

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY STUDIES



A COMPARATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF
PRO- GOVERNMENT AND PRO-TPLF SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISM IN THE CONTEXT
OF ETHIOPIA'S 2020-2022 CIVIL WAR

BY – ERMIAS GETACHEW

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASF-	Amhara Regional Special Force
CoHA-	Cessation of hostility agreement
CRSV-	Conflict-Related Sexual Violence
EHRC-	Ethiopia Human Right Commission
ENDF-	Ethiopian national defense force
EDF-	Eritrean Defense Forces
EPRDF-	Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front
GERD-	Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
GLEAN-	Global Ethiopian Advocacy Nexus
HoF-	House of federation
HoPR-	House of peoples' representatives
ICT-	Information communication Technology
IDPs-	Internally displaced persons
JIT-	Joint Investigation Team
NEBE-	National Electoral Board of Ethiopia
OFAC -	Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control
MSF-	Medicines sans Frontiers'/Doctors without Borders /
OCHA -	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR-	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OLF-	Oromo liberation front
R2P-	Responsibility to protect
SM-	Social media
SNS-	Social Networks
SOE-	State of emergency
SWT-	Stand with Tigray
TDF-	Tigray Defense Forces
TMH-	Tigray Media House
TPLF-	Tigray peoples liberation front
TSF-	Tigray Special Forces

UNOCHA- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

VOA- Voice of America

WHO- World Health Organization

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Abstract

This thesis is a comparative content analysis of Pro- government and Pro- TPLF activists during the war and after the signing of the Agreement on Permanent Cessation of Hostilities, also known as the Pretoria Agreement, in the context of the 2020-2022 Ethiopian civil war. The study argues that unlike the military confrontation in the ground, those Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists played major role in amplifying and exacerbating the war through the social media warfare. It further argues that the involvement of different actors behind each Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists makes the technological warfare and weaponization trend of social network more complicated and dangerous to sustained peace. The study concludes based on the findings that greater efforts are needed to ensure new mechanisms to understand the nature, role, and dynamics of social media warfare. Therefore, media literacy work and professional engagement in this field has to be seriously considered.

Key words- Activism, Manipulation, Social media warfare

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Digital activism has also flourished as a new phenomenon with in the development and complex nature of social media. Thus, it is defined as “Political conduct aiming for reform or revolution by non-state actors and new socio-political formations such as social movements, protest organizations and individuals and groups from civil society, that is by social actors outside government and corporate influence” (Karatzogianni, 2015, p. 1).

The researcher underlines the interaction and relation between social media activism and wartime activism during the Ethiopia’s 2020-2022 Civil war as well as post Pretoria agreement also known as Cessation of Hostilities Agreement(CoHA) which signed on November 2022.

Social media is the media we use to be social. However; it involves other related connotations as well. Social media is individuals’ activity and practice on media that enables sharing. (Safko& Brake, 2010)

Social media is a subset of Web 2.0 technologies, which include all online social networks, weblogs, and wikis. However, Twitter and Facebook have become synonymous with Web 2.0 (O’Reilly, 2005).These technologies are centered on the concept of user-generated content, online collaboration, information sharing, and collective intelligence (Davidson &Yoran, 2007; O’Reilly, 2005).

In February 2020, The World Health Organization (WHO) already warned of the danger of an “infodemic,” i.e., the overabundance of information about the topic. This relates to the question whether the information is accurate and truthful or false or confusing-which makes it difficult for people to find trustworthy sources (World Health Organization, 2020). Unlike the health issue, social media information plays vital role during as well as

after Ethiopia's 2020-2022 Civil War. Since, both Pro-Government and Pro-TPLF activists use the social media information along with many information manipulation techniques.

Social media platforms have become key spaces for activism given the profound mediatization of all human activities (Couldry; Hepp, 2022). This trend has been further exacerbated by the isolation measures of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to a large part of the population shifting their information consumption habits to social media (Newman, 2022).

The real development in social media platforms came with Friendster in 2002, which was followed by LinkedIn and MySpace in 2003, Facebook in 2004, YouTube in 2005, Twitter in 2006, Tumblr in 2006, Sina Weibo in 2009, and the launch of Pinterest and Instagram in 2010. The rapid explosion of social media has transformed the world and has been a catalyst for social change (Baird &Parasnis, 2013).

Today, at any act of citizen protest or demonstration, a tide of mobile devices can be seen capturing the moment and broadcasting it, often live, through their Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube, Telegram or WhatsApp group profiles.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Pro-Government and Pro-TPLF activists' plays role on amplifying and exacerbating the civil war between Federal government and TPLF(2020-2022). However, their role understudied and this research aims to fill this knowledge gap.

Digital activism was influential in Ethiopian politics for the first time during the lead up to the 2005 elections. The unprecedented opening of the political space at this time led to a surge in voting for the opposition that threatened the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front's (EPRDF) grip on power. The government responded with a crackdown on opposition and mass arrests in the post-election period (Abbink, 2021).

During this period prior to the rise of modern social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, Ethiopian bloggers became influential. They managed to stir pro-democracy and anti-government sentiments despite the fact that Internet penetration was just 0.22 percent and mobile phone penetration stood at 0.55 percent. (Gagliardone & Pohjonen, 2016, p. 26.)

Unlike the protest wave Ethiopia's 2020-2022 Civil war has experienced wide usage of social networking sites to manipulation and propagate the position and interest of the warring parties. Besides, social media activism amplifies the conflict in many aspects during the wartime as well as post wartime.

The social media network-“twitter” was the main ‘information battle ground’; competing information campaign emerged to frame the war for English language twitter. On one side, Tigrayans and their allies used twitter to engage in online activism and to share information about events taking place in the region. In reaction to this movement, the Ethiopian government and its supporters launched counter information campaigns to discredit Tigrayans activists, framing the violence as fabricated, exaggerated or caused by the TPLF. (Wilmot Clair, Ellen Tveteraas and Alex drew, 2021).

Therefore, this thesis aims to investigate the nexus between various social media influencing and Pro- government and Pro-TPLF social media activists have used manipulation techniques during the war and post Pretoria agreement or Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA).

1.3. Objective of the study

1.3.1. General objective

The general objective of this research focus on conducting a comparative content analysis of social media activism of the Pro- government and Pro- TPLF activists during the war and after the signing of the peace Agreement.

1.3.2. Specific objectives

Specifically, the research intends to:-

- Investigates how the social media platform and activists serve in mobilizing Ethiopians during the war and post-war periods
- Examine the nexus between positive or negative contribution of social media activism during the war time and post war time
- Assess different information manipulation techniques of social media activists during wartime and after.
- Analyze the impact of specific social media platform usage during war and peace situation
- Examine the contribution of Pro- government and Pro-TPLF activists for the peaceful activities of a society or lack thereof.
- Analyzing each twitter contents by content analysis method to understand the motives and meanings.

1.4. Research questions

Generally, the study attempted to answer the following basic and specific questions

1. What technique do activists use to mobilize their followers during and after war
2. What is the link between social media activism during the wartime and post Pretoria agreement of the war between Ethiopian government and TPLF?
3. What are the specific ways and means through which Pro-government and TPLF activists use to manipulate information?
4. What are the impacts of using specific social media platform during and after the war situation?
5. What are the general contributions or impact of those activists on the process of war as well as peace agreement between the two conflicting parties?

1.5. Scope of the study

The thesis being explicit that the focus is on social media activism during and after the war (the Pretoria Agreement).the temporal reference of the research content analysis lies between the war time to Pretoria agreement (between 2020- 2022)

The time line of the study has two phase of analysis. I.e. phase one during the wartime and phase two post- Pretoria peace agreement.

In phase one –the study focuses on twenty four months archive tweets which those selected activists write on; the second phase also focuses analysis of six month tweets which those selected activists tweets after the Pretoria agreement was signed. Thus, the study critically analyzes a two- year data.

Based on the spatial and temporal scope, the thesis analyzes only twitter social media posts,- since twitter allows archive tweets along with exact time and date line than other social media sites. Therefore the researcher limited its data analysis towards twitter social media platform only.

According to stat counter Global stats 2021 report After the war erupted on November 4, 2020 onwards there were high Twitter social media usage and new accounts with in eight months .As a result this case study focuses on six prominent ‘Pro-TPLF’ and ‘Pro-government’ social media(SM) activists, who uses twitter and have many followers on it. (See figure 1)

The study is also limited in data collection and analysis time frame between November 4, 2020 to November 4, 2022 only. The time frame indicates the wartime activism as well as post war situation or after Pretoria agreement (CoHA) signed.

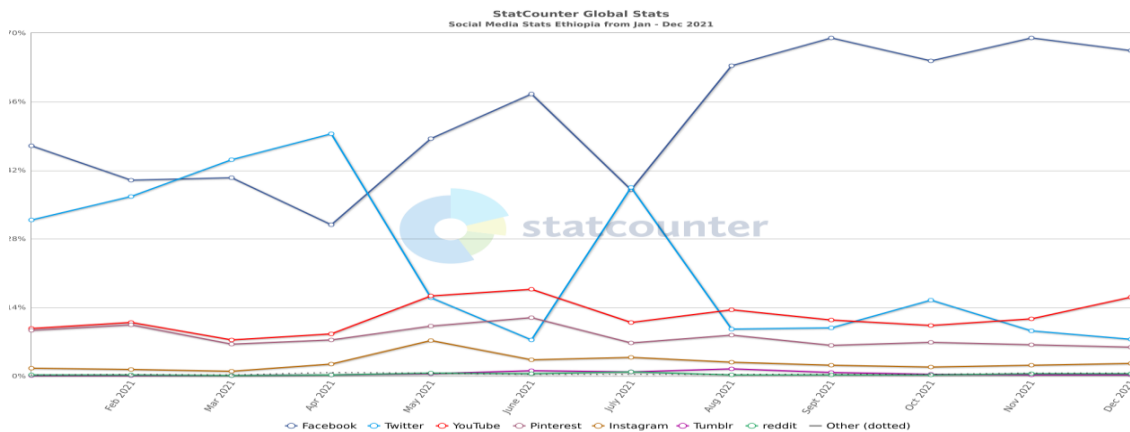


Figure 1. Social media stats Ethiopia from Jan-Dec 2021

1.6. Significance and implication of the study

The researcher believes a link between Pro- government and Pro-TPLF activist's role on amplifying and exacerbating during the 2020-2022 civil war contexts is understudied and there is a knowledge gap in the area.

As a result this thesis attempts to fill a gap in academic literature by analyzing and comparing the contents of social media, the different techniques used by activists, and the impact inflict on during and post war situations. Furthermore the research serves as an academic contribution with new conceptual knowledge.

This study will add to the body of knowledge on social media activism and conflict/peace studies, and will be an important resource to anyone seeking to explore the dynamics to the concept of activism through social media.

Furthermore, this thesis could be used for academic studies, data analysis, and explanation to the situation, further explorations, policy formulation, and other purposes. Thus, one of the intentions of this research is to contribute to a better understanding of what the role of social media during the war and post wartime.

It can also help readers in determining how and why social media is influential as a tool for modern day activists especially in the case of Ethiopian government and TPLF war and peace situations.

1.7. Limitation of the study

Because of the alignment change and other personal reasons, some of the important previous twitted data from selected activists' were deleted, hide or use other technique which enables to retrieve.

On the other hand, the difficulties to analyze the audio video data are whether genuine or AI generated, is the main limitation to the thesis. Since, some of such data are requires very sophisticated software to analyze and which the researcher unable to find on.

1.8. Organization of the Study

The research is organized into five chapters. Chapter one deals with the introductory section that includes the background, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, Scope/delimitation, significance and limitations as well as organizational structure of the thesis.

The second chapter deals with the review of related literature in the area of social media activism, especially the contribution of activism during wartime and peaceful situations, which are relevant to the researcher's study. In this section theoretical and conceptual frameworks regarding peace and security are included.

The third chapter covers the research methodology and design, which are applied to conduct the study. The fourth and most significant chapter examines the data presentation and analysis of the research, as well as the study's findings. Finally, chapter five presents the research's conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Conceptualizing social media

2.1.1. Defining social media

Based on the modern picture of politics, social media can be taken as an instrument of public opinion formation employing three foundational attributes of public sphere dimensions. The three dimensions are 1) Structural, 2) Symbolic and 3) Interactional. The three dimensions imply that social media are social engineering tools where information freely flows; signs and symbols are codified in a two-way communication (Brenne, 2016: 271).

This seems a basic line to justify that social media have rational regulatory mechanisms on the free access and free communication of information. As the public sphere individuals make subjective course of communication considering that individuals are not only privileged for their rights, but also respecting others as an obligation, too. So in this regard one may claim that social media give both freedom and responsibility as center of deliberative communication. [ibid]

Scholars contest on the exact history of the social media. Marrouat (2013) argues that social media is as old as CompuServe in 1969. However, other scholars site the history of social networking with the advent of Six Degrees back in 1997 (Boyd and Ellison, 2010). Auspiciously, since then hundreds of social media networks have shown themselves and still popping up with new choices and applications.

The Internet during its infant stages in 1969 was not intended for civilian use, it was meant for military. Heavy hardware and through programming language restricted it to be used only by technology enthusiasts. It was only because of what Apple, Microsoft and IBM did the computer finally reaches civilian homes through personal computers and the wonder of Internet became widely accessible. (Pereira, R., & Pereira, E. G, 2015).

Social media is a fragment but an important one, in this vast world of the Internet. It is any website or an application that allows its users to interact and share information or messages with each other. [ibid]

Social media is the media we use to be social. However; it involves other related connotations as well. Social media is individuals' activity and practice on media that enables sharing. (Safko& Brake, 2009)

Social media are effective for conveying any message to a given public, whether it is from a corporation, a public figure, or a government. (Harris, 2013, p. 18) Social media help the society, government officials, non-government officials and others to share what they have, to get information and to interact each other.

As per the New Media Institute, new media is defined as “a catchall term used to define all that is related to the Internet and the interplay between technology, images and sound.”(Cote, 2020)

Generally speaking Social media is a difficult concept to define with a couple of words alone as different scholars forward diverse views. Simply put, however, it is not merely this. It involves other related connotations as well. Social media is individuals' activity and practice on media that enables sharing. This includes the cultural product and the relationship among the users. In defense of this, Howard and Parks (2012) define that social media consists of tools, contents and those that produce and consume the digital content. As a result, social media is not merely application or social networks, but the interconnected entities that are to produce and consume and the related characteristics.

2.1.2. Importance of social media

The 2010s saw a key transformation for online citizenship communication: the shift from digital social networks (SNSs) to social media platforms (Helmond, 2015), something that reflects, for example, the strong presence of the label social media within the

academic discourse around digital activism from 2010 onwards compared to previous terms (Neumayer,C; Rossi, 2016).

Social media sites enable users to freely share and interact with others at a very limited cost. By using these platforms people communicate their views and ideas and also they share news, views and opinions' with one another. Social Media offers a communication platform without gatekeepers, censoring, or monitoring for quality, so not only individual users can produce contents but also social groups, organizations, and parties also use it effectively. [ibid]

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) in their widely cited journal classified social media in six broad types; collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia), blogs and micro blogs (e.g. Twitter), content communities (e.g. YouTube, slide share), social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), virtual game worlds (e.g. World of Warcraft), and virtual social world.

2.1.3. Social media's role in war and peace

Communication and its role in conflict have typically been defined in two ways. The first type is elite-level communication that includes diplomacy, tactical communication by leaders, rebel groups, and military commanders to communicate about logistics and tactics, as well as to signal intentions with allies and adversaries .(Smith and Stam, 2004).

Similarly Social media communications especially twitter is also an elite base platform, which engages different level and techniques of elites to ordinary individual's participation. (Smith and Stam, 2004)

First, social media lowers the barriers to entry for individuals and groups seeking to communicate. The use of blogs, Facebook, or Twitter to disseminate information also allows groups engaged in violence or seeking to challenge the state an alternative to mainstream media. Thus, the power of incumbents to control media may be lessened. Yet, this does not mean that social media acts as simply an alternative to the mainstream media. Many traditional media outlets are shaped and influenced by blogs and influential users. Especially during conflicts or contentious events, challengers are able to get their side of the story out to the public by seeding it in blogs and social media that are then

picked up by mainstream domestic and international media. Thus it is not that social media is an alternative to mainstream media rather its effects are indirect via its influence on media gatekeepers. This mechanism is particularly relevant to protestors and challengers in autocratic regimes, where social media provides an alternative outlet to close off media outlets. (Thomas Zeitzoff, 2021)

Second, social media increases the speed and spread of information. Information tweeted out or blogged can instantaneously be streamed across the globe and go "viral" when it is picked up by mainstream news sources. This quickening of the news cycle has several implications. Competition between various news outlets to be the first to report stories can create incentives to not fully vet information; Actors thus may have the ability to provide false and misleading information.(Jin et al. 2014).

Technology, which was only within the reach of power-elites in the past, has now become accessible to common people and civil society institutions. With the percolation of technology to middle and low income countries, especially through mobile phones, new vistas of usage are opening up offering applications far and wide. Peacebuilding can be understood as the attempts to bring about changes in attitude and behavior by promoting better interaction and inclusive discourse. (Lederach, 1997)

In such a scenario, the technological media i.e. the new media can be advantageous as it offers tools that foment collaboration, influence behaviors, and enable communities to make their voice heard (Kahl & Larrauri, 2013)

Social media can make supreme contribution in conflict situations both at the pre- and post conflict level. There remains a world of unexplored prospects vis-à-vis the social media's applicability in peace processes, necessitating further research in the arena.

The information society that the world has transpired in to largely relies upon these instruments of communication, the latest and most popular being the ubiquitous social media. Today, there is an evolving body of research with 'reconciliation at its heart and technology at its core' aimed at strengthening the process of Peacebuilding.

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Social media(SM) can make supreme contribution in conflict situations both at the pre-and post-conflict level. There remains a world of unexplored prospects vis-à-vis the social media's applicability in peace processes, necessitating further research in the arena.

It is also important to understand what war means before explaining the impact and relationship between war and social media; since Human history is full of war and violent conflict stories.

