



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

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**FRAMING THE SPEECHES OF PM ABIY AHMED IN PRINT MEDIA: THE CASE OF
ETHIOPIAN HERALD AND REPORTER NEWSPAPERS**

By

Gosaye Feyissa

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Thesis advisor: Amanuel Abdissa (Assistant Prof.)

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Graduate School of Journalism and Communication

Approval

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Gosaye Feyissa, entitled *Framing the Speeches of PM Abiy Ahmed in Print Media: The case of Ethiopian Herald and Reporter Newspapers* and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Chair of Department or Graduate Program Coordinator

ABSTRACT

Framing the Speeches of PM Abiy Ahmed in Print Media: The Case of Ethiopian Herald and Reporter Newspapers

Gosaye Feyissa

The main aim of this study was to examine how the government-owned Ethiopian Herald and privately-owned the reporter framed the speeches of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. This research took the speeches of prime minister as its unit of analysis to examine the process of message development during his four month's period in power from April 3, 2018 to August 4, 2018. The researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches. To conduct the study, two newspapers namely Ethiopian Herald and the Reporter which have a relatively high coverage of political, economic and social issues were purposely selected. The volume of the coverage, placement of the story, type of the story, tone of the story and sources used in the news related to Prime Minister speech were examined. The type of frame the two newspapers used is also examined. Framing theory and agenda setting theory was mainly used as theoretical framework for the study due to its importance in media study. This study is a descriptive design whereby both quantitative and qualitative methods were applied. In-depth interviews with journalists and editors involved in framing the prime minister's speech news were also used to support the content analysis. Result of this study revealed that the Ethiopian Herald give coverage to the prime minister's speech in a way that execute government policy and strategy while the reporter coverage was critical. However, the tone of the selected media coverage toward the premier was positive and news stories related to the premier were low compare to the coverage given by Reporter. The study concluded that the speech of the prime minister was framed by the government-owned and privately-owned newspapers. Ethiopian Herald framed the speech of the prime minister in simple words while the reporter framed it by using even descriptive words including metaphor.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

In this section, the overall summary of speech framing will be discussed in the form of background of the study. It also includes a statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance and scope of the study. In addition, limitations and organization of the study will be discussed.

1.1. Background of the study

The media's daily reports inform us about the latest events and changes taking place in the world beyond our reach. As a result of this phenomenon, most of our perceptions about the world are a second-hand reality created by the media organizations. There is no assurance and no guarantee that this reality is an accurate picture of the world (Raiz, 2010).

Concerning this, print media have played an important role in the political and socio-economic development of nations. Although newspapers are no longer the fastest medium for carrying the bulletins and headlines of the day, they still provide the best display and in-depth coverage of events and news (Heikkinen, & Reese, 1986).

When Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahimed made an inaugural speech at the parliament of the country on April 2, 2018, his speech has attracted the attention of local and international media and they continue to give wide coverage to his everyday activities. In the meanwhile, the premier has visited different parts of the country and conducted public speech to discuss with the residents.

Since being sworn into office as Prime Minister, he broke with tradition-launching deeper political and economic reforms that swept across the country. An original change agent and a blunt reformer, breaking the walls of division and building bridges of reconciliation and peace constituted the defining themes of his reform efforts (UNESCO, 2019).

Under his leadership, thousands of prisoners were released; open discussions and consultations held with opposition political parties, some of whom were previously dubbed as "terrorists"; a historic rapprochement and peace agreement was concluded with neighboring Eritrea; a

transformational agenda for legal and justice sector reform has been set in motion; and some of the largest public enterprises are to be partially privatized as part of a broader market liberalization and economic reform agenda (UNESCO, 2019).

All these activities were declared through the premier speeches in which the media continuously present his speech in different formats. According to scholars such as (Schaefer, 1997), speech is part of the communication process that takes place in different occasion including inaugural night, graduation ceremony, political campaign, an international conference. Although, many people can conduct speech as they can speak in front of people almost everywhere in which the speech of ordinary people rarely obtain attention while the speech of politicians or leaders of nations commonly obtains attention as they represent people's interests (Schaefer, 1997).

Also, Slagell (2009), describes speeches as in everyday language, public speaking refers to the communication practice of a speaker sharing ideas with an audience primarily through speech. Leaders of nations are also considered as other frequent users of certain language styles to deliver speech both in a national and international setting.

Based on the above explanation, it can be described that public speaking is a technique of communication with a group of people with a purpose to transfer ideas or information to the listeners in which media can play an important role in giving coverage to such events.

Since the topic of this thesis is framing Prime Minister Speech in print media news coverage, it is appropriate to examine to what extent the media covering and framing the PM speech.

Accordingly, the Ethiopian Prime Minister who sworn in as Ethiopia's new head of state in April, 2018, he became top media consumption due to resignation of Former Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn in February in the same year, following months of protests in the Oromia and Amhara region that led to the deaths of hundreds of people (Retrieved from internet on December 20, 2018).

Abiy Ahmed, in all his speeches and actions made national unity, peaceful co-existence, shared growth and regional integration a central theme of his administration. His inaugural speech inspired hope and renewed collective sense of purpose in Ethiopia (UNESCO, 2019).

Besides, the premier came up with new reforms in the areas of politics, economics and other social issues to ease public grievance. This, in turn, increases the interest of media institutions to enable them to come up with a new approach of providing information that the audience needs (Retrieved from internet on December 20, 2018).

The examination of earlier research on framing shows that frame analysis of media is much more prevalent than research on politicians and political speeches. In this thesis, the concept of framing will be examined theoretically, and analysis of which frames are employed on a series of topics in covering Prime Minister Abiy speech will be undertaken.

According to this perspective, media are a well-known outlet and played a greater role for a century in giving coverage to political, economic, social as well as other news stories. Though, the main focus of this study is to examine how the government-owned Ethiopian Herald and the privately owned reporter newspapers portray the speech of prime minister.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Media organizations do not just passively broadcast information repeating the words of the official sources or conveying exactly the incidents of an event. They also do not select or reject the day's news in proportion to reality. Through their selection and display of the news stories, the reporters and the editors focus their attention and influence the public's perceptions of what are the most important issues of the day (Raiz, 2010).

With this respect, this study examines the framing of PM Abiy's speech in print media news coverage. In Ethiopia, many print and broadcast media institutions are using the speech of officials as a primary source of their daily news. However, journalists of the state-owned media magnify the speeches of government officials neglecting their responsibility of providing balanced information to the public. According to Yonas (2008), journalists do this mainly for political reasons: fear of bosses, editors and government officials. Some of the private presses in

Ethiopia, according to Yonas, do not adhere to the fundamental principles of journalistic ethics which further affects framing.

In similar vein, the main categories of ethical breaches by the private press are thought to be related to inaccuracy, imbalance, partiality and misrepresentation. Similar study indicated that there are private presses that serve as mouthpiece for certain political parties; however, the public usually questions the independence of state-owned presses (Seifu, 2008).

As the public is not a homogeneous entity; rather, people have different values and experiences, and therefore different frames can be important to different people. Issues become salient to people when they are familiar with them and have experience of them (Thogersen, 2006).

Journalists do not only select topics and events for publication. The framing approach also goes beyond studying value judgments articulated in coverage, which is at the heart of studies of news bias. Journalists are involved in a wider process of defining what is at issue in public debates. This interpretive role of journalism integrates the other two perspectives: Professional criteria of newsworthiness as well as value judgments will play a role when journalists produce texts with certain news frames. The framing approach has, therefore, the potential to broaden our perspective on journalistic practice.

As a result, (Scheufele, 1999 cited in Bruktawit, 2008) argued that, media framing of an issue may be influenced by several socio-structural or organizational reasons and by individual or ideological factors. He further identified five variables that may potentially affect journalists' framing of an issue or event. These include social norms and values, organizational pressures and constraints, pressure of interest groups, journalistic routines, and journalists' ideological or political orientations. Therefore, these variables seem determinant also to Ethiopian media in framing current issues of politics and other public interest related issues.

Taking this into account, different scholars put their assumptions on media framing differences. Hallin and Mancini, (2004) and Stromback and Kaid, (2008) contend that, various media outlets may frame the same event in different ways based on the type, editorial policy, the ownership of the media outlet and the prevailing social, political and economic condition of the country.

According to Baker (2007), the government has historically adopted a hands-off policy based on the belief that diverse owners will produce a broad array of views, sustaining sound democracy. Furthermore, Gamson (1992) argued that media act as gatekeepers, supporters and interpreters by deciding selectively to do coverage on the side of one party or all parties on certain issues, giving them their interpretation and greater coverage to certain issue compared to other issues. This being the case for the researcher, however, very little is known about how the print media have been framing official speech in Ethiopia.

Accordingly, various local media institutions seem to have covered the speech of PM differently, but to the knowledge of the researcher, there is no empirical study that addressed how the media have framed the speech. This is the reason for the researcher to examine whether the state-owned and private print media employed different frames in covering the same issue with the stories of PM speech.

1.3. The objective of the study

1.3.1 Genera objective

The main objective of this study is to examine how the selected print media frame the speech of the prime minister.

1.3.2. Specific Objective

To investigate how print media presented the speech of Prime Minister

To identify dominant frames used by the stated print media institutions in framing PM's speeches.

To analyze how often the sampled newspapers interpret stories related to the speech of prime minister.

1.4. Research questions

1. How the print media presented the speech of prime minister?
2. What dominant frames were used in the selected print media in covering the speeches of PM Abiy?
3. How often the selected newspapers interpret stories related to the speech of prime minister?

1.5. Scope of the study

The scope of the study limited to only Ethiopian print media; one from the government and the other from private which are found in Addis Ababa. The study only assesses how two local newspapers covered the speeches of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed from April 2018 to August 2018. Hence, it should be noted that the study does not examine coverage of another platform like television, radio, internet, magazines or pamphlets. Furthermore, the study only included newspapers published from April 3, 2018, to August 4, 2018, and its horizon was also restricted to only four months examination. In addition, the study merely looks at how the media present issue; and does not include media reception analysis. From the two newspapers, 40 stories were collected.

1.6. Significance of the study

First of all, the output of this study helps to partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of master of art in journalism. In addition, theoretically and practically the result of this study is expected to benefit print media practitioners in identifying their strengths and weakness in giving coverage to official speech. It would also be used as a reference for media institutions as well as other researchers who interested to research in a similar field of study.

1.7. Limitation of the study

Even though the researcher has tried to make the sample representative, the results of the study might not still represent the coverage of the whole print media outlets in Ethiopia. More insight could be gained by including more samples in future research. Owing to the limitations noted above, the findings of this study would be more applicable to the media institutions under

investigation. The study focused only on analyzing the written texts. The visual contents, pictures of the newspapers were not part of the study.

It is due to this reason that various groups in the community compete to make their frames dominant during the construction of news. However, their success or failure can only be known by conducting audience analysis. This research, however, was limited to textual analysis and an in-depth interview with those working in the selected media and did not attempt on the reception side. It would be important if future studies could look into this aspect.

1.8. Organization of the study

The thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter One summaries the study's general background and research objectives. It also describes the statement of the problem, significance and limitations. Chapter two, deals with theory and scholarly opinions underpinning the study. Here, the study attempts to define framing theory and its practice in print media as well as types of frames.

Also, how the media try to set an agenda for the speech of the prime minister will also be examined. Chapter Three describes the study's methods, briefly discussing the triangulation approach that combines qualitative and quantitative research. The study relies on in-depth interviews of journalists, which means editors and reporters and also textual content analysis will be conducted.

Chapter Four deals with the study's finding and analysis in light of the literature reviewed in chapter two. The chapter also examines different frames emerging from data gathered through in-depth interviews and selected news from the newsroom. Chapter Five discusses the study's summary, conclusion, and possible suggestions.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. Higher officials and media

There is no doubt that media and politicians depend on each other in a mutual, close, and sometimes uneasy relationship. While media have to rely on the input of politicians to produce news, politicians likewise need media to communicate their ideas and arguments. Many, if not most, politicians realize that they need to be visible in the news media to be politically successful. In this context, the question of how political actors perceive media content is of great importance. If politicians regard the news media as hostile to their views, they may react with suspicion, conceal their plans and strategies, and become cynical about news media organizations and news journalists. This may have fundamental consequences on how politicians and media work together in fulfilling their public duties, and for democracy as such (Matthes, 2019).

In America during the last two decades, consideration of relationships between the media and the federal government has been stimulated by the availability of good empirical studies of various aspects of such relations (Richard et al, 2017). From the media, sometimes the increase is sharp and the criticism quite severe other times, the increase is gradual and the criticism relatively mild. In either case, recent presidents frequently have responded to such criticism by complaining of systematic bias on the part of the media that predisposes them.

The study conducted about Obama's speech framing describes that political stories remind Americans of the promises their government has to combat foreign threats, ensure their security, and protect their democratic institutions and processes. Economic stories delve into Americans' challenges, highlight Obama's economic policies and their effects, and offer a vision of and promise for collective wealth (Sanghara, 2016). This seems true in Ethiopia as print media frames the premier speech to influence public opinion.

