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**THE LIKELY IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE POLITICAL
PARTICIPATION: THE CASE OF AMBO UNIVERSITY**

BY: AZEB TAMIRU

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND
COMMUNICATIONS IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN JOURNALISM AND
COMMUNICATIONS**

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

JULY, 2019

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ADVISOR:

MEKURIA MEKASHA (ASSISTANT PROFESSOR)

BY: AZEB TAMIRU

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SIGN: _____

ADVISOR: MEKURIA MEKASHA

SIGN: _____

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STATEMENT OF DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

Name: Azeb Tamiru Taddese

Signature: _____

Date of submission: July 2019

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Acronyms

AU: Ambo University

FB: Facebook

IWS: Internet world stat

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Science

ABSTRACT

This study was intended to investigate the likely impact of social media on the political participation by taking Ambo University as a case of study. To achieve this objective, the researcher employed Explanatory Sequential Methods Design to gather with mixed method research approach. The necessary data were collected through survey questionnaire and in-depth interview. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample size. Among the total students registered in different colleges, school and departments of the university in different batches, 130 was selected as representative sample. The collected data were analyzed statistically by using a hierarchical multiple regression and qualitative thematic analysis methods. Accordingly, the findings of this study show that social media use had a significant effect on the political participation of students in Ambo University. The study has established that Facebook is still used to address political objectives like: the dissemination of information, social and political mobilization, advertising of upcoming events, recruiting more supporters, every day political talk, venues of political action, contacting and interfacing with political representatives and as a source of alternative political information. Furthermore, hate speech also exchanged using social media which supposed to create political instability. Generally, so as to create awareness about the use of social media, the government bodies should design social media law to address the problem of hate speech and sustain political reforms of Ethiopia.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Currently, the internet and social media users have been increased significantly all over the world. Due to this, Social media in Ethiopia and all over the world has become a vital and extremely effective tool in reaching mass audiences with social and political purposes. Such roles give a diversification of services using internet (Yunus, 2013). Moreover, it has also created the opportunities to develop link among people, family, associates, friends and other communal artists through the services of different social media types such as text messages, E-mails, Facebook, Blogs, Myspace, Twitter and so on. These are an innovative information tools enabling speedy interaction and intellectual cross sections (Farooq, 2016). Goren (2012) stated that one of the most significant concepts Internet brought to people's lives is social media applications where users access various online services by their personal accounts.

One of the most critical outcomes of the increase in the social media use and development of social media technologies can be seen in the areas of politics. Social media is a modern innovation and essential source of political activities in the world (Dunu, 2013). It is the widely used channel of communication through which political communication is experienced and disseminated (Farooq, et al. 2016). With this media, different individuals and groups share their political opinions among themselves through discussion threads, forums and polls. Besides establishing important social relationships, social networking group can share political issues and agendas with other like-minded members by joining groups (Neelamalar&Chitra, 2009).

As the strength of social media in reaching and interacting mass audiences is comprehended, it started to appeal interests of politicians and political activists as well. In many parts of the world, mastering social media is considered as a strong advantage for politicians to succeed in their political campaigns (Yunus, 2013). The effects of social media on the area of politics are not limited by the political leaders and parties but also political activist too. The political activist groups which find it hard to reach audiences

through mainstream media due to various reasons (such as censorship, profit oriented nature of mainstream media) realized that social media creates an expedient alternative. In the recent years the world witnessed that political activists can communicate, create political awareness on social issues and mobilize demonstrations through social media. Empirical evidence on the effect of social media in the politics of different country is evident. In confirming this Katkar (2014), states that the contribution of social media and Internet has led to the idea that open access and a free Internet can eventually turn out to be an important means of political communication.

According to Internet World Stats (IWS) in Ethiopia stated that the Internet usage is significantly above the African average, in the past years the number of Internet users has grown exponentially. If in 2000, only 3.6% of the population had Internet access (www.internetworldstats.com/eu/ro.htm), in December 2017 there are more than 16 million users (over 15% of the population) (www.internetworldstats.com/africa.htm), many of these individuals (4,500,000) being active on social media platforms with 4.2 penetration rate as well (www.internetworldstats.com/africa.html).

As a result of the complex and intertwined relationship between social media use and politics, the study of social media from the perspective of politics is important. In relative terms, political communication either from the political organisations or between the social media communities is pervasive in the world of social media. Hence, the study of social media from the perspective of Ethiopian politics is the focus on which the present study was to make an industrious effort. In particular, Ambo University is the study area to investigate the likely impact of Social Media and New Political Culture at Ambo University.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The use of Social media has become an integral part of public dialogue and communication in the contemporary societies of the world including Ethiopia. The fast development of social in Ethiopia has been influencing in the way people find groups of individuals with similar interests, the nature of information, the available news sources, or the possibility to require and share ideas. More recently, the importance of social

media has been particularly highlighted in politics, given the fact that the use of social networking sites (Facebook) and micro blogging services (Twitter) are believed to have positively influencing political participation (Goren, 2012).

Furthermore, social networking sites have been used to mobilise individuals to protest the government's management all over the world. Various scholars interested in electoral campaigns, investigated the effects of new media use on political participation. Some researchers discovered that the Internet may encourage political participation (Corrado, 1996; Grossman, 1999; Johnson & Kaye, 2003; as cited in Shah et al., 2005). In addition, some results have shown that the use of social networking sites, in particular, increased traditional offline engagement, such as voting and donations and fundraising (Vitak et al, 2011). Conversely, other researchers have revealed that the use of social networking sites is not at all linked to higher levels of political participation (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010, Davis, 1999; Davis & Owen, 1998; Margolis & Resnick, 2000; Putnam, 2000). Hence, research findings concerning the effects of social media use on political participation are inconclusive, leaving space for additional exploration of this topic.

Despite the fast development of the Internet, little attention has been paid to how young adults use social networking sites to engage in politics in Ethiopian context. This question raises attention because young people, who are generally not involved in politics, have now the opportunity to be exposed to and to engage in politically related subjects within their online networks, on which they are generally active politics (Yunus, 2013).

Therefore, purpose of this paper is, first, to investigate the relationship between social media use and political participation, focusing particularly on young adult social media use at Ambo University, and therefore to expand on previous findings. Based on the fact that, recently, some scholars discovered a difference in the effect of media use for acquiring news and media use for entertainment purposes (Gil de Zuniga et al., 2012). This paper concentrates on the effect of using social media with the purpose gathering news, on political participation. In addition, due to social medias interactive nature, it is argued that it is not only necessary to use these platforms as a source of information but beyond that, it is essential to be politically active on these platforms (liking, posting,

sharing, etc. political content). Specifically, it is this study's objective to investigate the extent to which social media use influence young adults' political participation at Ambo University.

1.3. Objective of the Study

The general objective the present study is to examine the extent to which the likely impact of social media on political participation by taking ambo university students as a case of study.

1.3.1. Specific Objectives

1. To investigate the relationship between social media use for news and offline political participation of Ambo University students.
2. To examine the relationship between social media use for political activities and offline political participation of Ambo University students.
3. To identify the relationship between social media use for news and online political participation of Ambo University students.
4. To assess the relationship between social media use for political activities and online political participation of Ambo University students.

1.3.2. Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between social media use for news by Ambo University students and their offline political participation?
2. How do social media use of Ambo University student's for political activities are related with their offline political participation?
3. What relationship exists between Ambo University student's social media use for news and their online political participation?
4. How do social media use of Ambo University students for political activities are related with their online political participation?

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study will attribute to the understanding of the rapidly growing use of social media by youth for political purposes in Ethiopia. Since studies done in the area are very scanty, the researcher believes that this thesis will help to fill the gap and contributes in adding data for future studies at every level. It will add to the knowledge about social media use and political participation of youth in Ethiopia. In other words, the finding of the present study contributes to the understanding of whether there is a relationship between social media usage (online usage) and actual political participation. It helps also to identify how the youth today communicate amongst their peers and others as well as gain insight into how the youth gain information and build their opinion on political issues. It will also serve as a steppingstone for further research ventures in the area.

1.5. Scope of the Study

This study intended to examine the extent to which of social media uses likely impact student's participation in the case of Ambo University students. Other media platforms (Print and Broadcast) are excluded due to the youth are highly using social media than traditional media. From the social media platforms, the focus of this study is only limited to Facebook.

1.6. Limitation of the study

This study would have been more valid and reliable if the researcher incorporated other department students in the University. In other words, due to methodological complexities, the study is confined to only one college in the university. Besides, lack interest in the participation of questionnaire and interview were the other limiting factors. Moreover, unwillingness of the students in giving the researcher sufficient data were few of them that might minimize the comprehensiveness of the study.

1.7. Organization of the Study

The study embraces five chapters. Chapter one presents a general background of the study. It deals with the introduction, statement of the problem, objectives of the study,

research questions significance of the study, and organization of the study. The second chapter presents different scholars views which are in one way or the other pertinent to the study. Chapter three figure out the methodology the study. The fourth chapter dwells on the presentation and discussion of the data, and analysis of the findings. Lastly, chapter five presents the conclusion of the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

In the preceding sections, the researcher would present an overview of the current research and theoretical concepts within the field of media use and political participation in. Moreover, factors that influence political participation are discussed as well. In sum, the review of existing literature within the field of political participation represents the foundation for the research paper.

