of the respective governments. Then it looked at and compared the AIDS news coverage in the two African papers with a tabloid format and the two European newspapers with a broadsheet format, through the studied years and the media attention given to it, i.e. space and position of coverage.

A comparison of the AIDS news coverage in the studied European and African papers shows that AIDS news was given more attention - as reflected by amount of space and frequency of coverage - by the two prestige papers from the North than the ones from the South. Further, when the coverage of the newspapers is inspected, one notes that the attention given for AIDS news coverage has steadily increased between 1983 and 1987 (though in 1984 some copies and in 1985 no copies of the Ugandan

paper was available for the study). This then is followed by a decrease in allotment of space in the subsequent years (Fig 4.1).

On the other hand, when one ponders at the incidence of AIDS in the countries whose media is found in the study, one discerns a steady increase in the prevalence of AIDS cases in each country between the years of 1983-1990 (Tables 6.1-6.3, 6.5 and 6.7). Nevertheless, though the prevalence and rate of infection has not decreased in reality, however, the attention given to the AIDS news coverage, on the other hand, reflected the opposite after 1987 (Fig. 4.1). At such instances, one wonders why and gets forced to inquire if it is because AIDS news has ceased to be novel, negative, important, etc. as the oft mentioned news value concept attests.

Furthermore, one way of measuring the attention given to a news is its position of coverage - i.e. front page (Nafziger,1948; Cohen,1963). Therefore, in this study, it is found out that the Ugandan paper, *The New Vision* had given comparatively more news space (40% of the news space) to AIDS news covered in front pages. Moreover, concerning the place of coverage of the AIDS news in the studied papers, it is found out that more than seventy percent of the space used for coverage was in inside pages - this does not include special pages that are also found in inside pages.

When we inquire at the angles that were frequented in the four papers over the studied years, the news angle on protection comes out to be dominant. The studied eight years have shown that the AIDS news concentrated more on protection than AIDS origin, individual victims, etc. Among the studied papers too, the news angle on protection was dominant. Though, the Ugandan, *The New Vision* has shown that the news angle that mentions about prevention was equally important.

As regards to the arena of AIDS news stories that came out in the papers, more than half of the news space was given to AIDS news whose arena was their own country in case of *The New Vision*, *The Times* and *Dagens Nyheter*. Nonetheless, the Kenyan *Daily Nation* covered sixty per cent of the news space by the AIDS news stories whose arena was not Kenya. In the case of *The New Vision*, *The Times* and *Dagens Nyheter*, the news value concept of geographical proximity took precedence in the reported AIDS news that the papers concentrated in reporting AIDS news from their own countries. But, in the case of the Kenyan *Daily Nation*, this did not happen, thereby leading one to inquire if it was because of some control from the

government side, or due to a scarcity of domestic AIDS news, or if it was because of lack of resources and capacity to go around and gather the available domestic news.

Concerning the actors that were used as objects of the news, it was HIV positive/AIDS victims that were the actors that were frequently discussed by the AIDS news covered in the studied papers and years. In other words, HIV positive/AIDS victims were the objects of the AIDS news of all the studied papers and years. But, in the initial years of 1983 and 1984, it were other risk groups (homosexuals, haemophiliacs, etc.) and officials, experts, HIV positive/AIDS victims respectively that were equally dominantly discussed in the AIDS news. As to the image given to HIV positive/AIDS victims by the studied papers, it is discerned that a neutral image was dominant through the studied years.

As to the type of story that was carried by most of the AIDS news among the studied papers; the study has found out that the two European papers and the Ugandan *The New Vision* have reported and allotted more news space for domestic news as opposed to the foreign ones. But, on the other hand, the Kenyan, *Daily Nation* had generally carried and given more percentage of news space for foreign AIDS news coverage as opposed to the domestic ones. Nonetheless, the *Daily Nation's* coverage in 1989 and 1990 showed that there was more news space allotted to stories who have domestic origin. This trend of AIDS news reporting which is unlike the preceding years, i.e. pre 1989, tends one to enquire if it was due to a relaxation of the reporting environment where the government fully accepted the problem caused by AIDS; or was it because the newspaper found the domestic AIDS story to be news worthy and easily accessible. Having said that, when we glance at the AIDS news reporting through the years, it was the domestic news that dominated the AIDS news reporting through the studied years.