War has been waged for all purposes, including preservation of territories from attack, expansion of empires, punishment of enemies and defense of allies. Since the 19th century, the size and expense of war machines and uncertainty about the consequences of war for society, as a whole, have made violence an increasingly unsustainable means for conducting international affairs. Despite its costs and the availability of non-coercive methods of diplomacy, war has been institutionalized to handle conflict. The use of violence remains among states as an accepted instrument for the extension or protection of their power. Organized military violence is persistently used in pursuit of the social goals of domination. (Ho-Won Jeong, 2017)

2.1.4. Nexus of social media and social movements

Social media are important to movement because they provide social movements an opportunity to shape public understandings of social and political problems, as well as a chance to mobilize a broader public to action. (Deana A, 2022)

Social media appear as aspiring tools for the creation of new opportunities for social movements. Web 2.0 platforms allow protestors to collaborate so that they can quickly organize and disseminate a message across the globe. By enabling the fast, easy and low-cost diffusion of protest ideas, tactics, and strategies, social media and networks allow social movements to overcome problems historically associated with collective mobilization (Ayres, 1999)

Social media are effective for conveying any message to a given public, whether it is from a corporation, a public figure, or a government. (Harris, 2013, p. 18) Social media help the society, government officials, non-government officials and others to share what they have, to get information and to interact each other.

Gerbaudo and Treré (2015) argued that research on the nexus of social media and social movements needs to pay attention to the complexity of the phenomenon, especially when it comes to our understanding of expressive and performative elements. Specifically, they singled out the importance of interrogating the role of collective identity in social movements and examining what ‘opportunities and threats the new media ecology brings to processes of identity construction in contemporary protest movements’ (p. 866)

Tensions of competing nationalisms and nation building in Ethiopia are increasingly evident in online discourses in recent times that often escalate to inflammatory, insightful, and hate speech. In this sense, it is not surprising that a growing list of scholars have interrogated competing political discourses in Ethiopia’s burgeoning digital communication sphere (Workneh, T. W. 2021). Nonetheless, the rise of antagonistic expressive forms in digital spaces is not a uniquely Ethiopian experience. There is growing global evidence on the relationship between social media proliferation and

occurrences of political extremism, partisanship, and rage culture (Postill, 2018). This phenomenon is closely related to the notion of moral outrage.

Research indicates disinformation accusations may make it easier to ban or discredit genuine online activism. By highlighting these dangers, disinformation plays no role in the war on Tigray-both campaigns have shared misleading, unverified, and false information to varying degrees and effects. (Clair Wilmot, 2021)

2.2. Social media activism

As our means to network virtually have begun to grow so too, have our platforms for voicing our opinions. In this scenario social media such as ‘Twitter’ and Facebook have become important forums for one to not just sustain a protest activity but also inform and organize activism around a cause.

Dictionary definition of activism is that it is a noticeable and direct action to achieve a result usually a political or social one (Cambridge Dictionary). Activism can clearly be defined as any type of effort that seeks to enforce, direct, inform, or promote social, political, societal or cultural change.

Duarte (2017) demonstrates that online activism is a mature, new territory for non-governmental actors to raise awareness and develop support around the world. Duarte argues that the Internet has changed the approach to politics because of the “invisible support” of Internet users. The power of web-based activism, the author contends, is in its distributive power, able to reach millions of people in a short time; it injects the same level of credibility that print press accorded social movements in the 20th century, and which it still continues to do.

Social media play an important role in facilitating the mobilization for, and coordination of, direct actions offline. An overemphasis on the Internet is present in some studies and mobile technologies and text messaging often plays a very important role (Gillian, 2008)

Social media enable activists and protest movements to ‘self-mediate’ and to distribute movement goals or frames more easily. Social movements and activists have always done this, but social media are said to greatly increase the capacity to transmit text and visual discourses. It is often argued that social media potentially provide (new) opportunities for citizens and subordinate groups in society to bypass state and market controls and the mainstream media to construct alternative collective identities.

A growing segment of social media usage on Twitter includes individuals advocating for humanitarian causes, environmental problems, or political and economic debates (Arafa, M., & Armstrong, C. 2016). Hashtag activism, a term that entered the public consciousness gives communicators an ability to streamline their messaging on the micro blogging social networking platform.

As our means to network virtually have begun to grow, so too have our platforms for voicing our opinions. In this scenario social media such as ‘Twitter’ and Facebook have become important forums for one to not just sustain a protest activity but also inform and organize activism around a cause.

Participation is a key concept that addresses the main differences between the traditional (old) media and the social (new) media and focuses mainly on the empowerment of the audience/users of media towards a more active information and communication role. The changes transform the relation between the main actors in political communication, namely political actors, journalists and citizens. Social media and networks enable any user to participate in the mediation process by actively searching, sharing and commenting on available content (Bruns, 2005).

A social movement is a social process through which collective actors articulate their interests, voice grievances and critiques, and proposed solutions to identified problems by engaging in a variety of collective actions. These movements have three features: 1) they are conflictual and have clearly identified (ideological) opponents; 2) they are structured

through dense informal networks; and 3) they are geared towards developing, sustaining and sharing collective identities (DellaPorta and Diani, 2006)

Social media play an important role in facilitating the mobilization for, and coordination of, direct actions offline. An overemphasis on the Internet is present in some studies and mobile technologies and text messaging often plays a very important role (Gillian, et al., 2008).

Eight core logics for the use of social media by protest movements and activists can be identified: ICT-supported communicative practices to organize internally recruit and network, i.e. Mobilize for and coordinate direct action, disseminate movement frames independently of the mainstream, and discuss/debate/deliberate/decide. The second category is ICT-based communicative practices to attack ideological enemies, i.e. survey the surveillers, and preserve protest artifacts. (Jordan and Taylor, 2004; Bennett and Segerberg, 2016)

2.2.1. Activism during war and peace

Peace has traditionally been seen as an international matter with a definition of peace limited to the absence of war or conflict; that is negative peace. Because peace also includes the conditions needed for peace to last and to prevail –positive peace– it touches most realms of life. (Galtung, 1969, 167-191)

Social media has been used in Ethiopia to promote digital activism especially during the times of elections. This is mainly because the conventional media came under the strict control of the state and people have been forced to use social media as a viable alternative to express their anger and oppositions. (Gagliardone, 2011)

There were 6.20 million social media users in Ethiopia in January 2020. The number of social media users in Ethiopia increased by 237 thousand (4.0%) between April and January 2020. With regarding to Internet users there were 21.14 million Internet users in January 2020, this number increased by 534 thousands (2.6%) between 2019 and 2020. (Datarportal, 2020)

Analysis indicates that Internet users increased by 520 thousand between 2022 and 2023. more broadly, 30.7 percent of Ethiopia's total Internet user base used at least one social media platform in January 2023. (Datarportal, 2023)

In Ethiopia, social media, specifically Facebook was served as a more preferable and favored source of information more than conventional sources of information such as radio, TV and newspapers. Besides, people use social media particularly Facebook to satisfy their various needs such as the need for entertainment, socialization, discussion or debate, and education. Moreover, most of the users of Facebook use it to express their high or low emotions at times when they experience these emotions (Kumlachew, 2014)

How a person or an institution defines peace will have a direct effect on the way issues of peace are addressed, specifically in situations of conflict be they great or small. The higher the ideal, the more likely it will be that conflicts will be prevented or, if need be, peacefully resolved.

Social media divides and unites people at the same time. On one hand the Internet is eating into the communal or social life of human beings whereas on the other hand it is also becoming a platform for them to share, talk or socialize. It seems as if it's withdrawing from the real world and adding to the virtual. It is here that people where can talk to someone according to their own wish and want of distance. It allows people to retain flexibility in their communication, allows them to generate content and not merely produce it. (Pablo Gerbaudo, 2012)

2.2.2. Role and Impact of social media activism in war

Social media activism and violent conflict has intertwined in many aspects. Bennett and Segerberg (2012; 2013) argued that tools (blogs, forums, digital social networks, etc.) had given rise to a new form of personalized public engagement that they called the logic of connective action. Connective action is based on personalized content sharing through personal narratives rather than collective structures and identities. Thus, the effects of these online activities can lead to concrete policy changes through public pressure on

governments or mass boycott actions against companies and extend political and civic outreach and participation by enabling new forms of mediated action (Boulianne,2020).

First, social media lowers the barriers to entry for individuals and groups seeking to communicate. The use of blogs, Facebook, or Twitter to disseminate information also allows groups engaged in violence or seeking to challenge the state an alternative to mainstream media. Thus, the power of incumbents to control media may be lessened. Yet, this does not mean that social media acts as simply an alternative to the mainstream media. Many traditional media outlets are shaped and influenced by blogs and influential users. Especially during conflicts or contentious events, challengers are able to get their side of the story out to the public by seeding it in blogs and social media that are then picked up by mainstream domestic and international media. Thus it is not that social media is an alternative to mainstream media rather its effects are indirect via its influence on media gatekeepers. (Boulianne, 2020)

This mechanism is particularly relevant to protestors and challengers in autocratic regimes, where social media provides an alternative outlet to close off media outlets. Alternatively, social media also affords regimes to fund "Astroturfing," or sock puppets that can give the appearance that the regime has broad-based support, and also drown out alternative voices. Second, social media increases the speed and spread of information. Information tweeted out or blogged can instantaneously be streamed across the globe and go "viral" when it is picked up by mainstream news sources. This quickening of the news cycle has several implications. Competition between various news outlets to be the first to report stories can create incentives to not fully vet information (Jin et al. 2014)

2.3. Information manipulation

Ethiopia's 2020-2022 Civil war has experienced different media manipulation techniques via pro government as well as pro TPLF activism. Thus, this research tries to explore the techniques they use it as the areas of new knowledge exploration towards war and peaceful situations.

Information manipulation as a process where actors leverage specific conditions or features within an information ecosystem in an attempt to generate public attention- and influence public discourse through deceptive, creative, or unfair means. Furthermore, media manipulation is a broad term in that it can be used to define a variety of other terms, such as disinformation, information operations, or influence operations. This is intentional as it allows for a wider variety of cases to be analyzed. (The Media Manipulation Casebook Code Book, 2022)

Information manipulation has always existed but was accelerated by three technical innovations: print, mass media, and the Internet. The Internet, in particular, became even more of an accelerant in the last decade with the rise of social media. [ibid]

Researchers have noted that many common media manipulation techniques have been also used, such as copy pasta (text that is repeatedly reposted), impersonation (pretending to be another person or member of a social identity group) and viral sloganeering (short, catchy phrases intended to deliver persuasive, disruptive messaging), around so-called social wedges issues (political or social topics that are both polarizing). (Wilmot, Tveteraas, and Drew, 2021)

Information manipulation is particularly prolific in times of war—and thus benefits all the more from the “despecification” of war, that is, from the increasing ambiguity between times of war and times of peace. As French historian Marc Bloch noted in 1921 in an article analyzing the proliferation of fake news during the First World War, “emotion and fatigue destroy the critical faculty.” Censorship also plays a role, because it is more intense in moments of crises and it feeds into paranoia and delusions. (Marc Bloch, 2013, p. 10)

2.3.1. Manipulation strategies

Jean-Baptiste Jeangène Vilmer (2018) indicates there are several manipulation strategies, which have different implications on receivers of the information. Among different strategies the following techniques highly recommended and widely used in social media sphere:-

- A. Astroturfing** -Occurs when campaign operators attempt to create the false perception of grassroots support for an issue by concealing their identities and using other deceptive practices, like hiding the origins of information being disseminated or artificially inflating engagement metrics.
- B. Butterfly attack** - Butterfly attacks occur when imposters mimic the patterns of behavior of a social group (usually a group that has to fight for representation). Imposters pretend to be part of the group in order to insert divisive rhetoric and disinformation into popular online conversation or within the information networks used by these groups. Distinct from Astroturfing, which tries to falsify grassroots support for an issue, butterfly attacks are designed to infiltrate existing communities, media campaigns, or hashtags to disrupt their operations and discredit the group by sowing divisive, inflammatory, or confusing information. The term butterfly attack is inspired by the mimicry behavior of certain species of butterflies, who impersonate the fluttering patterns of other species to confuse predators.(Patrick Ryan, 2017)
- C. Distributed amplification** - Distributed amplification is a tactic whereby a campaign operator explicitly or implicitly directs participants to rapidly and widely disseminate campaign materials, which may include propaganda and misinformation as well as activist messaging or verified information via their personal social media accounts. The strategy relies on many campaign participants to individually circulate campaign materials throughout their own communities, either via personal social media accounts or within offline spaces (such as on community bulletin boards, in the public square, etc.). It is often employed by campaign operators in an effort to complicate mitigation by seeding the campaign to as many platforms as possible (so that if one platform mitigates the campaign, it remains active on other platforms), or to overwhelm the information ecosystem with a specific narrative or message. The term was inspired by a technique in the field of electrical engineering, where “distributed amplification” refers to a configuration of simple electron tubes that allows engineers “to obtain amplification over much greater bandwidths than would be possible with ordinary circuits.” (E.L. Ginzton, 1948: 956–69)

Manipulation campaign operators use participants in a similar way that electrical engineers use electron tubes to increase electrical bandwidth by operationalizing their audiences to increase the amplification power of a disinformation campaign or artifact on social media. [ibid]

D. Gaming an algorithm - Attempting to manipulate an algorithm in order to gain attention. This may include tactics that elevate content into a platform's trending list, being recommended to other users, or placing in the top ten of a search engine's results.

E. Meme war - The intentional propagation of political memes on social media for the purpose of political persuasion, community building, or to strategically spread narratives and other messaging crucial to a media manipulation campaign.

F. Reputation management – Reputation management is a strategy in which campaign operators issue widespread press, content, or marketing materials to hide negative information, while amplifying positive news about their product, service, or cause. Reputation management is a strategy bigger than an individual refuting false claims about themselves; instead, reputation management refers to a concerted and deliberate strategy backed by resources (i.e. funding) and is professionalized, meaning those running the campaign are either paid or working on behalf of a company, client, or organization.

G.Targeted harassment - Coordinated and organized online harassment of an individual or groups of individuals to threaten, censor, or upset them or to disrupt their operations or behavior.

H. Trading up the chain - Trading up the chain is the process of getting a story from a small, local, or niche platform or media outlet to a more popular, national news service. If an article or post gains enough traction on the small, local, or niche platform, it may be reported on by a larger site either to be promoted or debunked. Regardless, the additional

coverage spreads the original story to a new and larger audience. If successful, a line from a blog post or tweet can become national news. (Krafft, P. M., & Donovan, J. (2020: 194-214,)

Some other social media manipulation techniques and meanings which many activists use:

Technique	Meaning
Coppypasta	- Refers to any block of text that is repeatedly reposted, often on social media, messaging apps, online discussion forums, and comments sections.
Evidence collage	- Compiling information from multiple sources into a single, shareable document, usually as an image, to persuade or convince a target audience.
Hijacked accounts	- The unauthorized use of an individual's account, typically accessed through stolen credentials or hacking.
Impersonation	- Pretending to be another person or member of a social identity group, either by mimicking their behavior or creating a falsified online presence.
Keyword squatting	- The strategic domination of unique or under-used keywords on a social media platform or search engine that will return search results and content in favor of the campaign operators' goals.
Leak	- The unauthorized release of sensitive materials or documents.
Misinfographic	- Info-graphics with false or misleading information. In some cases, they may also be classified as a forgery when they borrow an existing organization's brand aesthetics and logo
Phishing	Fraudulently posing as a trustworthy entity in a malicious attempt to access confidential information such as usernames, passwords and credit card details, usually by the means of email.
Trolling	- Engaging in inflammatory, divisive, or distracting behavior in an online community with the goal of provoking readers or viewers into an emotional, often negative, response (ex. anger, outrage, offense).
Typosquatting	- Is a form of cyber squatting, or an attempt to mislead users by fraudulently posing under someone else's brand or copyright.

Viral sloganeering	- Repackaging of provocative, revolutionary or reactionary talking points into a short, catchy, and memorable format for social media and press amplification.
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Table 1. *Social media manipulation key words and techniques. (The media manipulation case book, 2022)*

2.4. Evolution of social media activism in Ethiopia

Modern communications system did not come to Ethiopia to help accelerate modernization. Instead, it came together with other products of the industrial West. It suddenly appeared under the skies of Ethiopia, although no one intended to invent it. This was because, by the late nineteenth century, Ethiopia's isolation from the outside world was being shattered, and new ideas and technology were beginning to penetrate (Keller, 1981:319-20). Accordingly, the presence of foreign embassies in Addis Ababa that apparently required modern system and the threat of surrounding colonial powers drove Menelik II to introduce postal, telephone, telegraph systems, and printing press (Andualem .M ,2014:133)

The development of digital media in Ethiopia, while similar to the path taken by other authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes, has certain distinctive characteristics. Ethiopia is the country in Africa with a state monopoly over telecoms, despite strong pressure from international organizations, foreign countries and corporations to liberalize the market. (Gagliardone, 2011)

Digital activism was influential in Ethiopian politics for the first time during the lead up to the 2005 elections. The unprecedented opening of democratic space at this time led to a surge in voting for the opposition that threatened the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front's (EPRDF) grip on power. The government responded with a crack-down on opposition and mass arrests in the post-election period (Abbink, 2011).

Despite the very limited diffusion of the Internet among Ethiopian citizens, in 2006 the government began to actively filter the websites of opposition groups and human rights

organizations, specifically targeting those that gathered the voices of Ethiopians living abroad. The mix of commitment to using new technology and fear that the same technology could unsettle existing power structures is reflected in the government's massive efforts to use digital media in schools and government offices, and the neglect of providing reliable and affordable Internet connections in the major towns, including the capital. In 2010, Ethiopia had one of the lowest Internet penetration rates in the world. [Ibid]

One reason for blocking these online spaces can be attributed to the composition of the Ethiopian Diaspora and to the ability of the discourses it articulates to reach beyond the digital media. Similar to other national groups that migrated from the Horn, Ethiopians living abroad represent a large and powerful force that have historically been involved in wars and politics back home [ibid].