2.2. The Effect of Social Media and Political Participation

Social media is changing the way we learn about the world. The internet-based communication networks are promoting freedom of speech. People are no longer passive readers, but rather engaging in news as a conversation at local, national and international stage. Local and global societies are instantly collaborating, contributing, interpreting and interacting with the help of different social media platforms (Suopis, 2010). Social Media is an evolutionary development that has transformed the way that individuals, organizations and political campaigns are able to communicate (Solutions, 2010). As Safranek (2012), observes social media has given the opportunity to any ordinary citizen to participate actively in any affair on the online. Therefore, from this we can infer that social media platform is one of a vital tool for any person in sharing, commenting, writing his/her own social and political views freely.

Moreover, the only thing that is required from anyone to engage in the social media is basics of computer and idea or content. An average person, with little or no advanced computer skills, can do social media participation and independent blogging. Citizens can create content and can have access. Social media also lowers traditional socio-economic barriers for commanding the attention (Safranek, 2012).

Politicians regimes, and activists look to purposeful tap into the potential of social media. Since the rise of the Internet in the early 1990s, the world's networked population has grown from the low millions to the low billions. Over the same period, social media have become a fact for civil society worldwide, involving many actors' regular citizens,

activists, nongovernmental organizations, telecommunications firms, software providers and governments (Shirky, 2011).

According to Safranek (2012), digital technologies influence the formation and activities of civil society groups: mobs, movements, and civil society organizations. For example, while mass popular protests are by no means a new phenomenon, digital tools are facilitating the formation. On January 17, 2001, during the accusation trial of Philippine President Joseph Estrada, loyalists in the Philippine Congress voted to set aside key evidence against him. Less than two hours after the decision was announced, thousands of Filipinos angry that their corrupt president might be let off the hook, converged on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, a major crossroads in Manila. The protest was arranged by a text message reading, "Go 2 EDSA. Wear blk" The public's ability to coordinate such a massive and rapid response -- close to seven million text messages were sent that week -- so alarmed the country's legislators. Estrada's fate was sealed; by January 20, he was gone. The event marked the first time that social media had helped force out a national leader. Estrada himself blamed "the text-messaging generation" for his downfall (Ibid). Thus, we can understand that the effect of social media is high in creating awareness on the country's political reforms.

The internet seemingly summons societies into virtual town hall meeting, where citizens openly question authority, discuss conspiracies and argue over social trends. A global union is asserted everyday online. Anyone connected to the internet can attempt to understand public opinion, concerning nearly any issue (Suopis, 2010). For Shirky (2011), the communications landscape gets denser, more complex, and more participatory; the networked population is getting hold of greater access to information, more opportunities to engage in public speech, and an enhanced ability to undertake collective action. Suopis, (2010), writes about Middle East political affairs for international newspapers. She says social media platforms are giving a voice to the most marginalized groups in the region. On the other hand, Khoury (2011), argues that the Arab blogosphere arose because young people were frustrated with the restrictions imposed by the state-regulated boundaries of the Arab public sphere, which is closed off to most modes of free expression and joint citizen action (Khoury, 2011).

Likewise, Rensburg (2012), explain that how the internet and ICT have offered the opportunity for minorities in Africa and its potential to enhance democracy in sub-Saharan Africa. In many cases, ethnic minorities have as a result been largely excluded from political process due to lack of adequate communication channels. In many ways, ICT have redefined what we understand to be effective citizen and effective citizen participation, which are fundamental to a functioning democracy. Almost two billion internet users worldwide with unlimited information at push of button now have alternative access points to the political realm through their computers and mobile phones.

Many scholars continue to believe that the solution for African problem lies in the utilization of the internet to stimulate and improve democracy. The internet now provides various platform for communication and networking where traditional media have until now been restricted (Rensburg, 2012). Furthermore, Safranek (2012) stresses that the emergence of social media has offered the opportunity for marginalized group of people who do not have access to fir and justified medias. This is particularly applicable to Arab countries where religion and ethnic divides previously prevented networking. “Many Arab regimes banned the creation of political parties and limited the right to associate or create civil rights groups. This meant that there was little space where religious, ethnic, and cultural groups could meet and interact. ... But social media has helped such groups discover one another and break the psychological barrier of fear between them (Safranek, 2012).

Moreover, Siriyovasak (2007), has noted that various social media classes should be able to have access to media and participate in self-determination. Differences of opinion and belief must be cornerstone of a political society (Siriyuvasak, 2007). Many researchers suggest that communities are empowered when they become able to have control of their knowledge of environment and conventional paradigm of knowledge. This cannot be done in the traditional media because the traditional media are coming under increasing pressure from the ruling authorities who are showing signs of wanting to limit press freedom (Rensburg, 2012). All in all, the internet play a vital role in keeping a country's to possess healthy public discourses and political reforms.

According to Rosenberg (2012), “Facebook and Twitter have their place in social change, but real revolutions take place in the street. One of the biggest obstacles in using social media for political change is that people need close personal connections in order to get them to take action , especially if that action is risky and difficult. Social media always comes with a catch. It is designed to do the very thing that isn’t particularly helpful in a high-risk situation.” The revolution has taken place on the street while the Facebook and Twitter provide the platform to organize the demonstrations. Ali (2011), has indicated that the story of social media in developing nations so far is one of individual empowerment. Social media not only connects underprivileged nations to the outside world, but also provide the power to shape the Internet in a way that is relevant to peoples’ lives, the power to organize in scale, and the power to speak. These features make social media incredible tools that should be embraced by anyone with an eye towards development.

Thus, policymakers and development organizations should consider the capacity of social media to attract a wide user base, stimulate content creation, and promote basic ICT skills, and foster participation and democratization in developing nations. The innovation of internet has influenced the way we discuss issues, the way we read and gather information as well as the political discussions and their nature. Internet has emancipated the public from unidirectional information flow and direct control from the one who owns the media. It has become the cause for the rise of different social networking sites and social media.

Different researchers and scholars have investigated the effects of social media on the citizens’ political behaviour regarding political participation. Accordingly, the use of social media in and around the world has played a magnificent role in intensified the youth and adult to manifest their propositions and support in recent elections, worldwide. Apart from this, social media has influencing this particular age group in creating the exposure in utilizing political information, creating user-generated content like photos, videos and expressing, live-broadcast their political view (Safranek, 2012).

Hence, according to Kaplan & Haenlein, (2010), Internet with World Wide Web laid ground for electronic mail services, discussion forums, blogs, social networks, online shopping sites, and media sharing platforms. One of the most significant concepts Internet brought to our lives is social media applications where users access various online services by their personal accounts. Social media can be explained as a collection of internet-based applications that expand the ideological and technological foundations of Websites and that permit the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Social networking sites are the interaction between media-user and social media itself.

One of the most interesting characteristics of social media is represented by the term “user-generated content” which refers to different forms of media content, publicly available and created by end users (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Therefore, people use social media not only to get through online information, but also to produce distinctive information themselves.

The era of new mode of communication has been viewed in terms of three developmental stages. The first stage of development starts in 1990s and it is characterised by the dominant incidence of entertainment media formats which can be characterised as traditional communication technologies used in the political arena, which were merely profit oriented. The second stage, which begins in the mid-1990s, in which different technological innovations have been manifested (the Internet, World Wide Web, and the e-mail) which the people a new political platform. The innovation of these new media was mainly found in the interactivity feature. The third stage has become the remarkable technologies with Web 2.0 applications which allowed a higher-level interactivity of the people around the world with the help of different communication platforms (Medvic, 2011).

Therefore, the last stages of developmental phases are highly associated with the 2008 US presidential campaign in which the politicians use these media for political communication (Medvic, 2011). During these elections, social networking sites were used by young followers of Obama, to inspire their friends to vote (Turner-Lee 2010: 20). Due to the fact that a significant increase in voter turnout, compared to 2004, was

registered, President Obama's campaign was universally acknowledged as a prominent innovator in the use of information and communication technologies (Robertson et al., 2010). Hendricks and Denton (2010) stated: "The 2008 campaign was unique in that it became the first national campaign in which traditional media such as television, radio and newspapers were overshadowed by new media technologies and the Internet.", technologies, which significantly altered the political environment for both candidates and (potential) voters (Al Deen and Hendricks, 2012). After these elections, many political organisations, as well as candidates, understood the importance of social media and incorporated it into their communication strategies (Robertson et al., 2010).

Through social networking sites, political organisations and candidates have not only the possibility to directly communicate with their publics, but also to interact with them (two-way communication). In turn, through social networking sites, voters are given a platform to share their opinions and to be heard. For instance, Robertson et al. (2010) found that Facebook has a significant effect on young voters' decisions. Moreover, Banaij& Buckingham (2010) determined that young people used social networking sites with the purpose of finding political information, particularly information that couldn't be found in the traditional media, fact which proves. Robertson et al. (2010), argument that citizens use social networking sites in order to gather information about political organizations and candidates, as well as to communicate with them and express their opinion

Social media use for news is positively associated with online political participation. Consequently, one of the most important outcomes of the increase in the use of social media use and development of social media technologies can be seen in the areas of politics. The more the social media strength, the more to engage citizens in using social media in reaching mass audiences are comprehended. This access can maximize the interests of people's and political to participate in political affairs activists as well. In many parts of the world, mastering social media is considered as a strong advantage for politicians and their supporters to succeed in their political campaigns (Yunus, 2013). However, there are studies which found no connection between internet (and social networking sites use) and political participation, such as the study conducted by Zhang et

al. (2010), which concluded that reliance on social networking sites is related to civic participation, but not to political participation.

To sum up, the Internet and social media in particular can be regarded as a useful platform to potentially engage in politics, especially for young citizens.