2.1.1. Media and Politics

Media and politics are two sides of the same coin. Cook (1998) defined media as a political institution that plays an important role in politics along with many other institutions. Media favors more sources concerning politicians and political parties involved in policy making and governance of the country which directly involves public interest.

As official speech is cornerstone for any journalists who produce news in his everyday activity, the media could also play a crucial role in disseminating current information in the country, especially using the official speech like the prime minister. Therefore, head of state and nations are main source of news in print media as well as broadcast.

According to Black (2006), a symbiotic relationship exists between public officials and the media. The media want information from officials to produce available product, and the officials need the media to distribute their messages to the constituency. Ha (2003) argued that, without news media, both the voters and political actors cannot even imagine how to participate in and maintain the democratic process.

2.1.2. Sources of news in the Media

The evolution of the news media has presented an interesting tale to be told over the last several hundred years, and the changes have become more abundant over the last two decades with the advent of new technology and ways of reporting. Getting news and special interest stories to the American public has always been the top priority of the news media, but over the last several years, the way of doing so has evolved tremendously (Retrieved from internet on March 15, 2019).

There are several ways of getting the news to the public, among them television, radio, internet, satellite radio, newspapers, magazines, and even cell phones. The news world is far different today than it was a century ago, and things are on their way to changing even more. People have interacted with the news since the beginning of news media. The printed word was the first incarnation of news media. Newspapers and different forms of propaganda were widespread ever since the written word came into existence (Retrieved from internet on March 15, 2019).

2.1.3. A Brief Profile of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed

The multilingual Dr. Abiy was born in 1976 in Beshasha, near Agaro town Jimma Zone, in Oromia Region. He grew in a family of Muslim father and a Christian mother. While still a teenager, Abiy reportedly joined the resistance movement against the "Red Terror" regime of Mengistu Hailemariam. After its demise, he joined the Ethiopian army in 1993, where he first worked in the intelligence service and rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel. After the Rwandan genocide of 1994, he was deployed as a member of the United Nations peace mission and later served in the border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea (Retrieved on December 2018).

It was not until 2010, after heading the cyber-intelligence service (INSA), that Abiy moved into politics and quickly rose within the ranks of the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) which changed to OPD since 2019. He was elected to the House of Representatives, and in 2016 he became the Federal Minister of Science and Technology in Addis Ababa. However, he soon returned to his native province of Oromia to take up the position of Head of the OPDO Secretariat (Retrieved on January 2019).

At the end of 2015, Abiy found himself at the center of a violent dispute over illegal land-grabbing in the Oromia region. Although the controversial 'Addis Ababa Master Plan' was suspended in early 2016, the fallout continues to this day, with a death toll of thousands and many thousands injured. Abiy along with regional president Lemma Megerssa- became one of the central figures of a newly awakened Oromo nationalism (ibid).

With the ascendance to power of Dr. Abiy Ahmed, as Prime Minister of Ethiopia on 2 April 2018, the strategic Horn of Africa country is back in the global limelight. The political excitement in Ethiopia has not yet died out even though there is guarded or cautious optimism. Part of the reason why there is such great excitement about both Ethiopia and Dr. Abiy is how the political transition took place. First, there were massive protests across the country that nearly tore the country apart.

Second, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn did the honorable thing and resigned amidst rising political tensions, supposedly to pave way for radical political reforms and to be part of such a process. What is well known is that the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary

Democratic Front (EPRDF), a coalition of ethnically based parties-painstakingly held lengthy meetings and finally settled for Dr. Abiy as the chairperson of the ruling party and subsequently was endorsed as the Prime Minister of Ethiopia.

With the rise in mass protests across Ethiopia, which eventually gave rise to the shift in power dynamics, the EPRDF itself admitted that there were mistakes in governance and democratic participation. With this admission, the suggestion was that there should be more inclusive participation widening the political space.

2.2. Theoretical Frameworks

Agenda setting and framing are two serviceable frameworks for examining both the occupational practices of media professionals and the audience effects resultant from media exposure. Therefore, theories of news agenda setting (McCombs, 1997; McCombs & Shaw, 1972) are the most prominent approaches in research on how news and public opinion influence one another.

Agenda-setting has two levels. First level agenda-setting deals with the media's ability to influence what people think about. Second level agenda-setting explores how the media present issues in a way that can influence how people feel about those issues.

Although the influence of the media agenda can be substantial, it alone does not determine the public agenda. Information and cues about object and attribute salience provided by the news media are far from the only determinants of the public agenda. This substantial influence of the news media has no way overturned or nullified the basic assumption of democracy that the people at large have sufficient wisdom to determine the course of their nation, their state, and their local communities (Mccombs, 2014).

On the other hand, framing theory explains how the media organize principles, which may lead consumers of media to draw certain inferences about a given story. These theories are interconnected and help to explain why particular stories get more news coverage than others and how those stories are covered using organizing principles to simplify what are often large amounts of information. Therefore, the theoretical framework of this research is based on this agenda setting and framing theory which is important in identifying how the selected newspapers framed the speech of prime minister Abiy Ahmed.

2.2.1. Framing Theory

2.2.2. Definition

Media framing can simply be described as the angle or perspective from which a news story is told. While the news is often thought to be objective and value-free this is rarely if ever the case. Most news stories are value-laden in both their production and content.

News is not an exact representation of reality but rather a reconstruction from various angles of a small section of reality. This is not to say journalists necessarily lie or consciously distort the truth, but that journalists by covering particular stories, using particular sources from a particular news angle are constructing reality through a selective process. Moreover, they are constrained both by the work practices, constraints of resources and their relationship to shareholders and/or managers (Retrieved on February 19, 2019).

Framing provides a useful theoretical foundation for examining the influence of the contents of a communicated text in newspaper reports. According to framing theory, the perspective that news media takes when telling a story has an effect on how its audience responds to the news (Entman, 1993).

Thus, news and journalism researchers have often used the concept of framing since Goffman (1974) introduced the approach. Goffman described a frame as a "schema of interpretation" that allows people to "locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its limits" (p.21). Derived from social psychology, the core of framing research has aimed to understand "how people reply on expectations to make sense of their everyday social experience" (Reese, 2001, p.7). These expectations about daily life that is, the frames in one's head are constructed socially, a dynamic process involving the social contexts and the actors who generate the frame. The means to develop and transmit the frames, and the individual cognitive mechanism to perceive and assess them, must be considered. This dynamic interaction between social contexts and individuals attracts scholars from sociology, psychology, communication, political science, and journalism studies.

The media uses framing to influence the way people respond to news reports. Framing involves two processes: selection (i.e. news media chooses what to include and what not to include in the news report) and salience (i.e. emphasizing some aspects of the communicated information to

make them more dominant) (Entman, 1993; Cappella & Jamieson, 1997). The media frames when they "select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/ or treatment recommendation" (Entman, 1993: p.52). Frames, therefore, serve the function of shedding light on society's problems, making clear the causes of the problems and who are involved, making moral judgments about the causal agents and their effects in the reported events or issues, and suggesting solutions or treatment for the problems. Entman (1993) further argued that it is possible for a single sentence to perform more than one of these functions.

Entman (1993) stated that "frames have at least four locations in the communication process: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture" (p. 52). The Communicators (news media) provide the receiver (audience) with certain schemas or frames by which they interpret the events or issues. Different meanings can be assigned to the issue depending on how they are presented in a communicating text, which is characterized by certain keywords or stock phrases (Entman, 1993). Culture refers to a set of common frames rooted in how most people in a particular social group communicate or interact with each other (Entman, 1993). The news media use frames to make some aspects of the communicated text appear more salient than others, and the frame that the media uses shows what is more relevant to the reported event (Price, Tewksbury, 1997). The keywords or stock phrases are varied for emphasis which in turn makes the communicated text more meaningful or appreciated (Entman, 1993; Oversteegen & van Wijk, 2003; Fiske & Taylor, 2013).

News frames play different roles in news media reporting (Igartua, Moral-Toranzo, & Fernandez, 2011), and in framing research, frames have been viewed either as an independent variable or dependent variable. When viewed as an independent variable, news frames are the properties of communicating texts which serve as a precursor of audiences' news reception and interpretation (de Vreese, 2005; Igartua, Moral-Toranzo, & Fernandez, 2011)

2.2.3. Framing in Newspaper Reports

In their coverage of an issue or event in newspaper reports, news media routinely make use of diverse news frames to select and emphasize some aspects of reality and intentionally omit

others (Entman 1993; Watkins, 2001). Most researchers have suggested some approaches by which news frames can be identified by certain distinctive characteristics, in empirical studies (Entman, 1993; Neuman, Just, & Crigler, 1992; Shah, Domke & Wackman, 2001).

The first approach which is inductive derives the frames from the materials during analysis, and researchers do not define the frames before the studies but allow the news frame to emerge from the newspaper report under consideration (Neuman, Just, & Crigler, 1992; Gamson, 1992). The second approach which is deductive examines the frames that have been defined and operationalized before the studies (e.g. Valkenburg, Semetko, & de Vreese, 1999).

Cappella and Jamieson (1997) suggest that studies that favor the deductive approach must fulfill four criteria: identifiable conceptual and linguistic features, commonly observed in media practice, the possibility to differentiate one frame from the other, and the frame must be recognized by others. Despite these suggestions, framing studies have yet to reach a consensus in both methodological and theoretical applications (DeVreese, 2005; Entman, 1993). Entman (1993) describes this situation as the fractured paradigm.

2.2.4. Typology of Framing

In most cases, the terms frames can be defined as "organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world" (original emphasis) (Reese, 2001, p. 11).

Frames are seen as relatively lasting principles that are used in discursive communities. Using a cultural approach, it can be said that frames make up cultural stock of ways of thinking about issues (Van Gorp, 2007). Frames, in this sense, might operate on different levels. On the other hand, it is possible to talk about issue-specific frames, frames that characterize a specific news story and that might be subsumed under a generic frame (de Vreese, 2003). Generic news frames are general and not confined to a specific issue; they can be seen as standard ways journalists cover issues. One study of generic news frames is Iyengar's (1991) investigation of the "episodic" and "thematic" news frames. Another study identified five typical generic frames often used by the media (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000);

1. Conflict frame: The journalist focuses on a conflict between individuals, groups, institutions, regions or nations to capture the audience's interest.
2. Human interest frame: The journalist uses a human face in the story and emphasizes the emotional aspects of an event, issue or problem.
3. Economic consequences frame: Here the journalist focuses on the economic consequences of an event, issue or problem for individuals, groups, institutions, regions or countries.
4. Morality frame: The journalist might choose to focus on religious or moral prescriptions in covering an event, problem or issue.
5. Responsibility frame: The journalist could attribute responsibility either for the cause or for the solution to problems.

2.3. Agenda Setting

The term 'agenda setting' in mass media was taken from famous American columnist Lippmann, who laid the groundwork for the theory in the book "Public Opinion" which was published in 1922. One of the main assertions of agenda-setting theory is that 'what the media find important, or salient, is what the public finds important' (Marchionni, 2012). In different words, agenda setting is the selective coverage of topics that leads the public to perceive some issues as more important than others regardless of their inherent newsworthiness (Wanta, Golan, & Lee, 2004; Wu & Coleman, 2009).

A second aspect of agenda-setting theory is known as 'second-level agenda setting', which is the idea that the mass media not only tell people what to think about certain issues; but also how to think about them (McCombs & Shaw, 1993).

It also explains that through media coverage of an event, the public will develop an opinion about the event based on the type of coverage the news gives to those specific attributes. By covering attributes in either a positive, negative, or neutral tone, the media help the public not only decide on the importance of the issues being covered but also how to feel about the issues (p. 611)

The scholars such as Everett Rogers and James Dearing (1988) believed that the agenda setting theory in connection with mass media stands with interrelationship between three agendas. Such agendas are identified as (i) public agenda, (ii) media agenda and (iii) policy agenda. They claim such policy agenda can be developed based on the issues that the governments and other policy makers create. Occasionally, the reality of the world offers a new issue as a setting of agenda in mass media.

Agenda setting is not inherently bad. It acts as a system of prioritising one thing over another and such prioritization is necessary for a functional society (Dearing & Roger 1996). Agenda setting can fall into three categories: the 'media agenda', the 'public agenda' and the 'policy agenda'. For each agenda type, salience is key.

With regards to media agenda setting, the focus is not only on the positive or negative aspects of an issue, but on the emphasis placed on one issue over another. The extent to which people regard issues as being important as a result of the emphasis on these issues in the media is the central focus of media agenda setting theory (Dearing & Roger 1996; McCombs 2014).