Ethiopia, the December 2015 Oromo protest by students and farmers on the new master plan of Addis Ababa and around Oromia regions, made headlines in the world news. Ethiopian government blamed opposition parties for facilitating and organizing the protest via Facebook. (Adamu, M. A, 2020)

As stated by Adamu, M. A. (2020), before Facebook become popular in Ethiopia, people preferred to listen to radios and watch TVs broadcasted from outside the country, such as Voice of America (VOA) and Duetchevelle (broadcasted in Amharic from Germany) radio stations. Even those traditional media are also available in social media by having Facebook pages. Anyone can get those local traditional media news as well as political activists and Diaspora based media which are always willing and interested to transmit news to protest against the overthrown Ethiopian government. Consequently, social media in Ethiopia have become a preferred media outlet, which can present political news from the government supporters, activist, journalists as well as from opposition groups of the government. (Adamu, M. A. 2020)

It was the first time in Ethiopian history that events of the transition (2018) were mainly covered and reported by ordinary citizens via Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and blogs rather than the main stream media. As per the Aljazeera news/information collected from different journalists, activists and politicians, social media played a significant role for Ethiopia's political transition. (Abraham G, Tibebe B, 2019).

2.5. The role of social media activism in Context of Ethiopia's 2020-2022 Civil War

The social media not only helped to link Diaspora-based opposition leaders (activists) and the youth protesters but also created a platform for collective action. On the one hand, social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter provide platforms for collective action and could help to enhance popular participation.

Since its beginning, the Ethiopia's 2020-2022 Civil war has been characterized by a proliferation of hateful language, misleading information and propaganda that shadowed the events on the ground (Wilmot, C., Tveteraas, E., & Drew, A. (2021). Amid a media blackout and restricted access by journalists, a kind of parallel conflict thus emerged through which opposing sides of the war tried to amplify their narratives online or discredit the other side.

When the war began on November 4, 2020 the *internet watchdog* organization *net blocks* reported an internet network disruption in the Tigray region from 1am local time. Immediately after Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced on Facebook and twitter that 'a red line' had been crossed and that a 'low enforcement' was underway to apprehend TPLF leadership.

English speaking Tigrayans in the Diaspora encouraged supporters to take to twitter, circulating instructions and videos on WhatsApp describing how to use the platform to raise awareness about the conflict. Thousands of Tigrayans in Ethiopia and the Diaspora joined Twitter in the following days, according to an analysis of 90,000 tweets; many had joined twitter for the first time in order to participate in online activism. (Clair Wilmot, Ellen Tveteraas and Alex drew, 2021).

The opposing cyber armies also gathered the online campaigns behind various hash tags used to frame the events related to the war or influence Twitter's trending systems. Those in support of the Tigray amplified narratives related to the violence and atrocities carried out by the government to gain international support to stop the war (reflected in the hashtags such as #TigrayGenocide or #StopWarOnTigray). Conversely, the supporters of the Ethiopian government have framed the conflict narrative around questions of national unity and the need to protect Ethiopia from intervention from external actors (reflected in the hashtags #EthiopiaPrevails or #NoMore).

Most of the online activities of various activists in Tigray can be brought together under the umbrella of the so-called Digital Woyane, a social movement, which does not have a structure or an organization behind. Social movements, to give a short definition, are networks of individuals or groups loosely tied together, who are involved in a conflicting political or cultural situation. This happens "on the basis of a shared collective identity" (Diani 1992: 13)

The civil war situation encompasses with different level of information warfare between Pro- government and Pro -TPLF activists. News reports from several media outlets also came out with allegations of massacres, extreme sexual violence, destruction of public and civilian property and mass looting. These news reports controlled the social media atmosphere during the war as well as post war on CoHA.

2.6. APPROACHES TO PEACEBUILDING

On 2 November 2022, after 10 days of negotiations in Pretoria, South Africa, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) signed a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) under the auspices of an African Union-led process. This agreement paves the way to handle bloodshed war to a peaceful Peacebuilding processes.

Several approaches to the operationalizing Peacebuilding can be identified. Peacebuilding refers to direct work that intentionally focuses on addressing the factors driving or

mitigating conflict. It encompasses strategies that are coordinated at multiple levels and across sectors, including ensuring that there are funding and proper communication and coordination mechanisms between humanitarian assistance, development, governance, security and justice. Peacebuilding is a process but it is also an approach that supports peace. (De Coning, 2012).

Stabilization phase	Transitional phase	Consolidation phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation (DDR) • Humanitarian emergency • Priority for the locals is survival • strong visibility and involvement of external 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction • Building local capacities • Creating legitimate state institutions • Developing rule of law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconciliation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Security sector reform • Handover of greater responsibility to locals • Priority to local ownership • Increasing human rights • Trauma healing

Table 2- Peacebuilding phase –source- Firchow, P., & Anastasiou, H. (2016).

2.7. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is the “blueprint” for the entire thesis inquiry. It serves as the guide on which to build and support the thesis, and also provides the structure to define how will philosophically; epistemologically, methodologically, and analytically approach the thesis as a whole.

The research typically uses situational theory of problem solving, thus, it is a theory of communication developed to explain people’s motivated communicative actions when they encounter problematic life situations. (Jeong-Nam Kim, 2006)

Since the thesis focuses on social media activists' engagement through information linkage, the situational theory of problem solving applied very well. Information transmission refers to the dissemination of information to others, actively through information forwarding – the planned, self-propelled information giving to others – and passively through information sharing – the reactive provision of information only when solicited. Information selection refers to the acceptance and rejection of certain information in taking and giving, either based on source or on content, actively through information for fending. (Clarke & Kline, 1974, p. 233)

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The main goal of this research is to understand and analyze the role of social media activism in the Ethiopian civil war (2020-2022) context, with regard to Pro-government and Pro-TPLF social media activism.

Therefore, the study aims to conduct a comparative content analysis and explore different techniques used by activists in twitter social media platform. Besides, the researcher will rely on different peace and security, social media theories to understand the topic in depth.

In this chapter, the philosophical foundation being considered, the methodology and research design employed, the sampling techniques selected, the data sources and collection tool used data analysis, interpretation and ethical consideration sections are discussed.

3.2. PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION

The constructivist research paradigm used for this study. Honebein (1996) describes the constructivism philosophical paradigm as an approach that asserts that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences. It is based on the analogy or basis that people form or construct much of what they learn through experience (Adom, D., Yeboah, A., & Ankrah, A. K. 2016).

Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences—meanings directed toward certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas. (Crotty, 1998)

In constructivist research practice researcher Collects participant-generate meanings, Focuses on a single concept or phenomenon, brings personal values into the study,

Studies the context or setting of participants, validates the accuracy of findings, Interprets the data, Creates an agenda for change or reform.(Adom, D., Yeboah, A., & Ankrah, A. K. 2016).

The constructivism philosophical paradigm is associated with the qualitative research approach. Thus, the researcher in this thesis utilized the qualitative research design for undertaking this review. Its content analysis research method was largely used to constructs meanings from the phenomena under study through own experiences and that of the participants tweet data in the study.

Since the aim of this study is to understand and analyze the role of social media activism in the context of Ethiopian civil war(2020-2022), it is evident from this argument that the paradigm and the aim of the paper are aligned.

3.3. METHODOLOGY

The research employs a Qualitative Comparative Content Analysis Method to have clear understanding of the situation. In order to uncover new understanding and techniques used by activists during the war, typically constructivism philosophical paradigm applied to the research.

The constructivism philosophical paradigm is associated with the qualitative research approach. This is the case because the paradigm seeks to understand a phenomenon under study from the experiences or angles of the participants using different data collecting agents. (Adom, D.,Yeboah,A., & Ankrah, A. K. ,2016)

Qualitative data collection allows for the collection of non-numerical data, which aids in the exploration of how decisions are made and can provide detailed insights into the issue. The qualitative method also attempts to interpret data and provide meaning. It is also beneficial to understand how the social life and other aspects of the study population are organized. On the other hand, qualitative approaches allow room to be innovative and

to work more within researcher-designed frameworks. They allow more creative, literary-style writing, a form that individuals may like to use (Richards, 2006).

Therefore the researcher collects data from selected participants and analyzes its meaning as the instrumentation usually administered in this philosophical paradigm implies.

3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN

This research use case study approach in order to implement the comparative content analysis of Pro- government and Pro-TPLF activists tweet on.

Case studies are a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. Cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time (Stake, 1995).

The reason for the thesis use case study is because it focus specifically to the 2020-2022 Ethiopian civil war and only on the issues of Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists

3.5. SAMPLING

The research uses Purposeful sampling method and selects six twitter Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists proportionally. Thus, Two years sample data analyze accordingly.

The study determines participants based on pre- selection procedures. i.e., those twitter users from both sides selects based on their active verified twitter usage history, having more than 10k (>10,000) followers as well as based on the researcher prior knowledge and exposure to the field of study. The sample took from each participant tweets analyze based on temporal, spatial and thematic scope of the thesis.

The logic and power of purposeful sampling depend on selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study. Information-rich cases contain issues that are important for the research, therefore, purposeful sampling. (Alvi, M, 2016).

Purposeful sampling helps the researcher to select sources of information that would help answer the research objectives. That is in the initial level researcher selects participants who have broad and general knowledge of the topic or phenomena of the study. (Patton, 1990, p. 169)

3.6. DATA SOURCES AND COLLECTION TOOLS

The research uses primary data sources to gain the appropriate information for comparative analysis study. Besides, the researcher uses additional data examination techniques. Twitter open data sources mainly uses for this research as primary data source.

Each and every twittes of those selected activists from twitter open source, with in the research time scope, selects and analyzes accordingly along with theoretical and related documents.

Creswell (2013) asserts that a qualitative research should have multiple sources of data where the researcher is engaged in the research where he/she examines documents, observes behaviors and interviews participants to get rich information rather than depending on one source.

Primary data gather via each participants official twitter account. Finally, these data interpret in light of the theoretical framework of data analysis procedures.

3.7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The thesis uses thematic content analysis procedure. i.e.; as the research approach focusing on understanding, exploring, and interpretation aspects to discover specific information from a given circumstance. According to (Braune and Clarke, 2006), the thematic method of analysis is the best way to identify, analyze, and report data because it organizes and describes it in detail and interprets the various aspects of research.

A research term for the process of examining data to spot trends and deduce the meaning of the material is "thematic content analysis." Furthermore, the process of contrasting and comparing material with information from other sources is known as comparative analysis.

Moreover, the research typically uses content analysis as the research tool. Thus, a research technique called content analysis used to find specific words, themes, or concepts in a given set of qualitative data, or text. Researcher can measure and examine the occurrence, significance, and connections of particular words, topics, or concepts by using content analysis.

3.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The researcher due considers academic writing principles and make an effort to analyze the provided information objectively, without bias or attachment to a political point of view or ideology. The researcher will also make every effort to present the findings as accurately as possible. Each data and information has tangible and accurate references.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

In this section of the study, data description, presentations and analysis are presented and discussed. Since the objective of this study is to conduct a comparative content analysis of social media activism of Pro- government and Pro- TPLF activists during the war and after the signing of the Agreement on Permanent Cessation of Hostilities. Furthermore, to increase the credibility of the research, the data acquired from the verified twitter account open sources, were also triangulated by conducting documents analysis and relevant comparative data analysis techniques.

Accordingly, the data discussion, description, presentation and analysis of the above data documents are presented in the following three sections.

4.1. DATA PRESENTATION

In this section for understanding the concept and theories related to the data are presented. Besides, related concept to the study area has been presented to bring together for the sake of content analysis and clarifying points of argument.

4.1.1. CONTEXT OF THE CIVIL WAR

In March 2020, the Federal government announced the postponement of the national elections initially scheduled for August 3, 2020, officially because of the COVID pandemic. The TPLF did not accept the postponement, seeing it as a move by PM Abiy Ahmed to stay in power. The election was, however, held in Tigray, and the TPLF and its leader Debretsion Gebremichael won the election overwhelmingly. This situation led to each side considering the other illegitimate: the federal government did not recognize the result of the Tigray election, organized against the federal government's decision, and the TPLF considered the Federal government to be illegitimate because it had overstayed its official term. This led to a breakdown in relations between the federal government and the Tigray leadership. TPLF representatives no longer participated in the work of the

parliament. This escalation of tensions inevitably led to the outbreak of armed conflict in early November 2020 (Abbink, 2021).

After the TPLF has cast out from the central government, its members returned to the Mekelle and influenced the Tigrayans under the ethnic federalism umbrella. It continued to dominate the Tigray Region state's politics, economy, and security (Opalo & Smith, 2021).

On 6 October 2020, the TPLF stated that it no longer accepted the legitimacy of the Federal Government (the House of Peoples' Representatives, the House of Federation, the Cabinet, and the Prime Minister) as its mandate had expired. It further stated that henceforth Tigray would not accept any decision or resolution that came from the Federal Government.¹

On 3 November 2020, the Tigray Special Forces (TSF) attacked several federal military bases of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF). Debretsion Gebremichael said this was a pre-emptive operation in response to the regrouping of federal troops on Tigray's southern border and the central government's plan to launch a military operation to arrest Tigray's leaders. In response to the attacks on the armed bases, PM Abiy Ahmed declared on 4 November a six-month state of emergency in Tigray and announced the launch of a military operation. On 5 November, the federal army began to conduct air strikes. (Abbink, 2021)

The armed conflict in Tigray has resulted in a dire humanitarian situation. Since the conflict began in early November 2020, more than 50,000 people have sought refuge in Sudan while more than 1.7 million have been internally displaced in Tigray by August

¹Mekelle Foresight: Interview with Getachew Reda, Executive Committee Member, TPLF, on the expiry of the term of the Federal Government, Tigray Communication Affairs Bureau, October 6/2020. Source; Tigray Television <https://www.facebook.com/TigrayCAB/videos/346252249819545/>

2021. The conflict has also left an estimated 5.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance – up from 1.5 million in need before the conflict.²

After two years of civil war, On November 2, 2022, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) signed a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) in Pretoria, South Africa. Both warring parties discussed and negotiate under the auspices of an African Union-led process. (African Union, 2022)

This thesis therefore focuses on ‘the other form of the war’ via social media especially on twitter. While the actual war took place in the battlefields in Northern Ethiopia, the war by other means—through social media—continued virtually. The thesis will show variety of techniques which both Pro-government and Pro-TPLF Activists uses through twitter social media during the wartime until the cessations of hostility agreement signed. Hence, behind each technique social media can be used to support military operations, Intelligence Collection, Targeting, Inform and Influence (Psychological Warfare), Cyber Operations, Defense, and Command and Control the civil war.

4.1.2. OPERATIONAL TERMINOLOGIES DURING THE CIVIL WAR

Based on the data analysis, this research explores new and repeated peace and security terms, which used by both pro activists during the course of data analysis. These terms and concept may have their own impact, motive and attention to the relevant target audience. The terms chosen for this research data are those used and inter-changed most commonly by Pro-TPLF and Pro-government activists in the research discourse.

Since the primary focus of the study relies on the content analysis of each tweet, it is difficult to analyze each term. Though, without due describing the meaning of each term the researcher put it as it is for the sake of further discussion and academic study.

²*Joint report of the EHRC-OHCHR joint investigations on human rights in Tigray(2021) Pp21-22*

Among the repeated and operational terms during the course of the civil war, the following can be mentioned on the side of Pro-TPLF activists: *-genocide, war crimes, massacre, rape as weapon of war, total siege, hunger as a war weapon, ethnic cleansing, human wave, boycott, cessation of hostilities, cease fire, defacto aid blockade, humanitarian corridor, sexual violence, child abuses, ethnic profiling, scorched earth tactic, etc..*

Similarly on the side of Pro-government activists the following terms are used repeatedly: *- Warmongering, committed treason, walking evil, Child Soldiers, human shield, executed and mutilated, humanitarian truce, food aid blockade, man-made famine, extra-judicial executions, mercenary, tragic, cyber warfare, enablers, bestial ,devastation, horror, terror, aggression, overthrow, unilateral ceasefire, grave concern, grave danger, condemns, plethora of evidence, barbaric act, victim and victor, belligerence, displacing, disarm ,death squad, gradual normalization, etc..*

4.2. DATA ANALYSIS

4.2.1. PARTICIPANTS PROFILE

In order to get clear comparative narrative techniques, the researcher selects six influential social media users especially on twitter social media. For analysis purpose, from Pro-TPLF supporters' activists- **Lwam Gidey, Alula Solomon and Stalin Gebresilase**; from Pro- government supporters' activists **Neamin zeleke, Seyum Teshome and Suleiman Abdella** selected. These all activists selected based on the criteria the researcher arranged on its research methodology section.

During the course of the civil war, many of the messages and information at twitter crafted from outside the country social media users. A group of messages published pre-written tweets for users to instantly tweet content about the situation in Tigray for an international audience. The campaigns were coordinated to spread narratives promoting or opposing the Ethiopian government and its handling of the conflict. (DFRLab, 2021)

The lion's share for 'agenda setting'³ from both Pro sides were originates from a *click-to-tweet web* site owners namely Global Ethiopian Advocacy Nexus (GLEAN) and Stand with Tigray (SWT). These two website host and lead by Pro- government supporter Neamin Zeleke and Pro -TPLF supporter Lwam Gidey. [ibid]

- I. **Lwam Gidey**, @GideyLwam. Having 23.3k followers (until April 2024); A US-based undergraduate student during the civil wartime and originally from Tigray; she is the co-founder of Stand with Tigray. Stand with Tigray (SWT) Was Founded On November 6, 2020, the aim and its missions are:

*In reaction to the unjust war and genocide waged on the people of Ethiopia's northernmost region, Tigray, by central government forces, Eritrean forces, and armed Amhara militias. Swt has become a global campaign whose aim is to raise awareness about the war crimes and human rights violations committed against the Tigrayan people in Ethiopia. Swt's mission is to also advocate for an immediate ceasefire and peaceful dialogues between warring factions while calling for unrestricted humanitarian access and independent investigations of war crimes.*⁴

- II. **Neamin Zeleke**@ Neamin Zeleke, Having 226.1k followers (until April 2024); a long-time member of the Ethiopian opposition during the EPRDF, is leading Global Ethiopian Advocacy Nexus (GLEAN). He Joins twitter in October 2015. GLEAN domain registration claims to be based in California. It is a platform of civic organizations established to mobilize Ethiopians who were not part of the political movement.

GLEAN members actively sought out to recruit accounts with many followers to their cause. The second coordinates messaging and shares information. This takes place mainly in Twitter "rooms," GLEAN also

³Suggests that the communication media, through their ability to identify and publicize issues, play a pivotal role in shaping the problems that attract attention from governments and international organizations, and direct public opinion towards specific issues.

