



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE STUDIES SCHOOL OF
PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM**

**TITLE: A PSYCHO SOCIAL IMPACT OF PRETRIAL PUBLICITY ON COURT
DECISION MAKING IN THE CASE OF BOLE SUB CITY.**

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ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

MAY, 2025

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The thesis titled A Psycho Social Impact of Pretrial Publicity on Court Decision Making in the case bole sub city by Hanna Yibrah is approved for Degree of Master of Art (MA) in Social Psychology.

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DECLARATION

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of pretrial publicity (PTP) on legal decision making among lawyers such as judges, prosecutors, criminal investigators as well as senior law students in Ethiopia. I interviewed 200 people with a formal questionnaire to learn about how what we heard from media news— fact-neutral, fact-negative, and sensational reports—impact on Lawyers judgments of crime and criminal justice, the emotions they feel, what they remember, and how confident they are. Studies showed people are more likely to make a decision on a guilty verdict and then feel more confident when compared to when they've heard either no news, or positive news. Fear was found to be the most powerful emotion for driving sense of guilt beyond reasonable doubt and shock made people surer of their decisions. It's absolutely mind-boggling how even people with legal training can be manipulated by the emotion kremlin in the media. These findings indicate that, with enhanced judiciary educations, ethically responsible media policy and media literacy for Ethiopia, a fair trial will be had. Tags: Pretrial publicity, legal professionals, emotional bias, media framing, legal judgment.

Keywords: Pretrial publicity, legal professionals, emotional bias, media framing, legal judgment

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1. Chapter One- Introduction

1.1. Background to the problem

The effects of pretrial publicity on trial judgments have garnered increased interest. Pretrial publicity refers to any information that is published and carried to the hearing by couriers and which is not already known to the judge at the hearing (Greene & Wade, 1988). It was expressed through mainstream (old media – newspapers, TV and radio) and new media channels (social network, blogs and Tiktok) most commonly; pretrial publicity consists of information, evidence, and/or allegations regarding the case, the defendant, or the victim's personality. However, pretrial publicity often transcends reporting and disseminates opinions or conducts framing or presents information with emotional characteristics that can induce various psychological dynamics in people exposed to it. Although the law often presumes in its design that judges are, to a certain extent, immune to such informal influences based on their education and moral commitments, data from legal and cognitive psychology reveal that they are not. And, equally important, judges share the same cognitive functions of belief processing, memory formation, emotion, and decision with jurors.

Pretrial publicity can reactivate prepared schemas, elicit strong emotional reactions, or create expectations about a possible outcome in a case, which then, unconsciously affect the evaluating of evidence and the applying of legal standards. All of these effects are particularly troubling in the case of cases that may be overhyped by the media or that are politically charged because they often cannot be avoided. Prior to this, research in diverse jurisdictions has established how pre-trial publicity bears on legal actors in guilty verdicts, perceptions of the defendant's credibility, and punitive trends with negative coverage. However, the effect size depends on several variables peculiar to the published message, timing of exposure, and the decision makers' distinctiveness, all within the decision-making procedural context.(Hope, Memon, & McGeorge, 2004; Ruva & LeVasseur, 2012).

In bench or judge-based systems like Ethiopia, obviously, the judge's role is even more pivotal. Judicial explanation of facts and law in the case frequently determine the outcome, thus the more imperative for the judge to be impartial in judgment-making. The crux of law, media and public possibilities is changing in Ethiopia, which democratizes information as all legal

institutions will be subjected to more scrutiny by the public. Nonetheless, little is known empirically about how these processes affect judicial behavior and decision-making. Although there is an abundance of information in literature on the doctrinaire legal fundamentals and human need for procedural reform, insights on psycho-social processes spatially shaping judicial behavior find less representation in the literature. This is the research question that this study attempts to answer.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Article 20(1) of the Ethiopian Constitution secures the right of any accused person to have a public trial before an independent and impartial court. Notwithstanding those constitutional provisions the Ethiopian judiciary is still vulnerable to external influence—especially in politically sensitive or high-profile cases (Fessha, 2010; Alemu, 2018). One of the most common such concerns is that of pre-trial publicity (PTP), particularly when the media treatment is prejudicial, sensational or emotive, since this can have the potential to prejudice the presumption of innocence, which is a key aspect of the right to a fair trial. In the West there has been a great deal of scholarship documenting how jurors’ or judges’ decision making may be skewed by such media exposures via such mechanisms as pre decisional distortion (Greene & Loftus, 1985), confirmation bias (Lieberman & Sales, 2007), and affective priming (Studebaker & Penrod, 1997). These experiments reveal that PTP can generate emotional responses – like fear or anger – that systematically affect judgments of the law (Feigenson & Park, 2006).

Previous empirical research on the effect of pretrial publicity on judicial decision making is limited in the Ethiopian setup. To date, discourse on this issue is predominantly normative or anecdotal with little systemic analysis of how media narratives may influence on the emotional, cognitive and evaluative dynamics of legal actors. This represents a significant research shortcoming. Accordingly, this study aims to bridge this gap by applying a psycho-social perspective to analyze the potential influence of pretrial publicity on judicial decision-making in Ethiopia highlighting how emotions aroused as a result of media exposure might mediate judgments.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the psychological and social influences on judicial decisions of pretrial publicity (PTP) - how cognitive processes, emotional controls, and subjective aspects influence decisions about PTP in different kinds of legal cases by judges.
2. To investigate how PTP coverage affects judges' attitudes toward defendants and the law process, focusing on how media charged tone, narrative form, and subjects highlight moderate attributions of guilt, fair judgments, and procedural legitimacy.
3. To identify the intermediary psychological mechanisms—such as emotional arousal, cognitive bias, and memory distortion—that mediate the relationship between media exposure and judicial decision-making, particularly within higher courts where such factors may significantly affect verdicts.
4. To propose institutional and policy recommendations for enhancing judicial resilience to media influence, including targeted training programs and regulatory reforms aimed at safeguarding due process and public trust in the Ethiopian justice system.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study adds value both in terms of academia and practical procedural reform to the Ethiopian bench trial system. On an academic level, the study bridges a great gap in empirical work by examining the multidimensional factor interplay of cognitive, emotional, social processes generated by media and their impact on judicial decision-making in the Ethiopian bench trial system. While much of this work has been peer-reviewed in the western context of a jury trial system, this study is unique for applying generally accepted psychological theories to a non-Western court setting.

Thus, this study contributes not only to a better understanding of legal psychology but also inevitably to the decision sciences as a whole and media effect, specifically, working to delineate yet a broader insight into the role of extraneous influences in directing judgment and juridical outcomes. In terms of procedural effectiveness, this research has significant policy implications

that are applicable across the Ethiopian legal and media reforms' domains. The findings could serve the purpose of establishing purpose-specific judicial training programs, imparting judgments facilitated by the informed attention of judge metacognition, helping each to apply their unbiased rational judgments in case in a counter- biased way. Besides, the research informs policy of exactly what part of pre-trial publicity can be controlled and as a result, for instance, what trials to let out and which to hold for fair trial and ethical media coverage. Altogether, the research addresses a significant research gap and paves the way for essential reform for the preemptive balancing of Ethiopian bench trial verdicts in the prevailing media-rich world.

1.5 Organization of the Study

This thesis is organized into five chapters. In the first chapter problem the purpose and the significance of the Research are presented followed by the definition of terms. Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework This chapter discusses literature findings and the theoretical framework. Chapter three presents the research design, sample, data collection instruments, and ethical issues. Chapter Four reports the analysis of the data and findings. Chapter Five concludes with discussions, implications, and policy and research recommendations

Chapter Two -Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to Pretrial Publicity

PTP (pretrial publicity) is the transmission of a news story about a case to the public prior to being heard in court. In contemporary Ethiopia with media outlets exploding, pretrial publicity can emanate from a myriad of sources such as state and private television, radio, newspapers, blogs and importantly social media including Facebook, Telegram, Tiktok and YouTube. The digital upheaval is unceasing, and that so-called fact, be it true, exaggerated or flat out fake, can be heard by millions of ears in minutes. The result is a media environment in which trial by publicity often emerges long before a courtroom (Bornstein et al., 2020).

This media onslaught is a great challenge for Ethiopia and its young justice system that, like the justice system of many democratic countries, is based on the principles of justice, impartiality and law fullness. The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) provides in article 20 (1) that ‘accused persons have the right to “a public trial without undue delay, before an independent and impartial court and to a fair trial”. In addition, article 20(3) reaffirms the maxim of innocent till proved guilty and states that, every person charged with an offence shall be presumed innocent until he is proved guilty or has pleaded guilty (FDRE Constitution, 1995).

These provisions underscore Ethiopia’s commitment to a fair trial and free trial, a cornerstone of democratic governance and the rule of law. However, in reality, pretrial publicity can wear away at these safeguards, particularly in high-profile or politicized cases. “If anything, the media in general has a particular fondness off or glamorizing things and it seems it carries over to violence against women, too. These stories can contribute to public conceptions, which could, in turn, influence not just social responses but legal players (judges, prosecutors, witnesses). Now, Ethiopia has no rule of law, and one cannot pretend that public mood does not influence judges’ decision-making, especially over controversial and/or ethnic sensitive cases (hard to quote, including on what point). The risk of PTP is supported by several pieces of evidence from other areas. The elder Meta-Analysis by Steblay and colleagues (1999) found the much more likely than their unaffected counterparts to display this behavior even if they claimed to be impartial.