Newspaper titles also play a part in agenda-setting as well. Given that agenda setting is used to shape what the public views to be important, media can use a variety of tools to relay that emphasis. For cable news, emphasis can be conveyed by utilizing breaking news banners and using selective repetition (McCombs 2014). Print newspapers also employ similar tactics, such as the use of bold fonts and capitalization, as well as the use of selected quotes in the title and the length of the titles themselves (McCombs 2014).

Communication is crucial to the development of any society. The mass media are central to the provision of relevant communication for nation-building. The press can bring to public notice, issues that require attention with a view to mobilizing development efforts in that area.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology of the Study

3.1. Research Design

To conduct this study, two newspapers namely the Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter (English) were selected. The researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches to collect necessary data. The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods is referred to as triangulation. According to McNeill & Steve (2005, p.23) "triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods to cross-check and verify the reliability of particular research and the validity of the data collected". For many, the gulf between qualitative and quantitative research methods might be wide and very deep. However, using both of them is very important to check the accuracy of the data gathered by each method.

The quantitative approach (content analysis) will be selected as a major method for its importance in the area of media framing and it is used to measure the frequency of coverage, source, tone, placement and the type of frames used by the newspapers. The quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics to measure the frequency of coverage, story type, placement, tone, and source as well as the type of frames that the newspapers employed in framing the speech of Prime Minister Abiy. On the other hand, collected through in-depth interviews will be analyzed qualitatively. This would be audio recorded interviews with editors and journalists which will further be transcribed into text form. Then after, the transcribed notes/texts and other reliable information will be analyzed thematically.

In addition to the quantitative method, the researcher also used a qualitative method (textual analysis) to analyze and interpret the themes of the selected stories. Qualitative method is also applied to interpret the opinions of reporters and editors involved in reporting of prime minister speech related stories and to support the quantitative approach in addressing different aspects of the problem. In this regard, an in-depth interview will be conducted to help to get a better and deeper understanding of how stories of Prime Minister Abiy speech were framed, how the media gives salience to the issues.

Qualitative techniques can increase the researcher's depth of understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Wimmer & Dominick, 2010, p.48). Berger (1998) also notes that you often

obtain unexpected information that other forms of research might not discover by using an in-depth interview.

For Daymon and Holloway, 2002, qualitative research methods are depicted as being about words as the unit of analysis rather than numbers. They are associated with small-scale studies, close involvement of the researcher with the context under investigation, flexibility, participant viewpoints, and a holistic focus amongst other features. (Mack. N., et.al., 2005) also mentioned that the data format in qualitative research is textual (obtained from audiotapes, videotapes and field notes). Therefore, this study based its sources on newspapers and websites.

Therefore, to examine the extent of media coverage and dominant frames that are employed in the selected print media will be analyzed.

3.2. Data Sources and Subjects of the Research

The researcher will use data sources which include both primary and secondary data. The primary data will be collected through in-depth interviews with editors and reporters of a selected media outlet and interview and other firsthand information. On the other hand, secondary data will be collected through published data from the archive of the media organization, reports of various international organizations, and public records among others.

Secondary data are data that already existed before the researcher found them. These data are created, collected or gathered by some other person. Secondary data include various documents, publication of governments, technical and trade journals, books, magazines, newspapers, publications of various associations (Kothari, 2004). In this regard, the researcher uses secondary data which includes newspapers, and websites.

On the other hand, the subjects are selected from government and private print media outlets based on their popularity, accessibility, readability, and circulation. Therefore, the Ethiopian Herald and Reporter are selected for the subject of this study. Ethiopian Herald is a government-owned newspaper. It is one of the oldest newspapers in the country, established in 1941 and published daily except Monday.

The newspaper focuses on political, economic and social issues. It has a circulation of 15 thousand copies (Ward & Selam, 2011). The reporter was established in 1994. It is a privately owned newspaper which deals with social, political and economic issues. Reporter (English) is published weekly in Saturday and has 5000 copies while Amharic newspaper is published twice in Sunday and Wednesday with a cumulative circulation of more than 22 thousand copies (Ward & Selam, 2011). Both newspapers have a strong professional reputation in covering almost all of the important issues in the country.

All the publications of the weekly English Reporter (Saturday) and the daily Ethiopian Herald are the focus of the study. Ideally, it would have been much better if the data is gathered from Saturday edition of Herald which is similar to the dates of the Reporter. Hence, during four-month period, 16 editions from reporter and 16 editions from herald are collected and considered for analysis.

3.3 Sampling Technique and Procedure

Sample design is a definite plan determined before any data are collected for obtaining a sample from a given population. The sample is a sub-section of the population which represents the whole population. In other words, the sample is a model which examines only some part of the population. Two media outlets, government-owned Ethiopian Herald and the private owned Reporter purposively chosen to take samples from the appropriate subjects for the research.

These media outlets are selected due to the assumption that they would have different news treatment toward the prime minister speech because of their differences in ownership, ideology and political orientation under which they operate. In the newspapers, straight news, editorial, and article which directly connected with the speech of PM will be analyzed. Accompanying visuals such as photographs, illustrations, and charts in addition to, commentaries and letters to the editor/publication are not included in this study as it is not manageable for the researcher to address the whole population of the study under a specific topic.

Different types of frames can be extracted with varying methods. Some researchers prefer to use the five standard frames identified by the previous media framing scholars while extract conceptualized frames. In this study, the frame identified by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) i.e conflict, human interest, economic consequences, morality and responsibility frames were

simply used as an umbrella frame that served as a basis for the specific frames the researcher identified.

In qualitative framing study, the researcher has to be engaged data careful reading or listening to extract the theme and the framing device of each news story. By conducting a pilot study using randomly selected news stories of the outlets from the sample, the researcher extracts three dominant frames from 40 news stories that were collected from the sample newspapers. In a pilot study, each news article is read several times, while the researcher makes thorough notes, and after that, the news frames are decided.

According to Abera (2017), there are two rationales behind not using the five standard frames aforementioned including hermeneutic approach, a linguistic approach, a manual holistic approach, a computer-assisted approach, and a deductive approach as specific frames of this research area, these standard frames are too general.

3. 4. Time Frame

To get a reliable result for the study, the researchers used stories on representative samples of both government and private newspapers which covers prime minister speech that delivered on various events. Accordingly, the researchers selected the newspapers which were published from April 3, 2018, to August 4, 2018. This time frame was selected because it is the time where the speech of the prime minister becomes the top government, public and media agenda across the country. Also, there are two reasons for the researcher to base this study on four months' time frame. First, the government under former Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn responded to ongoing anti-government protests with frequent internet shutdowns and blocks on social media, in which though access was restored in April 2018 under the new prime minister (Net Country Report, 2018)

Also, a few blocked websites became accessible in May 2018, while hundreds more were unblocked in June, reflecting the new government's openness to critical voices and independent news. Online self-censorship decreased undoubtedly as citizens flocked to social media to participate in their country's transition from authoritarianism that creates a conducive environment for media institutions in Ethiopia to freely open to the public (ibid).

Second, various events were taking place on this period where prime minister Abiy held public meeting across the country and delivered various speech, calling of opposition political parties in exile for peaceful struggle in the country, the announcement of partial liberation of state-owned enterprise, peaceful reconciliation of Ethiopia with Eritrea among others. During this period, the prime minister presence on media reached a climax as his speech was always used for media consumption. Taking this into account, this study attempts to investigate to what extent the selected media outlet framed the PM speech during the period mentioned above.

3.5. Selected Newspaper

Two newspapers, government-owned the Ethiopian Herald and privately owned the Reporter, which have relatively high coverage of domestic politics and larger circulation, are selected. The researcher mainly focuses on media framing of prime minister speech that delivered on different occasions. All publication of reporter NP is easily available online while the Ethiopian Herald will be accessed through the organization archive.

The newspapers selected due to the assumption that they treat the prime minister speech as they are operated under different ideology. The newspapers are selected due to their availability; popularity in covering political issues and socio-political standing.

The Ethiopian Herald is published daily except Monday while the Reporter English published weekly on Saturday. Beyond their accessibility and popularity in covering political issues and socio-economic development of the country, the NPs published in English language and found in Addis Ababa.

3.6. In depth-Interview

The study used an in-depth interview to acquire data. The advantage of this method as argued by different scholars such as Struwig and Stead (2001), it combines both structured and unstructured interviews, which helps to increase the reliability of the findings. Patton, (2002) puts how useful the tool could be both to the researcher and respondents.

In-depth interviews are one of the most common qualitative methods. One reason for their popularity is that they are very effective in giving a human face to research problems. Also, conducting and participating in interviews can be a rewarding experience for participants and

interviewers alike. For participants, in-depth interviews offer the opportunity to express themselves in a way ordinary life rarely affords them. Interviewers engaged in in-depth interviews are offered the privilege of having people who are virtually strangers entrust them with a glimpse into their personal lives (p.29).

Editors and reporters from the sample newspapers were selected purposefully. This selection technique was used to involve the journalists who had written most of the analyzed stories. Thus, first, the researcher contacted those who had written almost all the articles about the prime minister. This is because no other journalists engaged in writing news about prime minister as they were routinely assigned and their name is registered in the office of prime minister. In Ethiopian Herald, two reporters and two editors contacted but only two of them available for interview. In Reporter, only one reporter and one editor were responsible for reporting and editing stories related to the speech of prime minister.

3.7. Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis helps the researcher to define what is being studied as well as what aspects are being studied. The unit of analysis for this study was newspaper articles (straight news, editorial, and feature article) written using the speech of prime minister as a source of news. This would be examined by examining the newspaper explicitly. The study focused on written texts and since the theoretical framework of this research is framing and agenda setting, the coding sheet is prepared by the researcher to categorize different frames in a way that would answer the research questions.

3.8. Inter-coder Reliability

Reliability was defined as the extent of replicability, which is pursuing the same results through repeated measuring procedures (Neuendorf, 2002). Reliability is one of the most distinctive attributes of content analysis methodology comparing to other techniques in communication. The independence of the procedure of measuring, instrument, and judges builds up the significance of reliability.

However, the process of data collection in content analysis methodology is often conducted by human observers through recording or transcribing texts, pictures, or audio recordings.

Therefore, reliability in content analysis studies is necessary to demonstrate to ensure the trustiness of conclusions from such data (Neuendorf, 2002).

In this regard, two coders were selected and trained to undertake the coding process of this study. One of them is a postgraduate student in Addis Ababa University and have been working at Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) as a reporter while other from an undergraduate student from a similar school. Both of them have a media background.

After learning the use of the coding instruments and becoming aware of all of the definitions, ENA reporter is responsible for coding The Reporter and undergraduate one responsible for coding from the Ethiopian Herald. More importantly, with the guidance of Peter and Lauf (2002), the validity of content analysis should be precautions. Therefore, to take objectivity and reliability into account, ten percent of the articles were randomly selected to check intercoder reliability, which was established at 0.86 for all categories based on Holsti's formula.

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2m}{N1+N2}$$

While M represents the number of coding decisions with which the two coders agree while N1 and N2 are the total number of coding decisions by the first and the second coder respectively. The inter-coder reliability across all categories ranges from 90% to 100% for the 10% of the stories, the two coders coded. Therefore, since this measurement has a high value, it indicates that the coding process for this study to an extent was reliable.

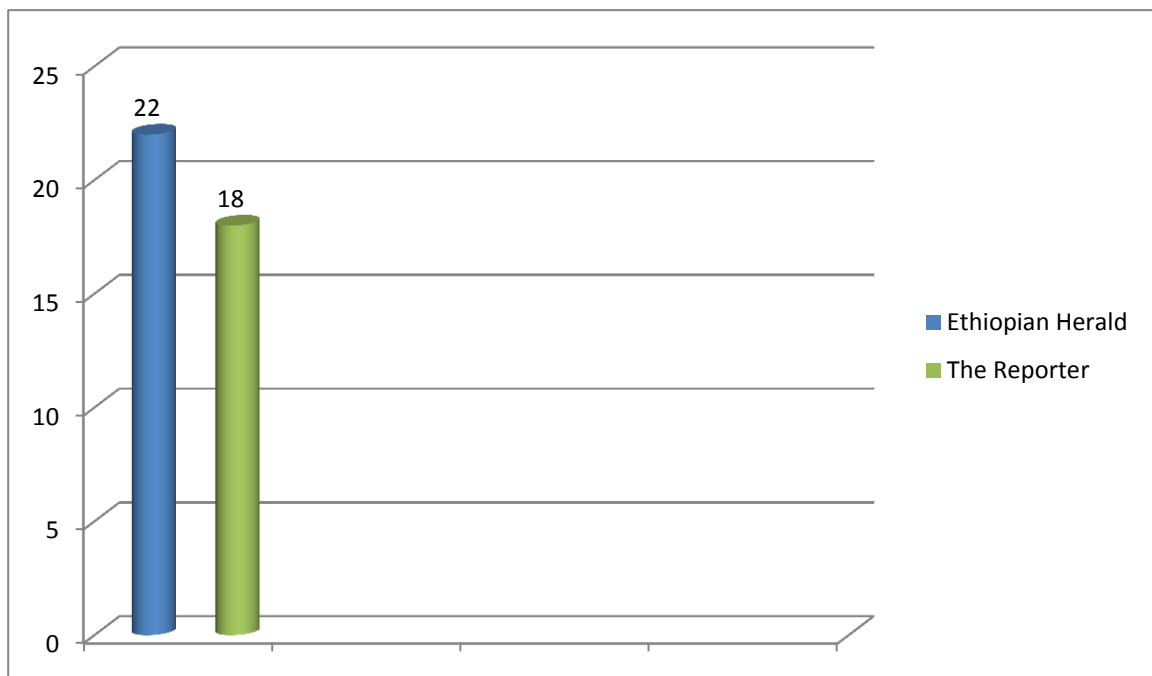
CHAPTER FOUR

4. Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

This section presents the results found from the quantitative and qualitative analysis. The quantitative aspect focuses on frequency of coverage, type of the story, placement of the story, tone of the story, and source of information used, whereas the qualitative part focuses on analysis of frame used and interpretation of themes as well as expressions of the selected newspapers.