When a news agency or other source of AIDS news is investigated in the studied years and papers, it was found out that most of the AIDS news that was covered by the prestige dailies and the studied years was either bylined - by the paper's correspondent or otherwise - or without mention of any agency. This finding, then, in turn pointed at the fact that all the papers have given precedence to selection and coverage of news produced by reporters or correspondents at the paper's own request.

All the studied papers, i.e. the two European and the other two African ones, had officials as the main actors in the AIDS news (actors as subjects). And when scanned through the years, it was experts who were dominant actors as subject between 1983-1986, i.e. the earliest years. But, between the years, 1987-1990, it was officials who were the main actors in the AIDS news. This finding of the present study then brings to mind the experience with risk and disaster communication research where it is noted that the media prefer a source with official status and relevant expertise (Sood et al, 1987).

The themes and references are believed to show the conceptual framework of the stories. Therefore, themes and references such as, homosexual, drug addict, haemophiliac and AIDS-test have turned out to be dominantly present in the studied years. Among the papers; *Dagens Nyheter* and *The Times*, had themes and references like drug addict and homosexual respectively, dominating the AIDS news scene. On the other hand, the Ugandan paper had Africa, while the Kenyan one had AIDS test and homosexual as the dominant themes and references in their AIDS news stories.

While trying to give an answer to the research question that queried if there is any correspondence between AIDS and Media realities in the studied papers and years, the study has found out that the two realities did not match all the time in all the countries and years studied. Nonetheless, total correspondence among the two realities, i.e. AIDS and the Media, was observed between the years 1983-1987. However, this did not continue, as in the years following 1987, the AIDS and Media realities have displayed varying forms of inconsistency based on a parti-cular year and/or country (For more see Figs. 6.2-6.5).

In order to investigate the mass media's picture of AIDS in relation to the public's perception of AIDS news (which is one of the research questions) the following queries were forwarded : Has the agenda-setting process been at work with the issue of AIDS? Has AIDS news set the media agenda in Sweden? To give answer to these queries, the study looked at the media data - the one gathered from *Dagens Nyheter* for this study and the one collected from Swedish television *Rapport* news -, the annual Swedish public opinion survey data (SOM), and the official statistics of AIDS cases, and found out that it displayed a condition that will be present when an actual agenda setting occurs (Fig.7.4).

While querying about the news media's role and importance in health risk communication activity, this study has also found out that the studied AIDS news items do also contain a discussion of risk prevention/protection activities. These risk prevention/protection activities include; information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy, screening, registering, isolation, new laws, condom usage, among others. The study has also found out that among the risk prevention/ protection activities that were discussed by the studied media, the preventive aspect of risk communication, i.e. information campaign, public education, counselling/ therapy, were the mostly reported ones. Furthermore, the study showed that there was a general trend of covering more risk messages in the AIDS news between 1984-1987. Besides, the risk prevention/protection messages were highest in 1987. Generally, the study found out that the risk prevention and protection activities such as, information campaign, public education, counselling/ therapy, screening, registering, isolation, and new laws were the ones that were dominantly discussed in the studied papers and years. Moreover, this study also showed that a news story that is relayed by the news media does also act as a risk communication, for it imparts a risk prevention/protection activity message.