This work is complemented by more recent research that has uncovered how digital media inflates bias through such means as emotional priming, cognitive overload, and selective exposure (Douglas & Edgerton, 2020). Despite the fact that these understandings are articulated in the context of court systems, they contain lessons for the Ethiopian context where, as in court decisions, judges could be affected by irrational cognitive biases—more so in an environment of political polarization, ethnic strife, and public oversight. “If they (the judiciary) apply the accoutrements of judicial guarantees to mitigate those risks, then in that sense, the whole spectrum of procedural guarantees is now introduced by the Ethiopian judiciary. These include the use of in camera trial for sensitive cases to shield them from public gaze, temporary media bans or gagging orders and ongoing education to support judicial independence and integrity.

The Ministry of Justice (2021) revised guidance on the management of high profile cases which required courtside not to allow comments made during the course of their proceedings to create a fair ground perception of bias, and the media not to make prejudicial comment during pre-trial phases. But implementation of these measures is lopsided, especially at the local level and in politically sensitive cases where institutional independence is less robust. Complicating matters further is the right to freedom of expression guaranteed by the FDRE’s Constitution Article 29. This provision accords each member of society the right to freedom of expression and the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas freely in the manner of his choosing, without let or hindrance. It also protects the freedom of the press and other mass-media (FDRE Constitution, 1995). These rights are fundamental to a democratic society, but can encroach on the rights of the accused, especially in the era of data saturation.

courts are in a bind—one that—been long forcing them to adopt a very delicate standard of showing respect to press’s interests and to the public’s right to know on the one hand, while protecting the right of the defendant to a fair and impartial trial on the other hand. The challenge is particularly acute in Ethiopia, a multiethnic society where legal processes sometimes intermingle with ethnicity, politics and historical grievances. Social media in particular, well known as a battleground of conflicting narratives, has also become a kind of courthouse where legal cases are fought and adjudicated in the court of public opinion.

This lack of content curation that can spread false information and only further divide society. Digital platforms' participatory nature also allows those who wish to remain anonymous to exert influence on domestic narrative generation from outside the remit of Ethiopian law (Douglas & Edgerton, 2020).

Finally, the need to grapple with the nitty gritty issues already on the horizon will require that responsiveness occur at the level of far more than merely procedural thinking (such as so many in the scholarly community posit in their multi-disciplinary eye view uniting legal theory, cognitive psychology, media ethics, and communication studies). These may include amending judicial rules related to “high profile” cases, the creation of a functioning media regulatory entity and wider public education about what the presumption of innocence is and how the courts operate. Institutional checks and balances, as well as an independent and free media regulator and neutral system of justice, are also crucial to strengthen. And in Ethiopia, a constitutional conversation needs to take place about how to harmonize the tensions between Article 20 (fair trial rights) (and compare, for example its skewed predecessor, Article 40, which should be declared null and void!) and its own Article 29 (freedom of expression). But they are inalienable and they all come into contact and have to be weighed with great skill so as to produce a fair justice. Models, which are ratiometric models – sub judice or press blackout periods – can be options to adapt to the Ethiopian foundation. The expanding right over pretrial publicity in the age of the internet constitutes serious threats to our Constitutionally-enjoined rights to fair trial and court independence. Increasingly driven by narratives constructed outside it, our cases require that we do both: innovate while also returning to a posture that the durability and excellence of our system of justice is rooted in the experience of due process, fairness, and truth. The failure to act endangers not only the rights of the named defendants, but the integrity of the judiciary, and the legitimacy of the state as an adherent of the rule of law.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The effect of pretrial publicity on trial related decision-making has been well-documented in legal scholarship. In cognitive psychology, social psychology, and legal scholarship, several models describe how exposure to media coverage—namely, biased, sensational, and affect-laden media—can lead to distorted juror cognition, memory, and evaluation. Ethiopia does

not employ Jury system, but these principles are still relevant for judicial agents, for the reason that judges are cognitive biased as well, such as lay jurors. The following section explores five key psychological theories that jointly describe how PTP erodes the impartiality and equity fundamental to the legal process.

2.3 Negativity Bias

The human tendency to weigh negative information more than neutral or even positive in cognitive processing (Ruva & McEvoy, 2008). If transferred to the context of the law, it would imply that jurors or judges would be more affected by media depictions that emphasize especially incriminating or morally-repugnant aspects of a defendant's past. The media also frequently capitalizes on this bias, featuring more emotionally salient information, such as prior criminal record, disturbing statements, or sensationalized descriptions of the alleged crime. Even if jurors are instructed to ignore outside evidence or warned of the attempt to admit such evidence, the emotional vividness of negative evidence can persist and covertly influence judgments of guilt (Lieberman & Arndt, 2000). The negative cognitive stickiness reported here disrupts attempts to insulate legal actors from bias by relying on procedural protections.

2.4 Story Model Theory

Pennington and Hastie's (1988, 1993) Story Model reminds us that when jurors (or judges) understand the facts of a case, they construct internally consistent stories. These "mind stories" steer their interpretation of what they observe, explaining evidence in terms of motives, characters, and outcomes in a way that is psychologically gratifying. Unfortunately, PTP adds a major complication to this process. This process of spinning a story, before it is tried in the courtroom, happens all too commonly when people are being exposed to media coverage. They begin to construct stories even before all the evidence has been revealed in the courtroom, but are rather fed from the outside. For example, if PTP frames a defendant as emotionally unstable or dangerous, a judge may later consider ambiguous witness testimony or body language through that frames. Once a narrative is established, it is relatively impervious to evidence insofar as the evidence is forced to fit the narrative. This creates tunnel vision and is hard to undo trial later.

2.5 The Pre-Decisional Distortion

The Continuum Distortion Theory (2001) distortion theory is a more developed version of pre-decisional distortion theory based on the idea of the confirmation bias. It rather implies that decision makers such as juries or judges tend to construe new information in a manner that is congruent with initial decisions preexisting established in the decision making process. . What this likely means in the world of PTP, is that those who are exposed to this media bias that negatively depicts the accused, are more likely to find prosecution evidence as strong and defense evidence as weak — prior to the beginning of the trial in fact. The threat is the unconsciousness of this bias: legal decision-makers tend to believe that they are impartial despite their tendency to process evidence through a distorted cognitive lens. This is the theory with respect to the timing of exposure to media content, because early impressions may heavily influence the course of case interpretation.

2.6 Priming Theory

Priming Theory (Tulving & Schacter, 1990) According to priming theory, the activation of particular mental models or schemas can be elicited subconsciously by palpable words, images, or associations. In PTP, emotionally loaded words such as “predator,” “terrorist,” or “brutal” — typical in the legal context — can activate cognitive representations linked to guilt, deviance or threat. Activated decision schemas are likely to influence the way in which otherwise neutral or ambiguous trial evidence is attended to or interpreted (Srull & Wyer, 1979). For instance, a judge who has heard the defendant described as “notorious” multiple times may develop an unconscious association in his mind between the defendant and other infamous criminals. And because priming works beneath our conscious awareness, it is particularly hard to guard against—even with court orders.

2.7 Mere Exposure Effect

The Zajonc (1968) mere exposure effect: People like things just because they have been exposed to them before. For PTP that message that is transmitted repeatedly has a higher chance of being believed to be true, irrespective of whether its contents are negative or positive As a result, legal

actors may form the belief that they “know” a defendant or victim because they have seen the person in the media so many times, leading to overconfidence in their own character and culpability judgments. That familiarity may result in precipitate or intuitive judgments, which displace formal evidence subject to proper judicial presentation. Repeated enough times, even questionable or inaccurate information can become ingrained in the memory and attitudes of those responsible for administering justice.

2.8 Integrative Summary

These psychological theories include negativity bias, story model theory, pre-decisional distortion, priming, and the mere exposure effect and, when taken together, these theories allow us to see quite a bit of the very deep cognitive vulnerabilities that PTP leverages. The evidence indicates, however, that these processes do not work in isolation, but reciprocally: Affective stories leave traces (preconception negativity bias) that are woven into coherent mental narratives of cases (story model) that are strengthened by the early evaluation of cases as they are tainted by suggestive language (pre-decisional distortion, priming) and normalized by repetition (mere exposure).

The understanding of these processes is of consequence to lawyers and policy makers, and individuals with an interest in the right to a fair trial. Judges may have more knowledge of the law and be more impartial than lay jurors, but they are hardly immune to the cognitive biases that plague us all. In a land where digital media are ever more dominant and politics and society still deeply polarized, such statements matter more than ever. PTP is not just about procedure but it is about inter-disciplinary awareness and institutional commitment to judicial neutrality and also, the psychological toughness of judges

2.8.1 The Emotional Strength and Affective Reasoning

Far from detached objectivity, feelings matter in the law. Courtroom players react emotionally to what is being said, how it is said, by whom it is said and what the moral dimension of the case may be. Emotional Arousal: The expression and experience of high-intensity emotion such as fear, anger or disgust infused by graphic evidence, victim testimony, or media attention may heighten perceptions of criminality. These emotions, research shows, bolster conviction and

harsh penalty (Lerner, Goldberg, & Tetlock, 1998). For instance, exposure to graphic crime scene images may enhance emotional arousal and decrease cognitive thoughtfulness resulting in inflated decision making for punishment that might be disconnected from the evidence. Bias of Empathy: Judges are frequently influenced by emotive sympathy with one side or the other. A defendant who looks remorseful or “like” a neighbor may be allowed a softer punishment, whereas a distant, cold, or emotionally unattached expression can lead to a sterner sentence—even if the expressions are not particularly related to guilt (Decety & Cowell, 2014). This bias to express is of particular concern for equal treatment before the law, given that emotional displays are influenced by cultural or psychological biases.