2.3. Political Participation on Social Media

As the name suggests, political participation simply means that a person is participating in the political process by making his or her opinions and beliefs known. In the social sciences, the term 'political participation' is often used to describe an action taken by a citizen to influence the outcome of a political issue. The possibility for all citizens to participate in the management of public affairs is at the very heart of democracy. At the same time full and equal participation of both women and men in political decision making provides a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society and may as such enhance the legitimacy of political processes by making them more democratic and responsive to the concerns and perspectives of all segments of society (Norris, 2002 as cited in Theocharis, 2014).

For instance, for many, as American citizens, one of the aspects of their culture that many are most proud of is the extent to which they can take part in the political system. Whether they are voting for a new congressman, serving on a jury, or participating in a public protest, they can be fairly certain that their actions are going to have an influence on American politics in some way. For them, this is important because it is one of the ways in which Americans can contribute to their communities and be active members of society (Macedo et al., 2005).

The most common understanding many people have regarding political participation is, regarded as the activities that citizens act upon on different political affairs having the purpose of influencing the government's structure, policies, or officials activities, either directly by influencing the implementation of policies, or indirectly by influencing the political actors that make those policies with the purpose of benefiting the large

community or in favour of supporting their political party (Yamamoto, 2014 as quoted in Verba et al., 1995). Moreover, Citizens can participate in the election of political participation representing social programmes at large. They can also be part of organisations which aim to directly influence politicians by engaging in public debate, they can also express their interests, preferences or needs which can benefits the demands of the societies they represent (Paletz et al., 2015).

Concerning the types of political participation, we can see the most common form of participation, in the form of voting is the one. It is a unique political participation in which citizens act, take part and make a decision about their county's political affairs. (Paletz et al., 2015). However, it is important to recognize that political participation goes beyond the actual act of voting and it implicates taking part in different political activities, such as attending a political event, working for a candidate, donating money to a candidate's campaign, wearing a button/sign in support of a candidate or attempting to induce others how to vote and the benefit of voting different political parties in the ways they can be benefited in a number of ways (Kenski&Stroud, 2006).

Recent studies show the importance of differentiating between two types of political participation: offline and online. "Online types of political participation are: gathering political information online articles, sending an email to a political candidate, visiting a political candidate's website, donating money to a candidate or a political party online" (Jung et al., 2011). Nevertheless, only few studies actually employ this difference in practical research (Gil de Zuniga & Rojas, (2010), argue that these two constructs should be examined separately, mainly because of the cost required by online and offline political activities. Considering the cost-effective feature of online political forms, people who, generally, would not participate in politics due to cost barriers, may engage in political activities over the Internet by donating money online, sending emails to public officials. According to, Theocharis (2014) ,argues that using digitally networked acts of political participation is a newly flourished strategy using different technologies and replaces the traditional ways of citizens' political participation.

On the contrary, the traditional media use, different research findings are consistent with regards to the fact that citizens are engaged in reading newspapers, magazines which is also positively associated with political participation. McLeod (1999), found that reading newspapers is especially associated with voting and contacting officials (Chang, 2007). Eveland and Sheu (2000) showed that newspaper use is related with more types of voting behaviour and a higher degree of political participation, including displaying a campaign button, sign or sticker, attending candidates' rallies and donating money to candidates or political parties.

Conversely, the increase of the new media which is Internet has increasingly drawn the researchers' attention, and a few studies investigate its impact on political participation. Different scholars argued that the use of media has an effect on political participation depend on individuals' motives for using the newly introduced technology. Based on Katz and Gurevitch's (1974) classification, the reasons why individuals use media are: surveillance, personal identity construction, social relationships and entertainment. Current studies show that using media for surveillance and information acquisition has a positive effect on political participation (McLeod, Scheu, & Moy, 1999; Norris, 2000; Prior, 2007; Shah, 1998; Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001; Zhang & Chia, 2006 in Gil de Zuniga et al. 2012). Consequently, it is not necessarily the media itself that can affect individuals' political participation, but the particular ways in which individuals use media for that particular purposes (Gil de Zuniga, 2009 in Gil de Zuniga et al., 2012). At last, we can conclude that social media and political participation has positive effect.

2.4. Socio-demographic factors

Among a number of variables that affect the people political participation are socio-demographic factors. For instance, studies have been conducted following the sociological approach in which they point out that from structural-objective variables. Such a result indicated that socioeconomic status (economic and sociological measure based on income, education and occupation) is the most important predictor of political participation. A higher socioeconomic status leads to a higher level of political

participation. Hence, we can say that socio-economic status can have a direct effect on the citizens' political participation (Cohen, Vigoda&Samorly, 2001; McLeod et al., 1996; Nowak, Rickson, Ramsey & Goudy, 1982 in Jung et al., 2011).

Moreover, different findings depicted that gender and age are the other significant factors prohibited citizen's political participation by taking it from political variables. Research findings indicated that men tend to be more active in political affairs, while women are equally, or more active, in community activities, and grassroots movements (Burns, Schlozman, & Verba, 2001; Enns, Malinick, & Matthews, 2008 in Zuniga & Valenzuela, 2010). Literature has also revealed a positive link between age and political participation (Han, 2008; Kaid, McKinney & Tedesco, 2007; McLeod et al. 1996 in Jung et al., 2011),

Therefore, it can be generalised that due to house hold activities and related exposure women in many parts of the world become passive in participating in the affairs of their country's politics. However, we can enhance their participation by giving attention to the mechanisms in which one can praise them.

2.5. Political Knowledge

Having a Political awareness can be taken as one of the most significant element in political science which plays a crucial role in the decision-making process by facilitating order to carry out their election campaigns by contacting the voters through different medias of platforms (Goren, 2012; Zaller, 1992 in Robison, 2015). The widely accepted definition of political knowledge was coined by DelliCarpini and Keeter who conceptualized it as the series of actual political information stored in the long-term memory (DelliCarpini and Keeter, 1996). According to Niemi and Junn (1998), knowledge is an essential factor aiding to successful political engagement and citizens should have at least a basic understanding of the political system in which they express preferences and designate political representatives (Niemi&Junn, 1998, as quoted in Soule, 2011). Thus, political knowledge is deemed as a standard to evaluate the effectiveness of democracy. Without having a basic level of political knowledge, citizens should not have difficulty to be engaged in public and matters.

Therefore, citizens having the absence of knowledge could not effectively address what they are addressing to the people and they may not achieve their political objectives. It is believed that political knowledge has a valuable contribution in the smooth flow of politics and decision-making, because the more knowledgeable a citizen is, the more politically active he/she is in creating good opportunities to the process of political election. In other words, if one is not capable of knowing about politics, he/she may not be active in political participation rather he/she may miss lead the citizens in wrong direction (Zukin, Andolina, Keeter, Jenkins, DelliCaprini, 2006 in Robison, 2015).

For instance, DelliCarpini&Keeter (1996), found that having good political knowledge has strong effect of political participation particularly in voting. Popkin&Dimok support these findings, as they also found that political knowledge is an influential element affecting the decision to vote the political party wisely.

Therefore, citizens who are very informed in one area of politics tend to be informed across other areas of politics as well as a result they can process the political voting smoothly (DelliCarpini and Keeter 1996). Political participation requires some material and cognitive resources, and principal. Individuals who possess sufficient political knowledge are better able to understand their own interests and how to effectively involve in the political scenario. People with higher levels of political information tend to be more politically efficacious, as well, and have the confidence and ability to participate in the marketplace of political ideas in which they can benefit themselves and their societies and countries at large (Galston, 2004; DelliCarpini and Keeter, 1996; McDevitt and Chaffee, 2000; Meirick and Wackman, 2004). From this, it is true that citizens with low political knowledge, tend to affect the country's political process negatively.

Regarding the above points, many scholars argued that there is a strong positive relationship between the people education level and their political knowledge. However, what is worth noting is the fact that regardless of rising levels of education, the level of political knowledge remained constant. Therefore, if one has a reasonable educational level may not guarantee that person is politically informed and have knowledge. (DelliCarpini&Keeter, 1996, as quoted in Soule, 2001). On the other hand, Polat (2005)

confirms that if on one hand a high level of political knowledge may lead to a higher level of political participation, on the other hand politically knowledgeable people might be dissatisfied with the information gathered, and therefore be disengaged. Nevertheless, the last possibility is not empirically sustained, and researchers continue to argue that political knowledge might escalate political participation (Gil de Zuniga et al., 2012; Jung et al., 2011; Yamamoto et al., 2013).

2.6. Political Efficacy

Among different researchers, Campbell, Gurin and Miller (1954), were one of the first in recognizing political efficacy as an influential element on voting behaviour. Besides, political efficacy implies the belief that political and social change is possible and that an individual citizen represents an essential part of political change in which citizens have a full legitimate right in participating any political vote (Campbell, Gurin and Miller, 1954 as quoted in Zhang et al., 2010). Moreover, characterizations of political efficacy refer person's belief in his/her capacity of understanding politics, being heard, and making a difference politically (Catt, 2005).

Furthermore, political efficacy comprises two scope: internal and external efficacy. Internal political efficacy refers to the beliefs of self-competence to identify and to participate successfully in politics they believe important to them. It is most commonly referred to as an individual's opinions about the influence he/she may have on the political process as a result of is/her personal skills and confidence, or the skills and confidence of similar individuals.