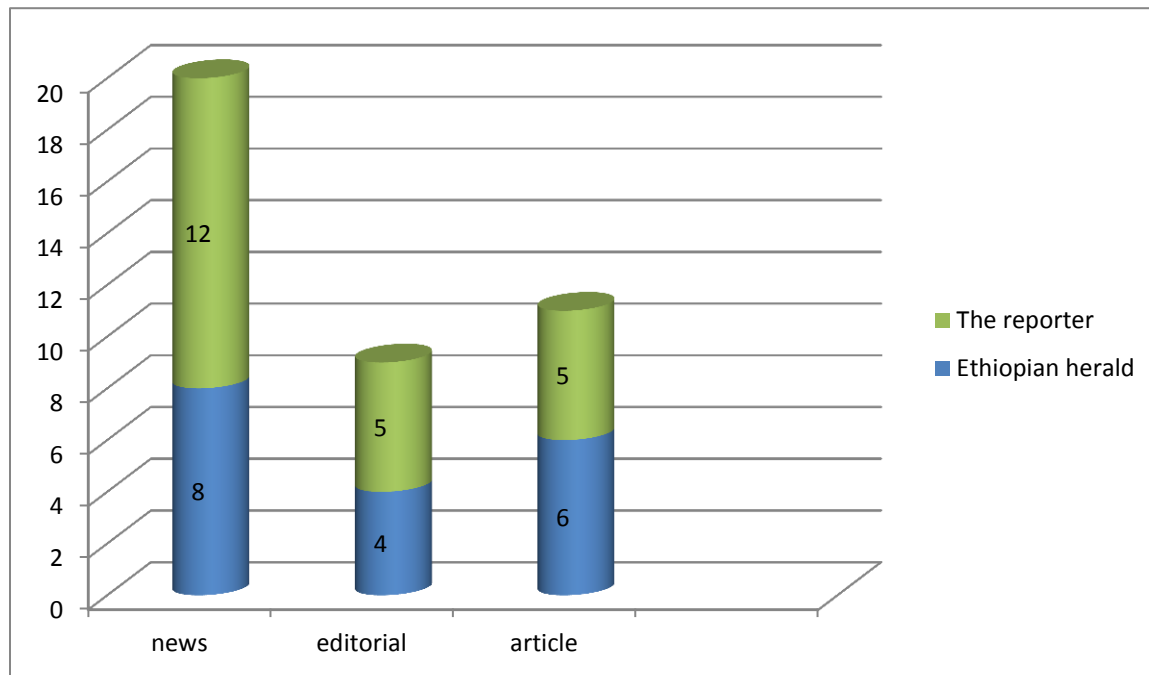
4.1. Data Presentation and Analysis

Fig.4.1.1.Frequency of coverage by the selected newspapers



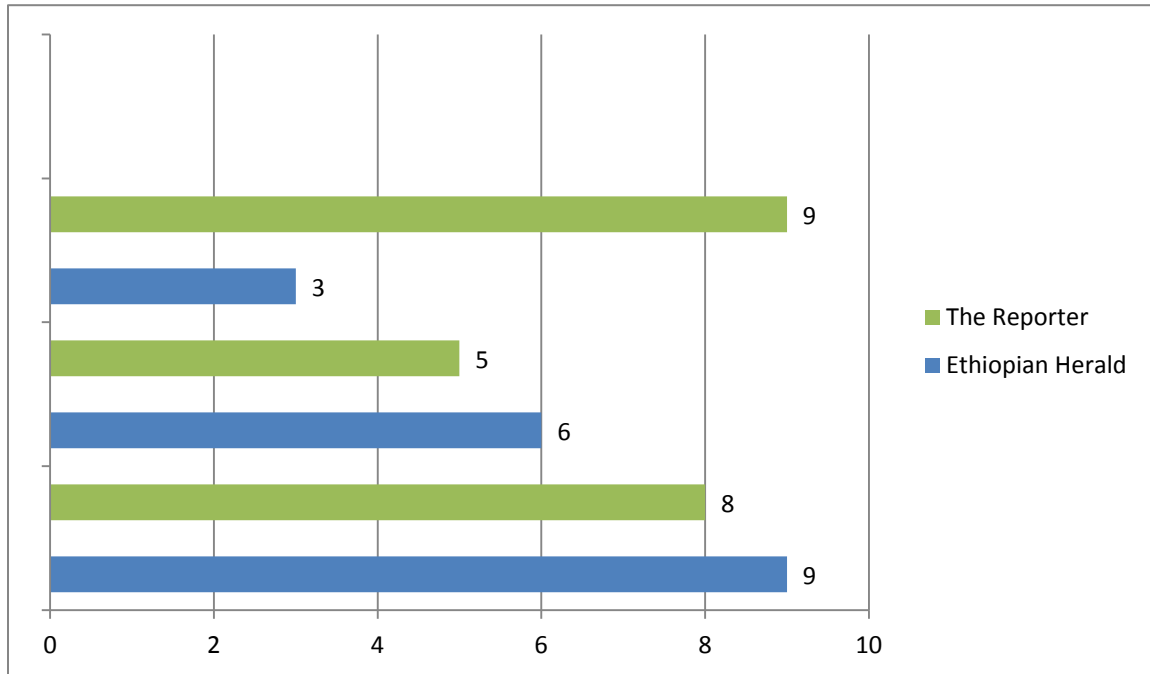
40 articles were concerned with the speech of prime minister within the selected materials. As figure 4.1.1 shows, the government-owned newspaper; The Ethiopian Herald published 45 percent of the totality of analyzed articles while the privately owned, The Reporter, which focuses on political, economic and social issues, provided higher coverage which accounted 55 percent of the articles.

Fig.4.1.2. Type of story covered by the newspapers



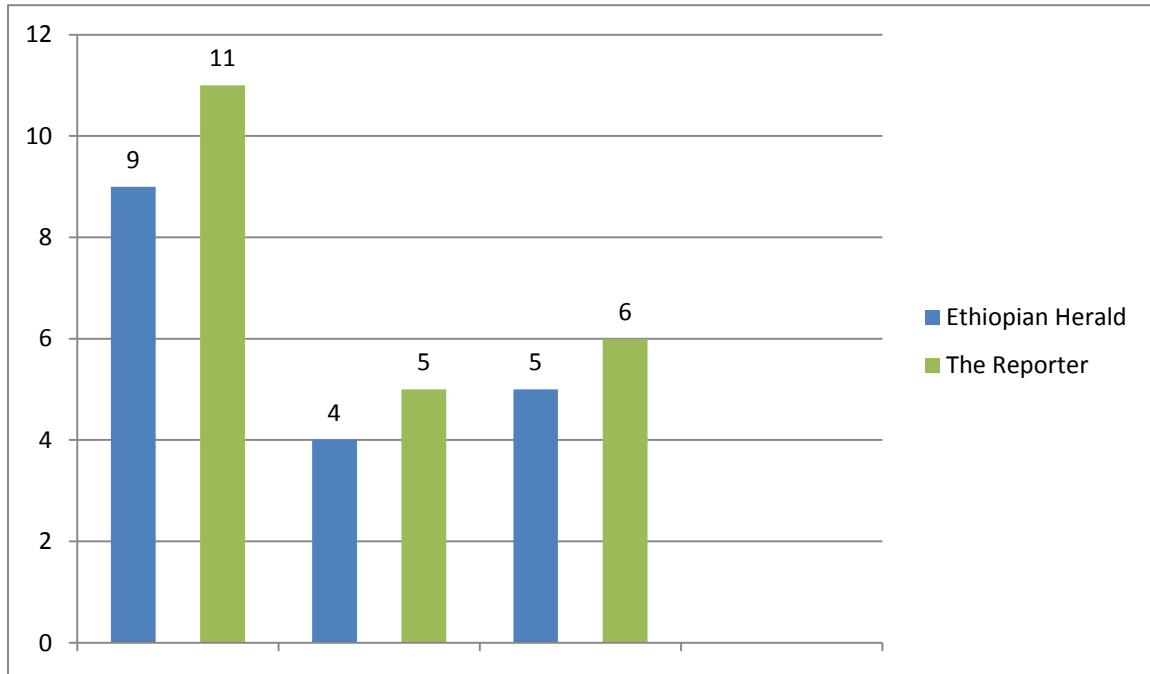
The above Fig. 4.1.2 shows that the type of news story covered by the Ethiopian Herald was about 45 percent. The percentage of remaining editorial and article were 22 percent and 33 percent respectively. Meanwhile, the reporter gave 54 percent of its coverage in the form of news. Besides, the reporter's editorial and article coverage accounted for 23 percent and 23 percent respectively which shows that the number coverage given to article and editorial are similar.

Fig.4.1.3. Percentage of placement of the story by the newspapers



As indicated in the above diagram, the Ethiopian Herald gave front coverage accounted to 45 percent. Besides, 41 percent was published on the second page and 14 percent was in the middle. On the other hand, the reporters published 36 percent of its coverage in the front page and 23 percent of coverage was on the second and 41 percent of its coverage published in the middle section of the newspaper.

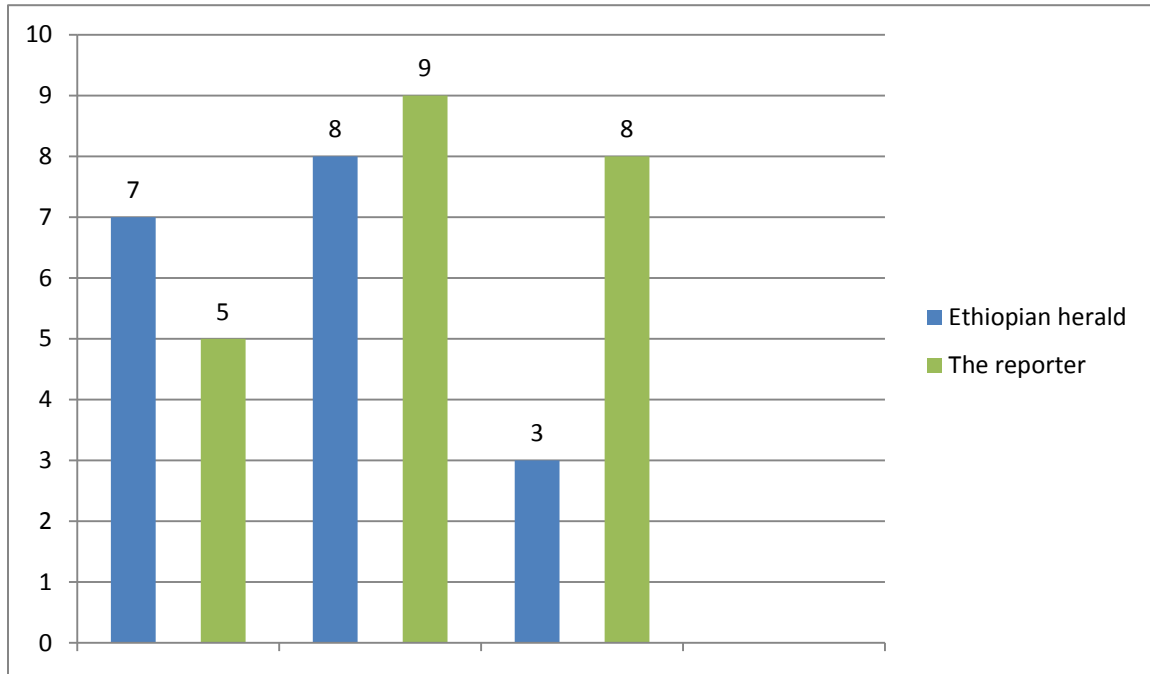
Fig.4.1.4. Percentage of tone of the story



The graph revealed that the Ethiopian Herald covered half of its coverage (50 percent) positively in reporting the prime minister speech while negative and neutral news coverage accounted for 18 percent and 22 percent respectively.