2.8.2 Restricted Memory and Limited Processing of Information Memory

Is a crucial issue in trials—especially when proceedings spin out over days or weeks. Psychologically, it’s a fact that human memory is very reconstructive, and when it comes to reconstruction, mess ups are pretty much a foregone conclusion. Source Monitoring Errors: Even jurors, and judges, can get mixed up about where they listened or read something—news accounts, witness testimony, or attorney statements. This “source confusion” may cause them to convey information that was not introduced as evidence (Lindsay & Johnson, 1989). Cognitive Overload: Cases are often laden with complicated or large amounts of evidence—legal jargon, forensic information, witness statements, etc. When people are cognitively overloaded, they look for ways to simplify information processing by turning to their psychological heuristic or converting to type to process affectively vivid information (Hope et al., 2004). This can distort the law: the louder the thing, the more coherent the logic or more compelling the evidence, the less variety of commentary it evokes on TV. These memory constraints underscore the need for clear courtroom communication and procedural ease in the avoidance of misapprehensions, which might affect verdicts.

2.8.3 Social Influence and Group Dynamics

The process of decision making is a social interchange in court systems or panels of judges. How people act and think in groups — group dynamics — can shape deliberation in a profound way. Conformity Pressure: The need for social cohesion may lead people to side with the majority even if their own opinion differs. (Authoritarianism was famously illustrated by Asch’s

(1955) conformity studies. This pressure can suppress individual critical thought, especially for members of minority groups or other individuals who lack confidence in legal reasoning, in courts using unanimity to reach a verdict. Group Polarization: We can make more extreme decisions after a discussion with others than each of us would do alone. When most jurors are leaning toward guilt, the group may become more extreme toward a harsher verdict after deliberation (Sunstein, 2002). The Leadership Factor: Strong personalities in the deliberation room may influence the group's reading of evidence and shut down dissenting opinions. These leaders may seem more informed or more legitimate, which can lead to influence regardless of true competence (Hastie, Penrod, & Pennington, 1983). These social consequences emphasize the importance of complementing the discussions with a strong facilitation and structuring in order to facilitate balanced participation and deliberation.

2.8.4 Stereotyping and Implicit Bias

Stereotypes and implicit biases are just unconscious mental associations that people make between others and, say, race, gender, age or class. And those mental shortcuts may yield surprising legal results, even when judges or jurors are consciously seeking to be fair. Assessing Credibility: Research suggests that race, accent or clothing can influence whether or not someone is believed to be telling the truth, is credible, or is guilty. For instance, jurors might unconsciously tend to believe a well-covered, well-educated defendant more than a marginalized one (Levinson, Cai, & Young, 2010). Behavioral Interpretation: Whether one and the same action (for example, getting loud or averting questions) seems more objectionable in stigmatized compared to non-stigmatized defendants is debatable. Guilt Attribution: In uncertain or marginal cases, jurors may revert to implicit judgments of who is a "criminal type", especially in areas with high exposure to the media's racialized crime myths. These preferential biases represent a serious threat to equal justice under law and any such biases need to be countered by anti-bias training and simple procedural reforms, such as "blind" evaluations or structured witness credibility checklists. There are unconscious psychological undercurrents that surge well below the rational surface of the reason of man." Cognitive biases influence how evidence is interpreted, emotions affect subjective impressions of wrongdoing, memory failures bias the recollection of actual events, group effects affect individual judgment, and implicit biases distort evaluations of credibility and character. Building on the empirical evidence in this area, our

analyses emphasize the indispensability of attending to these psychological vulnerabilities if due process values of fairness and impartiality are to be maintained. For Ethiopia and traditions like it, in which lay jurors play a negligible role compared with judges, these findings still very much apply. Judges are also susceptible to these pressures, especially in cases in the public eye or involving political issues. Thus, incorporating psychological understanding into the legal education process, mandating ongoing judicial education, enacting mechanisms for bias deterrence, and accountability in the judiciary serve as necessary devices for enhancing the quality and legitimacy of judicial decisions.

2.9 Social influences on court decision making

Legal decisions don't happen in a vacuum. Despite the ideal of basing its decisions only on facts and the law, both judges and jurors are always operating, at some level, within larger social structures. These can be the dynamics of court debate, influence of media, appetites of culture, or habits of an institution. These are more subtle but they can still have profound influence on how evidence is evaluated, how credibility is judged, and how decisions are arrived at constitutively. This part examines critical social factors that can affect how judicial decisions are made without the decision makers necessarily realizing it. The role of group dynamics in court deliberation is the process of court decision making is a social one -- discussing, bargaining, and seeking a consensus.

The influence and deliberation of jury members may significantly influence final decision. Social Normative Influence: In a group setting, people often adhere to a majority view to minimize social tension or rejection (Asch, 1955). Such pressure can create a culture of self-censorship of dissenting juror opinions in particular in jurisdictions requiring unanimity as a condition for returning a verdict. Potential Juror Influences: Some jurors tend to take control of the setting for deliberation and direct or control the focus of discussion and how evidence is interpreted. A phenomenon known as group- or majority-outlier interaction occurs when more confident or experienced jurors dominate their fellow jurors, and this can lead to a slant in group reasoning (Hastie, Penrod, & Pennington, 1983).

Group Polarization: Deliberation can also exacerbate preexisting beliefs leading to decisions that are more extreme collectively. Where jurors are biased in similar directions going in, they are apt to emerge with more extreme views (Sunstein, 2002). Media and Public Opinion Media governments and press coverage of sensational cases so often dominate and shape public conversation. It is an external environment that indirectly puts pressure on jurors and judges, who, while they may think they're immune to public opinion, are subject to it. Pretrial Publicity: Stories published by the media, especially ones that are salacious, emotional or implicative of guilt, can form cognitive frames that influence how jurors understand in court evidence (Ruva & McEvoy, 2008). Social Pressures: In high-profile or community traumatic cases, jurors can feel pressure to conform to anticipated public sentiment. The desire of the community to "make it right" may overshadow legal requirements of proof (Vidmar, 2002). Juror Voir Dire Reputation Management: More and more jurors are aware of the possibility that their verdicts may receive public or media attention. This knowledge could affect how they vote, especially in trials that get heavy media or political coverage. Cultural and Societal Norms Jurors, after all, are human beings who bring with them culturally ingrained beliefs and attitudes. They can influence how individuals read behavior, judge credibility and even understand such concepts as guilt or intent. "All jurors come with their own sets of life experiences, and those life experiences are what they use to make judgments," Mr. Richards said. Cultural factors shaping concepts of crime and justice: Attitudes about honor, shame, morality, and authority Culture is believed to be based on norms about honor, shame, morality, and authority. Such between group differences may impinge on how jurors interpret the overt behavior of the defendant, the witness and their courtroom deportment (Leung & Cohen, 2011). Stereotyping by class: People who are poor or grew up in poverty are often seen through the lens of deficiency or deficit. Jurors may equate poverty with crime or untruthfulness, and wealth with honesty and virtue (Darley & Robinson, 2004).

Demography as well as Social Identity The composition of a court — and of jurors' own identities — can inform how the individuals put on trial are judged and how group dynamics play out. Ingroup Preference: Jurors might be subconsciously inclined to prefer those of the same race or social status. Those can lend to the impression of being trustworthy, relatable, or even legal judgment (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Court Diversity: Evidence indicates that courts that

are more diverse in demography deliberate more thoughtfully, take account of more vantage points, and produce more accurate decisions. Diversity is a hedge against groupthink and prejudice (Sommers, 2006). Institutional Culture and Court Culture From individual jurors to the courtroom, collective decision-making is shaped by social norms and hierarchies. Respect for Authority: include that to judges, law officers or expert witnesses as a source of perceived authority and if they aren't challenged in virtue of their title. This may result in the automatic acceptance of prevailing discourses without questioning the underlying assumptions (Tyler, 2006). Procedural Liberalism The formalism of the courts, with its codified questioning and evidence laws, can foster passiveness rather than apply the "average man's" acid test to the "presentation" of evidence. Judicial rulings are bound up with a more tangled web of social forces. Group psychology, media stories, cultural norms and institutional power dynamics, they all influence the way "justice is served and understood." Understanding that legal decision making is socially embedded is important to appreciating the fact that biases at work elsewhere in the social world may also affect decision making, and that safeguards to ensure fairness and accuracy become important.