On the other hand, external efficacy refers to once beliefs about the responsiveness of political officials to citizens' demands (a more system-oriented sense of efficacy) (Kensi& Stroud, 2006).The fact that citizens must first and foremost believe that they are able to influence change before they are capable of understanding the value of engaging in the political process, political efficacy is regarded as a prerequisite of political participation (Abramson and Aldricj, 1982 in Zhang et al: 81). Empirical findings advocate that political efficacy is linked to several forms of political participation, such as political campaigning, contacting political officials and voting (Pollock, 1983).

Specifically, those with higher levels of efficacy have a likelihood of voting, with 20-30% higher than those with lower levels of political efficacy (Kahne and Westheimer, 2006 as quoted in Sharoni, 2012). Therefore, higher level political efficacy among citizens is usually considered as an advantageous for the stability of democracy, because “in the modern democratic society, citizens should feel that they have some power to influence the actions of their government by reflecting their view regarding socio-political affairs” (Wright, 1981).

Furthermore, scholars argue that external efficacy is more unstable over time, compared to internal efficacy (Acock& Clarke, 1990; Gurin& Brim, 1984). Other scholars argued that both internal and external efficacies remain consistent in time and that they are developed early in life. That is why acquirement of political efficacy is often seen as crucial element for future political participation in building active citizens who can contribute in maintaining democracy. In confirming this, Bandura (1977) confirmed that internal efficacy and external efficacy are linked, and later on, Madsen (1987) adapted this theory to the political context. He claims that individuals with low external political efficacy and low external political efficacy do not engage in politics and are unconcerned to the political system, while individuals with high external political efficacy and high internal political efficacy take part in conventional forms of participation (such as voting) and support the political system. Citizens with low external political efficacy, but high internal political efficacy are most likely to engage in protest-oriented forms of participation and have a sense of injustice.

2.7. Political Discussions on Social Media

Different scholars defined Political discussions in different ways. In one way round, it can be defined as a process of conversations about political issues that take place between the non-elite members of the political community (Schmitt-Beck, 2008 in Valenzuela et al 2011). Reasoning can take place not only from engagement interpersonal conversation but also from individuals’ reflection on media. The Political discussions can create the opportunities to learn mobilizing information, reflect on news or public issues, and reach mutual agreements, all of which are key antecedents of participation (Valenzuela et al.

2011). According to Katz (1992), political discussions lead to a stronger wish to participate in political activities, because the act of talking itself facilitates opinion formation (Zhang et al, 2010: 78). Political discussions constitute a method of promoting political participation, by offering information about how to get involved and by enabling a sense of duty to serve the local community (Verba et al. 1995 in Zhang et al, 2010). Zuniga & Valenzuela (2010) argue that the larger one's network, the higher one's probability to be politically engaged. This is based on the assumption that a larger network involves exposure to people who are typically active and could affect one's views and opinions. In addition, they claim that besides looking at the time spent online, it is vital to consider how people use the media. Gathering relevant information via new media channels was found to have a positive relationship with political participation (Shah et al, 2001). From this one can infer that creating a link with different people using different media particularly social media, citizens can create the exposure to influence people. Currently, we can see a good example of current Ethiopian people's is influenced due to the network they have created via facebook and other social medias.

Moreover, social ties were also found to be relevant when considering political discussions in relation with political participation. It is important to differentiate between strong and weak ties. Strong tie discussions are those discussions among family and close friends, which are characterized by intimacy, trust, respect, access and mutual regard (Kenny, 1994 in Zuniga & Valenzuela, 2010). These characteristics cannot be found when discussing with acquaintances, friends of friends or strangers. In this case individuals are more likely to be exposed to views which are very different from their own and as a result, weak ties discussions are considered to be more positively related to participation (Gil de Zuniga and Valenzuela, 2011).

Granovetter (1973), suggests that engagement in weak ties discussions provides information and resources that individuals do not find in their close environment of relatives and friends. The strength of weak ties lies in the provision of miscellaneous information that stimulates learning and offers new opportunities for mobilization (Lake & Huckfeldt, 1998; Wellman, 1997 as quoted in Gil de Zuniga and Valenzuela, 2011).

Hence, the citizens participated in strong ties can effectively discuss their views and opinions they have about politics.

The importance of political talk within networks and its influence on political engagement has been found with Internet use (Cho et al 2009, Shah et al., 2007) and the literature claims that specific motives and forms of Internet use lead to increased interpersonal communication about political issues (Sotirovic and McLeod, 2011) which in turn increase political participation (Kwak et al., 2005).

Hence, considering the emerging social media which highly influenced citizens to share information, user-generated content, user-centred design and collaboration. With the help of new media's (internet) citizens can have the exposure to broaden the sources of information flow in and around the world. Such communication can also influence citizens to create opportunities to share and access updated sources since it is a two-way communication (DiMaggio, Hargittai, Neuman& Robinson, 2001; Katz and Rice, 2002).

Generally, one can infer that political discussions are expected to be influenced by the newly introduced mode of world communication which is social Medias. Due to this access many of the citizens around the world have become politically aware where they have been participating by sharing different ideas (Valenzuela et al., 2011).

2.8. Social media and Politics: Theory of Public Sphere

This study is situated within the theoretical framework of Habermas notions of Public sphere. Habermas (1998) explained that we call events and occasions "public" when they are open to all. The public sphere itself appears as a specific domain, which can be classified into two domains, i.e., the public domain and the private domain. The public appears simply as that sector of public opinion that opposed to the authorities. The state organs and the media that provide the communication were considered as public organs. It was particularly the civil society, which established itself as the realm of exchanging commodities and governed by its laws, that constitutes a public sphere. However, the reduction in the public representation along with the elimination of the estate-based

authorities by those of territorial ruler created another sphere known as the public sphere in the modern sense of the term: the sphere of public authority.

The sphere of private people comes together as a public and has become the cause for the formation of the bourgeois public sphere. Then, they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities. Thus, they engaged in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labour. Before the public sphere had been formed and engaged in political activities of the state and society affairs, it was developed in the intimate sphere of the conjugal family. It was first formed in the intimate family to speak and discuss on its own public. In addition, before the public sphere had influence over the public authorities, the ideas were contested and settled by the critical reasoning of private persons on such ideas including politics. Thus, the public sphere evolves under the forum. The former literary public spheres provided the training ground for the reflection of critical public discussions, which is the process of self-clarification of private people focusing on genuine experiences of their novel privateers.

The political economy as well as the psychology arose as a specifically bourgeois science during the eighteenth century. The psychological interests guided the critical discussions that were started by the products of culture. This had become public in the reading room and the theatre, in museums and at concerts (Habermas, 1989). The public sphere was coextensive with public authority. The private realm was the authentic "public sphere," for it was a public sphere constituted by private people. Within the realm that was the preserve of private people, we therefore distinguish again between private and public spheres. The private sphere comprised civil society in the narrower sense, that is to say, the realm of commodity exchange and of social labour; imbedded in it was the family with its interior domain. The public sphere "in the political realm evolved from the public sphere in the world of letters; through the vehicle of public opinion it put the state in touch with the needs of society (Habermas, 1989). According to Habermas, andkhoury, 2011), public sphere it is a domain where opinion can be formed and can be accessed in principle by all citizens and where they can address all matters without being subject to

coercion. Ideally, it is an inclusive space, which is characterized by diversity of opinion and critical debate.

According to Habermas notion, the political public sphere comprised of the institutional communicative spaces, universally accessible, that facilitated the formation of discussion and public opinion, via the unfettered flow of relevant information and ideas (1989: 136). In other words, this sphere was characterised by universal accessibility in the sense that all citizens could voluntarily participate in discussions based on rational-critical debate. It also guaranteed free access and freedoms of assembly, association and expression (Fuchs, 2014). This meant that interlocutors would set aside such characteristics as differences in birth and fortune and speak to one another as if they were social and economic peers.

Habermas later revised this postulation by acknowledging that the status (command of resources such as property and intellectual skills) of the participant was important. Reason was to be the sole arbiter of issues in the public sphere which means that discussions were to be based on reliable sources of information. The resultant conversation, which Habermas (1991) calls “*praxis*” or public opinion which is conversation which leads to the formation of shared opinion was supposed to hold officials accountable and to ensure that the actions of the state express the will of the citizenry. It was also assumed that politicians would then take democratic decisions on the basis of debates in the public sphere.

The mass media are widely viewed as the central institution of the contemporary public sphere (Thompson, 2000). It is important to note that although the media is not the place where the public sphere resides, it is not the public sphere *per se*, but it is a vehicle through which such a space can be created. The liberal-pluralist perspective of media–state relations views the mass media system as playing an intermediary or the fifth estate role between the state and citizens (Willems, 2011). This is because the media act as a discursive space and a conduit through which both the “input” and the “output” of the political system are delivered (Willems, 2011). As a constitutive element of the civil society, the media is seen as important in carrying information that enables citizens to make informed political choices as well as influencing the decisions of the state. In recent

years, new media technologies (like the internet and social media) have also been classified as the public sphere (Castells, 2008). New media technologies are believed to have widened the public sphere to global audiences, spawning what Papacharissi (2004) refers to as the “virtual public sphere”.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Design

3.1. Introduction

Under the following sections, the researcher would discuss briefly about the research approaches and research design the researcher employed in the course of the research process. Besides, sample size and sampling techniques, instrument of data collection, data collection and data analysis procedures would be briefly presented under the proceeding sections.