The reporter newspaper gave 50 percent coverage positively while the remaining 23 percent and 27 percent of coverage were negative and neutral respectively.

Fig.4.1.5. Sources of the story



The Ethiopian Herald used Prime Minister Abiy as a direct source for its stories accounted for 39 percent and experts and politicians used as a source 44 percent. Also, residents and officials were used as a source which accounted for 17 percent. Similarly, the reporter coverage was 23 percent indirectly quoting pm speech while 41 percent publication used politicians and experts and 36 percent coverage was residents and official who used as a source in the news.

4.2. Discussion

1. Frequency of Coverage

There is much to be said about news coverage of the prime minister, once he is in office, the chore of governing begins, which would in turn added weight of media attention. For example, the Washington press corps, give coverage to the president on a daily basis. They benefit from covering the presidency because, as the perceived focal point of American government, the president is typically newsworthy. Indeed, presidents receive substantially more network news coverage on average than either Congress or the Supreme Court (Graber, 2002).

With this respect, the data analyzed above revealed that there was difference between the two sampled newspapers under study in giving coverage to stories related to the speech of prime minister. Meanwhile, the two sampled government owned and private owned newspapers were given considerable amount of coverage to the speech of prime minister. But, taking into account their publication difference, the coverage given by reporter was higher.

Informant C from the Reporter indicated that regarding the speech of prime minister, understanding inclusiveness and comprehensiveness of political environment in the country is crucial before start writing stories related to this topic.

Therefore, many events which focus on politics was took place during the sampled period. He further said “our coverage is mainly focus on disseminating the message of prime minister which was promoting unity, synergy and other words that explain togetherness.” “In the first few months, our coverage on Prime Minister Abiy speech was more actually focused on, how differently he differently perceives the political environment and the way forward,” he said.

According to this informant, even if the acceptance of the prime minister speech and message regarding peace, was somehow diluted due to displacement and conflict in some parts of the country, reporter still continue to give fair coverage and try to transmit his message of peace to the public.

Exposure to media can make certain things popular and this popularity can lead those things to become an agenda. Scholars such as Tuing and Hassim (2003) noted that, the frequency, depth

and importance given by the media towards certain issues are believed to determine the level of reaction or thoughts of targeted audience towards it. Similarly, Riaz (2008) contends that increase in the news coverage is thought to bring about increase in the salience of particular issues or events.

Informant B from Ethiopian Herald agreed that before they try to write the story about speech of prime minister, they select angle that fit with vision of the organization and its editorial policy with reference to their audience which said to be foreigner and literate people. “We avoid news that affects the country’s interest. Even if the prime minister conducted various speeches, we didn’t use all what he said because we use only important idea and left others,” the informant underscored.

From the above summary it can be said that the private owned newspapers which previously criticized of giving wide coverage to opponents was more favored by covering the speech of prime minister and critically judge his leadership. This finding coincide with Berhanu’s (2009) which reported that the government print media are highly favorable towards the EPRDF and critical of opposition parties while the private print media are highly critical of the EPRDF and pro-opposition parties standing for the election.

In contrast to this, the finding of this study revealed that the government owned newspaper gave coverage to the speech of prime based on what was said rather than critically analyzing. In similar vein it is also tried to silence the issue. It was assumed that the newspaper published its publication in daily basis and this would be the challenges to further criticize and look down seriously to every speech of the prime minister.

2. Type of the story

The above illustrations, figure 4.2, indicate that out of a total of 18 news published by the Ethiopian Herald, 45 percent of the stories were straight news, followed by 33 percent article and 22 percent editorial. On the other hand, the Reporter published 54 percent news, 23 percent article and 23 percent editorial. Hence, news stories had the highest frequency while article and editorial had the least frequency.

Informant C from reporter noted that stories related to the prime minister is sometimes based on events took place in various occasions with the presence of the PM and the reporter making news not only focus on this events, rather tries to see another angle to involve the ideas of various stakeholders which further develop the message of the prime minister.

This informant argued that even if efforts made to incorporate expertise opinion from politician and other scholars to the speech, such stories are expected to attract the attention of readers and therefore, we disseminated early in the form of news so as to reach the audience on time.

Story types on the speech of prime minister in the selected newspapers were presented as straight news, features, and editorials. As a result, straight news had more stories than other story types. Nwabueze (2009, p. 32) confirmed that unlike the feature story, straight news reports do not contain interpretations, forecast or any information outside what has happened, the way it happened, expect the views of people interviewed in the course of gathering facts for the story.

Informant A from herald agreed that news about prime minister is always come first and other type of news published later in the form of editorial or article which contains interpretation of the issues. The reason for focusing on straight news is due to the importance of news. As prime minister is head of government, priority is given to him and as the Ethiopian herald is government-owned newspaper, it is expected to promote the government activities and also sometimes criticize it. Feature stories needed deep interpretation and take more time to analysis what the premier said. Therefore, necessity of news matters to decide type of the story related to prime minister based on the editorial policy.

As the above mentioned data shows, feature stories focused on speech of prime minister were not sufficient in the selected newspapers. Feature stories are in depth and well researched. Nwabueze (1999, p. 48) states that feature stories extended the horizon of news through explanation and other attractions that might have slipped the thoughts and pens of reporters. Feature stories contain background information and news behind news. The coverage given to stories related the speech of prime minister through editorial the newspapers were few.

Okafor (2002) insists that editorial is critical interpretation or an evaluation of significant usual contemporary events so that the publications typical readers will be informed, educated, influenced and persuaded.

Accordingly, the reason the dominance of straight news acknowledged by informant was due to the fact that most of the stories were speech based on government and access to information toward the speech of prime minister was sometimes limited to only few media outlet.

3. Placement of the story

The above fig 4.3, described that the selected newspapers placed the story related to the speech of prime minister in the front page. Out of the analyzed 18 articles, the Ethiopian Herald gave front coverage accounted to 8 which was 45 percent. In addition, 41 percent was published in the second page and 14 percent in the middle. On the other hand, the reporter published 9 out of the total 22 analyzed articles which also 36 percent put the front page and 23 percent of coverage was on the second and 41 percent of its coverage published in the middle section of the newspaper.

Newspapers can influence readers by whether the story is the lead story, front page versus inside page, or the size of the headline (Carol & McCombs, 2003). The amount of repeated attention to a story can have the most powerful influence on the public.

Informant A from Herald indicated that the stories about prime minister come in front page as herald is public media. News analysis and it is based on weight of the news. When the country's leader do something it was happened to bring the news in front page. He added, I don't believe that something was wrong.

Informant C from reporter argued that news can be placed in the front page based on its prominent, timelines and significance. It is also based on its weight and significance to Ethiopia specially in strengthening relation with various world countries. Therefore, the speech of prime minister came in the front page.

Obviously, reporters cannot cover every matter that comes to their attention and not every important article can be placed on page one of a paper. As Zhu (1992) noted as one issue rises to prominence in news coverage, others invariably drift toward obscurity. For instance, McCombs

& Shaw (1972) in agenda setting literature demonstrates how news reporting focuses public attention on particular matters and away from others.

Some variables at work in this focusing may include the length of a news story, its placement in a newspaper or during a broadcast, or its extended coverage over time. Still, while topics are placed in view of the public's eye, they command attention. What is more, this placement affects what audiences consider to be significant (ibid).

Iyengar & Kinder (1982) note that people in their study;

“Who were shown network broadcasts edited to draw attention to a particular problem assigned greater importance to that problem-greater importance than they themselves did before the experiment began, and greater importance than did people assigned to control conditions that emphasized different problems” (p. 48)

4. Tone of the story

As indicated in fig. 4.4, Abiy's coverage was positive in the selected news outlets, including the private owned reporter newspaper which typically side with the opposition political parties. Accordingly, the Reporter provided favorable coverage to Abiy, which accounted to 11 articles out of the sampled 22 articles and this means (50 percent). However, the coverage given to the premier speech by this newspaper was accounted to 23 percent and 27 percent negative and neutral respectively.

On the other hand, out of the total 18 articles analyzed from Ethiopian Herald, 9 articles which accounted for 50 percent was positive while 18 percent and 22 percent were reported negative and neutral respectively. As a result, the extent to which things are portrayed positively or negatively is believed to affect their credibility on the audience. That is why McCombs (2000) argued that the content of mass media messages including the tone of the messages influence the pictures of the world in our minds. They also influence attitudes and opinions grounded on those pictures.

Informant C from reporter acknowledged that, journalists and reporter have been working in very critical and they consider the speech of prime minister in different ways so as to support him to continue sweeping reform being underway in the country.

Typically, it is supposed that the coverage of the prime minister speech is included many of his own words in the story. However, this would increase the amount of coverage positive coverage in the newspapers. Thus, more sentences attributed to the president will lead to more positive coverage.

Journalists are also encouraged to present multiple perspectives in a story. A story on the premier should include some variation in political perspective, including from both supporters and opponents of the prime minister.

Yet, if the stories inclined more on one perspective or another, this may have an impact on the tone of that story. One way to assess this is by the political party affiliation of government elites. Although some research indicates that network news will air more criticism than praise from members of the president's party in Congress (Groeling & Kernell, 2000). Other research shows that government officials not of the president's party are quite negative in their evaluation of the president.

Informant D from reporter noted "however, the prime minister's speech and his flamboyant message have not as interesting as in the beginning, because those messages were new for Ethiopia. But now people are changed from the ground and we as newspaper also shifted to become very critical to his speech more than previous."

5. Sources of information in the newspapers

The Ethiopian Herald used Prime Minister Abiy as a direct source for its stories accounted to 39 percent and experts and politician used as a source 44 percent. In addition, residents and officials were used as a source which accounted for 17 percent. Similarly, the reporter coverage was 23 percent in directly quoting pm and 41 percent of publication used politicians and experts while 36 percent coverage was residents and official who used as a source in the news.

The data disclosed that the selected newspapers were used politicians and experts in terms of using them as source of their news and the least source used in herald was residents and officials while reporter least source was the prime minister himself.

Decades of research into the role of news sources in the social construction of news have shown how the choice and framing of news sources has significant impact on news content. Many of these research studies have further identified that while news sources form a substantive amount of news content, not all news sources enjoy the same degree of access to the media (Gans, & Herbert, 1979).

Regardless of the decrease in audience trust in media in the United States in recent decades, additional research has tried to decipher what makes people trust or mistrust the news media. Two types of answers emerged. The first ties audiences trust in media to some feature of the text. For example, journalists' sourcing practices -for example, quoting or not quoting a source in the story's headline-was found to be related to the perceived trustworthiness of the news story (Sundar, 1998).

Informant D from Reporter noted that we approached to mainly political parties including activists and to explain the message of prime minister to the society. Independent commentators are also sued as sources to elaborate the speech of prime minister. Since political parties are in this platform to actually to share their opinion to the public toward the speech of prime minister. Apart from that, we wanted to avoid being trapped by repetitive political statements and we wanted independent perspective.

Ensuring impartiality, then, ideally entails the provision of a broad view of the range and weight of opinion on a particular topic. It means that journalists play an active role in *constructing* the narrative surrounding the range of opinion on a particular topic, as they seek to reflect the diversity of the public(s) they represent, while at the same time attempting to 'bind the nation and nurture a collective climate of rational opinion formation' (Hendy, 2013: 38). The journalists then wrote positive stories, hoping to keep the president as a source. John F. Kennedy hosted press conferences twice a month and opened the floor for questions from journalists, in an effort to keep press coverage positive (Greenstein, 2009).

4.3. Dominant frame discussed in each newspaper

Types of frames	Types of Newspapers			
	The Ethiopian Herald		The Reporter	
Frames	number	percent	number	percent
Synergy (<i>medemer</i>)	8	45 %	10	46%
Reconciliation	7	39 %	8	36 %
Reform abnegator	3	16 %	4	18 %
Total	18	100	22	100

4.3.1. The Dominant Frames Used in Framing Prime Minister Speech

The study investigated how Ethiopian Herald and the Reporter have framed the speech of prime minister from April 3 July to 4 August 2018. This period witnessed that the speech of prime minister's popularity was reached climax and became media and public agenda. Under this topic, the researcher presents three extracted dominant frames which were used in the two selected newspapers. These dominant frames include; 'Synergy (Medemer) Frame', 'Reconciliation Frame,' and 'Reform Abnegator Frame'.

The above extracted frames were drawn from a total of 40 news stories published in the newspapers under study. Therefore, the indentified frames would answer first research question; what dominant frames are used in the selected print media in covering PM Abiy's speeches delivered at different occasions.

Often researchers are led by the standard news frames identified in previous framing analyses such as the conflict frame; the attribution of responsibility frame, the economic consequences

frame, and the human interest frame DeVreese (2005). For the purposes of this study, the researcher creates his own frames after conducting pilot study. For each dominant frame, the researcher also purposively selected three articles for analysis from Ethiopian herald and the reporter.