⁴[https://www.standwithtigray.com./](https://www.standwithtigray.com/)

*claimed other click-to-tweet websites opposing the conflict in Tigray were spreading false information especially SWT.*⁵

- III. **Alula Solomon**- @Alula_solomon - Based on his verified twitter profile, he is founder and CEO Tigray Media House (TMH). He lives New York, USA, and joined twitter on January 2013. He has more than *102K followers (until April 2024)*. Based on this research analysis, Alula was very influential in twitter, YouTube and other media outlets during the course of the civil war.

- IV. **Stalin Gebresilase**- @StalinTeklu- Based on his verified twitter profile, he was a staff at TMH, and then opening his you tube media and become founder of Zara media network, human rights advocator and father. He has more than *195K followers (until April 2024)*. He lives in Washington DC and joined twitter on September 2018. Stalin is also popular in war on Tigray politics in twitter atmosphere as well as YouTube, Facebook and TV shows.

- V. **Seyum Teshome**-@seyoum_teshome, having *167.3 k followers (until April 2024)*; based on his verified twitter profile he is social media influencer who lives in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He joined twitter since 2010 and was influential during the course of the civil war as well as GERD issues via twitter, Facebook, YouTube and other media outlets.

- VI. **Suleiman Abdella**- @SuleimanAbdell7.Having*428.8 k followers (until April 2024)*; based on his verified twitter profile he works at Middle East media monitoring and analyst Media Company at Ethiopia. He joined twitter since May 2021. He primarily focuses on GERD issues but during the course of civil war he was one of the influential at twitter arena. He also popular via YouTube and other media outlets.

⁵Claire Wilmot, 2021

Pictorial representation or Screenshots of verified front page of tweeter accounts

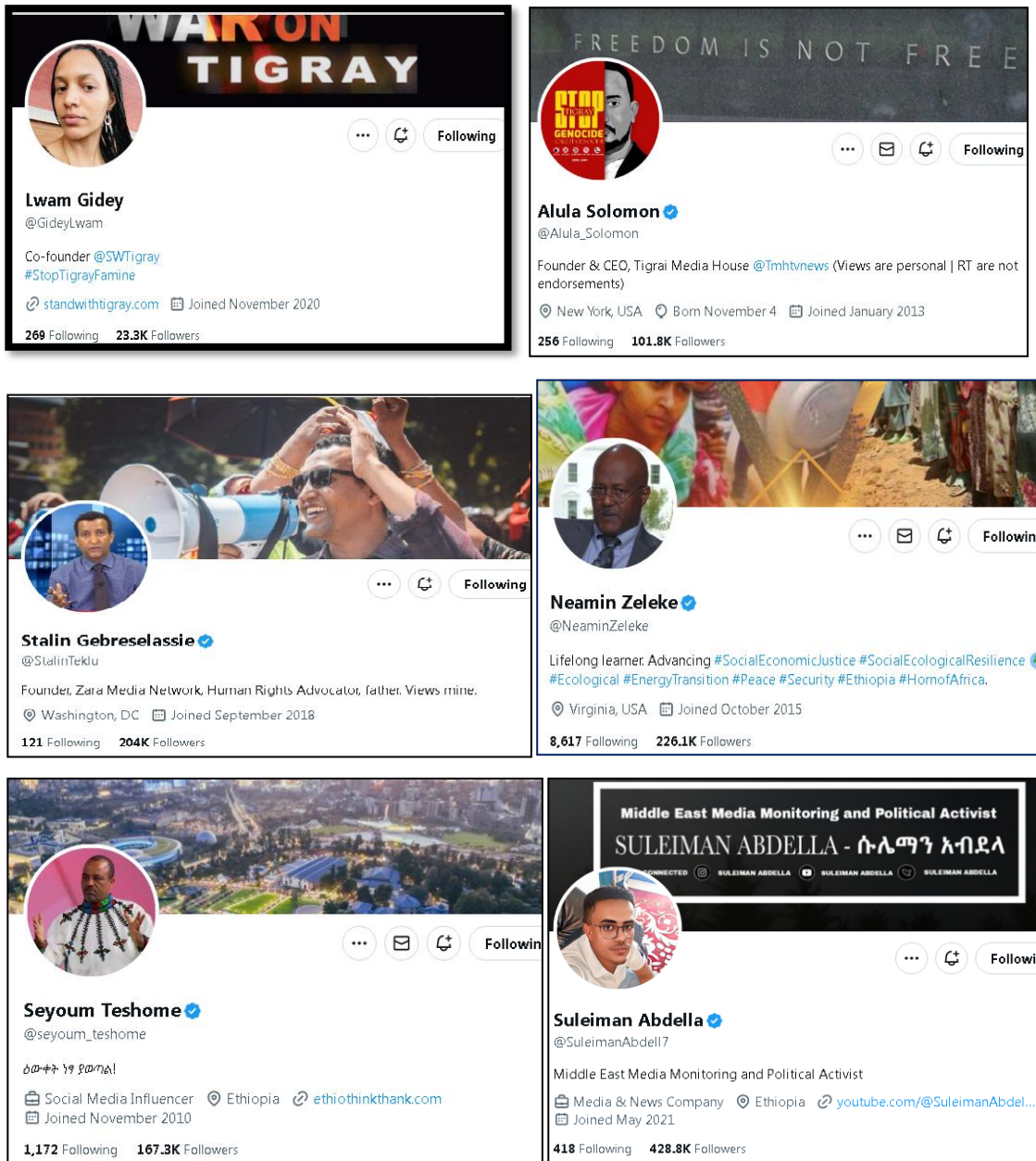


Figure 2-official profile of selected activists –data screenshot source -4/12/2024

4.2.2. COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF PRO-GOVERNMENT AND PRO-TPLF ACTIVISTS

Based on the research findings, those whose data are analyzed have similarities as well as differences in terms of the techniques they used to influence, narrate, manipulate, facilitating the mobilization for, and coordination of, direct actions offline and online.

The research analyzes six social media activists, which their data gathered from twitter open source. Thus, two years of tweets from selected activist's data content analyzed thoroughly. Even if they have different agenda to narrate, the following common features and characteristics have been observed throughout the whole data analysis tasks.

Here are the common characteristics that the research finds out:-

- i. Both parties (Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activist) are intertwining their twitter account with website, YouTube, Facebook as well as mainstream media discussions.
- ii. Within the perspectives of data analysis, the researcher came across the whole data within the time range of the research scope, i.e. two years. Thus, the average minimum tweet per individual is four tweets a day, and the maximum tweet is seven tweets a day per individual.
- iii. The 'main'⁶ tweeter agenda setters were dwelling outside Ethiopia/run from US/ and primarily transmit their information via *click- to- tweet*⁷Twitter campaign methods; some were also linked to registered NGOs. The researcher comes across that *click –to-tweet* website as the main source as well as influential narrative creators during the civil war. Due emphasis given to these two opposite direction or *click-to –tweet* sites and organizers through data analysis techniques.
- iv. Those activists within the same categorical activism have identical opinions or *frames*⁸regarding specific facts or persons; they also use the same references or interpretations to maximize the *trend*⁹in tweeter hemisphere.

⁶Based on the researcher data findings and the Digital Forensic Research Lab (@DFRLab), Southern Africa

⁷This technique improves dissemination on Twitter gives an advantage to the user to not think of a title to share. But instead that you are the one who creates a memorable or hooked phrase that is later shared by the user

⁸The concept of frames in the context of social movements was introduced by Snow (1986) and further applied and developed by many others (Gamson and Meyer 1996; Gerhards and Rucht 1992; Walgrave and Manssens 2000).

⁹A trend on Twitter refers to a hashtag-driven topic that is immediately popular at a particular time.

- v. In order to stress their narrative to twitter audiences, both sides use *#hashtags*, and indicating the tweet to someone with *@mentions*¹⁰sign. i.e. Hashtags a keyword or phrase that is preceded with a pound or number (#) sign, *Hashtags* that amplified content supporting or opposing the conflict in Tigray, all advertised their Twitter campaigns on social media and used pre-written tweets to create trending hashtags and connect with foreign influencers.¹¹
- vi. Similarly, in order to stress and make their narrative story to become *trend* to media outlets, both party activists use variety of hashtags created from the beginning to the end of the war. Here are those hashtags which was used by Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists during the war:-

Pro-government hashtags	Pro -TPLF hashtags
#EthiopiaPrevails	#IStandWithTigray
#unityforethiopia #TPLFisaTerroristGroup #TPLF	#TigrayGenocide #WarOnTigray #WarCrimes
#FakeAxumMassacre	#AxumMassacre
#AmnestyUsedTPLFSources	#MyTigrayanIdentityIsNotACrime
#TPLFisTheCause	#StopTheWarOnTigray
#TPLFStartedTheWar #TPLFMustGo	#BidenActNow #HummerMassacre
#ShameOnAmnesty #ScapegoatingEritrea #TplfUseChildSoldiers	#EritreaOutOfTigray #EndSexualViolenceinTigray #WeWillNeverForget

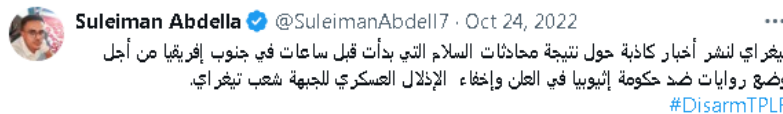
¹⁰usernames within tweets also sometimes resemble references

¹¹On Twitter, the @ sign is used as a marker of addressivity. Concerning the use of @ signs (i.e. @username), Twitter demarcates 'replies' and 'mentions', whereby the former puts @ sign at the beginning of the Tweet, whereas 'mentions' do not start the messages with @ sign. Both conventions predominantly reflect addressivity (Honeycutt and Herring 2009)

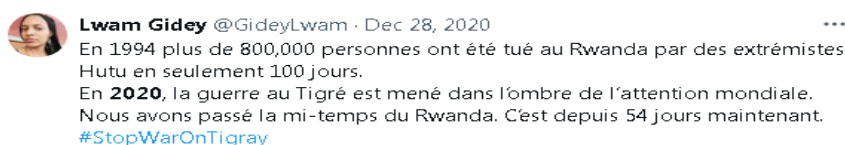
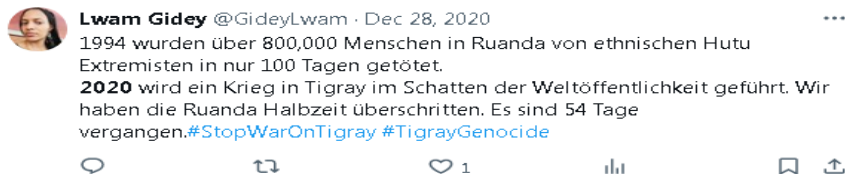
#CNNFakeNews	#ChildrenofTigray
#TigraiOpen4HumanitarianAssistance	#ChemicalAttackOnTigray
#BackoffAmnsety	#StopBombingTigray
#StoptheLieHelpTigray	#NeverAgain4Tigray
#TPLFisWarMongering	#RestoreTigrayInternet
#TPLFmisinformationCampaign	#AllowAccessToTigray
#TPLFisGenociderNotVictim	#ReconnectTigray
#HandsoffEthiopia	#StandWithTDF
#WurgessaMassacre	#Opentigray
#NoNegotiationWithTplf	#TigrayMassArrest
#StandForWHOvalues	#MekelleUnderAttack
	#AbiyToICC.
	#BoycottEthiopianAirlines
	#TigrayGenocideAccomplices

Table 3- popular hashtags during the war

- vii. The common language which Pro- government activists use in their tweeter message are English, Amharic and in some instances Arabic languages. On the other hand, those who are Pro-TPLF Activist use similarly English and Amharic language, but differently Tigrigna, French and Germany languages as well.

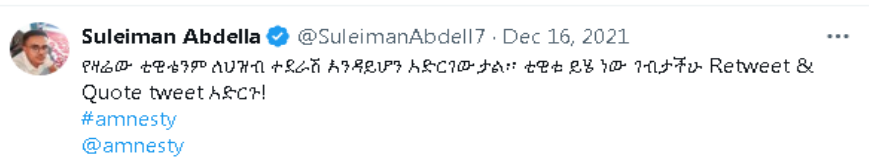


Translation-Tigray to spread false news about the outcome of the peace talks that started hours ago in South Africa in order to put narratives against the government of Ethiopia in public and hide the TPLF's military humiliation of the Tigrayan people../translation from Arabic to English/

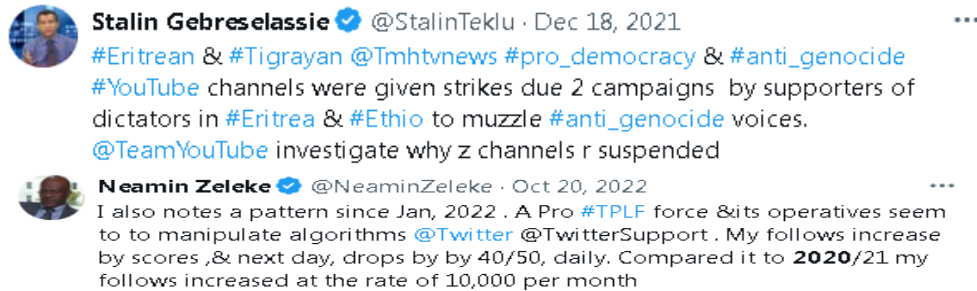


In 1994 more than 800,000 people were killed in Rwanda by Hutu extremists in just 100 days. In 2020, the war in Tigray is being fought in the shadows of global attention. We passed the half-time of Rwanda. It's been 54 days now. #StopWarOnTigray -Translation from Germany/translation French to English /

- viii. The main tweeter target audience for both parties during the first phase of the war was international communities, media, NGOs, Diasporas, prominent individuals and civic organizations. But during the intensive and second phase of the war both parties including the domestic audiences through their message framing techniques as primary and secondary target
- ix. Both parties similarly use “*mass abuse reporting*”¹² technique to twitter account in order to suspend the twitter account permanently or temporarily. Mass reporting of adversarial users for Silencing opponent voice is the main logic behind the act, or step to get the upper hand in tweeter narrative sphere. A victim from both sides uses other social media platforms in order to notify their supporters for counter action. Some of the tweets which mentioning the “*abuse report*” or mass reporting victims were attached to this research.



Translation- today's tweet has also made inaccessible to public. This is the tweet. Retweet and Quote tweet.



¹²Mass reporting on Twitter is a useful tool for quickly *flagging multiple accounts for violating the platform's rules and policies.*

4.3. FINDINGS

Generally speaking the research identifies twelve basic techniques that all activists categorically use during the analysis. Based on the analysis technique, the researcher put each and every tweet within those parameters in order to show the manipulation, narrative as well as influencing techniques they use with regard to the civil war. The next sub sections discuss the twelve categories.

4.3.1. War propaganda

This strategy uses the tweet hemisphere for the sake of war information as well as information related with typically on war and *war psychology*¹³. Those Pro- government or Pro-TPLF activists use this technique either intentionally or not intentionally in order to express their support towards the warring parties. On the other hand, they play crucial role in terms of aggravating and escalating the information-warfare during the civil war and hence influencing the dynamics of the civil war directly/indirectly. The intensity as well as the techniques used separately by either Pro- government or Pro-TPLF activists is quite different based on the war situation in the ground. In some cases the leading role for the *psychological war* done through this war propaganda mechanism with in tweeter messages.

Here are some of the examples, which serve as the psychological readiness or the relevance of war tweets:-



Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Aug 26, 2022

We will never forget. We will never ever forgive.

Free Tigray is a must. Even in 1M years, I could never see us living with these cruel fitretat.

The road to freedom has already begun and we are not looking back. 🍌




Suleiman Abdella @SuleimanAbdell7 · Nov 2, 2022

ደም ከፍለን ተዋግተናል። አይናችን ደም ለስከሚሉብሰ ፅፈናል፣ ሞግተናኪ፣ በደማቸው ቀለም አቅልመው የኢትዮጵያን አንድነት አሰጠብቀውልናል። የሰላሙም የከፉውም ቀን አባቶች ልናተ ናችሁ።

#EthiopiaPrevails


¹³The use of propaganda, threats, and other psychological techniques to mislead, intimidate, demoralize, or otherwise influence the thinking or behavior of an opponent

Translation-we fought with blood. We wrote until our eyes seem bloody. We debate; they preserved the unity of Ethiopia with their blood. You are the father of the peace and evil days


 **Alula Solomon** @Alula_Solomon · Oct 2, 2022
In the past 1 month fight, TDF has captured 3 T-72 tanks. The unit price of a T-72 tank is \$2 Million.

3 x \$2 Million = \$6 Million


And the campaign, by Eritrean kids and their Ethiopian water carriers in the diaspora, is still "disarm TPLF".

 **Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Jan 2, 2022
አያንዳዳችን ይህን አድል አንጠቀማለን አንጅ በከብራችንና በማንነታችን በኢትዮጵያና በኢትዮጵያውያን ለሌሎች ሊዘርፉን ሊያዋርዱን ሊገዙን የሚመጡ ካሉ መቸም አንዳያለቡት አድርገን አናዋርዳቸዋለን። ለኔ ይህ የፀታደር ሞት የክብር ሞት ነው!

Translation-each one of us will use this opportunity, but with our honor and identity in Ethiopia and our ethiopianness. We will humiliate those who come to abuse us, rob us, humiliate us and colonize us. For me this soldier death is an honorable death!

 **Seyoum Teshome** @seyoum_teshome · Nov 3, 2021
Ethiopian people are fighting a terrorist TPLF that has gathered a significant amount of weapons in the jungles of Tigray during the 27 years of its iron-fist dictatorship. It's now using this, the one it looted from the ENDF following its cowardly massacre on Nov 4 2020. #Nov3


 **Stalin Gebreselassie** @StalinTeklu · Nov 8, 2020
As the war waggged openly on #Tigray State of #Ethiopia escalates, #Tigray has downed a warplane 2day. @AUC_MoussaFaki @BBCAfrica

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Nov 6, 2022
In TDF we trust. 🍌
They are fighting to defend our existence and for that I am forever grateful.

Comment your appreciation and love for TDF below. #TDF #afro #Tigray ❤️


Military propaganda – Through this technique both parties explaining, boosting, amplifying battle ground victory and success military information in order to create a winning sprit and garner support for their respective side. This technique sometimes varies the fact in the ground and the intensity of the war situations. Both parties also uses breaking news format to show the urgent success of their supporting military group and to discredit the opponents information. The dynamic nature of the war in some instances shows its impact time to time for both Pro activists.