2.10 Prior Research in Pretrial Publicity and Court Decision Making

There is a large and increasing number of empirical research papers that emphasize the strong effects that pretrial publicity (PTP) has on judicial decision-making. Researchers in psychology, media studies, and legal studies have used a variety of methods—including meta-analysis, experimental mock trials, and field-based case analyses—to show that PTP can have a substantial influence on the ways in which jurors make sense of evidence, recall details, and reach conclusions. To the extent that these findings cohere, they collectively undermine the jurisprudential assumption that courtroom verdicts can remain immune from broader social stories. Meta-Analytic Foundations A significant contribution to the PTP literature comes from the meta-analysis work by Steblay et al. (1999), who integrated findings from 44 empirical studies. This supports a strong and statistically significant association of negative PTP exposure and increased guilty verdict rates. This effect was particularly strong when the media content was emotionally arousing, the time between exposure and trial was a long delay, and the crime involved moral loaded offenses such as assault and murder. This investigation offered vital

empirical support for the argument that PTP undermines juror neutrality-- a claim that has been based more on theory than data until no

Research on Experiment and Mock Trial the mechanisms through which PTP works have also being confirmed by actual experiments in mock trials. For example, Ruva and McEvoy (2008) exposed the subjects to negative, positive or neutral media and then showed the same trial material. From the beginning of the discussion of the PTP research, those exposed to negative PTP remembered more incriminating details, distrusted the defendant more, and were more likely to convict regardless of the evidence at trial. Hope et al., 2004), rather the PTP confuses court evidence with what has been reported in the media, such that participants were unable to distinguish between what was presented in court (the empirical fact) and what had been generated in the pre-trial (the narrative). These findings support the susceptibility of juror recollections and interpretations to emotionally salient, extraneous information. Social Media and the Digital Community Arena Recently, researchers are adjusting PTP inquiry to the digital era, in which the unfiltered, viral manner of content on Facebook and Ticktack and YouTube and X (formerly Twitter) carries additional hazards. As Douglas and Edgerton (2020) observed, subjects who were presented with social media posts that included emotionally charged or misleading content formed early impressions of guilt and false confidence in their judgment, which remained undeterred even when they admitted the sources were suspect. That exaggerated confidence, in combination with selective exposure, along with algorithm-based messaging distribution, is why social media represents the greatest threat to juror impartiality than any other type of media.

Court Deliberation Studies While first order research was directed toward the cognition of individual jurors, subsequent studies concerned themselves with group decision making in court. Ruva and Guenther (2017) compared the impact of homogeneous juries (all jurors exposed to the same PTP) to that of heterogeneous juries (varied levels of exposure across jurors). Homogenous juries were also more likely engage in a confirmatory discussion, thus, reinforcing their shared biases and discounting evidence that is exculpatory. On the other hand, heterogeneous juries engaged in more substantial critical discussion and were subjected to less bias. These results emphasize the value of diversity of information in group decisions and suggest that diversifying media exposure across jurors might constitute a buffering factor against

biased decisions. Real-World Case Analyses Field studies support concerns about PTP Further empirical evidence in field settings supports concerns regarding PTP. Vidmar (2002) surveyed numerous trial appellate cases in civil and criminal law alleging that pretrial publicity may have affected trial fairness. He observed that courts tended to dismiss the impact of media coverage, and deny motions for change of venue or for the court to be sequestered, no matter how much coverage there had been. These results seriously undermine the satisfactory of procedural protection and the judicial system's trust in juror-claimed impartiality. Case Studies in Capital and Structure Bakhshay and Haney (2018) provided a comprehensive analysis of media reporting in the context of 20 California capital cases that included change-of-venue motions. Analyzing 1,831 news articles, they found prejudicial framing — which included use of inflammatory language, character attacks on defendants and depiction of victims and communities in an emotionally charged way. Despite the clear prejudice in this coverage, courts typically refused to transfer or to take further precautions, based on jurors' assurances of their ability to remain detached. The paper revealed a systemic gap between judicial practice and empirical reality, supporting pleas for better empirically driven standards for appraising PTP claims. Collectively, then, they offer strong and consistent evidence that pre-trial publicity can seriously undermine the fairness of the legal process. From mass media to the online domain, from the personal to the collective, the impact of PTP can be seen at all levels of the decision context. Though traditional legal tools— such as voir dire and the giving of instructions by the judge, and change of venue—are intended to check these effects, the empirical evidence is that they are usually inadequate, inconsistently applied, not well understood. It's in this sense that the problem isn't merely to be identified, but that we need to think about judicial procedures designed in light of the ever-changing character of media and all the funny things that media does to determine what the public thinks and what happens in the courtroom.

In previous research on pretrial publicity, theorists had operated on the pre-conception that media coverage was even-handed, shallow and sporadic. Such older forms of media, however (newspapers, radio and television) were assumed to be broad and in some instances 'general' in their information transmission and infrequent in exposure among all potential jurors in similar patterns. But that presumption is no longer valid in today's digital media world. It's a personalized media environment: Our exposure to news is slanted by algorithms that control

what we read and when, based on our interests, browsing and emotional commitment. Accordingly, people are consistently receiving information that simply confirms their already-held beliefs, which is something they usually don't even realize. This algorithmic amplification of exposure results in echo chambers where biased or sensationalist materials are encountered time and again, making it far more difficult for jurors or judges to stay impartial. The transformation from uniformity to customization in media exposure has deep implications for the way pretrial publicity influences legal judgments.

2.11 The Existing Literature Gap

There are gaps in the existing literature, notwithstanding the voluminous nature of pretrial publicity; several significant gaps remain in both our theoretical understanding and our practical response to it. Such gaps are the result of outdated assumptions, limited methodological approaches, and geographic bias that need to be remedied to make sure the field develops along with shifting legal and media landscapes. The following list includes six key constraints in existing research and specific suggestions for future research.

1. Lack of Study on PTP Induced by Social Media

The majority of foundational research has been conducted for traditional news and broadcast media. But today, content is accelerated and shared through algorithm-based social platforms that tend to bypass editorial standards. Gap: Existing models do not take into consideration the velocity, engagement, emotional priming and spread of the video content on platforms like TikTok, Twitter, Instagram and Telegram. There is a need to develop new theories and designs of method suited to the dynamics of social media, centering on mechanisms including emotional contagion, the amplification of disinformation and filter bubbles (Douglas & Edgerton, 2020).

2. Limited Positive and Mixed PTP Effects

Most of the research has focused on adverse publicity, which has even been linked to greater rates of conviction. However, media can also be sympathetic toward defendants or doubtful of victims, especially when celebrities, law officers, or other public persons are involved. Gap: Positive and even equivocal endorsements are under-explored regarding their impact on

leniency, credibility assessment, or deliberative quality. Need: Future research PART-Use balanced experimental designs to illuminate the scope of media influence to not only bias jurors toward acquittal but also to mitigate moral culpability (Bruschke et al., 2016).

3. Absence of Longitudinal, Ecologically Real Studies

Although lab and mock trial research have the benefit of high control, they often hold student participants, simplified cases and artificial time limits, thus serving insufficiently as real-life reflections. Gap: No research has explored PTP effects longitudinally (using justice practitioners), or considered longer term effects of PTP exposure with authentic jurors or judicial officers in naturalistic court contexts. We need: There is a need for the longitudinal and field research to examine (a) cumulative exposure, (b) retention of misinformation, and (c) long-term effects of the pretrial stories (Vidmar, 2002).

4. Narrow conception of the courtroom

As the scene of court deliberation as a social process while the bias of individuals is well-studied, the social communication dynamics of group deliberation, particularly in the context of differential media exposure, is not well understood. Gap: PTPs role in group-level processes associated with persuasion, resistance to dissent or confirmation bias during deliberation (to name a few) is not well-understood. Implications: Future research must explore how the diversity of exposure of jurors affects deliberative process outcomes, the emergence of leaders, and the resolution of conflict (Ruva & Guenther, 2017).

5. Evidence-Based Interventions and Educational Tools:-

Legal interventions such as voir dire, judicial instruction, venue changes have not been adequately studied for their effectiveness. Research should investigate such interventions, which could be incorporated into media-literacy schooling, pre-trial orientation of jurors, and decision-support systems that would assist jurors to critically evaluate sources of information (Lieberman & Arndt, 2000).

6. Lack of Consideration of Cross-Cultural and Jurisdictional Diversity:-

Much of the research builds upon U.S or Western judicial systems and falls short of discussing how PTP works in non-western, developing or hybrid judicial systems such as in Ethiopia. Gap: There is a lack of knowledge all over the world on how cultural views on authority, media freedom, and justice overlap with PTP in different legal settings. Implications: Cross-cultural, institutional and media regulation comparison studies of PTP effects are needed to increase the global generally applicability of the findings.

Conclusion although harmful impacts of pretrial publicity are well documented in decades of research, there are some important blind spots. These culture myths include old media models, reductive methodological boundaries, and a deficit of common sense or cross-cultural knowledge.

Filling these gaps demands interdisciplinary, methodological refinement and a resolve to use rigorous empiricism as a basis for legal reform. Only then will justice systems adapt to defend the rights of the accused and defend the cornerstone principle of a fair and impartial trial in an age of ubiquitous, real-time media influence.

2.12 Scope of the Study

This research lies on the confluence of psychology; media scholarship and litigation practice and explores the impact of Pretrial Publicity (PTP) on judicial decision-making in the Ethiopian context. Although the research in the area of PTP is based mainly on jury-based systems in western countries, this specific investigation is one of a kind in that it target Ethiopian legal professionals such as judges, prosecutors, and soon-to-be legal professionals who participate directly in deciding a verdict in contrast to the jury's non-decision role.

Topical Scope The study explores:

The implications of PTP to psychological theories about how it influences cognitive and emotional processes (negativity bias, priming, story model theory).The impact of the social

networks (such as TikTok, Facebook, Telegram) in the perceptions of the legal actors when it comes to politically or ethnically sensitive cases.

Affective and cognitive responses to media framing and the relation between these responses and legal decisions and confidence in judicial reasoning. On the broader social factors—such as group dynamics, conformity, implicit bias, and institutional culture—that shape court decisions.

More broadly, analysts are divided on the extent to which procedural safeguards, including gag orders, to media and the judiciary, and judicial education, stave the influence of PTP.

Geographical Scope The research is limited to Ethiopia and to legal practitioners who work in urban areas, which is Bole sub city where media penetration and digital consumption is relatively high. Adapted for the cultural, institutional and political context of the Ethiopian's justice system, it was influenced by international experience.