Therefore, this section presents the major actors in the news presentation in the selected print media outlet when they framed stories related to prime minister's speech which enable to answer research question; how the print media presented the speech of prime minister.

4.3.2. Synergy (Medemer) Frame

Ethiopian Prime Minister ascended to power in April, 2/2018 and has made inauguration speech at the parliament of the country. Since his speech has attracted local and international media and many countries across the world began to follow what was going in the areas of socio-politics in the region.

For instance, the coming of the premier brought many changes in the areas of politics, economic and social affairs. Due to that, the premier speech has been receiving wide coverage by local and international media as well. So that, the selected newspapers Ethiopian Herald and reporter were used synergy (medemer) frame in giving coverage to prime minister activities.

From the beginning, Ethiopian Herald, the government-owned news portrayed the prime minister as a promoter of synergy (medemer) which was related to unity or coming together to solve the problems of good governance and other issues the country's faced in the past.

The following excerpt of the story entitled "Nurturing the re-established Ethio-Eretria strong ties" would support the argument. The front page of news read as;

Lidetu Ayalew Members of the Ethiopian Democratic Party for his part says it is complementary that Dr. Abiy Ahimed has taken the initiative to break the wall that has separated the two people for a decade and revive the spirit of togetherness (Ethiopian Herald, July, 21, 2018, p.1, VOL. LXXIV, No. 269)).

In this case, Ethio-Eritrea issue was among hot issues announced by the prime minister and the media also make it the agenda, but the Ethiopia herald didn't clearly explain the benefit the two countries obtained from peace and loss from 'war no peace' of two decades. In this regard, the print media also highlight from the perspective of what the government said rather than investigating the problems from the grass root for the stalemate and didn't show the countries future destiny. However, Ethiopian herald synergy (medemer) used to set an agenda and only support the government policy including what was said by the prime minister.

One of the hot issues among the media and public during the sample period of this study was the premier brought glimpse of hope to people in the country those who were in the worst scenario due to political tension in some parts of the country. Since the prime minister came to power many people were happy and express their commitment to actively participate in nations development endeavor. Therefore, the newspaper transmitted message of the prime minister by using synergy frame to bring together all people of the country to achieve common vision. Under title; contributing one's share for success of leadership change, the article read as;

At a time Ethiopia find itself at a cross road owing, among other things; to the infringement of such constitutional guaranteed right as freedom of expression and assembly, the prime minister and his administration need to be given all the help they can get. As the prime minister underscored in his address, the importance of respecting diversity when calling upon Ethiopians to come together, it is incumbent on us to accommodate difference as we renew our commitment to building a democratic system (The Reporter, April 7, 2018, Vol. XXII, No. 1126).

The reporter newspaper similarly use synergy frame in a way that all citizens of the country should come together to solve the country's problem and become part of solution. The message of this newspaper indicated that no one cannot bring change without help of others and success cannot be ensured .Under the title; nothing comes before peace, democracy!, the newspaper extract from article support this argument as follow;

It's naïve and indeed counterproductive to expect Prime Minister Abiy to do miracles. The transition to a better future can be wisely managed when Ethiopians join hands to find a shared solution. If the change citizens are looking forward to is neither

participatory nor institutionalized it is liable to fail and even result in unintended consequences (The Reporter, July 7, 2018 Vol. XXII No. 1139)

4.3.3. Reconciliation Frame

As some people agreed that prime minister who said to be a reformist and restless leader, he tries to avoid hatred and bring peace, love and forgives among all people of the country. This would be aimed at working together with any Ethiopian national without labeling to any ethnic group, social and cultural affairs including political orientation. The article Ethiopian herald published in the front page under the title, rethinking national consensus in Ethiopia read as follow;

According to Chane, national consensus needs tolerance, kindness, sharpness, logicity, and information based on fact. In addition to this national consensus calls for free discussion by its very nature. Due to this people can select their better ideas of the providing. While it is grouped under international conflict resolution, Chane noted (Ethiopian Herald, July, 14, 2018, p.2, VOL. LXXIV. No. 263)

From this perspective, the coverage given to reconciliation frame by herald was giving some insight on how national consensus will become set the ground and the way it would effectively exercise. This was described from experts' opinions. From another perspective, the situation when the premier came to power was worst due to protests in some parts of the country and that was the reason for him to call for peace which transcends to the horn of Africa and beyond. The newspaper didn't show the value, norms and peaceful coexistence of the society while using reconciliation frame.

On the other hand, the reporter newspaper tries to use reconciliation frame to convince the audience. It also tries to use strong words to explain it in different ways. In the headline of stories related to Prime Minister Abiy, the newspaper tries to hook the audience as well. Unlike herald, the reporter used short words for explaining what was said by the prime minister and what expected to do in the forthcoming. The article also describes how hatred affected the society and should be done in the future to maintain the message to Abiy which he called forgiveness. the following excerpt under the topic; 'Lest hands extended in peace are clenched' explains this;

There is a saying that goes, “Bitterness is like cancer. It eats upon the host.” It’s the responsibility of this generation to erase decades of hatred and vindictiveness with love and forgiveness. The scenes of unfettered jubilation witnessed last Sunday on the streets of Asmara during the state visit of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) to Eritrea bear testimony to the fact that the wall of hatred crumbles in the face of love and forgiveness (The Reporter, April 7, 2018, Vol. XXII, No. 1126).

The Ethiopian herald in its publication under the title: ‘support the good start for national consensus’ also describing reconciliation frame in different ways. The initiatives taken by the premier in the areas of politics were one of the reasons to use this frame to sustain the sweeping reform. By using reconciliation frame, it explains how to accelerate national consensus through love and peace and respecting diversity. This argument can be described as follow;

Currently Ethiopia is on a good start to bring about the long anticipated national consensus especially through the committed initiatives of Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed. Ever since he assumed the premiership, Dr. Abiy has taken actions that managed to bring together vast majority of the public towards common agenda or interest and goal. This is unprecedented level of opportunity to further build up on and realize strong national consensus (Ethiopian Herald, July 14, 2018, p.2, VOL. LXXIV. No.263)

4.3.4. Reform Abnegator Frame

The newspaper was covered a wide range of issues related to the speech of prime minister. Sometimes, it is important to logically criticize governments' activities to enable the audience to build trust on the media outlet and actively participate in development activities being underway in the country in which the role of media is also crucial. Reporter newspaper in its publication titled ‘making sense PM's tour’ read as follow;

‘In his Eid Al Fitr message, Prime Minister Abiy said that the conflicts were caused by groups that do not want peace and the public has to understand that these "daytime hyenas" want the people to kill each other and benefit out of it’ (The Reporter, June, 23, 2018 Vol. XXII No. 1137).

This was some good thing done by the newspaper in entertaining diversity of view in and used reform abnegator in a very jargon way. It was not common to use such kinds of words in media. Because, no one cannot understand what information was intended to transfer. Therefore, the media used this frame out of context and at the same time, the audience also misinterprets differently.

The Ethiopian Herald under: council urges public to nurture current reforms' explains that as many people who support the prime minister Abiy leadership, other many people's were against the reform and tries to abort it. The effort made by the primer was encouraging and experts and scholars called for not miss the existing opportunity. Supporting this argument, the newspaper presents like this;

Ameha stated that Ethiopia had passed through similar opportunity in 1974 by the effort of the people, but immediately the public movements were hijacked by a military junta and the country lost its opportunity. He added that although Dr. Abiy is taking many reforms to answer the public questions, the unrests and ethnic clashes in different parts of the country are indicator to lift the reforms. The chairperson said that HRCO sees the chaos created in some parts of the country as threats to the golden opportunity (Ethiopian Herald, June 30, 2018, p.2, VOL. LXXIV. No.251).

Ethiopian Herald used reform abnegator frame in different ways. It tries seeing things in different angle to give insight to its audience about the overall activities of Abiy and those who try to impeded his activities. Under its title 'public rallies signify change, despite some faults' the newspaper argue the efforts exerted Abiy and other people who have hidden interest, this can be read as;

The public rallies being undertaken in different parts of the country indicate the changes which have been maintained by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in 90 days in power, though some of them have been entertaining anti-federal system (Ethiopian Herald, July 8, 2018, p.1, VOL. LXXIV. No.258).

The reporter also used reform abnegator in a way to take caution in every activity undertaken by the prime minister. It tries to show direction to take measure to respect the rule of law and keep

the reforms. Unless otherwise the risk may be worst and when irregularity happened, it was not simple to restore. This argument supported by the extract from the article under the title: ‘exercising caution’

Citizens fiercely supportive of Prime Minister Abiy likewise need to resist the urge to be melodramatic or enamored with conspiracies and instead provide any information that may come in handy. Displaying histrionics and acting with haste only serve to push the change off track. Each and every action ought to be carefully thought out (The Reporter, June 30, 2018, Vol. XXII No. 1138)

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1. Conclusion

Media plays a role in focusing the people's attention towards a certain issue. The frequency, depth and importance given by the media towards a certain issue are believed to determine the level of observation, reaction or the thoughts of the targeted audience or society towards it. According to Reese (2001), "framing is organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world."

Media is believed to have authority in influencing the people's views towards a certain issue. The influence used by the media is the same either concerning the positive or negative image or character of a certain race, society, country or the individual himself.

Someone who is involved in the media from whichever level in the organizational structure of the media can influence the framework of the news either through choosing the news angle, choosing the sources to be used, headline expression, summarizing the main point of the story and choosing appropriate perspective.

Thus, this study set out to examine framing prime minister Abiy Ahmed speeches in print media in the case Ethiopian herald and Reporter. Hence, it attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. How the print media presented the speech of prime minister?
2. What dominant frames were used in the selected print media in covering the speeches of PM Abiy?
3. How often the selected newspapers interpret stories related to the speech of prime minister?

To conduct the study, two newspapers; Ethiopian Herald and the Reporter which have a relatively high coverage of domestic politics were selected. It focused on the speech of prime minister, his leadership. The research employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative content analysis was performed to count frequency of coverage, type of story, tone

of the story, source used in the story, placement of story and types of framed used in the selected newspapers. In-depth interviews with journalists involved in framing stories related to PM speeches considered to support the content analysis.

Result of this study revealed that the Ethiopian herald gives coverage to the prime minister speech in a ways that execute government policy and strategy while the reporter coverage was critical and well interpreted. However, the tone of stories in the selected media coverage toward the premier was positive and news stories related to the premier covered by herald was low compare to the coverage given by reporter.

In addition, among three dominant frames identified by the researcher, synergy frame was one of the dominant frames in the selected newspapers and journalists and editor working in the newsroom were aware of how to frame the stories related to political speech. Once newspapers receive newsworthy information, they try to present the information by framing the news story as what they intended to transfer.

But, difference occurred in portraying the prime minister due to differences in ideology under the newspaper operated and ownership. This can be affected journalists profession in different ways.

It can be concluded that the speech of prime minister was framed differently by the government-owned and privately-owned newspapers. Ethiopian herald framed the speech of the prime minister in simple words while the reporter framed it by using even descriptive words like metaphor.

5.2. Recommendation

Newspapers were the only form of local media used for this research study. Other forms of media, which could be used in future research, might include radio, magazines, television, or online news sources. Additionally, there have been a few television movies and books written about the Prime Minister Abiy Ahimed. This will be also another research to be conducted in the future.

Different newspapers could have used a different terms to explain the prime minister. Therefore future research might include not only local media; it would also international media about portrayal of the prime minister.

According to the finding of this study, framing does frequently happen in news stories and it is important for practitioners to be familiar with this topic. Media reporters could benefit from this study in understanding how to present a news story. Therefore, future researchers should continue performing research on this topic and could compare the differences or similarities of media framing across the media platforms.

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Table

No	List of Journalists	Job Title	Media Houses
1	Daniel Beyene	Editor	Ethiopian Herald
2	Abdurezaq Mohamed	Reporter	Ethiopian Herald
3	Asrat Siyoum	Editor in Chief	The Reporter (English)

Appendices

Appendix A

Coding Sheet

Name of Coder: _____

Code for coder one= B1

Code for coder two= B2

Name of Newspaper: _____

Date of Publication (date/month/year): _____

Title of Story: _____

Analytical Categories:

1. Type of story:-

• News _____

• Editorial _____

• Feature _____

2. Type of Source the story used:-

• Prime Minister as direct source _____

• Politician and experts _____

• Other government official and residents _____

3. Tone of story:-

• Positive _____

• Negative _____

• Neutral _____

4. Placement of the story

•1.Front page _____

•2. Second page _____

•3. Middle section page (eg. From page 1-5) _____

5. Type of frame the story used:-

•1.Synergy (*Medemer*) frame _____

•2. Reconciliation frame _____

•3.Reform abnegator frame: _____

Appendix B

Interview guide for journalists and editors

1. General

What is your reflection on speech of the prime minister?

How did you and your media cover the pm speech?

2. Sources

Who were the sources you quote and used in the stories in related to the prime minister speech?