Some of the data examples from both corners are put here:-


 **Suleiman Abdella** ✓ @SuleimanAbdell7 · Aug 28, 2022 ...
ጥምር ጦሮ ቶባን ይዞ ወደ ዋጃ አየገሰገሰ ነው። በነገራችን ላይ በዚህ ሰዓት የምትሰሙት አስገራሚ ነገር ይፈጠራል። ለዛንው በትንሽ ነገር መረበሽ ትተን ትልቅን ድል የምናበስረው። #TPLFisaTerroristGroup

Translation –coalition force is marching towards waja. By the way this season you will hear something amazing. That’s why we give up worrying about small things and announces the big victory

 **Stalin Gebreselassie** ✓ @StalinTeklu · Aug 27, 2021 ...
Tigray Defense Forces #TDF captured 70% of 🇪🇹 tanks including 4 of this type modern automatic 2nd generation tank 1.8m worthy each. No Q that @AbiyAhmedAli of 🇪🇹 will go for good soon.

 **Stalin Gebreselassie** ✓ @StalinTeklu · Nov 26, 2021 ...
ሰበር ዜና ከነቀምት!
WBO (OLA) ከተማዋን ለመቆጣጠር ተቃርቧል። በአራት ኪሜ ፊደቸስ ላይ ይገኛል። የከተማዋ ብልጽግና ፖሊስ አባላት አብዛኞቹ ወደ ትጥቅ ትግሉ አየተቀላቀሉ ይገኛሉ። ከፊሎቹ ደግሞ ከአካባቢው ቤተሰቦቻቸውን በመያዝ ሸሽተዋል ተብሏል።

Translation- breaking news from nekemt- OLA is nearer to control the city. Found within 4radius. Most of city’s pp and police members are joining the armed struggle. The rest left the city along with their families.

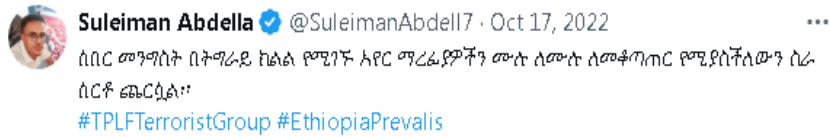
 **Stalin Gebreselassie** ✓ @StalinTeklu · Nov 12, 2021 ...
Tigray Forces downed Ethiopian MI-35 gunship helicopter in Mile front. @martinplaut @wdavison10

 **Stalin Gebreselassie** ✓ @StalinTeklu · Jun 23, 2021 ...
Tigray Forces killed over 10,000 #Ethiopian troops, captured over 4,000, downed Transport L-100 Hercules Antonov. #Tigray prevailing!

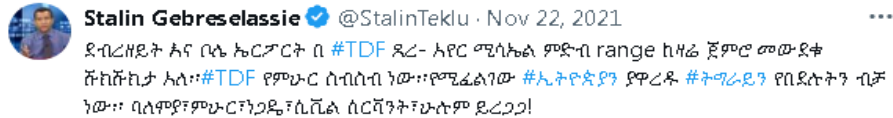
 **Stalin Gebreselassie** ✓ @StalinTeklu · Apr 20, 2021 ...
Tigray Forces #TDF downed a Russian-made MI-35 gunship helicopter in Abiy-Adi area of central Tigray today at 11 am Nairobi time. Unconfirmed reports indicate it belongs to Eritrea. Three of the crew members died. @martinplaut @wdavison10 @nimaelbagir @BBCAfrica @CNNConnect

The war propaganda techniques which was used by both parties at the tweeter hemisphere focus not only the creation of psychological winning sprit for military ecosystem, but also serve to create readiness, havoc, desperation, confusion towards non military combatants, civilians as well as politicians who might support the war directly or

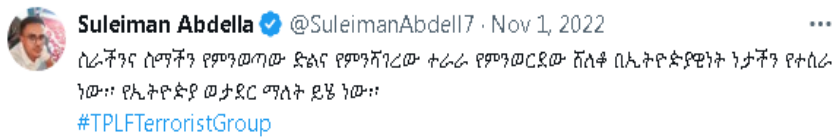
indirectly . Thus, these techniques serve as the pre war scenarios as well as predictions of the war result. The following tweets aim this:-



Translation- Breaking- government has completed the work that will allow it to fully control the airports in Tigray region



Translation –there are whispers that debrezeit and bole airports are under TDF anti aircraft missile range. TDF is a group of scholars; they only found those who humiliate Ethiopia and Tigray. Professionals, merchants and civil servants everyone calm down;



Translation –our work and our name, the victory we climb and the mountain we cross and the valley we descend are made by our Ethiopianness. This is what Ethiopian soldier mean.



4.3.2. Allegation

Among the common technique, which was used by both parties’ activists, is allegation strategy. This method is widely used from the beginning to the end of the war. Each parties uses allegation strategy in order to win the narratives of their own interest through different approaches. The wining narratives based on the allegation strategies of government, institutions, people, individuals, international organizations as well as activists each other.

In some instances the allegations were conveyed with the aim to shame, bully, marginalize, victimize others, or incite actions against targeted groups, individuals or institutions.

It is also noted that the tendencies of allegation on both sides differs based on the fact in the war zone. Thus, those Pro-TPLF activists allege the Ethiopian federal government unwillingness to peaceful resolutions, violations of the Constitution and laws of Ethiopia, violates the duties and responsibilities to protect Tigray civilians, allows to degrade sovereignty of the state by inviting Eritrea, gave 'elephant ear' to its own Tigray citizens' when they face atrocities, crimes and hunger rather than safeguarding.

Besides Pro-TPLF activists allege PM Abiy as he were not interested in political solutions, previous attempts at negotiation failed as he was not ready for peace, he was weakening Tigray by applying political, economic, and security pressure and violating the rights of Tigrayans, his goal was to take away Tigray`s right for self-determination and establish a centralized system of government, he wanted to eliminate Tigrayans, he selectively arrested Tigrayans, discouraged investors from investing in Tigray, called Tigrayans insulting names, and prepared for a genocide against Tigrayans.etc..

Pro-TPLF also allege ENDF and Amhara Special Forces and militias as committed unlawful killings and extra-judicial executions amounting to violations and abuses of international human rights and international humanitarian law, committed acts of torture and ill-treatment against civilians and captured combatants in various locations across Tigray, genocide committer, barbaric, looters, committing various atrocities to the people of Tigray, ENDF looks like party driven military group than protecting the constitution of the country especially, all are committing genocide on the people of Tigray.etc...

The government of Eritrea and EDF allege as violating sovereignty of a county, committing Various acts of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) including physical

violence and assault, Arbitrary detentions, abduction, and enforced disappearances, blundering Tigray, looters, human right abusers, genocide committers on the people of Tigray as well as Ethiopians too, etc...

Individual base allegation is one form of Pro-TPLF activists allege strategy; in this case they allege Agegnehu Teshager as hate speaker, the preacher of genocide who encourages to commit on the people of Tigray, he always mention to exterminate the people of Tigray, he is working to alienate the people of Amhara with Tigrayans etc...

The African union allege by those Pro-TPLF activists as toothless organization, which allows genocide committed by one of its member states on the people of Tigray. Similarly allege UN as it gave less attention to the ongoing conflict and atrocities' made by the Ethiopian government, gave 'deep concern' press releases rather than practicable decision.

Contrary to this, Pro-government activist's allege TPLF and TSF of their inhuman and treasonous nature of the attack on the Northern Command, TPLF always lies and misinform the world as its innate nature, always use violence as a solution to political problems, sponsoring inter-communal and religious violence, TPLF defied federal laws and regulations , was perpetrating all forms of human rights abuses, preying on the country's resources, and suppressing any form of dissent while they were in power arrested and detained mostly ethnic Amharas, whom they insulted, made them sit in uncomfortable postures, beat them with plastic pipes, kicked them, and denied them food and water for several days, abuse of the bodies of deceased ENDF soldiers, committing Various acts of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) including physical violence and assault, TPLF rejected the federal government's efforts to peacefully resolve the tension .etc...

Pro-government activists also allege WHO and Dr. Tedros for its unwavering support to TPLF through material as well as diplomatic leverage power and pressure, violating UN


duties and responsibilities for its personal cause, using and abusing his power to support the terrorist group and his biased claim, involvement and action on the war. etc..


The following data shows the intensity of each side allegation strategies which ranges from individual to group level:-


The screenshot shows a vertical thread of five tweets. Each tweet includes a profile picture, the user's name and handle, the date, and the text of the tweet. The tweets are as follows:


- Lwam Gidey** (@GideyLwam) · Mar 13, 2022: Dear barbaric ethiopians, STOP burning humans alive. STOP burning us. #TigrayGenocide #StandWithTDF
- Suleiman Abdella** (@SuleimanAbdell7) · Nov 1, 2022: The Barbaric act committed by #tplf against #ENDF will always be remembered as a crime of treason that will never be forgotten in the nation's history! #TPLFisTheCause #Nov3 @MikeHammerUSA @UN_HRC @Reuters @USAmbUN @AFP @EU_Commission
- Stalin Gebreselassie** (@StalinTeklu) · Aug 24, 2022: Another round war again in #Ethiopia. @PM @AbiyAhmedAli ordered its national army & Amhara regional forces to attack #Tigray, violating the agreed humanitarian truce. Fierce fighting continues in S. TIGRAY front. @nimaelbagir @MarksSimon @cnnbrk @BBCBreaking
- Neamin Zeleke** (@NeaminZeleke) · Nov 23, 2022: A plethora of evidence #TPLF's bloody records of 27 long yrs. terror & plunder; looting #Ethiopia bone dry. Another round of terror; destruction & rape of #Amhara #Afar on Nov 3rd. 2020. Aim? March to Addis & return to overlordship. The pathological tyrants are now in disarray.
- Lwam Gidey** (@GideyLwam) · Nov 3, 2021: Ethiopian govt loyalists, media personalities & activists have openly started calling for the ethnic cleansing of Tigrayans across Ethiopia. This has led to the imprisonments & extrajudicial killings of Tigrayans across cities and towns. Stop #TigrayMassArrests! @SecBlinken
- Neamin Zeleke** (@NeaminZeleke) · Feb 20, 2021: #TPFL's global disinformation continues to mislead the #Intlcommunity & policy makers to put pressure on #PM Abiy's govt. Campaign of deception from Nov. 4th, 2020-Feb 20, 2021 #TPLFisTheCause @POTUS @SecBlinken


Some of the allegation on both sides had been trying not only to attract international attention to their respective causes but also manipulate Twitter algorithms so that they can have noticeable presence in the social media platform. Hence, the information and allegation warfare in this category highlights not only individuals but also the general public or groups in some instances. Here are some of the examples:-


 **Suleiman Abdella** ✓ @SuleimanAbdell7 · Oct 17, 2022 ...
Ethiopian defense forces have begun the liberation of Tigrean people who so far were held hostages by the TPLF. Nonetheless, the TPLF began to spread fabricated stories in order to demonize the ENDF #DisarmTPLF #TPLFisTheCause. @EU_Commission @AJEnglish @AsstSecStateAF


 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Dec 23, 2021 ...
April 2021 to date, 34 Kebeles of #Kemant were burnt by #AmharaForces. The atrocity left at least 4,000 dead, 210,000 homeless, 10,000 refugees in Sudan. @hrw @ifrc @JosepBorrellF #KnowMore aljazeera.com/news/2021/10/6...

 **Neamin Zeleke** ✓ @NeaminZeleke · Feb 20, 2021 ...
#TPLF, an overlord for 27 yrs., organized&sponsored bloody ethnic conflicts to destabilize #Ethiopia, &derail #PM Abiy's reform, prevent consolidation of the 2018 Ethio-Eritrea peace deal. #TPLFistheCause @SecBlinken @SamanthaJPower

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Feb 26, 2021 ...
"Between 19 and 29 November 2020, Eritrean troops operating in the Ethiopian city of Axum, Tigray, committed a series of human rights and humanitarian law violations, including killing hundreds of civilians." #AxumMassacre #TigrayGenocide

 **Seyoum Teshome** ✓ @seyoum_teshome · Aug 4, 2021 ...
TPLF organized the "Samri Death Squad" who stabbed & hacked to death 2000 people in Mai-Kadra town from 9-10 November 2020. The #MaiKadraMassacre is the sole responsibility of #TPLFisaTerroristGroup. #DisarmTPLF @PowerUSAID @UNReliefChief @UNHumanRights


 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Apr 29, 2021 ...
"Old Tigrinya names and signs have been eradicated and replaced with Amhara signs, which is also happening in Raya areas." #TigrayGenocide #AmharaMilitiaOutofTigray @POTUS @SecBlinken @EU_Commission @UN @ChrisCoons @USUN @GerEmbAddis @CNN @hrw @amnesty bit.ly/3aJqjFS

 **Suleiman Abdella** ✓ @SuleimanAbdell7 · Dec 31, 2021 ...
The walking evil TPLF rebels are against spiritual heritage& historical artefacts of whatever sort. They have destroyed Mosques& churches in Afar&Amhara. Burnt and desecrated Holy Quran. What else do we need to assert that #TPLFisawarcriminal? @UNESCO

Some form of allegations emanates from media reports and some research findings of international institutions. Such kind of information intentionally used by both party activists of strengthening and amplifying their own political narration

- Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Jul 18, 2021
Kisanet, a 13-year old girl in Tigray, suffered horrific burns consistent with the use of white phosphorus. @AbiyAhmedAli waged chemical warfare on #ChildrenOfTigray. @NurturingCare @save_children @UNESCO @USAID @WHO @SPOONFoundation @NurturingCare bit.ly/3evF94K
- Neamin Zeleke** @NeaminZeleke · Nov 2, 2022
On the 4th of Nov. 2020, #TPLF #Ethiopia's former overlords slaughtered 1000s of #ENDF. The aim was to march to Addis & return to power. #TPLF digital also started massive cyberwarfare to dupe the #IC. Data-based story on #FakeTigrayGenocide. Déjà vu!!
actfactet.org/post/the-preme...
- Stalin Gebreselassie** @StalinTeklu · Oct 18, 2021
Airforce launches air strike in a market place in #Mekelle city of #Tigray. killed 3, injured dozens and destroyed big civilian investments and buildings.
@nimaelbagir @wdavison10 @RAbdiAnalyst
- Seyoum Teshome** @seyoum_teshome · Nov 1, 2021
Lesson from 11/30/2021 'Tigrayan forces captured Dessie' was how @AFP @BBCWorld @AJEnglish started the fabricated distorted one-sided story without a news source! ETHIOPIANS showed they have a formidable DIGITAL ARMY which is diligent and patriotic! #NoNegotiationWithTplf @AFP
- Alula Solomon** @Alula_Solomon · Dec 14, 2022
#Eritrea is using its Addis Ababa agent EZeMa party to instigate violence and unrest in #Ethiopia to derail peace deal signed between Tigray and federal government.

Institutional including governmental and nongovernmental, religious or organization allegations on both sides are the common strategy for their tweeter agenda. Both parties repeatedly and some of which separately alginiate by those activists in order to get ground the narratives of their supporting entities or parities during the war time.

- Seyoum Teshome** @seyoum_teshome · Oct 25, 2021
#US,#UN,#EU Where is this so called "#Tigray_conflict"? There is no war in Tigray since June 2021 The truth is #TPLF invaded #Amhara & #Afar regions following the withdrawal of the govt forces. YOU failed 2 condemn #TPLF's actions. Ur silence is an approval for #TPLF brutality !!
- Stalin Gebreselassie** @StalinTeklu · Jan 13, 2022
ጤተክርስቲያን ከመስቀል አደባባይ ፖለቲካ ይልቅ አገልጋዮቿን ብቅጥሎ ለምሳሌና ከብር ነበር።
- 
- Translation- it would be better for the faithful if the church rebuked its ministers instead of meskel square politics.*
- Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Sep 23, 2022
Though it may be hard to tell the exact reason for @JosepBorrellF inherent bias against Ethiopia, one thing is sure: he has been consciously ignoring Ethiopia's confidence-building measures and other significant signs of progress on the ground. #DisarmTPLF #TPLFisTheCause



4.3.3. Blame shift or blame game

This strategy used by both activists repeatedly and aggressively. Both parties blame each other, blame someone, blame shift from one direction to the other with different perspectives. The blame game, a concept worth exploring, manifests in personal relationships and professional environments. It entails attributing fault or responsibility to others rather than owning one's actions. This behavior can stem from psychological motives such as the need to protect self-esteem or maintain power dynamics.¹⁴ In this twitter data analysis the blame game employs the psychological winning and being responsible for certain action with regard to the civil war.

The similar characteristics that the research found are the victim mentality and victimization behind each and every blame game assumptions. Thus, the victim mentality is characterized by perceiving oneself as a perpetual victim, constantly facing adversity, and being at the mercy of external circumstances. Those with this mindset often believe that they have little control over their own lives and attribute failures and hardships to uncontrollable factors. This can foster helplessness and a lack of personal responsibility.

¹⁴<http://succeedwithjackwong.com>

Psychological factors play a significant role in adopting the victim mentality. Past experiences of trauma or mistreatment can contribute to this mindset, as individuals may develop a heightened sensitivity to potential threats and view themselves as victims. (Roulet, T.J., & Pichler, R. 2020).