Methodological Scope The research is of a quantitative nature through a followed by a structured scenario-based questionnaire applied to 200 legal practitioners. Hypothetical trial vignettes with manipulated media framing are used as experimental stimuli and responses are subjected to chi square tests and binary logistic regression analysis.

Temporal Scope Data was captured at a time of intensified digital media in Ethiopia (post-2020), thus reflecting a current media ecology dominated by high speed information exchange, political divisiveness, and ethnic tensions.

3 Chapter Three: Methods

This chapter presents the methodological approach used to investigate the psycho-social effects of PTP media reporting on judgment in a court of law in Ethiopia. Specifically, the chapter delves into the research design, target population and sampling, data collection tools and procedures, data analysis methods, and the ethical considerations of the study. The methodology is responsive and aligns with the target population of the study relevance in cultural settings and observance of ethical considerations. It is meaningful to the discourse of this study, as it yields relevant and user-friendly recommendations.

3.1 Research Design

To achieve the purpose of the present study regarding the mechanism of PTP and judgment, a quantitative methodology was used, consisting of a survey-based experimental design in which participants are exposed to several case vignettes and afterwards asked to answer a structured questionnaire measuring their legal judgment, emotional response, and demographic profile. The organized questionnaire was categorized into five parts. The case study variants were presented to each of the respondents. The case scenarios inspired the respondent's argument in the courtroom. In contrast, the respondents responded to questionnaires just like judges were responding to evidence presented in court. The emotional tone of these case scenarios was varied. The variance was first clearly crafted by deciding which tone will vary, where we had one PTP classification on the assignment. Then, brainstorm before and during the studies helped lay the basics/structure/outline to present the different types of emotional variations.

3.2 Population and Sampling

The study targets the following different categories of people in the court seeking judgment. Thus:

- Sitting and practicing judges
- Public prosecutors
- Criminal police investigators
- Final year law school students

- National and regional lawyers such as legal researchers and court clerks.

The sampling method used for this study was purposeful selection since the correct participants in this study should meet the following criteria: 1. Ethiopian 2. Age band between 21 and 65 years of age 3. Legal training or at least involves the current justice system 4. Fluency in the working language of the legal field. A total of 200 participants from the significant sectors of the criminal justice system of Ethiopia participated in the study. This structured was based on the fact that individuals of legal capacity or academic standing who either interpret legal facts examine evidence or make judicial pronouncements. The sample included 50 acting judges who handle criminal cases at the federal First instance and High courts, 50 public prosecutors involved in criminal prosecution and the examination of evidence review and 40 final-year law students from registered Ethiopian universities with prior Judicial follow up experiences. There were 30 criminal investigators, mostly police persons responsible for evidence collection and analysis and 30 early career legal professionals: legal researchers, court clerks, and junior legal officers in quasi-judicial organs. These categories were purposefully selected to cover a wide perspective from experienced legal professionals to novice practitioners; the finding would give a 360-degree view of how PTP would influence reasons and judgment in Ethiopia's justice system.

3.3 Data collection instruments

Data were collected by the structured questionnaire designed in English and Amharic by considering the language sights of all participants. The question was structured to explore the quantitative effects PTP has on the cognitive and emotional response of Ethiopian legal experts and trainees. All items were closed-ended and intended to provide standardized response options for more reliable statistical testing. The sections included:

Section A: Demographic and control variables. This part included standard measures of age, gender, and professional experience and sought to control or moderate the effects of PTP on Decision Making,

Section B: Case scenarios including legal decision-making. The scenario-based section included two fictional cases: the mock trial of Federal Republic v. Dawit Bekele and Federal Republic v. Almaz Kassa. The cases were selected because of their thematic relevance and

adopted and adapted content similar to those found in parallel scenarios used in the research from Ethiopian news. Each story was accompanied by a simulated news section created specifically for the purpose of the framing effect – neutral, positive, negative, sensational or mixed. The narratives used language similar to that used by Tiktok and thus created a realistic background for the participant to make a decision in.

After a description of each scenario, participants provided a binary verdict on what they would rule Guilty/Not guilty. This measure was the main outcome variable of the study. Participants were also asked to indicate their confidence in the decision made on a 7-point Likert scale (1= not at all confident; 7=extremely confident). This was a measure of the decision-design signal and decision-certainty.

C. Media Recall – this section aimed to assess the participants' factual memory of the information portrayed in the media narrative. Multiple-choice and true/false questions were used to measure recall accuracy and detected potential framing or emotion-related bias

D. Emotional Response using a 7-point Likert scale adjusted for Ethiopian culture, the test evaluated emotions of anger, sympathy, fear, disgust, sadness, and shock. The selection tested only selected emotions because of their popularity in media influence and legal psychology research.

E. Perceived Media Influence – this section aimed to measure how the written or televised story affected personal judgment and the criminal justice system. The elements of the questionnaire included a fairness bias, an objectivity bias, and PTP mediated exhibit bias.

3.4 Data collection procedures

The data collection took place within a 2-week time frame in March 2025 in three Addis Ababa hotspots, including the Federal First Instance and Federal High Court Bole Bench, the Bole Sub-City Police Department site, and the Law Faculty at Addis Ababa University. I chose these spots to have the strongest chance of encountering a wide array of participants, including legal professionals and students preparing for the criminal justice sector in Ethiopia. The site-specific recruitment was conducted following a formal institutional permit granted by the Addis Ababa University and sent to each appropriate location represented. Explicit consent was obtained and

documented from all the study participants following a brief orientation on the study's objectives and the confidentiality safeguards. The pre-test questionnaire, consisting of personal questions, was given to participants before case scenario presented. Sessions were about 25–30 min long and occurred in room at the respective universities and offices. Participants were also free to discontinue the survey at any point without any consequences. Each paper questionnaire was collected by hand; the hard copy was securely stored for analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data collected in this study comes from a structured questionnaire and the data were analyzed using SPSS (statistical package social sciences). There were several justifications for using SPSS including that it is one of the statistical software optimization more powerful, facilitated on use and more standard tool to analyze quantitative data of survey especially in social sciences.

Data Preparation and Cleaning. Before the data is descriptively analyzed, a thorough review of the values was done to check for any missing and inconsistent responses. Whenever such issues were identified, the cases were discarded from the respective analysis, or in other cases, inconsistent data was corrected on a traceable basis. Variables were appropriately labeled and coded based on defined levels of measurements.

The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, percentages, frequency distributions) in the first instance. These data were critical in providing a profile of participants and a detailed account of media exposure and emotional and cognitive responses to PTP.

Inferential statistic methods were used to meet the research purposes and to test the research hypotheses: Chi-square tests were conducted to investigate the relationship among media condition, participant demographics (i.e., age, gender, occupation role), and legal decisions (Guilty/Not Guilty). This analysis-to find out if patterns in judges' decisions were statistically dependent on media framing or participant background-aided in the interpretation.

"Guilty" verdict Binary Logistic Regression was employed to test the influence of emotional responses (i.e., ANGER, FEAR, and SYMPATHY) and media exposure on the probability of a guilty verdict. This threshold model was chosen because the dependent variable was binary, and because this enabled calculation of odds ratio estimates while adjusting for demographic variables.

The cross-tabulation complemented the Chi-square analysis, so as to graphically present the frequency distribution for demographic and response variables that helped to interpret the patterns of association.

Reliability analysis of the emotional response scale produced a Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.70 to 0.80, which means that the internal consistency of the measurement was acceptable for affective responses.

All statistical assumptions were met and tested before analysis. The significance level was $p < 0.05$ and results were discussed in terms of statistical significance and practical relevance under the influence of media on judicial neutrality.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The research-oriented study uses human subject guidelines by and the research participants understand the conditions and participants' rights of the study. Anonymity confidentiality; the coding format is used, and no identifiers are implemented.

- **Intention to Obtain Informed Consent:** Participants will be explained about the study, the fictitiousness of the cases and their rights.
- **Anonymity and confidentiality:** No personal information is obtained. Answers are encoded and stored securely.
- **Least harm principle:** The case-stimuli are fictitious, but however might be experienced as distressing. Participants are alerted in advance .
- **Voluntariness:** No force or threat of force has been used, no inducements, rewards or bribery offered which might pressure individuals to participate against their better judgment, and participants will not be penalized if they choose to stop at any time.

•**Debrief:** A well-done debrief allows participants to process the context of the research and leave with emotional clarity. Such ethical principles serve to protect the physical and mental health, privacy and freedom of choice of all participants.

Chapter Four: Result and Discussion

The sample resulted in a total of 200 Ethiopian citizens that participated in the study. Of these participants, 25% were sitting judges, 25% were district attorneys, 20% were law students in their last year of the undergraduate program, 15% were a police criminal expert, and 15% were early professional legal staff. For the latter, ages were between 24 to 49 years. There were 65% men and 35% women with the mean age being 34.5 years, s.d. = 5.9. As the following results implied an, ordinal logistic machinery is applied for further case bestowal analysis. On average, this distribution was a vignette of Ethiopia's legal terrain. Each respondent had a substantial amount of courtroom or litigation experience. Additionally, 70% of the respondents indicated that they were frequenting the media (three or more times per week), and more than 80% indicated that they were on digital platforms including Telegram, Facebook, and TikTok.

4.1 Result of Group assignment and verdict Inputs

The aim of the current research was to explore the effects of emotional PTP on judicial decisions by comparing five different types of media conditions (neutral, positive, negative, sensational, and mixed). The association between media exposure (type of media exposure) and the binary legal outcome (guilty vs. not guilty) was tested using chi-square test for independence.