Why did you approach experts and politicians as sources to interpret Abiy speech?

Was there any pressure from external bodies to write the story in certain ways?

3. Placement of the story

Why your media organization always put the stories about pm speech and his activities in the front page?

What was the tone of the overall stories about pm? Positive, negative or neutral?, why?

4. Frames

How did you construct the stories and why? Were you aware of how the stories were framed?

Did you purposefully shape or organize the story in certain ways?

Why did you focus on unity and reconciliation when covering the speech of prime minister?

How often the selected newspapers interpret the speech of prime minister?

What factors affected the way you covered the speech of Prime Minister Speech from April 03-August 4/2018?

Stakeholders need to enhance commitment for peace



The inspirational leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed is bearing fruit as many people have shown interest to participate in the rally organized to acknowledge his initiatives ever since he came to power about two months ago.

He has influenced peoples thoughts towards national reconciliation, unity, forgiveness ... etc. Acknowledging his assertive leadership in uplifting people to exercise such good moral, it is also important to note that such positive behaviors were long ingrained in the culture of the people.

People have lived with peace, mutual respect and cooperation for years. Conflicts that happen usually happen are also solved through the rich traditional arbitration and conflict resolution mechanisms.

Despite the existence of the valuable cultural assets of the people that helped the resolution of conflict and the unreserved efforts of the leadership, conflicts among people are likely to happen.

The policy and approaches of the government and role of the leaders, educational and religious institutions are likely to play significant role in shaping the relationship between people.

Conflicts that flared up in some parts of South Ethiopian state are outcomes of the failure in managing smooth relations ship between the public. Just as they lived together for ages, they can live together forever provided all the relevant stakeholders perform their responsibilities with utmost commitment.

Just as the example set by Prime Minister Abiy, it is possible to lead people towards mutual trust and tolerance. This has been witnessed practically throughout the times the country started applying federalism during the last two decades. Except some small-scale skirmishes, no severe level of conflict

has been observed.

If at all such conflicts happen, they were nipped in the bud through both traditional resolution mechanisms as well as intervention of the government, religious and other institutions. However it is important to address conflicts durably.

Concluding from the developments observed in our country so far, it is possible to sustainably address such problems in our country as our people and country own all that it takes to do so. First of all the people own rich cultural heritages that enable to solve conflicts of any origin though simple and affordable means.

Second there are strong religious organizations and systems that allow intervention to settle conflicts among the society. They have also been playing significant role in addressing related issues so far.

Hence , other relevant stakeholders like educational institutions and civic society should also discharge their responsibility in filling the existing gaps as well as future challenges in ensuring the sustainability of peace and tolerance in the society.

Higher educational institutions have a big potential in analyzing the constructive historical and cultural backgrounds of the society and contribute to nurture values that can keep people together than tear them apart and engage against one another.

All stakeholders should take advantage of the inspiration created by the senior leadership of the country to build up on the common values of people that can contribute towards ensuring their unity, harmony and shared vision.

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How effective were Premier's 90 days in office?

BY ZELALEM GIRMA

Since taking office about three months ago, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed was busy inspiring national consensus and rebuilding government trust among the society.

The premier's achievements during the stated period are worth the high level of popular support he has won, according to Scholars and Politicians.

Dr. Tarekegn Adebo, Associate Professor and Senior Advisor for Peace and Conflict Resolution at Addis Ababa University and abroad, says the Premier's effort to revitalize the country's peace and stability is welcomed by the majority of the people. Commencing his Premiership position, Dr. Abiy's concern was to line up public speeches and discussions with various segments of the society across the country to create national consensus.

Dr. Tarekegn recalled that Dr. Abiy has freed political prisoners and those held on corruption and terrorism charges, and preach about Ethiopian nationalism. He has met investors, youths, political parties, artists, prisoners, and visited patients among others.

Dr. Abiy has also made strategic travel to neighboring countries starting from Djibouti, and then to Sudan, Kenya, Egypt and Somalia. In doing so, Dr. Abiy is fulfilling his word promised to people while he assumed power at the



Dr. Tarekegn Adebo

Parliament. In this regard, a Political Scholar at Addis Ababa University Wosenseged Asefa argued that holding discussions with segments of the society one by one will open door for the coming of monarchial government. Dr. Abiy rather needs to build effective democratic institutions, independent judicial system as well as self-governing electoral board, he added.

"Premier's leadership is a marathon, not a sprint. It's the work of years, with effects sometimes not fully seen for decades. His governance is really run by constitutional design; putting full amount of energy in the executive to see the political landscape transformed," a 44-year-old man residing in Addis Ababa.

Then, in 90 days, Dr. Abiy has made a strong start on giving Ethiopians exactly what they wanted for: a democratic, determined, outspoken, and optimistic leader. However, there is no new policies in a nation, most people feel that the country goes in the right track - it's been promises made, promises kept, he commented.

Dr. Tarekegn also agrees that Dr. Abiy has met popular support from all corners of the country, his vision fully entered in to the minds and hearts of all Ethiopians. All states need to pursue

the principle of peace and mutual benefit and must continue to strengthen peaceful co-existence that existed for centuries.

In his usual public speeches, Dr. Abiy says the need for peace is to tackle challenges that bounded us with enormous intricacy, hatred and conflicts between the same citizens. But, this complexity offers us with huge opportunities for cooperation and solving common problems since the country is home to people that are connected by blood, language and culture.

In fact, the need to pursue peaceful co-existence among peoples in this country is very significant to sustain our supremacy over other countries, and stand for prosperity that benefits all segments of the society.

According to Wosenseged, in any healthy society there must be both a search for consensus and a tolerance for dissent. Despite some conflicts inside a single society in some parts of the country, it is not about protesting against the Prime Minister, rather it was due to the problems accumulated for decades, he observed.

In a document wrote by Dale Bricker and Leah Leatherbee at Horn of Africa Program: "Tolerance for dissent means, ultimately, the willingness of officials to permit nonviolent activities, even when they are designed to bring about a peaceful transition of power to replace the government."



Wosenseged Asefa

"It also means forbearance in the face of disagreeable expressions of opinion, the willingness of an opposition to permit others to freely reject its line and choose another, either in support of the government or in favor of a third way."

Dr. Abiy wants to build a society in which they believe in search for true consensus and tolerance which have usually been in short supply for decades. A new horizon that Dr. Abiy brings for the people is togetherness, Love, and Forgiveness, Fitsum Arega, Head of the Prime Minister Office, tweeted.

Fitsum said; "Dr. Abiy believes in Ethiopia will return to its former national glory. Our quest requires all of us to be active participants & not passive bystanders. Regardless our roles, we all need to engage whether it is in the government, in politics, in business, in sciences or arts."

Rethinking national consensus in Ethiopia

BY MESERET BEHAILU

After practicing a constitutional federal democratic system that attempted to tolerate ethnic, religious and socioeconomic differences, Ethiopia has faced the issue of boosting national consensus as a hot agenda.

Scholars and politicians argue that national consensus was very

poor during the last two decades and there is a need to take strong actions to put it in place for the bright future of the nation.

Lecturer and researcher at Addis Ababa University, Dr. Sisay Mengestie, says, the existence of unwise use of power, selfishness, violation of constitution and unfairness were some of the major indicators for the poor level of national consensus in the country

during the last 20 years. President of Ethiopian Democratic Party Dr. Chane Kebede, on his part also agrees that the issue of national consensus existed during the last 18 plus years was questionable affecting the rights of the people and creating wide rift between various societies.

President of Raey Party Teshale Sebro on his part stated that even though the country has a written constitution

the actual implementation was not that successful which finally ended up in outrage of the public.

Nurturing national consensus is a timely and mandatory issue as it is significant in realizing the overall objectives of the people.

He further stated that national consensus can help ensure through effective democratic system and independency of democratic institutions

while discussion and agreement have benefited to create strong national consensus, he added.

According to Sisay, national consensus has various significant within the country through conflict resolution, for sustainable development, peace, political stability, obeying for the law and

(See Rethinking national... page 2)

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Support the good start for national consensus

Ethiopia is among the countries of the world with a large number of population as well as diversity. About 79 nations, nationalities and people live with mutual respect and tolerance. The people also adhere to different sorts of religion. Furthermore the people vary in their socio-economic status and there by interest or attitude politically.

Despite some conflict in the past the people and the country are well known for the exemplary level of tolerance and mutual understanding and respect. The sporadic conflicts that flare up some times in some areas were also possible to be settled through either traditional alternative dispute resolutions mechanisms or governmental and other institutions mediation.

After clinching the protracted civil war in the country in 1991 the government has established a constitutional democratic system. During the last two decades the government has been applying the principles of democratic system and justice, among others as per the way they are enshrined in the constitution, though undeniable that there were drawbacks in the practice as many people were outraged.

The last three years were turning point in the journey of the country on the path of building democratic system. The unrest that flared up with the immediate causes of governance and justice problems have escalated to a large scale change of leadership.

In the course of the upheaval various developments were observed. While majority of the people were requesting improvement in the government's handling of democratic system, justice, human rights etc..., others had also taken the opportunity to reflect illegal, biased and other opinion. Thanks to the smooth transition of power the legitimate quest of the majority

has triumphed. Yet, it is undeniable that there is a likelihood of other extremist or radical forces attempting to sway the attitude of the public.

Hence ensuring national consensus has become a determinant issue in preempting the violation of human and democratic rights of people, shortcomings related to governance as well as hindering of development. According to scholars and politicians national consensus is a vital step towards surely achieving all these goals.

National consensus can assist efforts of conflict resolution, sustainable development, peace, political stability, conforming to the rule of law and safeguarding the constitution.

Currently Ethiopia is on a good start to bring about the long anticipated national consensus especially through the committed initiatives of Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed. Ever since he assumed the premiership Dr Abiy has taken actions that managed to bring together vast majority of the public together towards common agenda or interest and goal.

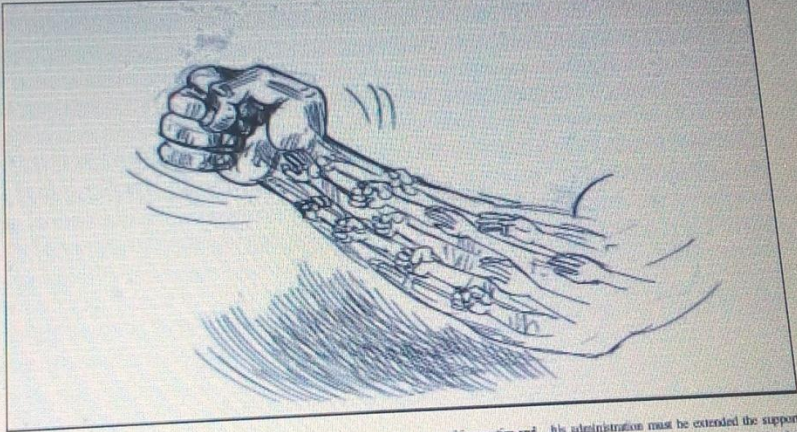
This is an unprecedented level of opportunity to further build up on and realize strong national consensus. By taking advantage of the strong and influential leadership role of the prime minister, relevant stakeholders should now play their role towards enlightening the public about the values of unity in diversity, tolerance, consensus among others.

The government should also discharge its responsibility of coordinating stakeholders like higher educational institutions, political parties, religious institutions, civic society and all concerned institutions to do their best for the bright future of the nation by supporting the ongoing efforts of bringing about national consensus.

Contributing one's share for success of leadership change!

Abiy Ahmed (PitD) became the third person to occupy the Office of the Prime Minister in the twenty-three years since the founding of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia following his appointment to the post by parliament this Monday. The new Prime Minister is set to see out the remaining two years of former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's term, who unexpectedly resigned in mid-February. The challenges facing him are great given he rose to power in the backdrop of an unprecedented political turmoil that was brought by three years of deadly protests in various parts of the country. As the Prime Minister ascends to the top job after securing the chairmanship of the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) by a majority vote following a fierce internal struggle, the Front's entire leadership and members must acknowledge that his election is an outcome of the "deep renewal" they vowed to undertake and stand resolutely by him. If the EPRDF fails to make use of the opportunity that the change of guard presents and address grievances that have been simmering for decades, the political crisis gripping the country cannot be resolved any time soon. Although the speech delivered by the premier at his swearing in marks a departure from the EPRDF's long-established culture and is all-inclusive, it also serves as a reminder that the EPRDF needs to jettison obsolete traditions and keep up with the times.