Here are some of the examples that both activists use blame game and blame shift strategies in order to establish certain cases:-

A. Blame game:-





The screenshot shows a vertical thread of seven tweets. Each tweet includes a profile picture, the user's name and handle, the date, and the text of the tweet. The tweets are as follows:

- Suleiman Abdella** (@SuleimanAbdell7) · Oct 5, 2021: UN workers interfering in the internal affairs of #Ethiopia and supporting a terrorist group have no right to stay in [Ethiopia]. @UN should investigate these individuals. @FMCastaldo @ZovkoEU @guetta_en @k_langensiepen @chrimmes @Mariearenaps @michaelgahler @tomastobe @davidmcallister
- Lwam Gidey** (@GideyLwam) · Oct 20, 2021: The most useless & corrupt org, @UN has given a psychopath, @AbiyAhmedAli a green light to eradicate Tigrayans. #Mekelle
- Neamin Zeleke** (@NeaminZeleke) · Oct 7, 2022: Since Nov 2020, #EU has shielded #TPLF's crimes. Unwilling & unable to admit the devastation, horror & terror committed in #Afar #Amhar by bestial #TPLF. Despite #TPLF's 3rd round aggression #EU still bent on heaping blame on the victim. Travesty! @Europarl_EN @JosepBorrellF
- Seyoum Teshome** (@seyoum_teshome) · Sep 18, 2021: Here's how the #TPLF executed & mutilated the bodies of members of #Ethiopia defense forces after the surprise mutinous attack on northern command on Nov 4, 2020; a day that will live in infamy. Impossible to negotiate with the devil. Never again!
- Lwam Gidey** (@GideyLwam) · Apr 18, 2021: Crop fields have been burned down systematically to starve #Tigray|ans for the past 5-months. Any more tolerance for this barbarism is a death sent to millions. #AbiyToICC #TigrayGenocide @SenBooker @SecBlinken @WFP @ChrisCoons @USUN @POTUS
- Seyoum Teshome** (@seyoum_teshome) · Oct 7, 2021: Just as #TPLFTerroristGroup says @EU_Commission blames Ethiopia for the start of the conflict on 4 November 2020 in Tigray! Let the facts speak! Shame on EU! #NoNegotiationWithTplf #TPLFSURRENDERNOW #HandsoffEthiopia #UnityForEthiopia #EUCommissionNotFair
- Suleiman Abdella** (@SuleimanAbdell7) · Dec 7, 2021: There are three terrorists in Ethiopia. One is the @USEmbassyAddis and the other is the TPLF. The third is Shene #NoMore #EthiopiaPrevails


 **Neamin Zeleke** ✓ @NeaminZeleke · Feb 16, 2021 ...
 @HRW's @LaetitiaBader story dated February 11, 2021, titled #ETHIOPIA: UNLAWFUL SHELLING OF #TIGRAY URBAN AREAS' "...is biased, exaggerated, mostly non-factual, & dishonorable.." @amnesty @UNHumanRights
 Global Ethiopian Advocacy Nexus (GLEAN) 📄
eastafricanist.com/2021/02/15/ope...


Blame shift –some of the blame shift strategies rely on tit –for- tat way and some of which focus on scapegoating. Thus, for some allegation of tweet there might be corresponding blame allegation in order to attack the misinformation battle on both sides. The following data can be a good example:-

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Jul 27, 2021 ...
 President of Amhara National Regional State, @AgegnehuT has openly called on national TV for the extermination of all #Tigrayjans, calling them "the enemies of #Ethiopia." #GenocideAlert @hrw @SecBlinken @ChrisCoons @BBCBreaking @cnbrk @AJEnglish @UN

 **Suleiman Abdella** ✓ @SuleimanAbdell7 · Nov 11, 2021 ...
 ኢሽባራው ወያኔ ከኦሞራ ጋር የምናወራርደው ሂሳብ አለን ባለው መልኩ አንዲህ አያወራረድንው። መፍራት ያለብን ግፍ መሰራትን አንጅ ግፍ የሚሰራን አረመኔ ቡድን በፍጹም ልናዝለትና ልንራራለት አይገባም።
 #NoMore
 #TPLFTerroristGroup

Translation- the terrorist TPLF is betting as it said ‘we have a score to bet with Amhara’.What we should be afraid of is committing atrocities and we should never sympathize with the barbaric group that commits atrocities against us.

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Jan 30, 2021 ...
 'The government of Ethiopia, journalists and many humanitarian agencies working in the area told the world that the 1984-1985 famine was primarily due to drought and insect plagues.' @AbiyAhmedAli in 2021 lying about the man-made #FamineOnTigray @POTUS @VP bit.ly/3cp7MjW

 **Neamin Zeleke** ✓ @NeaminZeleke · Feb 13, 2021 ...
 Disinformation & deception are the last dangerous weapon left in the hands of #TPLF elites & their foreign allies who have not accepted the change of govt. & reform in #Ethiopia led by #PM AbiyAhmed since 2018.
 @euopresident

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Apr 19, 2021 ...
 #IsaiasAferki has prepared for #TigrayGenocide for more than 3 decades through forceful conscription. The alliance with @AbiyAhmedAli was Z final chapter of this mission. #AbiyToICC #IsaiasToICC @Haavisto @EU_Commission @MarosSefcovic @Ulkoministerio twitter.com/Eri_Uprising/s...



Seyoum Teshome ✓ @seyoum_teshome · Aug 7, 2021

We have told the world on July 22/2021 that Terrorist TPLF is preparing another conspiracy orchestration against the Ethiopian Government for the international community. Now is loaded #FakeHumeraMassacre #TPLFisaTerroristGroup @PowerUSAID @UN_HRC @SecBlinken...



Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Jul 20, 2021

10-vehicle @WFP convoy was attacked on Sunday about 115 km (70 miles) from the town of Semera while attempting to move essential humanitarian cargo into #Tigray #AllowAccessToTigray @CrisisGroup @SecBlinken @NATO @G7 @NorwayUN @Haavisto @FAIreland ctt.ec/TH2u8+



Neamin Zeleke ✓ @NeaminZeleke · Nov 1, 2020

#Zehabesha, Nov 19, 2019. The leadership underestimated & did not take measures when #TPLF refused to hand in criminals like Getachew Assefa. #TPLF left no stone unturned to come back on state power or destabilize #Ethiopia. Here we are today. [youtube.com/watch?v=Y8ti0P...](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8ti0P...)



Stalin Gebreselassie ✓ @StalinTeklu · Sep 7, 2021

Many 🇪🇹ns think only @AbiyAhmedAli et.al will be accountable for #TigrayGenocide. Z fact is all involved businessmen, religious leaders, artists, journalists, diplomats who supported 🇪🇹 & 🇩🇪 in #TigrayanExterminationProject in any form r included.

4.3.4. Satire and mimicking

One of the strategies both activists' use is satire and mimicking. These strategies mainly focus on the opponent's speech act or any inferences. Satire': a term that evokes an idea of humor as a politically meaningful cultural act. On the other hand, mimicking is imitate someone actions or words, especially in order to entertain or ridicule. The use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and the civil war other topical issues is quiet common style of those activists on both parties. The satire and mimicking strategies' not only expressed in word form but also some form of *emojies*¹⁵and cartoons too to make more satirize.

Here are some of the tweet data related to satire and mimicking –

¹⁵A visual representation of human emotions, living beings, objects and even certain symbols.

A. Mass and institutional base satire


Based on this category selected institution acts and general inferences (undefined designated owner of the information) used to satire narration for both party activists.

Some of the examples attach here with:-


- 
- Alula Solomon** @Alula_Solomon · Dec 13, 2020
Ethiopia is a strange country. Its ministry of peace raises funds in support of the ongoing civil war in the country.
- 
- Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Jan 23, 2022
What does the US Embassy in Addis Ababa say about today's Addis Ababa Street Race? Today, American citizens may be told to leave
- 
- Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Dec 12, 2021
They are even calling every Tigrigna speaker junta. They think Ge'ez is Amharic alphabet smh.

They are commenting their misinformed history. when you have no history to tell, you make up lies!
- 
- Seyoum Teshome** @seyoum_teshome · May 28, 2021
After watching @CNN's fake news campaign against Ethiopia, I started to think that @POTUS has lost the 2020 #US_Election. Now @FoxNews is the reliable source whereas @cnni is the most biased US propoganda outlet!
- 
- Alula Solomon** @Alula_Solomon · Sep 29, 2022
#CNN received Award as Outstanding Research News for its report on Ethiopian Airlines, "Ethiopia : Exposing the Hallmarks of A Genocide"
- 
- Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Jun 17, 2022
ሀውሐት ትግል ሲጀምር ኤምቤትስ አሸዋ ነበረች። ሀውሐት ትግል ሲጀምር ሳኦድ አረቢያ ገና ነጻጅ ይወጣችበት አመት ነበር። ሀውሐት ትግል ሲጀምር ሰሜን ኮሪያ የለችም ነበር። ሀውሐት ትግል ሲጀምር ቻይና የምድራችን ድሃ ተብሎ የምትጠራ አገር ነበረች።


Translation- when TPLF started struggle UAE was sandy. When the TPLF struggle began it was a year when Saudi Arabia had just found oil, when TPLF started struggle North Korea did not exist. When TPLF started struggle china was called the poorest country in the world.

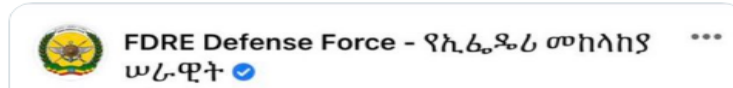
 **Alula Solomon** @Alula_Solomon · Sep 7, 2021
Supporters of the genocidal regime are back to their old rhetoric of "surrender to save your people". I want to remind them things are in a different territory now. At least, we are not on November 4, **2020**.

Btw, that fateful day, November 4, is my date of birth.:(

 **Stalin Gebreselassie** @StalinTeklu · Dec 13, 2021
አንድ ኢትዮጵያ የተዋረደ ዲፕሎማሲ በምድር ተወልዶ ያውቅ ይሆን? በአክቶቬሊትና hash tag @DrTewdrosን ማውረድ የሚቻል ይመስላቸዋል። አሰዳቢዎች! ማፈሪያዎች!


Translation –has a disgraced diplomacy like Ethiopia ever had been born on earth? They think it's possible to take down by the activist and hashtag @DrTewdros. Insulters! Shame on you!

 **Alula Solomon** @Alula_Solomon · Sep 2, 2022
Respected media personalities who work for international media outlets are embarrassed for #Ethiopia 🤔🤔
This is ENDF official Facebook page. They need photoshop expert. 🤔



B. selective individuals and leaders act for satire

Quoting individual's speech or action for the purpose of satire is common practice for both party activists. In this case Pro-TPLF supports mainly use PM Abiy speech and act for their satire narratives, similarly Pro-government supporter activists use Getachew Reda and Debretsion speech acts for their satire narratives. Both similarly includes governmental officers speech act for satire and mimicking purpose too.

 **Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Oct 5, 2022
በወርቅ ሸለቆ ውስጥ የረገፉ የሀወሓት ታጣቂዎችን አይቸ የጌታቸው ረዳን ለታክቲክ አፈገፈማን ወሬ ስለሚሉ አውነትም ህወሓቶች ሞታቸውንም ቢቸሉ አልሞትንም ብለው ይከዳሉ።
#TPLFTerroristGroup #EthiopiaPrevails

Translation- when I heard the news of those militants who lost their life at valley of werke and Getachew reda's we retreated for tactic speech, if they can really TPLF's deny their death even though they really dead.



Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Apr 18, 2021

The @AbiyAhmedAli led administration might be the only government in history to allow foreign troops to massacre, rape, torment, & displace citizens of its own country. #TigrayGenocide #AbiyToICC @EU_Commission @UN @SecBlinken @ChrisCoons @SenBooker @antonioguterres @USAmbUN



Neamin Zeleke @NeaminZeleke · Jul 30, 2022

Here it is on Oct 8, 2021, On Gen Tsadkan "Africa's Top Military strategist.", according to @WorldPeaceFdn's Alex De Waal, a scholar turned propagandist of the #TPLFTerroristGroup @mosaleg @AlexanderTekie @tsearaja



Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Jun 23, 2021

"Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed plunged Ethiopia into a war in the Tigray region that spawned atrocities and famine. On Monday, his country goes to the polls." #TigrayGenocide @ChrisCoons @POTUS @TheDailyShow @G7 @CNN @FRANCE24 @BBCWorld @SecBlinken nyti.ms/3xK2lxX



Alula Solomon @Alula_Solomon · Dec 4, 2021

CNN should apologize us for letting the world know we were in Mekelle back in June 2021. - Billene Seyoum 😊

C. Prominent individuals outside the country and related issues

In this category prominent individuals whom their speech aligned with the civil war are selected and both party activists use related issues with regard to the civil war narration for satire purpose.



Seyoum Teshome @seyoum_teshome · Oct 3, 2021

Mr. Shock, we invite you to come to #Ethiopia, #AddisAbaba, and be our Guest for the Coronation Ceremony of Dr. Abiy Ahmed that's to be held on Monday, the 4th of October 2021. Let's know your reply so that we can reserve a seat for you !! @antonioguterres



Alula Solomon @Alula_Solomon · Jun 18, 2021

What's election for a man whose ascension to power considered as an outcome of 'Divine intervention', for a man who claims his mother dubbed him as 7th king of #Ethiopia ?

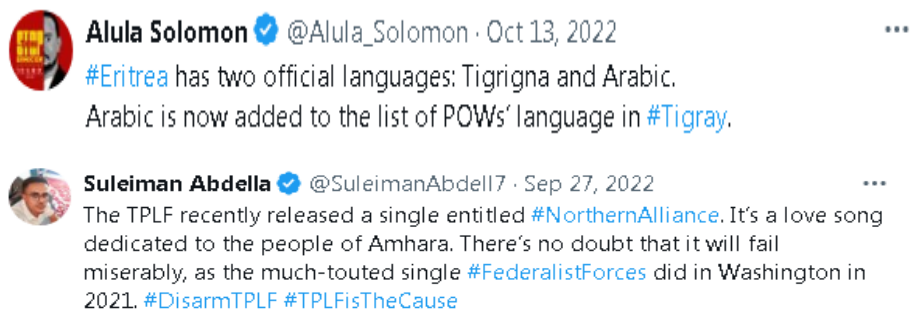
"What election?" - Isaias Afeworki
#Amhara Election 2021



Neamin Zeleke @NeaminZeleke · Oct 4, 2022

Replying to @NeaminZeleke

Another big cruel joke. The war started two years before Nov 3, 2020. The Abays, Seyoums, & big #TPLF bosses took turns to berate & undermined the reform starting in 2018. Several measures & steps of #TPLF to destabilize & make #Ethiopia ungovernable. 5/6




4.3.5. Conspiracy


Through this manipulation strategy both party activists try to create their own supporting narratives to pertinent supporters. Belief in conspiracy theories appears to be driven by motives that can be characterized as epistemic (understanding one's environment), existential (being safe and in control of one's environment), and social (maintaining a positive image of the self and the social group).¹⁶

This conspiracy techniques in the twitter hemisphere creates on both directions based on assumption, guess, speculative, own rhetoric's, political agenda as well as 'we know our enemies psychology' and strategy very well thinking. Some of the comparative tweets from both sides are attached here:-




¹⁶ Douglas, K. M., Sutton, R. M., & Cichocka, A. (2017). The psychology of conspiracy theories. *Current directions in psychological science*, 26(6), 538-542


 **Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Oct 21, 2022
Why every time ENDF makes a substantial move on the ground by liberating lands from TPLF militia, everyone starts like being concerned about a crisis, some going even far as to call the war spiraling out of control! #DisarmTPLF

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Apr 18, 2021
Crop fields have been burned down systematically to starve #Tigray|ans for the past 5-months. Any more tolerance for this barbarism is a death sent to millions. #AbiyToICC #TigrayGenocide @SenBooker @SecBlinken @WFP @ChrisCoons @USUN @POTUS


 **Seyoum Teshome** @seyoum_teshome · Oct 7, 2021
Just as #TPLFTerroristGroup says @EU_Commission blames Ethiopia for the start of the conflict on 4 November 2020 in Tigray! Let the facts speak! Shame on EU! #NoNegotiationWithTplf #TPLFSURRENDERNOW #HandsoffEthiopia #UnityForEthiopia #EUCommissionNotFair

 **Stalin Gebreselassie** @StalinTeklu · Jan 11, 2022
ለን @AndargachewTse2 በጎንቡት ትርክት @AbiyAhmedAli በትግራይ ላይ ጦርነት ሲከፍት የትግራይን ታሪክ የራሳቸው መሰረታቸው ነው። ትግራይ በሚመጥናቸው ልክ ትስማማቸው የሰበረቸው ታሪካን ሲለምታውቅና በተግባር ሲለምታላይ ነው።


Translation- when Abiy begun war based on andargachew tsege's rhetoric, they think Tigray's history as their own. But Tigray breaks their moral accordingly because Tigray knows own history and done it practically

 **Seyoum Teshome** @seyoum_teshome · Jun 14, 2021
ከግንቦት 2019 - መስከረም 2020 ባለው ጊዜ የአሁኑ የአጭሪ ተገዳሪ የአሜሪካ ልዩ መልዕክተኛ የሚመራው ከግብርና ለጥፎ ጉዳይ አሜሪካ በአካባቢው የምትከተለውን ስትራቴጂ ነደፈ። አሁን ተግባራዊ አዩታደረገ ያለው ይህ ስትራቴጂ ነው።
youtu.be/qfFhZ_oBI_A

Translation -from May 2019 to September 2020 ,a senior research team led by current US special envoy to horn of Africa, draw the following strategy. Currently this strategy is implementing

 **Stalin Gebreselassie** @StalinTeklu · Nov 26, 2021
ትግራይ በአብይ፣ በአገረው ተሻግሮና በኤርትራ በአለም ተወዳዳሪ የሌለው ግጥና ወረራ ሲፈጸምበት "ኤርትራ አልገባችም" ብላቸው የሙጥኝ ያላቸው ኢትዮጵያውያን ከሆላቸው "ይቅርታ" በሉጉ ካልሆነ #TDF ሀገር ማስከበር ላይ ነውና ለሀገር ብትገዙ ይሻላል።

Translation-when Tigray experiences world's unparallel violence and atrocities committed by Abiy, Agegnehu Teshager and Eritrea, and those Ethiopians whom said 'Eritrea is not present', if you can - say 'sorry ' otherwise TDF is on the process of law enforcement and better to obey for law -

 **Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Oct 13, 2022
ለኛ አንድ መንግስት አንድ ወታደር አንድ ህዝብ አንድ አገር ነው ያለን።ዕቅድ የEthiopia መንግስትና የEthiopia ሀገር የEthiopia Defense ኢትዮጵያ የምትባል አገር ናቸው። ቴዎድሮስ ወታደርና የትግራይ መንግስት የሚባል መንግስት አናውቀውም።

Translation-We have one government, one soldier, one people and one country. Ethiopian government, Ethiopian law and Ethiopian defense and Ethiopia. We don't know TDF and Tigray government.

4.3.6. Amplify

This strategy very important in order to stress a sort of information to the wider audience. It is also important to increase the reach and visibility of content on the internet. Strategically both parties' activists' uses this strategy by amplifying individuals, special occasions, news releases, any information published or printed with the importance of their knowledge or agenda.