The Chi-Square test was selected as the independent variable (Group Assignment, the media framing) and the dependent variable (Verdict1_Binary, defendant verdict categorized in binary) are both nominal. This test is suitable for testing for an association between two categorical variables in contingency table format.

This is the test for an association between two categorical variables in the form of a contingency table. No significant association was observed through The chi-square test, $\chi^2(4, N = 200) = 3.96$, $p = 0.411$. More specifically, proportion of guilt vs not-guilty verdicts does not vary significantly across the five media frame conditions. This was true regardless of the tone of the media (negative, sensational, positive, mixed or neutral); their verdict favorability ratings were statistically indistinguishable.

It was also found that for these participants, the emotional tone of pretrial media reports did not have any direct effect on legal gamble. A possible explanation is that the respondents, as judges,

lawyers, law students and lawyers, were able to resort to their legal schooling and professional experience to correct and guard them against media content with an emotional tinge. The women's ability to distance themselves from emotive pretrial information to concentrate on case-relevant information may represent a cognitive strategy used to counteract bias. Strangely, even though three quarters believed that media reporting had the power to influence the outcome, six out of 10 felt that they hadn't at all been swayed by their judgments. Such a discrepancy indicates "self-other bias", meaning that people accept that they themselves would be influenced by others' media, but not by their own. This bias may obscure the ways that external stories subtly shape interpretation and memory, even when the decisions themselves appear impervious.

In other words, employing the Chi square test allowed for the examination of whether media framing ('categorical' exposure) was significantly related to a legal decision ('binary' outcome) in the study.

In short, the use of the Chi² test (chisq) enabled the study to robustly test whether a relationship between media framing (i.e., categorical exposure) and legal decision (i.e., binary outcome) exists. Benign lack of association Media tone alone appears to have had no meaningfully statistically significant effect on the participants' disposition of the case before them. These findings demonstrate the critical role of professional legal training and media literacy in preserving the impartiality of judicial decision-making and suggest a need for continued education in reasoning and media literacy among legal professionals.

4.2 Discussion – Emotional Predictors of Verdicts

This study was intended to fill this gap in the literature by testing how much decision-making bias could be predicted by emotional states when content-specific emotions were used and by more than a mere correlation between the emotional reactions and the judicial decision outcome and a binary logistic regression analysis was conducted to test the overall predictive power of the measurements (fear, anger, disgust, sadness, shock, helplessness).

I wanted to see if these affective responses to becoming involved in these hypothetical pre-trial situations might have some predictive value in associating participants' guilt propensity. The only significant emotional predictor of a guilty verdict found in the regression was fear

Respondents, who were less fearful in response to the legal vignette, were therefore more likely to vote for acquittal as opposed to conviction. This result is consistent with theories of fundamental psychological motives, which conceive of fear as a basic adaptive emotion that serves defense functions by reacting to threat or uncertainty quickly. This fear-based emotion can have a biasing influence in legal judgment, by encouraging a response of punishment (e.g., a guilty finding) in order to restore social and moral order. In contrast, the remaining emotions—anger, disgust, sadness, shock and helplessness—did not significantly correlate with verdicts. These same sensations of guilt were felt by eyewitness and self-reported, yet they did not affect one responsible or not for finding guilty or not. Does one infer from this that the emotions of law are not all equally strong? And fear is a standout; of all the emotions we've witnessed, it has emerged as the one most likely to have the legs to turn an emotional moment into a measurable legal response. The theoretical and practical significance of this finding are apparent. The finding, at a theoretical level, also contributes to a growing corpus of literature that has highlighted the need to take into account emotion, in particular fear, in how people think about risk and how they make moral judgments. In legal psychology, this indicates that feelings or emotions are not automated byproducts of mental life but are instead a dimension of the cognitive construction of legal reasoning, especially when there is much to be determined or the issues are morally complex. Pragmatically, the discriminatory power of fear implies a problem in the legal system. Even those, such as lawyers, judges, and others well educated (law students, colleagues, and the participants in this study) can be, and are, still profoundly affected by their own safety-based experiences in the interpretation and decisions of law in the United States. This is a valid fear to have for the impartiality of verdicts in super-charged trials in general, and trials involving graphic evidence, intense media scrutiny, and public pressure in particular. Returning to the findings and the interpretation of there being an association between fear and verdict that is partly confounded with a priori judicial attitudes as already argued, I think that our study demonstrates the selective power of fear as a justice arbiter and, therefore, suggests educational and institutional man oeuvres to control such a potentially blinding effect.

To achieve more fair and just justice, we need to acknowledge that even in areas where rationalized legal reasoning predominates, emotion, particularly the fear, has a role in and there has a silent but powerful hand.

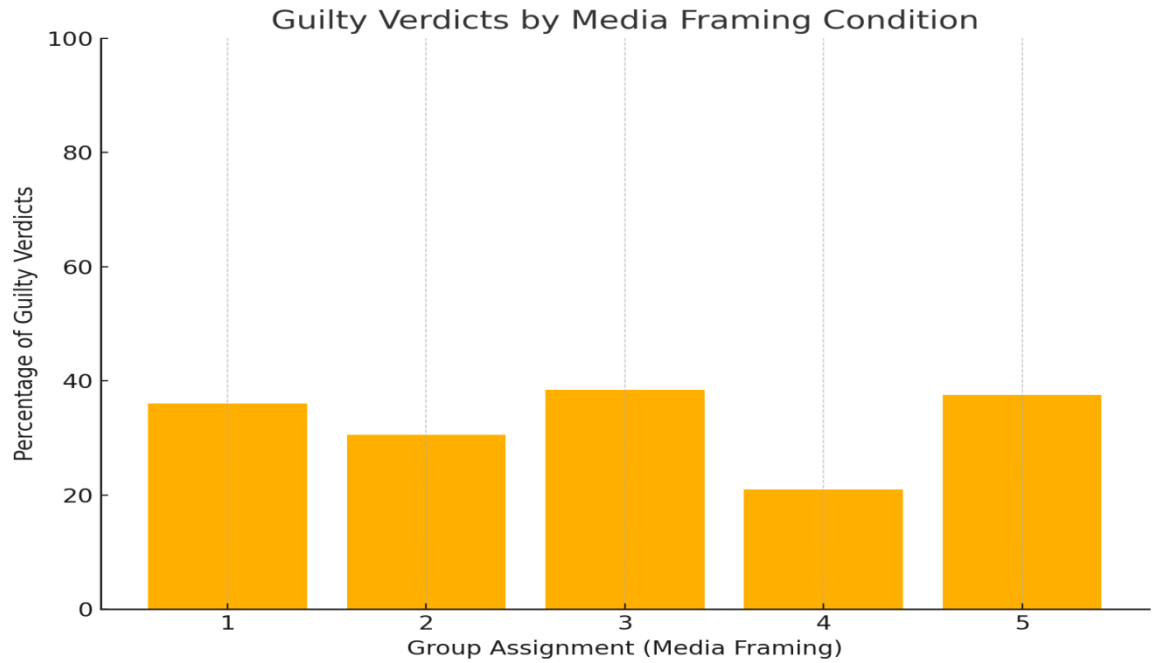


Figure 1: Rate of Guilty Verdicts as Function of Media Framing Condition. In this bar chart, we can observe the differences in the percentage of guilty verdicts between the five experimental media conditions

4.3 Emotional Response and Cognitive Processing

Comparing participants' self-reported emotional reactions, we find substantial variations among the four media framing conditions. Valence was measured on a 7-point Likert scale, and six key emotions were rated on these scales: Anger Fear Sadness Disgust Shock Sympathy These reactions were reported immediately following respondents' exposure to one of two case scenarios that was paired with a media story presented in a neutral, positive, negative, sensational, or mixed tone.

Emotional Effects by Framing Type

Emotional intensity was rated by the participants at 7-point scales and included anger, fear, sadness, disgust, shock, sympathy. These were administered immediately after reading the information about the first one of the two media reports on which two case scenarios (in accordance with one of five media narratives: neutral, positive, negative, tabloid, and mixed) were based. By contrast, respondents in the positive narrative condition, which involved qualifying contextual information or humanizing depictions of the defendant, reported higher levels of sympathy and sadness. These stories seemed to prompt more compassionate or reflective states of emotion, and illustrate how different framings may produce different emotional profiles, which can influence the way in which the evidence is made sense of, and the immorality of a defendant evaluated.

Shock and Confidence as Cognitive Outcomes

Of all types of emotions studied, shock was a significant predictor of confidence in legal judgment. The result of regression analysis demonstrated that the confidence score was significantly associated with shock ($\beta = 0.072$, $p = .012$), so that increased (surprise or moral outrage) emotional arousal can lead to "overconfidence" in the guilt of the accused no matter how certain it is that factual guilt has been established..

Instrumental Design and Its Role in Interpretation

These results are corroborated by the design of Section B of the questionnaire, where respondents were exposed to two meticulously constructed fictitious legal case scenarios – Federal Republic v. Dawit Bekele and Federal Republic v. Almaz Kassa. All cases were constructed as to replicate common processes in actual legal practice in the Ethiopian context influenced by pretrial media coverage. After each situation, participants were prompted to:

- Reach a verdict—“Guilty” or “Not Guilty,” and
- Rate on a 7-point Likert scale their confidence in that verdict.

The binary judgment variable reflected a direct outcome of the legal decision and the confidence rating was assumed to indicate the participants’ cognitive certainty. These two outcome measures provided the opportunity to explore in a more subtle way how affective states that are affected by media tone shape the surface content and the deep level of legal decisions.