Although time will only tell if the leadership change will have the desired effect, the Prime Minister's speech, which struck a different tenor from his predecessors', was generally well-received. The fact that he chose to go beyond the ethnocentric narrative that had been espoused for years and dwelt at length on the bigger ideal that Ethiopia represents was regarded as an important step forward. The tone he set can be viewed as not only heralding the beginning of fundamental changes Ethiopia, but also helpful in eliminating the current climate of distrust and division bedeviling the country. He also touched the hearts of many when he highlighted family values, values which have never had a prominent place in the EPRDF's culture. Some of the metaphors he used to describe the strong bond of solidarity characterizing Ethiopians evoked profound emotions in many an Ethiopian. And the equal emphasis he gave to the protection of individual rights under the EPRDF, is a harbinger of the change that is anticipated to come. At a time Ethiopia finds itself at a crossroads owing, among other things, to the infringement of such constitutionally guaranteed rights as freedom of expression and assembly, the Prime Minister and



his administration need to be given all the help they can get.

As the Prime Minister underscored in his address the importance of respecting diversity when calling upon Ethiopians to come together, it is incumbent on us to accommodate differences as we renew our commitment to building a democratic system. From appointing cabinet ministers to instituting building to tackling numerous accumulated chores requiring his decision the tasks awaiting him as he takes up office are to say the least exceptionally demanding. It is of the essence that merit and not quota play a decisive role when he assembles his cabinet team. Equally critical is to breathe a new life into the feeble government agencies under his control as well as the institutions of democracy. In particular ensuring the independence of the National Election Board of Ethiopia, the courts and the press plus guaranteeing the unfettered enjoyment of basic liberties are amongst the areas that should be singled out for urgent reform.

A considerable segment of the Prime Minister's speech was devoted to national unity and consensus. Once he gets into full swing he is expected to disclose details of policy and strategic framework reforms. The EPRDF has made countless promises to the public following the "renewal" exercises it periodically conducts. Prime Minister Abiy very much needs the support

of the EPRDF, opposition parties and groups and the general public to set the stage for the next elections in 2010, when his term is due to expire, to be free, fair and democratic. Such assistance is instrumental in creating the space for a constructive political engagement in Ethiopia. All citizens who have high hopes for their beloved country must realize that the hatred and intolerance besetting Ethiopian politics only serves to harm national interest and as such contribute their share to the democratization process.

Ethiopia's former glory can be restored solely through the sacrifice of its sons and daughters. Its citizens are duty-bound to defend its sovereignty by rebuffing any attempt to interfere in its internal affairs. Foreign elements with an axe to grind will leave no stone unturned to advance their interest in Ethiopia and the wider region. They will go as far as installing a puppet government who will do their bidding. If their evil motive is to be thwarted it is imperative to put in place an inclusive system of governance which, inter alia, enables citizens to enjoy the equal protection of the law and participate fully in the affairs of the nation, checks maladministration and corruption, and ensures accountability and transparency in the operations of the government so that Ethiopians are able to exercise the full measure of their human and democratic rights. Prime Minister Abiy and

his administration must be extended the support they need with a sense of nationalism in order that this agenda translated into action.

The far-sighted people of Ethiopia, who were delighted by Prime Minister Abiy's speech, have expressed in various ways that they will not hesitate to support their leader. As we always say this show of support emanates from the bottomless love Ethiopians have for their country. There is no doubting that they can do miracles if good governance prevails. This is precisely what the Prime Minister alluded to in his speech. It's high time that the actors on the political scene, which for long have viewed each other as arch-enemies, leave behind their baggage and come to a common understanding in a spirit of give-and-take so they can deliver the changes the public craves for. We cannot leave everything to the premier and his administration and expect him to accomplish the lofty ideals he has set out to. All of us owe the premier the duty of give him time to settle in his new job and the help he needs before blasting him for something he did or did not do. That is why each and every citizen must contribute his share for the leadership change to lead to better times. We wish the Prime Minister all the best in his endeavors!

General Manager Reporter Head of Photography
Nahom Tesfaye

New PM's first real test

By Brook Abdu

It all seemed like the conflict and public uprising that rocked the country for the past three years is finally coming to an end following the change of guard at the very top of the ruling party, Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), as Abiy Ahmed (PhD) assumed the chairmanship and the Prime Minister position of Ethiopia.

But, it was not even three months into his tenure when a relatively calmer region of the country, Southern Regional State, was rocked by another ethnically charged violence. The unrest spread to three Zonal administrations in no time.

Wolkite was the first of these three places that saw a bloody ethnic conflict which resulted in huge damages to property and loss of lives. The conflict that broke out between the Gurages and Kebenas, on June 13, 2018, claimed the life of one person while leaving seven others heavily injured. Several kiosks, shops, vehicles and other properties were set on fire.

Perhaps the most distractive of three conflicts is the one that happened on the day of the Fiche Chambalala celebration (June 14) which marks the New Year according to the Sidama people customs and traditions. The celebration is held every year in the regional capital Hawassa. What began as a small clash

and throwing of stones grew to be a full-fledged conflict between the Sidama and the Wolayta ethnic groups, according to Solomon Hailu, communications head of the regional government.

Solomon told *The Reporter* on Tuesday June 19 that 10 people have been killed by the conflict and nine sustained major injuries while 80 people walked away with minor injuries. As a result of the conflict, 3,500 peoples have also been displaced from their residential areas and their properties have been damaged. The conflict also resulted in property damages which are not yet accounted for fully.

Although the conflict in the region assume a different form resembling a question of self-administration, later on, Solomon said that such questions could have been forwarded using constitutional means; and that it cannot be a justifiable action by any reason.

Wolaiyta was another part of the region to experience a similar conflict after two days on June 16. What began as an opposition to the attack on the ethnic Wolaiytas in Hawassa grew to a full-blown violence and the Wolaiyta Sodo University, Sodo Agricultural College, Sodo Primary and Secondary School as well as government institutions and private properties were damaged and set on fire. Damage to property was unaccounted for and both private and government services have not

commenced for almost five days.

Three have also died in this conflict and 10 people injured.

According to the deputy administrator of the Wolaiyta Zone, Getahun Garedeu (PhD), the public's outrage came as a result of the attack on the ethnic Wolaiytas especially related to the annual Fiche Chambalala celebration in regional capital. And the scale of the attack has been growing from time to time.

In his Eid Al Fitr message, Prime Minister Abiy said that the conflicts were caused by groups that do not want peace and the public has to understand that these "daytime hyenas" want the people to kill each other and benefit out of it.

After addressing to the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) on Monday June 18, the Prime Minister flew to Hawassa to discuss with the society and the administration of the Sidama Zone.

The Prime Minister condemned the attacks and stressed that they should not happen again. While assuring the PM that the attacks on the innocent civilians by no means represent the Sidama people, they presented their questions relating to self-administration to which he replied "the need for self-administration should be discussed thoroughly both at the regional and federal level and its benefits should be analyzed in terms of the projected costs".

After his discussion, the Prime Minister visited the displaced people camped in various locations in the city.

Meanwhile, similar discussions were held in Wolaiyta Sodo and Wolkite towns where similar questions of self-administration were raised to the Prime Minister.

Getahun, the deputy head of the Wolaiyta Zonal Administration, stated that the acknowledgement of the growing attacks inflicted on the ethnic Wolaiytas by the Prime Minister was a big move as it has never been acknowledged by any governmental body both at the regional and federal levels.

In a meeting that the Prime Minister had held in Wolkite, he urged the leaders of the Sidama, Wolaiyta, Gurage and Kebena zonal and woreda administrators to resign as soon as possible taking responsibility for the damages that happened because of the conflicts.

Following the call of the Prime Minister, five senior officials from the Wolaiyta region have resigned: the head of the Zonal Administration, his deputy, Southern Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Movement (SEPDM) Zonal head, rural as well as urban politics heads of the SEPDM.

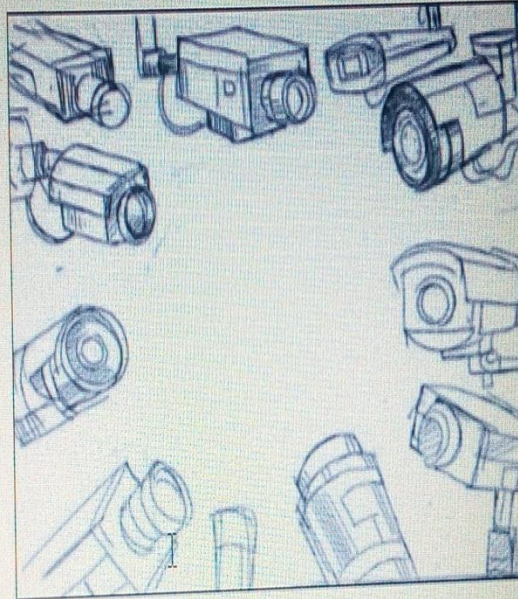
The Prime Minister appreciated the move by the Zonal Administration officials and called for the others to follow suit.

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Exercising caution

First we would like to express our condolences on the death of two compatriots following a grenade attack during the massive rally held at Meskel Square on June 23 in the center of Addis Ababa to show appreciation and support for Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD). We wish their families solace and a speedy recover for those who sustained injuries. Nothing can justify such a barbaric act. The police have launched a probe into the incident and are being assisted by the FBI. While we will not dwell at this point on how the investigation is unfolding nonetheless we would like to focus on the importance of exercising caution. The heinous attack gives rise to a raft of questions. Chief among is the obvious security breakdown. Is the breakdown attributable to intentional or negligent oversight? Or was scant attention was paid to ensuring that the event passed off without any incident? Much has been made about the fact that the body search carried out at the rally in which millions took part was perfunctory and that the podium on which the Prime Minister and other dignitaries were seated was too close to the rally goers. Had the premier and other participants been killed in the attack it would not be difficult to imagine that the consequences would have been horrific. This is precisely why it is of the essence to exercise caution.

It should have been par for the course to guard against an attack by elements that are opposed to the winds of change blowing in Ethiopia because it affects their interest or that paint themselves as supporters of the change but actually harbor an ulterior motive. Given that these elements stand to lose a lot they have no qualms about stoking ethnic and religious conflicts to derail the change underway and maintain the status quo that had existed for some 27 years now. It's also within the realm of possibility that forces aware of security and intelligence lapses can take advantage of them to further an agenda that is not necessarily aligned with that of the state. The hitherto lax attitude



reform his security team with a view to beef up its capacity and close off any loopholes. After all he cannot do an effective job while his security is not guaranteed.

The motive behind the attack and who masterminded it is bound to be identified following through the hopefully thorough investigation. Until then it is prudent that the Prime Minister go about his business mindful of security risks and the grave implications for the nation if God forbid harm were to befall him. While it would seem naive or ignorant to give such an advice a person who had served in senior positions both in the military and the intelligence apparatus it is not out of place to urge that prudence is a hallmark of the actions he takes. He has reiterated on several occasions that love shall triumph. But love can triumph insofar as caution is exercised. It would be unwise to let one's emotion get the best of oneself as the information gleaned from the suspects under police custody and the public at large will no doubt be instrumental in terms of crafting precautionary measures.

urge to be melodramatic or enamored with conspiracies and instead provide any information that may come in handy. Displaying histrionics and acting with haste only serve to push the change off track. Each and every action ought to be carefully thought out.

At this juncture it's useful to examine the factors which necessitated the change. The decision to release tens of thousands of prisoners by dropping charges against suspects undergoing trial and pardoning convicts including inmates facing capital punishment as well as to draft a new amnesty law was prompted by the atrocious state of the legal system and the judiciary in Ethiopia. The law was used by the government as an instrument of suppression, justice up for sale to the highest bidder, institutions of democracy were emasculated. Led by Prime Minister Abiy the reformist camp within the ruling Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) that has taken the helm of the Front has taken a commendable step of turning the challenges confronting it into an

required thinking and legal framework with a sense of responsibility. The June 23 rally was an expression of an approval of this new beginning. It's obligatory to proceed with caution in order to meet the high expectations of the public.

As the grenade attack was obviously intended to dampen the palpable air of public optimism the manner in which the investigation into the alleged perpetrators of the attack is conducted constitutes a test for the administration of Prime Minister Abiy. It has been common practice during the EPRDF's rule for anyone who falls foul of the government to be excoriated by the state-owned media before being prosecuted, convicted and sentenced on flimsy charges. Amnesties that lacked proper legal justifications were also routinely bestowed en masse. These and similar other travesty of justice must never be repeated. This calls for the judiciary to be able to exercise the independence it enjoys under the constitution. As the premier has underscored over and over again delivering Ethiopia from this darkness and restoring it to its former glory is a task that be put off for tomorrow. Again this journey can take the country to greater heights if it is characterized by prudence and farsightedness, not rashness or irrationality.

As we have said time and again Ethiopia has squandered numerous opportunities due to precipitousness on the part of decision makers. Citizens must therefore steadily steer their leaders on to the path they want. Moreover, extra care has to be taken to ensure that the process of building a nation and a free society does not veer off course. The youth who rushed to save the Prime Minister as the attack unfolded did so without any regard for their lives because their beloved country needs them. Tomorrow's Ethiopia can be prosperous and democratic by thwarting plots to sow ethnic, religious and political discords, promoting unity, demonstrating in action love of nation, and upholding the rule of law. If this aspiration is to be realized it is imperative to exercise caution at all levels.