Having discussed the general results of this study, when we look at one of the findings, i.e. AIDS news was given more attention by the European news media when compared to the attention it commanded by the African ones, we then automatically tend to inquire as to the incidence and severity of AIDS in the studied countries as well as continents. The severity of the incidence of AIDS was illustrated by the *Weekly Epidemiological Records* of 29th November 1991, where it said that up until that date (i.e. 29 November 1991) the HIV virus has infected six million in Sub-Saharan Africa and half a million in Europe. Furthermore, there are 2049, 2643, 141, and 112 Aids cases per million in Kenya, Uganda, Britain, and Sweden, respectively. Then, this being the fact, the findings of this study show that the news media of the North has given more attention to AIDS news than the news media of the South where the problem is comparatively higher.

Being true to the news value concept of selecting and presenting news that has geographic and cultural proximity to its area, the news media of the North did also dominantly cover domestic AIDS news at the expense of the news that comes from the severely affected part of the world, i.e. Africa. The Kenyan newspaper, on the other hand, concentrated in the coverage of

foreign AIDS news probably due to different pressures (political, lack of resource, etc.) it had on selection and presentation of the AIDS news.

As our empirical investigation on AIDS news as risk news confirmed that the studied news items do also carry risk prevention/protection messages; and also as news can keep the AIDS issue on the news agenda longer, we therefore, think that the news media has a rather big role to play in AIDS risk communication. And by doing so, the news media will keep on reminding the public that AIDS is still around and prevention or protection measures are then needed.

Suggestions and recommendations

In order to find out the overall performance of the news media in the communication of the AIDS news, this study examined one part of the communication process, i.e. the message. This attempt of the study to find out the performance of a medium in the communication of AIDS news has enabled it to gather some valuable information. Nevertheless, it is my belief that this gathered information is not enough to depict the whole picture. So, as to have a representation of the whole picture, the other remaining parts of the communication process, i.e. communicator, channel, audience, need to be brought into the investigation.

Therefore, for a holistic study of the type mentioned above, first, conducting a study on the part that deals with the communicator, i.e. the journalist, is a *sine quo non*. Examining the way the journalist goes about in the selection, gathering and presentation of the AIDS news gives part of the answer to the query. As to the message, analysis of it both quantitatively as well as qualitatively helps discern it more clearly. Then, conducting an investigation on the audiences' reception of the AIDS news that they get through the media does also shade much light in solving the research problem. Besides, by doing so, what at the same time could be discerned is the effect the message or for that matter the media or the communicator has/had on the audience. Furthermore, concerning the channel, looking at more than one medium (i.e. tv, radio, newspaper, etc) will make the study rather broad. Moreover, this in turn helps figure out which medium or media and why it had the discerned effect.

It is always possible to come up with some helpful and important results that are enough by themselves for a particular study by conducting an analysis only on one part of the communication process as shown by this particular study. A study can also be done on two parts of the communication process as in the case of Kitzinger and Miller's (1992) study on the media and audience beliefs of African AIDS where they examined main news bulletins and also conducted an in-depth group discussion with different audience groups; or like Hartmann and Husband's (1974) study on mass media and racism where they content analysed the media materials and also conducted a survey research on the audiences.

Nevertheless, I still maintain that an analyses encompassing all the parts of the communication process is more holistic and very illuminating. Furthermore, it will have a very broad choice of answers to a research problem posed.



12 EPILOGUE

The AIDS pandemic reign on the continents and countries of our planet has required its inhabitants to gather all their strength and work together to control the spread of the infection. Moreover, it has yet more again made clear that this whole earth is but a global village as Marshall McLuhun once observed. What is spotted in the northern hemisphere at any time will not take long to be again located in the southern half of the planet, thanks to the homo sapien`s unprecedented technological achievement which made the interactions among people swifter and easier.

HIV infection which is the precursor of the disease AIDS is lifelong, and it at the same time is able to perpetuate itself by continually infecting others (Mann, 1988:8). This particular nature of the infection, i.e. eternity and perpetuity, is the one that calls for an immediate and a possible final solution in a form of vaccine or curative medicine. Furthermore, according to Dr Jonathan Mann (1988:7), the fight against AIDS has at the same time made it a sine quo non to inquire more about some elements of our health and social system where inadequacies and inequities are around. Besides, this fight against HIV/AIDS has also helped us to consider again the way we understand social problems of the type prostitution and drug abuse and the way these problems are approached and solved.