Conclusion Overall, the findings of this section indicate that the valence in which the media frames introduces a measurable influence on emotional intensity and judicial confidence. Angry/shocking or negative/sensational framing shifts attention to anger and shock, through positive framing attention is directed toward sympathy and sadness. The substantial role of shock in confidence, finally, emphasizes the impact on cognition of emotional arousal, with important implications for judicial and media training. The implications of these findings are that pretrial publicity may bias decisions not only in terms of the information content of publicity, but also in terms of its emotional tone, effecting conceptions of how justice should be perceived or enacted

4.4 Memory Recall and Perceived Media Influence

There was the highest memory on average for those in the neutral and positive framing groups. In response, individuals exposed to negative or sensational content remembered emotionally salient, but incorrect, information -a pattern that fits with previous findings on affective misinformation effects. Even though 75 percent of those surveyed agreed that media exposure had an effect on their choices, 60 percent reported high levels of confidence about their own objectivity. The discordance is indicative of a cognitive self-other discrepancy, where individuals acknowledge vulnerability in others but not in themselves. These results underscore the need to cultivate metacognitive awareness and integrate media literacy training in legal and

civic education. This might further enable people to engage critically with content in the media and avoid being unduly swayed by biases in judgment under high-stakes decision-making scenarios.

Chapter Five: Summary .Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter integrates results from the experimental research with the literature, theory and real-world applications. The Interpretation is given on the result is based on the Ethiopian legal system is taken into account the increasingly defining the media in adjudication.

5.1 Comparison with the work in the literature

The results are quite congruent with international studies including Kovera 2012 and Steblay et al. 1999 how the media framing and emotional tone shape judicial decisions. Emotionally laden media content erodes procedural fairness and impartiality consistent with previous research. However, this research uniquely adds by focusing on the media's up- or downstream impact on legal persons whose sides have been trained in a transition justice environment. Unlike the traditional jury-system-oriented Western research, this research contributes to identifiable or soothed law profession, as it evokes a picture of the current and past legal professional judges benefitting, something that is most likely to repeat in adversarial context.

5.2 Theoretical implications

The phenomenon of sighted control overconfidence is one further piece of evidence for affect heuristic theory: a judgment that is based on “feeling” rather than rational analytic processing – something that would be expected to be more frequently found within the transition legal environment with its mix of moving embedded trust and emergent legal formalism.

1. Judicial Training and Continuing Legal Education

In conclusion, I suggest that establishing psychology- and cognitive-specific modules as an integral part of judges, prosecutors, and other legal practitioners' training programs would be instrumental in maintaining and strengthening judicial decision-making. Specifically, the proposed modules concerning media psychology and emotional framing could enhance legal practitioners' abilities to assess the media impact on shaping public opinion and the unconscious biases influencing their decisions due to distinct media narratives. Moreover, debasing strategies along with cognitive deviation recognition mechanisms as well as reflective judgment tools may help legal practitioners identify and neutralize their bias automatically. Therefore, incorporation

of the suggested components into law school curricula and other training programs would promote metacognition and more independent and rational legal judgment in the future.

2. Strengthened Media Regulation

As sensational or negative news reports can affect public perceptions of the fairness of the judiciary, regulatory institutions like the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority and the Ministry of Justice should be more active in implementing and enforcing media oversight. These institutions shall promulgate strict ethical codes for reporting the unfolding of legal cases that media provide objective, balanced and affective free, fact-driven coverage that don't direct public opinion in any form or interfere with the ongoing legal process on the basis of inflammatory adjective and adverb rich writings. Finally, there must be clear and enforceable penalties for media institutions that fail to adhere to these reporting standards, particularly with respect to criminal proceeding where premature or biased reporting may prejudice justice. The imperative to regulate the media thus in this way is that it is the only way to ensure the integrity of the legal process and the principle of fair justice.

3. Procedural Reforms in Trial Protocols

In the light of publicity and the need for the fair trial, therefore, trial judges can put in procedural safeguards to protect the rights of accused person that there will not be any external impact over the trial. One such mechanism might be to declare temporary blackouts on reporting at certain points in the process that would stop the specific kinds of prejudicial material from informing the judiciary and the public. Lawyers, judges and prosecutors should be an option in cases of particular notoriety when legally available to further minimize the impact of media scrutiny on the decision-makers. Additionally, the use of delayed publishing or enforced publication of the short-prior- and mid-trial reports ought to be enhanced. Such measures will serve to reduce external influence on trial, and facilitate judicial judgment as per truth and law.

4. Public Awareness and Media Literacy Campaigns

Comprehensive public education campaigns are needed to reduce the cognitive self-other bias demonstrated in the current study— the tendency for people to believe others are more susceptible than themselves to media influence. Such efforts need to sensitive the populace of subtle influence of media framing on public perception. It is however crucial that all citizens are provided with the media literacy tools required to critically interpret legal news, rather than having the information fed to them in an emotional one dimensional manner. Work with schools, universities, and civil society partners will be crucial for sharing accessible, contextually appropriate educational materials in multiple languages. By allowing citizens to understand and defend themselves against manipulative content, initiatives like these help foster an informed and critical society, and thus contribute to ensuring the impartiality of the judiciary and enhancing popular trust in law.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

While findings are robust, certain methodological constraints must be acknowledged:

- **Use of Fictional Scenarios:** Simulated cases may lack the full emotional complexity of actual judicial processes, potentially limiting ecological validity.
- **Self-report Bias:** Reliance on self-reported emotional reactions and media influence introduces susceptibility to social desirability and introspective inaccuracies.
- **Generalizability Constraints:** The sample, predominantly urban legal professionals, may not reflect broader lay, rural, or culturally diverse populations within Ethiopia.

These limitations suggest cautious interpretation of results, although they provide a valuable empirical foundation for further research.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

To deepen insights into media effects on judicial processes, subsequent research should explore:

- **Longitudinal Studies:** Assessing sustained impacts of media exposure on judicial decision-making over time.
- **Qualitative Approaches:** Utilizing in-depth interviews or focus groups to explore nuanced perceptions of media influence and judicial ethics.
- **Cross-cultural Comparisons:** Examining media-legal interactions within diverse transitional and hybrid judicial systems.
- **Inclusive Sampling:** Expanding samples to incorporate laypersons, rural populations, and vulnerable demographic groups to enhance generalizability and inclusivity.

These research avenues promise a richer, comprehensive understanding of PTP dynamics across diverse judicial landscapes.

I gained insights through this study about the psycho-social influence of PTP on legal decision-making in Ethiopia using a controlled, experimental design. Both legal professionals and laypeople were exposed to various media frames of a simulated criminal case. The experiment examined the effects of different media frames on verdicts, confidence, emotions, memory recall, and expectancies for media influence. Built upon dual-process cognitive theories, this study aimed at narrowing the empirical void of media effects information in transitional justice systems,

5.5 Major Findings

The analysis revealed several critical findings regarding the influence of pretrial publicity (PTP)—especially negative and sensational media framing—on legal decision-making processes among professionals in the Ethiopian justice system. These findings have direct implications for the integrity of judicial reasoning under conditions of media exposure.

1. Influence of Media Framing on Verdicts

- Participants exposed to negative or sensational media narratives were significantly more likely to render guilty verdicts compared to those in neutral or positively framed conditions.

- This demonstrates that the emotional tone of media content can bias evaluative judgments, even when the factual information remains constant across conditions.

2. Emotional Responses and Confidence

- Emotional reactions—particularly anger, disgust, and shock—were strongly associated with increased confidence in legal judgments.
- However, this heightened confidence did not correlate with better factual memory, suggesting an emotional overconfidence effect driven by affective arousal rather than analytical reasoning.

3. Memory Distortion under Emotional Conditions

- Subjects who joined emotional media groups displayed extreme evidence of altered memories, given that they misremembered events that were not true, but were extremely emotionally salient.
- This affective misinformation effect suggests that emotionally framed narratives disrupt accurate cognitive encoding and recall, substituting rational analysis with emotionally influenced recollections.

4. Perceived Media Influence

- While some participants acknowledged the role of media in shaping public perceptions of guilt, many were unaware of its subtle influence on their own reasoning.
- This indicates a meta-cognitive blind spot, where legal professionals recognize societal media bias but underestimate their personal vulnerability to it.

5. Legal Professionals and Susceptibility to Bias

- Although legal professionals demonstrated greater resistance to PTP effects than lay participants (as shown in earlier research), they were not immune.
- Even trained legal actors were influenced by emotionally charged narratives, reflecting a psychological vulnerability that persists despite legal expertise.

5.6 Summary of Findings

Pretrial publicity, particularly if cast in a negative or sensational light, influences legal decision-making by:

- A growing number of emotionally driven narratives leading to guilty verdicts,
- Building confidence on the basis of emotions to a greater degree than facts,
- Compromising memory retrieval and leading to misinformation,
- Regarding trained attorneys despite their expertise. These results speak to the risk of affective priming and biased recall in legal settings and underscore the crucial requirement of legal safeguards on media reportage in transition justice legal systems like that of Ethiopia.

5.7 Contributions to the Field

The contributions of this study are the followings:

- **Psychology and Law:** Provides empirical based evidence on the significance of emotional and cognitive processes in the formation of legal judgment in the judiciary in Ethiopia.
- **Mass Communication and Community:** Emphasizes the effect of media presentation and sensationalism on both public and professional ideas about justice.
- **Policy and Law:** Offers policy recommendations for judicial reform and media control which can help reduce the disadvantages surrounding PTP and protect procedural justice.