The amplifying techniques in both directions have certain similarities but also have wide difference interims of emphasis. Thus, Pro-TPLF activists amplify more on analysts, individuals like US senators, as well as news sources. Whereas, Pro-government activists the main amplifying issues are on certain countries and some individuals. Moreover, amplifying global TPLF conspiracy narratives is the main theme. Some data shows Pro -government supporters also shared information from state-affiliated media outlets as part of their amplify campaigns.

The following twitter data can reveal the difference:-

A. Amplifying individuals or country for the sake of own mission support:-



Alula Solomon @Alula_Solomon · Oct 14, 2022
Great servant of the voiceless. Thank you, Congressman Brad Sherman!

Congressman Brad Sherman @BradSherman · Oct 13, 2022
Spoke directly to @POTUS #Biden today regarding potential genocide in #Tigray. He is very well aware of the situation and is open to hear my ideas on how to respond, particularly to pressure #Eritrea to withdraw troops.


Neamin Zeleke @NeaminZeleke · Jul 21, 2021
Thank you @BronwynBruton. For 2 decades, I struggled for democracy against a brutal minority dictatorship. I withdrew from politics in 2019. My only reason for coming back in Nov. 2020: because I know #TPLF in & out, an org & mindset that poses an existential threat to #Ethiopia.

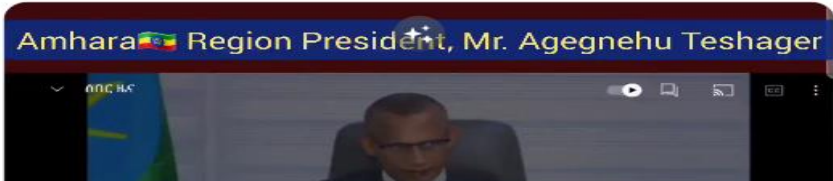
Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Jan 4, 2022
Please amplify! @RAbdiAnalyst @martinplaut @KjetilTronvoll @jworldwatch @WorldPeaceFdn @daddyhope #Tigray



-  **Seyoum Teshome** ✓ @seyoum_teshome · Oct 10, 2021 ...
 @HermelaTV is now in the league of journalists Maria Ressa and Dmitry Andreyevich Muratov that were awarded the **2021** Nobel Peace Prize recently! All three are speaking against tyranny! @HermelaTV circumstance being more daunting! #HandsoffEthiopia #UnityForEthiopia
-  **Alula Solomon** ✓ @Alula_Solomon · Nov 10, 2022 ...
 Thank you, Ireland 🇮🇪
 The situation in #Tigray has not changed since the signing of CoHA in South Africa.
-  **Suleiman Abdella** ✓ @SuleimanAbdell7 · Aug 29, 2021 ...
 Turkey, Russia, China India, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, South Sudan, & some others ❤️ we #Ethiopians have great respect for you all for truly stand with the truth. #TPLFTerroristGroup #SaluteErdoğan @MFATurkey @RTErdogan @trpresidency @EU_Commission @eu_echo @MFATurkey...
-  **Neamin Zeleke** ✓ @NeaminZeleke · Nov 21, 2022 ...
 The bestial #TPLF should honor the #SA peace deal. #TPLF has been the enemy of the Ethiopian people pre- **2018** & Nov 3, 2020. In contrast, #Eritrea has been a friend in need & friend indeed in the darkest hrs. Peace cannot prevail at #Amarha #Eritrea's expense PM @AbiyAhmedAli
-  **Seyoum Teshome** ✓ @seyoum_teshome · Oct 5, 2021 ...
 The day the popular Ethiopian rebellion against the TPLF dictatorship won! A Historical Day! !#newbeginnings Addis Ababa October 4, **2021** #ክብር_ሰጥሎ #UnityForEthiopia! #TPLFSURRENDERNOW

B. Amplifying any news source and video footages-

Amplify selected speech act and media outlet report With regard to the preferred narrative is one form of Pro- TPLF activist’s style of tweet. On the other hand, amplifying and Allegations of TPLF disinformation became a central feature of the Pro-government activists. Hence, both parties typically try to amplify leaked documents, videos and audios for the sake of their own rhetoric.


 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Jul 25, 2021 ...
 🚨🚨🚨 #GenocideAlert
 President of #Amhara National Regional State, @AgegnehuT has openly called on national TV for the extermination of all #Tigray|ans, calling them "the enemies of #Ethiopia."
 @SecBlinken @StateDept @UN @hrw



 **Suleiman Abdella**  @SuleimanAbdell7 · Sep 9, 2021 ...

ሦስተኛው መልዕክት
 Destroying schools and hospitals is a war crime". Athlete Halie Gebreselasie spoke after the school he built in the rural area of Amhara was destroyed by
 #TPLFTerroristGroup
 #TPLFattackingSchools
 #TheGenocid @UN @USAID @SecBlinken @HSHskMohd

Translation- third message


 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Apr 18, 2021 ...



|@SecBlinken mentions ethnic cleansing in #Tigray
 @AbiyAhmedAli's admin denies the allegation
 @SecBlinken demands #EritreanTroopsOutofTigray @AbiyAhmedAli
 promises troops will evacuate Troops continue to murder civilians as of today.
 #Enough empty promises. #AbiyToICC

 **Suleiman Abdella**  @SuleimanAbdell7 · Sep 1, 2022 ...

Retweet በግንደረግ ተደራሽ አናድርገው።
 #TPLF continues vacillating between victim and victor.
 A statement by Government Communication Affairs on current affairs
 @CherneyAmharaTV @SpokespersonCHN @MohamedBinZayed
 @KingSalman @AsstSecStateAF @BBC
 @UN @antonioguterres

Translation- retweet for high reach



 Lwam Gidey reposted

 **Stand With Tigray**  @SWTigray · Oct 6, 2021 ..



NEW REPORT: "#Ethiopia's government has used the country's flagship commercial airline to shuttle weapons to and from neighboring #Eritrea during the civil war in Ethiopia's #Tigray region, @CNN investigation has found."
 @amnesty @UN @SecBlinken @POTUS
 cnn.com/2021/10/06/afr...



C. Amplify some sort of leaked video, audio or document-



Through this strategy both party activists' tries to impose and impress supporters with first hand source and uses for the sake of own narrative strengthen purposeful strategy. Here are some of examples:-



 **Stalin Gebreselassie**  @StalinTeklu · Jun 17, 2021 ...

New footage of #Ethiopian soldiers executing innocent civilians in #Tigray.
 #StopTigrayGenocide
 #TigrayGenocide #TigrayCantWait


 **Neamin Zeleke**  @NeaminZeleke · Feb 1, 2021
 #Federal police evidence of 90-page documents has details of #TPLF's plan to march on #Addis Ababa to remove the #Federal govt of #Ethiopia within 3 months. @law_dd !  x.com/law_dd/status/...

 **Alula Solomon**  @Alula_Solomon · May 31, 2021
 In a leaked audio by Kello media, @AbiyAhmedAli declared, to his party executive members, that he won the June 05, 2021 election. 😊 Yes June 05, 2021 😊 The #Ethiopia prime minister also stated that he won't leave office for the coming 10 years.

 **Neamin Zeleke**  @NeaminZeleke · Dec 25, 2020
 #Global community must be clear on the genesis of conflict #Tigray. #Ethiopia. Prof. Jen Abbnick's article sheds light in contrast to foreign experts with agenda or allied to #TPLF's criminal clique. Compare to #PM Abiy's article. @BronwynBruton



 **Stalin Gebreselassie**  @StalinTeklu · Feb 15, 2022
 በሚስጥር የተቀረጸው የቡልቡላ ወታደራዊ ማሰልጠኛ youtu.be/MhO1nyZE8o0 via @YouTube

Translation-Secretly recorded bulbula military training center-

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Mar 14, 2021
 "Eritrean armed forces massacred scores of civilians, including children as young as 13, in the historic town of Axum in Ethiopia's Tigray region in November 2020, @hrw said" @SecBlinken @POTUS #Eritrean soldiers won't leave just by asking. Military intervention is a must.

4.3.7. Undermine

Undermining opponents and undermine witness credibility is the other strategy which used by both party activists. Thus, by undermining the opponent capacity to do or information they provide, the other party will benefit the winning psychology in other perspectives. This technique use a vice versa approach as disgracing and dehumanizing or undermining the enemy, glorifying oneself in other ways.

 **Stalin Gebreselassie**  @StalinTeklu · Dec 5, 2021
 ከምር ግን ግንድን ከጎረቤት ጋር ገዝግዝህ ሰባብረህ በደስታ ጮሎ ስትረግጥ አንተ ቅርንጫፍና ቅጠል ላይ ተንጠልጥሰህ ዘና ብላህ ምንም ልንዳልተፈጠረ ምንም ልንዳልበደልክ ለመምሰል መተወን ይመረጣል? የግንድ ለሀይይ አታውቅም? ምኑን አይተህ? ገና!

Translation – when you cut and break down the trunk with your neighbor you feel very happy. But really you want to hang on to branches and leaves then relaxed and pretend that nothing happened? I think you don't know the characteristics of trunk? So far you have see nothing! Wait for it!



Suleiman Abdella @SuleimanAbdell7 · Sep 8, 2022

...

በአዲስ አበባ ውስጥ የተገኘ የህወሃት ሽብር ቡድን የሰው ሴትን ጭምር እንደ መጋዘን ሲጠቀምበት የነበረ ምሆኑን የሚያሳይ ነው።
ከዚህም በተጨማሪ የሽብር ቡድን ዱቄት ሊጠፍ እና የበሰለ ምግብ ከህዝቡ በማዳኛ ይወስድ ነበር

Translation – indication that TPLF's terrorist group strong hold enemy's adaraqai front used a person's house as a warehouse. In addition the terrorist group forcibly took flour, dough and cooked food from the people.



Alula Solomon @Alula_Solomon · Aug 17, 2022

...

After starting the shelling on TDF strongholds in Western Tigray front on August 15, 2022, #Ethiopia (Abiy) has released a statement today demanding permanent ceasefire to fool the International Community.



Neamin Zeleke @NeaminZeleke · Nov 23, 2022

...

A plethora of evidence #TPLF's bloody records of 27 long yrs. terror & plunder; looting #Ethiopia bone dry. Another round of terror, destruction & rape of #Amhara #Afar on Nov 3rd. 2020. Aim? March to Addis & return to overlordship. The pathological tyrants are now in disarray.



Stalin Gebreselassie @StalinTeklu · Nov 5, 2022

...

Facts on #Tigray. #TPLF is political party, doesn't own army. #Ethiopia still fighting in Tigray allying with 🇪🇪, looting & killing civilians. #TDF Generals weren't briefed properly about the signed doc. Not sure if TPLF CC is briefed well.



Neamin Zeleke @NeaminZeleke · Oct 14, 2022

...

The reason for bestial #TPLF starting the war, no longer able to suck the country blood dry after 2018 with an unbridled pillage where 10000s of #TPLF Tigrayans who came bare footed became millionaires, at the expense of Ethiopian people 🇪🇪 including @IMF & @WBG loans



Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Jul 4, 2021

...

After humiliating defeat in #Tigray, the #Ethiopia fascist government has started mass arrest of Tigrayans all over the country. @amnesty must inquire the whereabouts of the 1000s of civilians before it is too late.
#TigrayMassArrest #TigrayGenocide
@SecBlinken @USAmbUN @UN



Alula Solomon @Alula_Solomon · Jun 7, 2021


...


The June 21, 2021 'Amhara Election' will go down in history as an event that hugely contributed to the disintegration of #Ethiopia. Mark my word!
#ShamElection

4.3.8. Warning


Through this technique both activists try to warn and give due attention to their target audience and supporters on certain issue with regard to the civil war. Some warning information's targeting not only the real audience but also serving as news tip for those concerned on other ways. Here are some examples:-


 **Stalin Gebreselassie** @StalinTeklu · Dec 8, 2020 ...
 One thing for sure @AbiyAhmedAli didn't calculate is #Tigray people won't be/never been led without their will in history. No peace in #Tigray, no peace, security and development in #Ethiopia.
[#StopTheWarOnTigray](#)

 **Seyoum Teshome** @seyoum_teshome · Oct 3, 2021 ...
 [ATTENTION] September 14, 2021
 AP Fact Check says "The UN agency confirmed that none of its vehicles had been seized by rebels."
 original link @ bit.ly/3A8efb4
 archived link @ bit.ly/3mdPjtQ
[@iyoba4u](#) [@DanielsonKassa1](#)


 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Oct 24, 2021 ...
 🚩: @AbiyAhmedAli once again launching airstrike in Mekelle, the capital city of Tigray targeting civilians. There has been no tangible action from the Int'l Community to end this human toll. We demand #NoFlyZoneInTigray.
[@SecBlinken](#) [@UN](#) [@hrw](#) [@amnesty](#)

 **Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Nov 17, 2021 ...
 Trying to ride the #TPLF horse against over 115M people in Ethiopia in order to advance ur national interest will never be successful, after what we have seen in the reign of terror in 27 yrs. #Ethiopian|s all over have said loud and clear #NoMore to the minority fascists.

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Apr 17, 2021 ...
 The chaos in Ethiopia brought on by the conflict in Oromia, Benishangul-Gumuz and the #TigrayGenocide has affected regional stability in the horn. It will also affect international security. Put a stop to #WarLordAbiy & #DictatorIssayas. @cnni @IntlCrimCourt @POTUS

 **Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Oct 28, 2022 ...
 Is the US a negotiator or an observer in the AU-led peace talks in South Africa? We still remember what they did to Ethiopia in the GERD talks, appearing as observers. Be impartial or leave us alone. #DisarmTPLF
[#TPLFisTheCause](#) [@SFRCdems](#) [@SenateForeign](#)

Some level of warning intentionally serves to create psychological as well as physical cautions. Such kind of warning use like double blade knife, since the warning directly or indirectly tells to do something by the name of caution. The following data can be good examples:-

 **Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Sep 8, 2022 ...
 መሬት ላይ ባለው ነገር ለንግር ለንግር ለንግር ለንግር፡፡ ብዙም ለንግር መካከል በዚህ ወላጅ ሰዓት ግን ከኢትዮጵያ ገን መሆን ብቻ አይደለም 24 ሰዓት ለኢትዮጵያ መስራት ያስፈልጋል፡፡ በሁሉም የአውሮፓ ከተሞች ጠንካራ የሆነ ሰላማዊ ሰልፍና የትዊተር ሀሽታግ ማድረግ አለብን

Translation-don't be mistaken by something on the ground.let's not brag too much,but in this critical time ,it is not just about being on ethiopia's side, it is

necessary to work for ethiopia 24 hours a day. We have to have peaceful rallies and hashtag campaign in all european cities.

Lwam Gidey reposted



Stand With Tigray @SWTigray · Sep 8, 2021

ALARMING: "People living in camps after being displaced by conflict were receiving "no aid" and host communities were running out of food, it said."

@WFP @USAmbUN @UNOCHA @UNOSAPG

ACT NOW. #AirDropFoodToTigray



Seyoum Teshome @seyoum_teshome · Sep 15, 2021

Replying to @seyoum_teshome

at a time when the nation could spiral into further conflict, putting the entire stability of the Horn of Africa at risk."

Fighting broke out between the TPLF and Ethiopian government forces in November 2020 when TPLF attacked one of the federal military bases in Tigray.



Stalin Gebreselassie @StalinTeklu · Feb 18, 2022

ትግራይ የማትደራደርበቻው

1. የትግራይ ስራዌት አንዳል ይቀጥላል።
2. ዳር ድንበቻ ከጦርነቱ በፊት ወደ ነበረበት ይመለሳል
3. የኤርትራ ስራዌት ከሁሉም የትግራይ ግዛቶች መውጣት
4. የትግራይ Referendum
5. በትግራይ ላይ ወንጀል የፈፀሙ ተጠያቂ ይሆናሉ

Translation-non negotiable Tigray's positions

1. The Tigray army will continue to exist
2. The border will be restored to its pre-war status
3. Withdrawal of Eritrean army from all territories of Tigray
4. Tigray referendum
5. Those who committed crime against Tigray will be held accountable



Alula Solomon @Alula_Solomon · Jan 20, 2021

Tegarul

Those who supported war on Tigray, they don't qualify to shake your hands, let alone to be your friends or religious leaders, to have social (marriage) and business ties.

Btw, thank you for vigorously implementing the calls I made back in November, 2020.



Suleiman Abdella @SuleimanAbdell7 · Sep 13, 2022

TPLF poses grave danger to Ethiopia's national security by launching the third invasion into the neighboring Amhara and Afar regions with a large number of fighters, aligning with foreign actors and fomenting disturbances in different parts of the country. #DisarmTPLF



Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Sep 12, 2021

Tigray is still under siege with no access to telecom, internet, electricity, banks and the blocking of humanitarian aid to starve the population of Tigray as a whole is in effect. #WeWillNeverForget the atrocities committed on our people. @UNOSAPG

4.3.9. Capitalize for social media trends

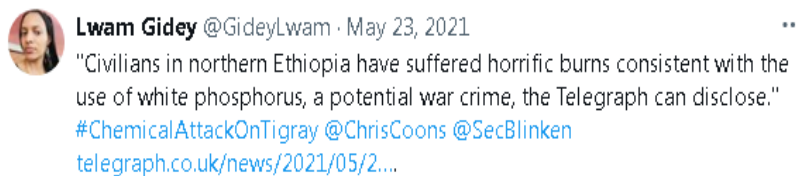
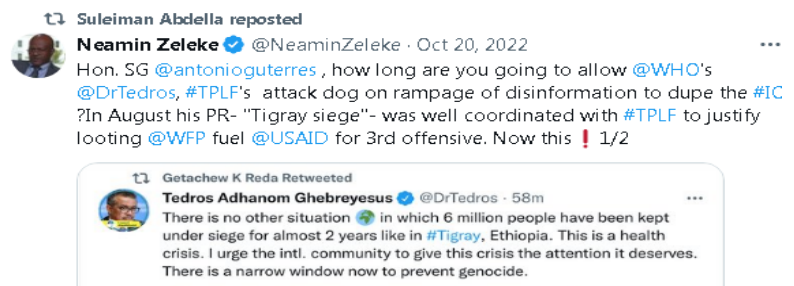
This technique is widely used by both parties. This is one of the dominant characteristics of the social media campaign, hence, in social media, a Trend refers to a post, topic, or an idea that is hyped or popularized for a certain period of time. This is determined by the


number of times that internet users posted, discussed, talked about, or shared contents related to the topic.