It, therefore, seems in line with the above mentioned thinking that in some countries and places (e.g. in some areas of Britain and Malmö county in Sweden) the local authorities or the national AIDS committees are seen trying to provide sterile and disposable syringes for known intravenous drug abusers. This type of practice is exercised despite strong vocal opposition that accuses this practice as being the same as legalising intravenous drug abuse and thereby encouraging drug addicts and addiction per se.

As HIV/AIDS spread can be checked once the transmission routes and the nature of the infection are known, educating and informing to increase knowledge of potential risks is fundamental. Therefore, having realized these, according to Baggaley (1988:7) big public health information campaigns geared to AIDS prevention have been launched around the beginning of 1987 in many countries -including Sweden and Britain, for example. Similar campaigns are also being undertaken at different times and places since then.

Evaluation done on some of the 1987 AIDS campaigns indicates that messages presented with hard facts in a straightforward and sincere fashion are more effective (Baggaley, 1988:15; Findahl, 1989:19). Nevertheless, according to Birigit Westphal Victor's (1991:126) observation, these health education campaigns have not brought the expected/required individual behaviour change that helps combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. It is here and exactly at this juncture, that we ask ourselves, so how do we go about? and what can be done? Yes, the answer to this query is not that simple. Nonetheless, what one can point out here is that a continual health information campaign that is aimed at increasing knowledge about risks and then help bring about behavioural change in order to check HIV/AIDS infection seems the only workable prescription until a vaccine or a cure is found.

In order to assure the effectivity of the health information campaigns launched to combat HIV/AIDS spread, constant evaluation of each and every campaign undertaking is needed. Besides, while organising these campaigns, it seems important to study and learn from experiences gained from previous undertakings of the same type. In addition, trying to use as many different media as possible (electronic, print or otherwise) and not totally relying on advertising companies and their techniques which is geared to selling a new product (for more about the use of advertising companies, see RRV,1989:18 and Findahl, 1989:19-20) are some of the recommendations one comes across when reviewing the literature on some of the experiences of the hereto conducted campaigns.

Furthermore, the news media whose main function is reporting news can play a very important role by imparting AIDS risk information and also by making the AIDS risk issue alive on the agenda. In their study of AIDS and the agenda-setting process in the United States, Rogers et al (1991) maintain that the public agenda for AIDS was set by the mass media, and "...new information and new interpretations about the general issue of AIDS served to keep AIDS on the media agenda over a period of years" (P.42). Every "new information and interpretation" probably will help the issue of AIDS stay newsworthy as it continually helps fulfill the news value criteria of news selection and presentation. The more the AIDS issue stays in the news media agenda, it then is expected to be a constant reminder of the public health risk attached to it. And it is then that the news media's role of informing the public comes in hand to fighting the present day pandemic, AIDS.

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APPENDIX



CODING SCHEDULE

UNIT OF ANALYSIS

The unit of analysis is the news item that is printed under a single heading.

STUDIED MATERIALS

The study will include AIDS news stories in four dailies.

<u>COLUMN</u>	<u>VARIABLES</u>
1-4	ITEM NUMBER
5-6	DAY
7-8	MONTH
9-10	YEAR
11	MEDIUM
12	PAGE
13-16	SPACE
17	NEWS AGENCY
18	ARENA
19	STORY TYPE
20-21	ACTOR AS SUBJECT
22-23	ACTOR AS OBJECT
24	IMAGE OF ACTOR
25	MAIN ANGLE
26-30	RISK PREVENTION/PROTECTION
31-43	THEMES AND REFERENCES

CODING CATEGORIES

1. ITEM NUMBER

- Each AIDS story item is numbered starting from 0001 onwards.

2. DAY

-The sample day as identified by its date is numbered between 01-31.

3. MONTH

- The month the news item came out is numbered between 01-12.