3.2. Research Approach

The researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative research approach due to various justifications. Firstly, integration of qualitative and quantitative studies helps the researcher for the better understanding of the research problem and yields to get richer, comprehensive and holistic understanding. Secondly, using single approach may not guaranty the researcher to find out valid data which is free from researcher's biases. Thirdly, from mixed approach a researcher can generate both numerical and non-numerical data from survey questionnaire and interview. Furthermore, mixed-methods research approaches were used to systematically combines quantitative and qualitative research tools, methods, approaches and concepts for richer and broader understanding and purposefully minimizes the limitations of mono-method research method for quality data findings (Creswell, 2014).

More specifically, the quantitative research approach was used to get numerical data about specific aspects of phenomena in which structured and explanations are formulated in terms of the variables relationship (Miller & Brewer, 2003). Adding to this, Creswell(2003), confirms quantitative research method includes the true experiments and the less rigorous experiments called quasi-experiments, correlation studies, and specific single-subject experiments . On the other hand, the qualitative approach is a composite of philosophy, concepts, data-gathering procedures, and statistical methods that provides the researcher the opportunity to systematically examine human subjectivity

and exploring how people define, describe, and symbolically make sense of their experiences about the research subject (Given, 2008).

3.3. Research Design

In order to assess Social Media effect and New Political Culture in the Contemporary Ethiopia Political Landscape by taking Ambo University as a study area, Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design was used an appropriate design is adopted. The explanatory sequential mixed methods approach is a design in mixed research approach that appeals to strong quantitative data followed by qualitative data. It involves a two-phase in which the researcher collects quantitative data in the first phase, analyzes the results, and then uses the results to plan, the second, qualitative phase (Creswell, 2014).

The quantitative results typically inform the types of participants to be purposefully selected for the qualitative phase and the types of questions that will be asked of the participants. The overall intent of this design is to have the qualitative data help explain in more detail the initial quantitative results. A typical procedure might involve collecting survey data in the first phase, analysing the data, and then following up with qualitative interviews to help explain the survey responses (Flick, 2014; Creswell 2014). Moreover, the quantitative and qualitative methods allow the researcher to gather data from survey questionnaire and in-depth interview about the participants' reflection, experience, and understanding on political participation and its effect on the current Ethiopian political landscapes.

3.4. Sampling and Sample Design

3.4.1. Target Population of the Study

Ambo University students are the target population of the present study. In other words, all batch students enrolling in the university are considered as a population to which the finding of this study is generalised. Particularly, students who are in the regular streams are the potential data sources concerning the effect of social media on political participation. The researcher believes that the experience of regular students has paramount importance to understand the research problem in a greater detail.

The survey study was specifically intended to Ambo University students of any academic batches who use either social media plat forms like Face book or Twitter (or both). The reason for selecting the students are because of their young age limits of 18 who joined to the university and these young generation is highly exposed in using the social media where they are expressing their feelings, ideas and thoughts freely. Besides, Ambo University is selected because of its exposure where students made frequent strike inquiring political reforms of Ethiopian compared to other universities found in the country. It is important to manage the sample size in line with the design of the study (Creswell, 2003). Thus, the sampling technique is discussed as follows.

3.4.2. Sampling Techniques

Simple random sampling technique was used in the present study for two different but important reasons. For one thing, simple random sampling is important to assure the sample representativeness. For the other thing, simple random sampling allows for the objectivity of sample selection (Balnaves&Caputi, 2001). Among the total students registered in different colleges, school and departments registered in different batches, amount will be selected as representative sample of the population using simple random sampling techniques. As a consequence, the researcher randomly selected the participants, i.e. college of social science, departments of journalism and communication, and English language and literature were randomly sampled students for the purpose of questionnaire and purposive sampling for interview.

However, qualitative approach focuses less on sample's representativeness or on detailed techniques for drawing a probability sample (Creswell, 2014). Instead, it focuses on how the sample or small set of cases, units, or activities signifies social life (Creswell, 2003 & Yin, 2013). For the qualitative approach, it is the participants relevance to the research topic rather than their representativeness which determines the way in which the people to be studied are selected (Creswell & Yin, 2013). This means qualitative research rarely determine the sample size in advance and have limited knowledge about the larger group or population from which the sample is taken.

As a result, the participants for qualitative approach of the present study were selected with the expectation that they could generate adequate and relevant information, with sufficient quality data to offer new insights on the topic under study. In the explanatory sequential mixed method design the qualitative sample should be individuals that are in the initial quantitative sample. Because, the intent of the design is to follow up the quantitative results and explore the results in more depth. The idea of explaining the mechanism, how the variables interact, in more depth through the qualitative follow-up is a key strength of this design (Creswell 2014). Accordingly, the participants of qualitative study in the present study will be selected from the participants in the quantitative study with the purpose of explaining the findings from quantitative study.

3.4.3. Sample Size

In order to collect data that are representative of the population, sampling is a very good method that enables the researcher to determine the sample size from a large population and use relatively small number units in place of the whole population by Yemane, (1992), by $CI = 95$ and standard error = 5%

$$n = \frac{N}{1} + N(e)^2 \quad n = N$$

$$= \frac{196}{1} + 196(0.05^2)$$

$$= 130$$

Where

n = sample size

N = total population

e = standard error

CI = Confidence Interval

Concerning the sample selection and size, (Level of confidence = 95%) participants were defined as a sample size. These participants were selected using random sampling techniques to fill out the questionnaires.

3.5. Instruments of Data Collection and Data Collection Procedures

3.5.1. Data Collection Procedures

The data collection proceeds in to two distinct phases with quantitative sampling in the first phase and with purposeful sampling in the second, for qualitative phase. One challenge in this strategy is to plan adequately what quantitative results to follow up on and what participants to gather qualitative data from in the second phase. The key idea is that the qualitative data collection builds directly on the quantitative results. The quantitative results then are built on may be extreme or outlier cases, significant predictors, significant results relating variables, insignificant results, or even demographics.

Thus, the follow-up quantitative may help to group respondents to the qualitative phase into different categories and conduct qualitative data collection with individuals representing each of the categories. Another challenge is whether the qualitative sample should be individuals that are in the initial quantitative sample. The answer to this question should be that they are the same individuals, because the intent of the design is to follow up the quantitative results and explore the results in more depth. To collect valid and reliable data the researcher proposed the survey questionnaire and interview as clearly discussed in the following sections.

3.5.2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire is one of a popular data gathering tools in which the researcher can generate data from large populations in the form of printed and structured manners. In this study, the survey questionnaire measures the social media effect on the current Ethiopian political landscapes in the study area. The fact that, the researcher used surveys questionnaire as it is said to be an objective, quantitative approach to the study of the social processes within a well-defined area at a given time and to help the researcher

understand some specific problems of the participants' attitudes towards major social, economic and political problems at a particular time and generate statically data (Kumekpor, 2002).

Moreover, this tool was used to solicit data and information from a sample of participants in the study area attending their tertiary education in 2019 academic year. To this end, a set of close-ended and open-ended questionnaire were set by the researchers based on the literature review and adapted from previous research having similarity in the current research. The questions will be formed by Likert scale, interval options and yes or no types of questions.

Thus, before preparing and administering the questionnaire for participants, pilot testing was carried out. Based on the results of pilot testing, the researcher made some reasonable revision with some of the questionnaires so as to minimize barriers to the participants and maximize the validity and reliability of data collected from the participants. In the sum, the researcher gave due consideration about participants confidentiality which cannot be compromised. To confirm this, (Creswell 2014), suggested that "since questionnaire is a means of intrusion into the life of the respondent, in terms of time taken to complete the instrument, threat or sensitivity of the questions would become the possible way of invasion of privacy. Thus, care was made to ensure that the respondents' privacy was not be compromised". Finally, this survey questionnaire is administered on March 2019.

3.5.3. In-depth Interview

This is the second tools of data gathering which the researcher undertaken. This tool helps the researcher to generate qualitative data by employing face-to-face in-depth interview with the proposed participants. Moreover, it is vital to gather data about participants' reflections about their perceptions, competences and participations of politics using social media plat forms and its influence on the current Ethiopian political landscapes from their own point of view rather than imposing the author's view (Yin 2013). In confirming the above views, Cathrine, (2007) asserted that the main reason of

using in-depth interview is to obtain participants' attitudes, perceptions, values, and behaviors and experiences and their views about the subject in a more detailed way.

Furthermore, interview as a research tool is interchanging ideas and opinions the interviewee and interviewer have on an issue. It helps the interviewee and interviewer to discuss and interpret the situations and experience of people to talk about their everyday (Yin 2013). The fact that the researcher was develop semi-structured types of interview to encourage the interviewee to elaborate on the issues rose in an explanatory manner and to follow up interesting development and to let the interviewee elaborate on certain issues. Kumar, (2005), suggested that semi-structured interviews are suitable for 'what' types research questions to generate a more reliable outcome representing the interviewee's real views. While interviewing, audio recorder will be used for the suitability and validity of data interpretation. At last, interview schedules will be arranged based on the participants' convenience of the time and places in which the researcher conduct the interview at different time.

3.6. Procedures of Data Gathering

So as to gather reliable and valid data from both tools stated above. The researcher was engaged with different data gathering procedures. First, the quantitative survey questionnaire and qualitative interview were prepared based on the available literature review and pre-conducted similar study by considering the research objectives and research questions. After developing quantitative and qualitative instruments, it was given to the scholars who have experience in research for feedback. After that the researcher conducted, a pilot testing for further improvement was made. After all this procedure, the tool was ready to be distributed for sample participants in the same days together with cooperative personnel. After doing all this, the researcher first requested the consent of the university and participants. After getting their consent, the researcher made them brief about the objective of the study and confidentiality.