5.8 Implications for Court Decision-Making

In light of the evidence that PTP is occurring this study highlights the need for immediate policy and educational responses including:

- Training in the recognition of media bias and its control for judges, prosecutors and legal attorney.

- Return to court-reporting guidelines that require coverage of all trials and impose press blackout orders for certain sensitive or high-profile cases.
- Public communication campaigns encouraging media literacy and critical engagement to build resilience against implicit biases. These steps will fortify judicial independence

5.9 Conclusion and Final Remarks

It is my conclusion that this study has established that either emotional and/or negative PTP affects the well of due process and the administration of justice. And indeed, there is empirical evidence that trained legal minds who are supposed to engage in dispassionate and rational reasoning have a blind spot to the more subtle, but equally strong, perhaps more powerful, effect of heated media volleys. This lapse in whatever amount of critical thinking they possess leads to memory distortion, overconfident verdicts, and an outsize impact that is nothing short of a threat to the foundational values of due process and judicial neutrality. Such considerations are particularly relevant to the Ethiopian context, which is still in the crucial and unstable phase of post conflict transition in which PTP also levels its importance. in the Ethiopian courts. The country is also marked by the ongoing information revolution in which digital and citizen journalism has established itself as an outlet for pre-trial information, capable of spreading unchecked emotional information. Without proper safeguards, such exposure may easily bias the opinion of the public and the verdicts of the jury. More importantly, the damage of cognitive and affective bias can lead to the dismantling of judicial authority. In new democracies, an independent judiciary that is seen and trusted as such is not just a condition but also a foundation of democracy.

5.10 Recommendations

The findings of this study reveal that emotionally charged and negatively framed pretrial publicity (PTP) can significantly compromise legal objectivity, even among trained legal professionals. In light of Ethiopia's evolving legal framework, transitional justice process, and increasingly influential media environment, the following comprehensive and actionable recommendations are proposed to safeguard judicial impartiality and reinforce public confidence in the legal system:

1. Integrate Media Literacy into Legal and Judicial Education

Ethiopia's legal education system has to update its syllabuses to address the new challenges of digital and broadcast media. Media literacy courses (dealing with how the framing, emotions, salience and misinformation are used to persuade) that should be a part of the curriculum in law faculty, judicial academies, and professional training institutions need to be made mandatory. These modules would contain Ethiopian and other transitory legal system case studies to show practical implications of media prejudice on trials. Legal training institution should be working, in partnership with communications professionals, to create interdisciplinary courses bridging legal reasoning with media analysis and critical thinking.

2. Institutionalize Cognitive Bias and Emotional Regulation Training

Resilience against unconscious bias is crucial to maintain legal neutrality. This includes Ethiopia's continuing legal education (CLE) curriculum mandatory bias-awareness and emotional-regulation trainings for judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys. Training should rely on psychological theories such as those posited by dual-process models (system 1 vs. system 2 reasoning) to better orient legal actors to when they are acting intuitively, emotionally, rather than based on judgment supported by evidence. Modules ought to incorporate interactive exercises (e.g. mock trials in the context of the media) to reflect the real-life cognitive stressors.

3. Develop and Enforce Judicial Guidelines on Media Exposure

To safeguard judicial neutrality, the judicial system in Ethiopia must introduce formal guidelines for managing media-related challenges in high-profile cases. Federal Supreme Court Council or Judicial Administration Council rules governing responsible media consumption and disclosure of exposure should be developed and circulated to all court stakeholders. Judges should be urged to recuse themselves, or request peer review, if they think media attention has biased their judgment. Courts may also offer judges pretrial orders letting them know to stay away from news coverage of the case.

4. Strengthen Legal Safeguards against Prejudicial Publicity

Regulatory thought-frames have to catch up to the digital virality and information being thrown around unchecked.

Consider about allowing judges to issue short or long-term media embargoes in special cases to ensure fairness while not completely blocking off press free speech. Increase the use of contempt of court laws to punish media organizations or individuals who consciously publish prejudicial material that could influence the result of a trial.

5. Launch National Media Ethics and Public Awareness Campaigns

Long-term protections of legality involve the encouragement of a “journalistic culture that respects the law, as well as the responsible use of available information.” Collaborate with the Ethiopian Media Authority, journalist unions, and civil-society counterparts to create and disseminate ethical reporting guidelines on monitoring ongoing legal cases. Launch and implement public media literacy campaigns -- via radio, television, and social media and in schools -- to educate people on how media framing distorts truth and justice. Urge newsrooms to have legal affairs editors and offer in-house training courses for responsible legal reporting.

6. Foster Inter-Institutional Collaboration and Oversight

No institution can oversee the law-media collision by itself. By all means such a drive is needed. Establish a multi-sectorial task force including the judiciary, MoJ, the Ethiopian Media Authority and academic institutions to monitor and address issues of PTP on regular basis. Create monitoring and feedback systems to identify and counteract any media coverage that imperils a fair trial or judicial independence. Facilitate regional and woreda-level courts in discussing platform where events or trends which threaten local media or justice practices can be recorded and met with response..

7. Promote Ongoing Empirical Research on Media and Law

For reforming the media within evidence-based legal approach, sustained empirical research on the influence of media on judicial process in Ethiopia shall be emphasized. Public and private

universities are urged to create focused research clusters or centers on media, justice, and behavioral law. Such centers may have an important role in generating local evidence and guiding policy. It is also important to secure funding from governments and international donors to conduct longitudinal studies of media impact in perhaps Ethiopia's varied legal landscape—urban and rural courts, federal and regional jurisdictions. Partnerships with international academic institutions would also allow comparative work to assist Ethiopia in comparing its legal-media interface to other countries embarking on transitional justice reform.

8. Pilot Specialized “Media-Sensitive” Courtrooms or Trial Procedures

Test media-sensitive courts or special chambers for cases expected to generate heavy media attention, in which procedural rules expressly concern themselves with media exposure. These courtrooms shall have limited press access, additional protections for the anonymity of witnesses and defendants and psychological support for judges subjected to public pressure. Assessment of these pilots may also guide nationwide reforms and contribute to balancing transparency against trial fairness.

Conclusion of Recommendations

It will take will and coordination, both required to have judicial credibility, wrongful convictions, and rule-of-law. Ethiopia has an opportunity to establish a justice system that is procedurally fair as well as cognitively and culturally resilient in a rapidly changing environment for media. The time to act is now

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Appendices

1: Pretrial Publicity Questionnaire).English Version

Judicial Decision-Making Questionnaire Based on Pretrial Publicity

Section A: Demographic Information

1. **Age:** _____
2. **Gender:** ☐ Male ☐ Female
3. **Professional Background:**
☐ Judge ☐ Prosecutor ☐ Criminal Investigator
☐ Final-Year Law Student ☐ Early-Career Legal Professional
4. **Years of Experience:**
☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1–3 years ☐ 4–6 years ☐ More than 6 years
5. **Frequency of Legal/Crime Media Consumption:**
☐ Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely
6. **Preferred Media Platforms:**
☐ Television ☐ Radio ☐ Newspaper ☐ Facebook ☐ YouTube ☐ TikTok ☐ Other:

Section B: Case Scenarios and Pretrial Publicity Exposure

Case 1: Public Prosecutor vs. Dawit Bekele

Dawit Bekele, a 33-year-old civil engineer, is accused of murdering his partner, Samrawit Tadesse. The case gained national attention following the release of leaked audio recordings, heated public debates, and a viral TikTok-style clip. You were shown a media portrayal framed from a particular angle. Answer the following based on your impression.

7. What is your individual verdict? ☐ Guilty ☐ Not Guilty ☐ Not Sure
8. What do you believe would be the judge's verdict? ☐ Guilty ☐ Not Guilty ☐ Not Sure
9. How confident are you in your verdict? (1 = Not confident, 7 = Very confident):
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7
10. Estimated Judge's deliberation time (.....): _____

Case 2: Public Prosecutor vs. Almaz Kassa

Almaz Kassa, a 26-year-old nanny, is accused of murdering two children in her care Kalkidan Ayele (4) and Menenet Ayele (6). The case provoked strong emotional reactions after CCTV footage and commentary were shared widely, especially on social media. You were exposed to a media narrative shaped from one framing perspective.

11. What is your individual verdict? ☐ Guilty ☐ Not Guilty ☐ Not Sure
12. What do you believe would be the judge's verdict? ☐ Guilty ☐ Not Guilty ☐ Not Sure
13. How confident are you in your verdict? (1 = Not confident, 7 = Very confident):
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7
14. Estimated jury deliberation time (in hours): _____

Section C: Memory Recall and Comprehension

15. What was the primary charge in each case?
16. What specific evidence do you recall from the media coverage?
17. Were any eyewitnesses mentioned? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
18. Was a motive discussed? If yes, summarize briefly:

19. What type of media tone was used in the coverage?

☐ Neutral ☐ Negative ☐ Positive ☐ Mixed ☐ Sensational

Section D: Emotional and Cognitive Impact

Rate how strongly you experienced the following emotions (1 = None, 7 = Strong):

- **Anger:** ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7
- **Sympathy:** ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7
- **Fear:** ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7
- **Disgust:** ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7
- **Sadness:** ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7
- **Shock:** ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7
- **Helplessness:** ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7
- **Confidence in the Justice System:** ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7

Section E: Reflection on Media Influence and Legal Fairness

21. To what extent did the media content influence your personal verdict?

☐ 1 (Not at all) ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 (Extremely)

22. Should media coverage be restricted before a trial begins?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

23. Should judges receive formal training on how to resist media bias?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

24. What measures would you recommend to reduce the influence of pretrial publicity?