4. YEAR

- The year the AIDS story appeared is numbered between 83-90, i.e.1983-1990.

5. MEDIUM

- The medium used for the study is newspapers.The newspapers used for analysis are mentioned below, and are given numbers 1-4.

1. DAGENS NYHETER
2. DAILY NATION
3. NEW VISION/UGANDA TIMES
4. THE TIMES

6. PAGE

- The pages where stories are supposed to be covered are given coding numbers 1-3.

1. Front page news
2. Specialized section (medicine,research..)
3. Other pages

7. SPACE/LENGTH (in column centimetres)

- The space given to the story (it includes pictures and illustrations) in column centimetres, i.e. total column length (x) total column width that is occupied by a story.

- If a news story occupies three columns wide block of 20 centimetres high, then it will be entered 0060 (3 x 20).

8. NEWS AGENCY

- The source of the news item, news agencies or other is categorised, and is given coding numbers 1-9.

1. REUTERS
2. AFP
3. UPI
4. AP
5. TT
6. KENYA NEWS AGENCY (KNA)
7. UGANDA NEWS AGENCY (UNA)
8. OTHER AGENCY
9. By lined, or without any mention of agency

9. PLACE OF THE AIDS STORY (ARENA)

- Country or continent of AIDS story item as described in the story (headline, or the body of the story).

1. SWEDEN
2. KENYA
3. UGANDA
4. BRITAIN
5. EUROPE (excluding Sweden and Britain)
6. AFRICA (excluding Kenya and Uganda)
7. NORTH AMERICA, SOUTH AMERICA
8. AUSTRALIA, ASIA, OCEANIA
9. NO COUNTRY OR CONTINENT MENTIONED

10. STORY TYPE

- What is the news item about? Is it about a domestic or foreign news event? Domestic or foreign is assigned based on the country of the paper's origin that is being analysed.

1. DOMESTIC
2. FOREIGN

11. ACTOR AS SUBJECT

- Stories are probed to determine the actors in the story that are used as subjects. Stories are then examined to see if they have used any of the actors that are numbered 1-20.

1. Government health agencies
2. Other government agencies/Myndigheter-local and central government Authorities Sweden.
3. National non governmental organizations dealing mainly with AIDS (e.g. Terrence Higgins Trust, Noaks Ark, TASO, etc.)
4. Other national non governmental organizations
5. World Health Organization (WHO)
6. Other UN organizations
7. International Red Cross
8. Other international organizations
9. Government health officials
10. Other government officials
11. Politicians
12. Medical Researchers/Experts
13. Other Researchers/Experts

14. The Media (Tv, Radio, Newspapers)
15. Professional Journals
16. HIV positive/AIDS victims
17. Prostitutes (Risk groups)
18. Drug Abusers (Risk groups)
19. Other Risk Groups
20. The man/woman on the street
21. Other

12. ACTOR AS OBJECT

- Stories are read to find out the actor/s mentioned in the story. The main actor/s that is talked about in the story is picked out by reading the news item very carefully. In some occasions there is a chance that the actor in the story could at the same time be the actor/s that is used as source. Stories are then examined to see whether or not they have used any of the actors that are numbered 1-20.

0. No actor as object
1. Government health agencies
2. Other government agencies / Myndighet- local and central government Authorities in Sweden.
3. National non governmental organizations dealing mainly with AIDS (e.g. Terrence Higgins Trust, Noaks Ark etc.)
4. Other national non governmental organizations
5. World Health Organization (WHO)
6. Other UN organizations
7. International Red Cross
8. Other international organizations
9. Government health officials
10. Other government officials
11. Politicians
12. Medical Researchers/Experts
13. Other Researchers/Experts
14. The Media (Tv, Radio, Newspapers)
15. Professional Journals
16. HIV positive/AIDS victims
17. Prostitutes (Risk groups)
18. Drug Abusers (Risk groups)
19. Other Risk Groups
20. The man/woman on the street
21. Other

13. IMAGE OF ACTOR

- The news stories are read very carefully to find out how the actors mentioned in a news story are treated by the news item. The news stories are examined to find out the image the actor/s in the story is given, i.e., if the actors are treated or talked about positively or negatively, or neither negatively nor positively (i.e., in neutral terms).