Following the quantitative data collections, the qualitative interview was conducted with sample participants so as to gather valid qualitative data. In this process, the researcher arranged a schedule with the interviewee. Consequently, the face to face interview would

be taken place is the ways the researcher gave them courage to the interviewee so as to give him relevant data about the subject of the study. Finally, the quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed as presented in the following section.

3.7. Data Analysis Procedure

The goal of analyzing the data is to document the evidence fairly, to produce convincing logical conclusions and recommendations. After collecting data from the questionnaire and interview, different analysis and interpretation procedures were carried out. For these cases, the quantitative and the qualitative data were analyzed separately. Then, the qualitative data was organized under similar continuum in a way suitable for data analysis of different themes. In the same way, data collected from interview was converted into the computer and the audio recorded data were transcribes by playing each respondents record.

After organizing data in the above manners, mixed data analysis was carried out for both data types. This interpretation follows the form of first reporting the quantitative data in the first phase and then the qualitative data follows it in the second phase. Accordingly, in the interpretation section, after the researcher presents the general quantitative data and then qualitative results, a discussion should follow that specifies how the qualitative results help to expand or explain the quantitative results. Finally, the data collected from survey questionnaire, were analyzed quantitatively by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and the results were presented in tables form with corresponding frequencies and percentage. Whereas, the qualitative data collected from interview was also analyzed qualitatively in the form of descriptive explanation.

3.8. Validity and Reliability

As with all mixed methods studies, the researcher needs to establish the validity of the scores from the quantitative measures and to discuss the validity of the qualitative findings. In the explanatory sequential mixed methods approach, additional validity concerns arise. The accuracy of the overall findings may be compromised because the researcher does not consider and weigh all of the options for following up on the

quantitative results. Attention may focus only on personal demographics and overlook important explanations that need further understanding. The researcher may also contribute to invalidate results by drawing on different samples for each phase of the study. This minimizes the importance of one phase building on the other. The sample size may also be inadequate on either quantitative side of the study or the qualitative side. These are a few of the challenges that need to be built into the planning process for a good explanatory sequential mixed methods study.

In order to assess the content validity of the questionnaire a pilot test was run. Content validity represents a systematic, yet subjective method of assessing instrument ability to measure what it is supposed to measure (Creswell 2014). For the pilot test, ten participants were asked to complete the survey. Their remarks and comments were noted, and the questionnaire was enhanced based on these statements. Additionally, the validity of the instrument was checked based on peer review. The questionnaire was presented to the professionals (instructors) to check face validity and modified as per their comments. For further examination of the test's internal consistency, Cronbach's Alpha formula was applied to the data from the pilot study mentioned above. The value of Alpha reached .88, which is statistically considered high. So, the instrument was found statistically reliable.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis, Discussion and Interpretation

This chapter is dedicated to the analysis, discussion and interpretation of data collected through different tools. This is started by introducing the chapter followed by analysis, discussion and interpretation of data to answer research questions of the present study.

4.1. Introduction

After data is collected from questionnaire and in-depth interview, each collected data was organized and grouped thematically under similar continuum. After that, the data collected from these tools were summarized, interpreted and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively as presented below. This chapter begins by presenting and discussing data to answer each research questions formulated in the first chapter of the current study. This section begins by presenting and discussing the demography of the respondents. This will be followed by presentation and analysis of data related to variables social media and politics identified in the conceptual framework of the present study.

Therefore, four different models will be tested based on hierarchical multiple regressions:

- The first model: Step 1 - Demographics, Step 2 - Political Variables, Step 3 - Social Media Use for News; Dependent variable - Offline Political Participation
- The second model: Step 1 - Demographics, Step 2 - Political Variables, Step 3 - Social Media Use for Political Activities; Dependent variable - Offline Political Participation
- The third model: Step 1 - Demographics, Step 2 - Political Variables, Step 3 - Social Media Use for News; Dependent variable - Online Political Participation
- The fourth model: Step 1 - Demographics, Step 2 - Political Variables, Step 3 - Social Media Use for Political Activities; Dependent variable -

Online Political Participation

When using hierarchical multiple regression, the most important results to look at from the SPSS output are the presented in the model summary table and in the coefficients table. In the model summary table, it is essential to look at the values given by R^2 , ΔR^2 and p (significance levels). The value of R^2 depicted how much of the variability in the outcome is accounted for by the predictors in the model (Field, 2003: 187). In a hierarchical regression, it is interesting to look at the ΔR^2 , as this value shows how much of the variance is explained by the newly added predictors.

4.2. Demographic Data

The sample size is represented by men (65%) and women (35%). Regarding to their age intervals ranges from 18-23 (76%) and 23-26 (24%). The respondents are generally university students: almost half of them are third year students which covers (48%), second year students (37%), first year students (15%). Looking at the general use of social media, it is clear that most of the respondents prefer Facebook. (92%) use Facebook.

4.3 Social media use for news and offline political participation

Regarding social media use for news, 47% of the respondents use Facebook to collect news about events, public issues and politics very often. When it comes to the types of people, they usually make a strong-ties and weak-ties discussion, 48% of the respondents answered that they held political discussions with friends and family frequently and 30% answered that they held discussions with politicians, acquaintances and strangers very frequently. Only 8% of the people never discussed political topics during political protest with nobody else. The sample population can be considered as political efficient, as most of the respondents agreed with each of the three questions measuring political efficiency.

The first objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between social media use for news and offline political participation. In order to achieve this objective regression model was developed and the variables were entered in the

following order: 1st block - demographics (gender, age and socioeconomic status), 2nd block - political variables (political knowledge, political efficacy and political discussions), 3rd block- social media use for news; the dependent variable was offline political participation. The hierarchical regression results can be seen in Table 1.

It was also expected that the older group of respondents (20-23) and the respondents with a higher year of study will have a higher offline participation score. However, age ($\beta=0.154$, $p=0.065$) and year of study were not unique statistically significant predictors of offline political participation ($\beta=0.039$, $p=0.680$). The year of study variables explained 5% of the variance in offline political participation ($\Delta R^2=.054$), at a statistically significant level ($p=0.040$ $p<0.05$). Among the individual variables, gender ($\beta=-0.187$, $p=0.031$, $p<0.05$) was a unique predictor. The negative β coefficient of gender shows that men were more active in offline participation than women.

The political variables explained an additional 25% ($\Delta R^2=.253$) of the variance, at a statistically significant level ($p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). Knowledge ($\beta=0.308$, $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$) was the strongest predictor among the political variables, followed by efficacy ($\beta=0.162$, $p=0.035$, $p<0.05$). This means that the higher ones' level of political knowledge and the higher ones' level of political efficacy, the higher the engagement in offline political participation, in the current Ethiopian political protest. These results support previous findings on similar topics, such as Gil de Zuniga et al., (2012) and contrast Polat's argument (2005), claiming that knowledgeable people might be disengaged from political activities because they might be dissatisfied with the information gathered. In addition, the results support Baumgartner, J.C & Morris, J.S (2010), that individuals should believe in their ability of influencing change before actively engaging in political activities that lead to change. The variable political discussions were not statistically significant ($\beta=0.100$, $p=0.276$).

After the predictor social media use for news, was entered, the model did not improve at a statistically significant level ($\Delta R^2=.006$), leading to the conclusion that social media use for news ($\beta=0.136$, $p=0.246$) does not influence offline political participation. These findings are contrasting the results of Gil de Zuniga et al. (2014) previous research.

Table 1: Social media use for news and offline political participation

Table 1. Offline Political Participation	
Step 1 – Socio-demographics	
Gender	-.179*
Age	.154
YoS	.039
ΔR^2	5.3%*
Step 2 – Political Variables	
Political Knowledge	.308**
Political Efficacy Political	.162*
Discussions	.100
ΔR^2	25.9%**
Step 3	
Social Media Use for Political Activities	.136
ΔR^2	0.6%

*Note: Standardized regression coefficients reported. N=130 *p<.05, p**<.001*

In order to explain the quantitative result related to the relationship between social media use for news and offline political participation, the data from in-depth interview from respondents indicated that Face book serves an important media for gathering alternative political and social news and information. From the findings, it can be generalized; Facebook serves as an important source for alternative political and social news and information. This in part corroborates the study by (Moyo, 2009), which suggest that the use of new media technologies is a result of the hot regulatory atmosphere which limits the free transmission of information that forces people to depend on alternative media platforms.

With regard to offline political participation, it has been found that participants still used Facebook to watch political videos, read political news displayed on their newsfeeds and follower pages administered by citizens, journalists and mainstream news organizations. In confirming this, Mukhongo's (2015) explain that the contribution of social media to Sub-Saharan Africa has been its ability to provide information and to access the political information.

4.4. Social media use for political activities and offline political participation

Second objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between social media use for political activities and offline political participation. In order to make quantitative investigation of the effect, a second regression was run to investigate where the variables were entered in the same order as in the first regression or not, but the 3rd block included social media use for political activities, instead of social media use for news; the dependent variable remained offline political participation.

Social media use for political activities explained an additional 12% ($\Delta R^2=.122$) of the variance in offline political participation at a statistically significant level ($\beta=0.544$, $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). This means that the more students were involved in political activities on Facebook, in the current Ethiopian political context is by liking, sharing, commenting, etc, the more politically participative they were offline.

Table 2. Social media use for political activities and offline political participation

Table 2.	Offline Political Participation
Step 1 – Socio-demographics	
Gender	-.179*
Age	.154
YoS	.039
ΔR^2	5.3%*
Step 2 – Political Variables	
Political Knowledge	.308**
Political Efficacy Political	.162*
Discussions	.100
ΔR^2	25.9%**
Step 3	
Social Media Use for Political Activities	.553**
ΔR^2	12.2%**

*Note: Standardized regression coefficients reported. N=130 *p<.05, **p<.001*

When comparing the two predictors of interest in the two models, it is vivid that social media use for political activities is better explains offline political participation, as it accounts 12.2% of the variance in the dependent variable, compared to social media use for news, which is not a statistically significant predictor.

Respondents confirmed there is lack of political space as one of the driving factors behind their deployment of Facebook for political activities. Almost all interviewees observed that the existence of repressive laws had contributed enormously to the restriction of the right to protest in physical spaces. As Gerbaudo (2013),

appropriately puts that authoritarian regimes are afraid of street demonstrations “which could create a hazardous interaction between the activist community and the popular classes on the streets”. Thus, Facebook is used to get involved with the limitations imposed on the right to protest and freedom of assembly in the context especially during the state of emergency proclamation.

This finds support in Boyd’s (2008), assertion that online spaces are increasingly becoming alternatives in contexts where physical public demonstration have become inaccessible, untenable, and oppressive. Although the decrease of public spaces in is largely due to political restrictions, and social inequalities also contribute to a fragmentation of public space and exclusions. Facebook allows for what Miller & Slater (2000), calls “expansive realization that people who have access to a new media are at first usually concerned to use this technology to facilitate things they already had been trying to do (Miller & Slater, 2000). Additionally, respondents noted that they used Facebook as an additional political space where they could increase their grievances beyond the alienating nature of formal political spaces. This supports Miller’s (2011), view that “Facebook provides an additional space for personal [and political] expression”.

Through in-depth interviews, it emerged that respondents use Facebook as a crucial tool for mobilizing their supporters into an active group in the pursuit of political, social and ideological change” (Nedelman, 2007). As Gallagher (2009), points out, online mobilization is not only limited to raising awareness, but also provoking people to take action. It also emerged from interviews that respondents in Zimbabwe viewed Facebook as providing them with an alternative to traditional channels of political mobilization. This is because it was almost impossible to organize public rallies, door-to-door visits and street demonstrations. Facebook thus enabled them to avoid legal restrictions associated with offline political mobilization.

4.5. Social media use for news and online political participation

The third objective of the current study is to examine the relationship between social media use for news and online political participation. In the third regression, the independent variables were entered in the same order as in the first regression, but the

dependent variable was online political participation. The results of the third hierarchical regression can be seen in Table 3.

Socio-demographic variables explained 5% of the variance ($\Delta R^2=.052$) in online political participation, at a statistically significant level ($p=0.047$, $p<0.05$). Gender ($\beta=-0.183$, $p=0.028$, $p<0.05$) is a unique predictor in the model, while age ($\beta=0.154$, $p=0.059$) and Year of study are, again, not statistically significant ($\beta=-0.032$, $p=0.643$). Similarly, with the first results, and supporting findings from previous research, these outcomes show that men are more politically participative, online, than women.

The political variables explained an additional 48% of the variance ($\Delta R^2=.484$) at a statistically significant level. Knowledge ($\beta=0.423$, $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$) and efficacy ($\beta=0.243$, $p=0.003$, $p<0.05$) were the two unique predictors among the political variables, while the “political discussions” variable ($\beta=0.073$, $p=0.308$) was not statistically significant, as in the model predicting offline political participation. In this model, social media use for news ($\beta=0.403$, $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$) is statistically significant and it improves the model with 7% ($\Delta R^2=.073$). So even though the social media use for news did not effect offline political participation, it had an influence on online participation.

Table 3. Social media use for news and online political participation

Table 3.	Online Political Participation
Step 1 – Sociodemographics	
Gender	-.183*
Age	.154
SES	-.032
ΔR^2	5.2%*
Step 2 – Political Variables	
Political Knowledge	.423**
Political Efficacy	.243*
Political Discussions	.073
ΔR^2	48.4%**
Step 3	
Social Media Use for News	.403**
ΔR^2	7.3%**

*Note: Standardized regression coefficients reported. N=130 *p<.05, **p<.001*

Contrary to the view that everyone is a “producer” (Bruns, 2008), on social media, it was established that some of the participants on Facebook could be rightly described as “forwarding” and “sharing” agents rather than original content producers. This is because most of the Facebook pages and groups were characterized by cutting and pasting of content from the mainstream media. As Zuckerman (2008) observes, those using networked media to contribute to the dissemination of news selectively amplify stories introduced by traditional media outlets, thereby replicating offline cultural foci. It is arguable therefore that the communicative spaces spawned by some Facebook groups and pages are “alternative in appearance than in substance” (Wasserman, 2010).

This study has found that respondents also used Facebook as a source of news and political information alternative to state propaganda. However, they used the media in various forms to access political information and news. As scholars (Dahlgren, 2009; Nyamnjoh, 2005), observe, everyday appropriations of available ICTs may differ according to variations in socio-political contexts. Almost all the respondents indicated that they preferred Facebook because of the various potentialities it offered towards answering their local-specific political objectives. They cited features like groups, private messaging, chat system, Facebook events, notes, newsfeed, privacy settings and video call as enabling them to avoid the limitations of other media platforms. Most of the respondents observed that they preferred Facebook because of its flexible privacy settings which allowed them to control who can have access to their online conversations.

4.6. Social media use for political activities and online political participation

The fourth objective of the present study is to investigate the relationship between social media use for political activities and online political participation. In the last regression model, the independent variables were entered in the same order as in the third regression, but the predictor of interest was social media use for political activities. The results can be seen in Table 4 (the first two blocks are identical with the results from the previous model). The predictor of interest, social media use for political activities had a major effect on online political participation, explaining an additional 33.5% ($\Delta R^2 = .335$) of the variance, at a statistically significant level, after controlling for age, gender and socioeconomic status. Social media for political activities is a stronger predictor of offline or online political participation.

When considering offline political participation, it is clear that social media use for political activities was a stronger predictor, as the variable “social media use for news” was not statistically significant. In the model predicting online political participation, social media use for news explains 7.6% of the variance. Therefore, media use for political activities is a better predictor of both offline and online political participation, than social media use for news.

Table 4. Social media use for political activities and online political participation

Table 4. Online Political Participation	
Step 1 – Sociodemographic	
Gender	-.192*
Age	.178
SES	
	-.043
ΔR^2	6.1%*
Step 2 – Political Variables	
Political Knowledge	.512**
Political Efficacy	.222*
Political Discussions	
ΔR^2	.084
	39.5%**
Step 3	
Social Media Use for Political Activities	.764**
ΔR^2	33.5%**

*Note: Standardized regression coefficients reported. N=130 *p<.05, **p<.001*

In addition to the quantitative study, is important to assess whether students using Facebook groups and follower pages in are enabling users to express their grievances, challenge symbolic domination and advance their political interests. Örnebring and önnsson's (2004), conceptualization of alternative public sphere is also invaluable for evaluating the extent to which discourse on Facebook groups and pages takes place somewhere else other than in the mainstream mediated public sphere; whether other participants have access to and a place in the debates and discussions. Respondents also stated that Facebook groups and follower pages are contributing towards an alternative space for political activism through opening up to *other* issues than those commonly debated in the mainstream mediated public sphere.

An important reason why Facebook groups and pages have the ability to constitute an alternative public sphere is that rather than simply fostering rational and critical

debate there are other forms of debating and discussing common issues which are practiced. From the in-depth interview it was evident that Facebook groups and pages allow for diverse modes of political expression in the form of posts images, video and comments.

Respondents agreed that there is a serious political conversation between students going online. It was found that there is an internal circle that always posts and comments on Facebook. It was also established that highly active students in offline spaces are also heavily involved in initiating online political conversations. These constitute what Dennis (2015), describes as “civic instigators” and “contributors” instrumental in kick-starting and sustaining online conversations. Mostly the discussions are predominantly made up of males in all the Facebook groups and pages. It has been found that young people are actively interested in and discuss political issues with friends in online spaces (Mattes & Richmond, 2014). These online conversations promoted what O’Donnell & Schmitter (1986) calls “horizontal voice” where youths interact with their friends and fellow group members. As O’Donnell & Schmitter (1986) observes, this kind of horizontal voice is seen as a necessary precondition for the formation of collective identity and the formulation of “collective vertical voice”. This study also found that everyday political discussions are dominated by a small group of opinion leaders. This illustrates that an inner circle of Facebook users always posts and comment, at the same time as most of the followers are demoted to roles such as “linkers”.

Respondents also stated that Facebook pages and groups are characterized by sensational and humorous expressions of political issues. They were more likely to resort to carnival modes of political debate. This playful political figures and policies have the potential to “draw historically subordinated publics into the realm of the political in a way that formal political debates are unable to” (Wasserman, 2010). This also merges with Bakhtin (1984) notion of carnival which suggests that “laughter, open up an “unauthorized” discursive space from which the ‘official’ world may be ridiculed, and resistance sustained”. Facebook pages and groups were punctuated by emotional expressions. These emotional conversations allowed Facebook users to express their “deeply felt interests” (Lunt&Stenner, 2005).