1. positive
2. neutral
3. negative

14. MAIN ANGLE OF STORY

- The angle of the story as perceived from the headline and/or the intro. The angle of the story is searched if it is from the point of:

1. origin
2. ways of transmission
3. victims (individuals)
4. infection rate (statistics)
5. protection
6. prevention
7. research
8. other.

15. RISK PREVENTION/PROTECTION ACTIVITIES

- Stories are studied to see if they contain a discussion of any or all of the following activities that have some relation to risk prevention/protection undertakings. They are given numbers ranging from 26-30. A presence of each category is coded 1 and its absence is recorded by 0.

26. information campaign, public education, counselling/therapy
27. screening/registering/isolation/ new laws
28. condom usage
29. avoiding multiple sexual partners
30. other

16. THEMES AND REFERENCES

- Each of these references and themes are coded indicating their presence or absence. The main/head theme and reference that is mostly reflected in the story is picked out by the coder through going the story very carefully. These themes and references are thought to indicate the stories' conceptual framework. Therefore, presence as a theme and reference is coded 1, and presence as a main/head theme and reference is coded 2, whilst absence is coded 0.

31. HAITI
32. AFRICA
33. HETEROSEXUAL
34. HOMOSEXUAL, GAY, BISEXUAL
35. PROMISCUITY/PROMISKUITET, MULTIPLE SEXUAL PARTNERS, FÖR MÅNGA SEX PARTNER
36. PROSTITUTE, PROSTITUERAD, PROSTITUTION
37. ZERO GRAZING
38. HIGH RISK- BEHAVIOUR/SEX/ACTIVITY
39. HIGH RISK GROUP, GROUPS AT RISK, RISKGRUPPER, HÖGRISKGRUPPER
40. IV DRUG- ADDICT/INJECTION, SPRUT NARKOMAN, NARKOTIKA MISSBRUKARE, NARKOMAN, DRUG ABUSER/ADDICT/USER/MISUSER, INTRAVENÖSA DROGMISBRUKARE/MISSBRUKARE, KNARKARE
41. HAEMOPHILIA/CS, BLÖDARSJUKA, BLOOD BANK, BLODTRANSFUSION, BLODGIVARECENTRALEN, BLOOD DONATION CENTRES
42. AIDS RESEARCH, AIDS FORSKNINGEN, AIDSSTUDIE, EPIDEMIOLOISKA STUDIER
43. AIDSTEST/HIV-TESTING, LABORATORY TEST,

CODING SHEET

ITEM				DAY		MONTH		YEAR		M	P	SPACE				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	

NA	AR	ST	ACT. SUB		ACT. OBJ		I	AN
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25

RISK PREVENT/ PROTECTION				
26	27	28	29	30

THEMES AND REFERENCES												
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43











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Our modern day pandemic - AIDS, is still at large claiming many lives from every walk of life. So far, the most effective weapon for fighting the pandemic is health information and education. The mass media by its ability of reaching a vast majority of anonymous masses at different levels and sectors of society is able to assist in carrying risk prevention and risk protection messages that help check the spread of the disease.

News which is one form of relaying information by the mass media is then supposed to be able to perform this task of communicating risk prevention and protection messages. This study then attempts to discern and compare the attention given to AIDS by the news media of the North and South parts of the world.

Based on some empirical study findings, it shall also try to give answers to the questions: What does the news media's portrayal of AIDS look like in relation to the prevalence of AIDS in the real world? What does the news media's picture of AIDS look like visa vis the public understanding of AIDS? Has the agenda-setting process been at work with the issue of AIDS? What is the news media's role and significance in risk communication activity? Does the news media have any role in risk communication while relaying AIDS news?

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