Chapter Five: Summary of finding, Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter begins by discussing and analyzing some of the major findings in relation to the research questions set out in the first chapter of the current study. I specifically focus to identify possible areas for future research. The chapter also offers conclusion and practical recommendations.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between students' social media use and online or offline political participation in by taking Ambo University as a case of study. The study aims to add to the current research on this relatively new topic, as well as to examine whether social media use for political activities accounts for higher levels of the two types of participation more than the variable "social media use for gathering news. In order to explore the issue, mixed method research approach was employed, collecting data using a survey method and in-depth interview, and statistically analyzing the results using a hierarchical multiple regression and qualitative thematic analysis.

5.1. Summary of major finding

This section aims to discuss the research results in light of existing theoretical findings and empirical evidences, as well as to present concluding remarks by answering the main problem statement. When looking at the effect of the socio-demographic variables, the results point out that the variables age, gender and year of students was statistically significant throughout the four regressions, having an effect on both online and offline participation. However, when evaluating the effect of these three variables, individually, only gender proves to be a unique predictor of political participation. Age and year of students do not have statistically significant effects, which is unexpected, as among socio-demographics.

As the target population of this study is represented by young people, aged 18-26, the difference between younger and older respondents can be made as participants aged 18-22 and 23-26. The effect is close to being significant, showing that the group aged 23-26 is more politically participative; however, the p value = 0.059 and, therefore, it cannot be concluded that age is a unique predictor of participation in this case.

Political variables (political knowledge, political efficacy and political discussions), a significant effect is seen in all four models. Not only model 2 is significant in all regressions,

but the change it brings is quite large. Political knowledge and political efficacy proved to be significant unique predictors in both forms of political participation, supporting previous theories, claiming that the higher the levels of political knowledge and efficacy are, the higher the political participation is however, what is interesting to note is that the variable “political discussions” has no unique significant effect.

Social media use for news proved to be a significant predictor of online political participation, explaining 7% of the dependent variable, but not predicting offline political participation, remaining a statistically insignificant predictor in this model. Simply put, this means that the more Ambo University students read news on Facebook, during the political protest in contemporary Ethiopian context, the more they engaged in online forms of participation, Nonetheless, this correlation does not stand when offline forms of participation are considered.

When looking at social media use for political activities, this variable is significant in explaining both online (accounts for 22% of the variance) and offline political participation (accounts for 12 % of the variance). This means that the more the young adults liked/favorite, shared/retweeted, joined groups, or commented on Facebook political updates, the more active they are in traditional online and offline forms of participation. Comparing the two social media predictors it is clear that social media use for political activities better explains the variance in offline and online political participation than social media use for gathering information. All in all, the findings of this research paper indicate the importance of acknowledging the usefulness of social media in the political realm, as these platforms seem to be ideal for reaching the younger generation’s attention towards politics.

Overall, interviews revealed that there is localized usage of Facebook for political purposes; with the most significant differences emanating from the ways these actors deployed this medium to facilitate traditional forms of political participation. The study has established that respondents appropriated Facebook to address their political objectives like: the dissemination of information, social and political mobilization, and advertising of upcoming events, recruiting more supporters, everyday political talk, and venues of political action, contacting and interfacing with political representatives and as a source of alternative political information. To a certain extent, these findings are similar to usage patterns identified in international contexts (Gerbaudo, 2012; Lim, 2014; Storsul, 2014). This further

indicates that social media have become an important platform for students to participate in political activities.

5.2. Conclusion

Considering the fact that social media continues to integrate in people's daily lives and that it is used by young people worldwide, researchers also continue to investigate this topic. Various angles and this particular study aimed to add a step further in this direction. Overall, the differences in the findings exploring the relationship between social media use and political participation, and extensive use of social media in the political context of Ethiopia, hot discourse of social media role in politics and the contemporary political instability represented the motivation of exploring this topic in depth.

In conclusion, the findings of this report show that social media use had a significant effect on the political participation of students in Ambo University. The study has established that Facebook is used to address political objectives like: the dissemination of information, social and political mobilization, advertising of upcoming events, recruiting more supporters, everyday political talk, venues of political action, contacting and interfacing with political representatives and as a source of alternative political information.

5.3. Recommendation

Based on the conclusion made, the following points are recommended.

- It was established that the empirical findings reflect the theoretical construct of the study, but future research can be conducted on the same area, but different context. Because this is a fast developing and changing subject and future research can provide more conclusive answers.
- Studies could be repeated to indicate how the role of Social Media in the political sphere is evolving. Further, much has been documented about the opportunities of the technology, but studies could access the research of these findings in order to determine how effective the utility of the technology is for political purposes in Ethiopia. Particularly, how to utilize social media for the upcoming Ethiopian election.
- Understanding why individuals participate in politics online and what motivates them to do so could provide further insight in understanding the phenomena. Such research

could also assist political parties in aligning their online communication strategies specifically towards online members. Alternatively, further research could include more information on the effect that online participation plays on offline action.

- Most importantly, the finding of this study can be used by concerned government bodies designing social media law to address the problem of hate speech, which is supposed to create political instability.

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APPENDIX A

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM

Dear respondents:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather data on “social media effect and new political culture in the contemporary Ethiopia political landscape: the case of Ambo university”. This study is conducted in Addis Ababa University, department of journalism and communication for the partial fulfilment of Master of Arts degree in journalism and communications. Therefore, you are requested to write your genuine response based on the instruction forwarded. This will have great value to come up with valid and reliable research finding. Hence, I would like to request you to give your genuine information for the questions presented below. At last the information you provide will only be used for the research purpose and all the information will be kept confidential in any form.

Thank You for Your Cooperation!

Part One: This part requires you fill all your personal detail on the space.

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Department: _____

Study Year level: _____

Part Two: when part one required you fill your personal details; this part is intended to ask your exposure in using social media platform for political purpose in the current Ethiopian political reforms. Please, encircle your agreement to the question on scale provided.

1. How frequently do you use Facebook to get information about events, public issues or politics?
 1. Never
 2. Rarely
 3. Occasionally
 4. Frequently
 5. Very frequently

2. How frequently do you discuss political topics with your friends and family in the current political context?
 1. Never
 2. Rarely
 3. Occasionally
 4. Frequently
 5. Very frequently

3. How frequently they discussed political topics with your acquaintances and strangers?

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Occasionally
4. Frequently
5. Very frequently

3. My participation in politics makes a difference in Ethiopian political landscape.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

Every participation counts in the contemporary Ethiopian political process.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

4. My political representative cares about my opinion

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

7. What kind of politically related activities of Facebook do you perform. Please tick from the following options.

1. "I liked a campaign related Facebook post",
2. "I liked a political candidate's Facebook page",
3. "I posted a campaign related status update on Facebook",
3. "I posted/shared a link/photo/video on Facebook",
4. "I commented on a campaign related Facebook post",
5. "I joined a political group on Facebook",
6. "I joined a political event on Facebook",

7. Other: _____

Which of the following activities do you engaged in offline in the current political context?

1. "I spoke with public officials in person",
2. "I called/sent a letter to public officials",
3. "I participated in demonstrations or protests",
4. "I attended a political meeting/rally/speech",
5. "I encouraged someone to protest",
6. "I wore a campaign sign",
7. "I signed a petition for a political cause or candidate",
8. "I worked/volunteered for a political party or candidate",
9. Other: _____

5. Which of the following activities do you engaged in online in the current political context?

1. "I sent an email to politicians",
2. "I visited a campaign/candidate website",
3. "I donated money to a campaign online",
4. "I subscribed to a political newsletter",
5. "I signed up online to volunteer for the activities of political parties",

6. Others: _____

Do you follow the current Ethiopian political reforms on social media platform?

1. Yes
2. No

7. Do you believe that social media helps you to stay in touch in participating in Ethiopian politics?

1. Yes
2. No

8. In what ways using social media platform helps you in understanding the politics of Ethiopia?

1. In getting true information about events
2. In getting up to dated information public issues
3. In making me free to express my political stand

4. In getting recent news about Ethiopian political movement

9. Others: _____

10. Does political sharing made on social media such as Facebook affect your ideas or thinking about the current Ethiopian political reforms?

1. Yes

2. No

11. If your answer is for question number 11 is 'Yes', for what purposes do you use social media plat form?

1. To chat with my friend

2. To consume online Information

3. To share mine and other opinions

4. To maximize my personal brand

5. To find political information

6. To maximize my personal brand

7. To produce unique content and share to publics

8. Others if any

17. Do you agree that the use of social media influence young citizens' political participation on the current Ethiopian political reforms?

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

Thank you very much for time and consideration!

APPENDIX B

In-depth Interview Guide

The purpose of this interview is to gather data on “social media effect and new political culture in the contemporary Ethiopia political landscape by taking Ambo university as a case of study. This study is conducted in Addis Ababa University, department of journalism and communication for the partial fulfilment of Master of Arts degree in journalism and communications. Therefore, you are requested to give your genuine response. This will have great value to come up on the write research finding. Hence, I would like to request you to give your real genuine information for the questions will be presented for you. At last the information you provide will only be used for the research purpose and all the information will be kept confidential in any form.

Thank You for Your Cooperation!

Interview Questions

1. Would you tell me your experience in using social media for political purpose?
2. Which social media platforms do you frequently use?
3. Would you explain the purpose you are using social media platforms?
4. What kind of role do you think social media play in the current Ethiopian political reform?
5. How do you explain the role of social media in the contemporary Ethiopian politics?
6. Do you think that social media has effect on political participation? How do you explain this?