It is also a strategy to maximize the impact of certain speech segment, news report, audio video speeches or any mistakes done by the opponent's side. It helps to stay relevant and keep the message top-of-mind with the target audience. Besides, Creating content around a trending topic makes more likely to reach a wider audience, as trending is the main currency for each tweet. Hence, during the civil war many hashtags created based on this assumptions. Both Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists use intensively to achieve the trend option in the tweeter battlefield.

They also use different techniques to achieve the goal. –


A. Media reports, tweets and inferences capitalize techniques:-




 **Seyoum Teshome** @seyoum_teshome · Oct 5, 2021 ...
@AFP History is made in Addis Ababa on October 4, 2021, #Ethiopia won the Diplo war! A day in the history of Africa where AFRICA slammed the door on the face of neocolonialism! #NoNegotiationWithTplf #ኢዲሲ_ምዕራፍ #UnityForEthiopia! #newbeginnings #TPLFSURRENDERNOW

 **Alula Solomon** @Alula_Solomon · Dec 2, 2022 ...
Eritrean forces still killing #Tigray civilians, report says | AP News
apnews.com/article/africa...


 **Neamin Zeleke** @NeaminZeleke · Mar 29, 2021 ...
#Tigray Police Man sexually attacked more than 50 women (including married women), was released within 12 hrs paying to 100 USD bail is a common occurrence. #TMH revealed in 2019 #EritreaPrevails #EthiopiaPrevails @NicolaADeMarco @jgmariner @afp @AP #TplfLies #AxumFiction

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Jun 19, 2021 ...
A NYT Investigation alleged that rape is being used as a weapon of war in #Tigray. Explicitly describing several cases of GBV that are reported. Highlighting intentions of armed forces to prevent women from giving birth. #BelieveBlackWomen @RaquelWillis_ ctt.ec/75u6E+

 **Seyoum Teshome** @seyoum_teshome · Oct 3, 2021 ...
6) ኢትዮጵያ የሀውሐትን ወታደሮችን የሚያመለክሱ ተሽከርካሪዎች ላይ የሎን ምርመራ ለማድረግ በትግራይ ቴሺ በ ኦገስት 30/2021 የተሰጠውን የአማርኛ ሽዜናቸውን መመልከት ይረዳል (ይህንን ሺዲዮ ከታች ተመልከቱ)

Translation-For those who are interested to research the truck logo which transport TPLF soldiers, it is better to watch Tigray's TV Amharic news which transmitted on august 30/2021.check below this video .


 **Stalin Gebreselassie** @StalinTeklu · Jun 16, 2021 ...
13-yrs-young Kisanet is a victim of white phosphorus chemical in #Ethiopia's #TigrayGenocide. @AbiyAhmedAli of #Ethiopia & its ally #Eritrea have killed tens of thousands in Tigray War. @nimaebagir @wdavison10

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Apr 30, 2021 ...
'#Ethiopia has swept up thousands of ethnic #Tigrayans into detention centers across the country on accusations that they are traitors, often holding them for months and without charges, the AP has found.'
@UN @SecBlinken @hrw @POTUS #EthnicityisnotaCrime bit.ly/3t5FVdl

B. Capitalize prominent individuals and politicians' speech

This technique serves as due attention certain prominent and non prominent individuals or interties inferences towards the main target of the civil war. Both party activists use this technique repeatedly for the sake of own narrative.


 **Alula Solomon** @Alula_Solomon · Dec 9, 2022
 Here one of Eritrea's puppets in #Ethiopia. He referred Oromiya's flag as ragtag "ቡትቶ".
 EZeMa is Eritrea's representative in Ethiopia. Their hatred towards Oromo is unparalleled.


 **Ephrem Madebo** @GTWTW_Now · Dec 8, 2022
 የኢትዮጵያን Flag አውርዶ የራሱን ቡቱቱ ሲሰቅል ግራዚያኒን የተጡ ጅግኖች የልጅ ሰጾች ባሉበት Cityውስጥ ተመሳሳይ ይቅርታ የግንደት አገራዊ ወንጀል መፈፀም አንደ ግራዚያኒ ያስተገልጻል ዛሬም በሜሊያን የሚቆጠሩ የግንስ አሰገዶዎች አብርሃም ደብረመኝ አሉ።


Translation-


When the heroes who punished Graziani when he took down the Ethiopian flag and hanged his own boot, committing the same unforgivable national crime in the city where the children live, will be punished like Graziani.

 **Neamin Zeleke** @NeaminZeleke · Dec 3, 2022
 @TiborPNagyJr you said in Nov. of 2020, #TPLF started the war to return to undue power & privilege, on @BBC. You @SecPompeo were on record that #TPLF attacked #Eritrea to internationalize the conflict. 1/2

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Oct 17, 2021
 'God have mercy': #Tigray residents describe life under siege @amnesty @SecBlinken @UNHumanRights apnews.com/article/ethiop...

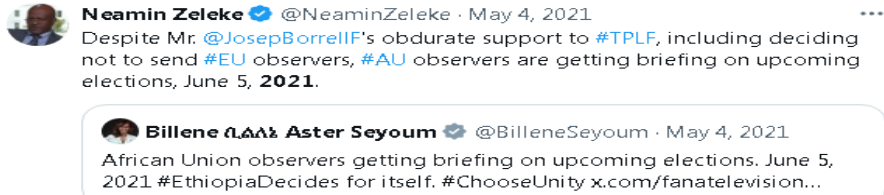
 **Neamin Zeleke** @NeaminZeleke · Nov 1, 2022
 No peace "...until we overthrow govt.. working to destroy their capacity.. we will continue until we remove them.." Among delusional & pathological cabal @reda_getachew revealed the stated aim of the bestial #TPLF, overthrow the Federal govt. 2020/21 #DisarmTPLF @HermelaTV

 **Seyoum Teshome** @seyoum_teshome · Oct 3, 2021
 @OCHA_Ethiopia እና @WFP_Ethiopia
 The mysterious aid trucks of @UNEthiopia and @WFP being clearly used by #TPLF
 1) 16 Sept 2021 @UNEthiopia 466 ጭነት መኪናዎች ወደ ትግራይ ሄደው 38 ብቻ መመለሳቸውን፣ 428 መኪናዎች መሠወራቸውን ገልጸዋል! ብዙዎቹ ሁለት ወር ሆኗቸዋል

 **UN Ethiopia** @UNEthiopia · Sep 16
 Concerning. None of the 149 trucks in the convoy that reached #Mekelle

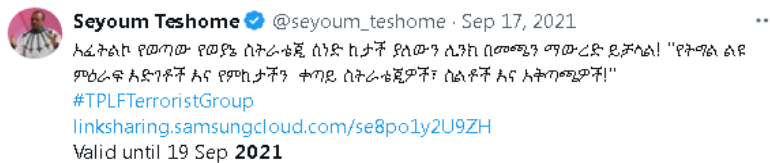
Translation- 1/16 Sep 2021 UN Ethiopia says 466 trucks were traveled to Tigray only 38 returned, 428 trucks have been disappeared. Most of them are disappeared two months ago.

 **Alula Solomon** @Alula_Solomon · Dec 23, 2022
 US Congressman calls for sanctions on Ethiopian Airlines over alleged role in #Tigray conflict | News24

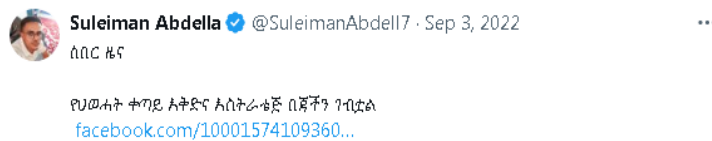


C. Revealing leaked document

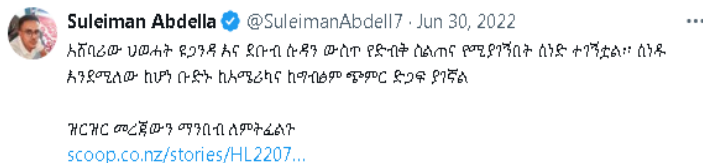
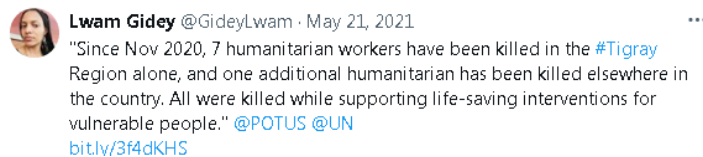
Similar to amplifying techniques, revealing leaked document, uses in order to create meaningful narration and tip other media outlets. In some instances revealing leaked documents and information serves to refute opponent's propaganda or information:-. The following data source indicates this:-



Translation- the leaked TPLF strategy document can be downloaded by clicking the link below! 'Special phase of the struggle and the next strategies, strategies and directions of our future!'.



Translation- Breaking news. We found TPLF next plan and strategy




Translation- We found secret document which states terrorist TPLF'S training place at Uganda and the Sudan. The document also states this clique got support from US and Egypt too.

 **Seyoum Teshome** ✓ @seyoum_teshome · Oct 3, 2021 ...
In a very important part of his press briefing in response to the above-mentioned rumors on 3 August 2021, @UNReliefChief, UN's humanitarian chief, said that the "blanket accusations" of humanitarian aid workers need to stop because..
borkena.com/2021/10/01/a-u...


4.3.10. Targeted harassment


Both parties use this technique similarly by targeting individuals, institutions or any news outlets, which oppose their narrative and harass accordingly. Through, this strategy aligned with a tit for tat method use effectively. One of which appreciate, the other party will harass accordingly.

The following data indicates the sphere of individual targeted harassment strategies:- for Pro-government activists repeatedly mention and harass accordingly are:- Dr. Tedros, Getachew Reda, Nima Elbagir , Lucy Berhe, General Tsadkan, Rashid Abdi, Martin Plaut, Alex de Wall, Declan Walsh, Kjetil Tronvoll, etc.

 **Neamin Zeleke** ✓ @NeaminZeleke · Mar 19, 2021 ...
Tragic madness. #Gen. Tsadkan is said to be among a few broadminded #TPLF senior leaders. He was kicked out by Meles Zenawi in 2001. He had time to read, get a master's degree from #GWU, & reflect on the wrong path of the regime as reflected in some of his writings pre-2018.

 **Neamin Zeleke** ✓ @NeaminZeleke · Sep 13, 2022 ...
In Nov. 2021, Mr. Super clairvoyant "predicted" that the #TPLF and #OLA will march to Addis, victorious and triumphant. This time around mercenary is hallucinating on the burial ground of his patron, the #TPLF.

 **Rashid Abdi** @RAbdiAnalyst · Sep 12, 2022
They have come up with another dumbass slogan - "disarm TPLF".

 **Suleiman Abdella** ✓ @SuleimanAbdell7 · Oct 8, 2021 ...
CNN has lost its credibility as paid-to-lie journalists such as @nimaelbagir concoct fake news to harm #Ethiopia. The incident that happened in 2018 is shamefully& deliberately reported to have happened in 2021 by @CNN to mislead the world. #ThefakeCNNreport
@POTUS @SecBlinken

 **Seyoum Teshome** ✓ @seyoum_teshome · Oct 9, 2021 ...
Winner of #FakeNewsAwards, 2021
@nimaelbagir, @CNN

Suleiman Abdella @SuleimanAbdell7 · Dec 15, 2021
 WHO under Tewodros Adhanom (former TPLF exe've member) leadership is acting against the core values of integrity& professionalism. Health centers vandalized by TPLF rebels in Amhara& Afar are neglected& brushed aside by WHO bcuz of the partiality of its leader.
[#StandforWHOvalues](#)

Neamin Zeleke @NeaminZeleke · Oct 8, 2021
 Here comes #Alex De Waal's "Africa's top mill. strategist". Gen. Tsadkan, who vowed that #TPLF forces & #childsoldiers, will march & capture Addis, is once again hoodwinked #TPLF diaspora, begging for money, promises #Tigrayprevails & victory. @antonioguterres @USAmbUN @PowerUSAID

Suleiman Abdella @SuleimanAbdell7 · Aug 31, 2022
 The shameless #TPLFTerroristGroup spokesperson @reda_getachew demands food aid, fuel, and banking services from #Ethiopia's federal government, despite its actions of stealing aid and fuel for the people of Tigray. AUDACITY! #TPLFisTheCause #DisarmTPLF @WFPChief @PowerUSAID

Seyoum Teshome @seyoum_teshome · Oct 5, 2021
 @declanwalsh Declan @nytimes @CNN are all crying #Ethiopia is moving on! October 4, 2021, Addis Ababa-against neocolonialism!#ኢ.ዲ.ሲ_ምዕራፍ
[#UnityForEthiopia!](#) Long Live #Ethiopia! #newbeginnings
[#TPLFSURRENDERNOW](#)


Suleiman Abdella @SuleimanAbdell7 · Oct 20, 2022
 There is time for everything! It is time for DG of WHO to stop enabling the Terrorist TPLF in destroying the people in Tigray! True colors come out! @iyoba4u @Sultan_Abagissa @NeaminZeleke #DisarmTPLF!




Similarly Pro-TPLF activists also select individuals to harass repeatedly among which:-
 Dr. Abiy, Agegnehu Teshager, Redwan Hussein, Isaias Afewrki, Daniel Kibret and some prominent individuals and officials also in this category:-

Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Aug 21, 2021
 These seven individuals helped orchestrate the #TigrayGenocide: Birtukan Mideksa, @ashenafi_meaza, @BilleneSeyoum, Daniel Kibret, Temesgen Tiruneh, @DanielBekele and Agegnehu Teshager. @NEBEthiopia @FAGEthiopia @EthioHRC, @AgegnehuT





 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Apr 17, 2021
Issaias is a war criminal; @AbiyAhmedAli is worse. Anyone who tries to salvage them is complicit to genocide. Stop supporting weaponized starvation and rape. Say no to #TigrayGenocide and send #AbiyToICC. bit.ly/3ss9gyf @IntlCrimCourt @WhiteHouse @BBCWorld

 **Stalin Gebreselassie** @StalinTeklu · Nov 29, 2021
አክሱምን ጥይት ቢያንስ በአንድ አሃጣም [መግደል አያቅተኝም] ብሏል ሀይሌ ገብረስላሴ በትላንትናው ፕሮግራም።


አድጋሚው አጭላመ ቢባል በጣም ያግላል። TDF የተግባር ሰራዊት ነው ተረት አይቸልም። ተገቢ ከትትል ያደርግልኝል። በፈላጊው መንገድ! አላቸ!

Translation-Haile Gebresilase in yesterdays' program says I will not miss at least one out of five shots or failing to kill. Better to say he is making his life short. TDF is an army of action, not fiction .it will give you a proper follow up. Anyways as you wish! Its over!

 **Alula Solomon** @Alula_Solomon · Nov 11, 2022
Redwan Hussien has two choices:
Either to squeal (for Abiy) as usual or to be honest and implement the CoHA.
So far he is squealing.

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Jul 27, 2021
President of Amhara National Regional State, @AgegnehuT has openly called on national TV for the extermination of all #Tigray|ans, calling them "the enemies of #Ethiopia." #GenocideAlert @hrw @SecBlinken @ChrisCoons @BBCBreaking @cnnbrk @AJEnglish @UN

 **Alula Solomon** @Alula_Solomon · Nov 13, 2022
CoHA spoiler alert 🚫

 **Daniel Kibret** @danielkibret · Nov 13, 2022
ሰው በጨርቅ ወይም በወርቅ ቢገነዝብ ሁለቱም መቀበሩን አያስቀሩትም። የግንዛቤን ታሪክ ይቀይረው ይሆናል አንጂ።

Translation-if a person is clothed with cloth or gold, both of them can't deny his burial. It may be changing the history of his burial.

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Aug 21, 2021
In a dereliction to their duties, @DanielBekele and @EthioHRC have intentionally and systematically minimized and disregarded crimes against humanity happening against #Tigrayans all over #Ethiopia. #TigrayGenocideAccomplices

Both parties also use institutional blame and harassment strategy for their own narrative sake:-



Stalin Gebreselassie @StalinTeklu · Aug 28, 2022

የኢትዮጵያ ትራንስፖርት ዘርፍ ባለሀብቶች ወደ ትግራይ ጦርነት ተሸከርካሪዎች ያሰማሩ ዝርዝር

የጦራዎች ለጦርነት ለማጓጓዝ የሚያገለግሉ የተመዘገቡ የትግል ተሸከርካሪዎች ኮታ				
ተ.ቁ	የግብር / ስርዓት ስም	የትግል ተሸከርካሪ ስም	የተመዘገበ ኮታ	የግብር
1/1				

Translation-

List of Ethiopian transport sector investors deployed to Tigray war vehicles

Quota of trucks assigned to transport defense logistics			
Name of the investor/organization	Total number of vehicles	Assigned quota	Remaining



Seyoum Teshome @seyoum_teshome · Oct 14, 2021

The tragic news of 2021 is CNN officially has become an International Misinformation Agency (IMA). So far, the US has rejected its propaganda piece, as Dept of Defense itself uses commercial airlines in war and emergencies cases. Please refer to CICA @CNN



Stalin Gebreselassie @StalinTeklu · Nov 26, 2021

AAU ትግራይ ባህርት ስትወረር ትንፋሽ ያላለው "ከኔ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ተመርቃችሁ ህወሓትን የምትደግፉ ወረቀታችሁን አቀማችኋለሁ" ሲል ዛሬ አስጠንቅቆል። አገር ነቅሳላች የምንለው አኮ ወደገን አይደለም።

Translation –when Tigray was invaded by Eritrea, AAU says nothing, now issuing warning for ‘those who graduate from my university and supporting TPLF I will confiscate your paper.’ That’s why we say the country in Sevier problem.



Alula Solomon @Alula_Solomon · Sep 2, 2022

The humiliation of Ethiopian Airlines:

From world class airline to a junk genocidal military aviation.



Neamin Zeleke @NeaminZeleke · Sep 13, 2022

In Nov. 2021, Mr. Super clairvoyant "predicted" that the #TPLF and #OLA will march to Addis, victorious and triumphant. This time around mercenary is hallucinating on the burial ground of his patron, the #TPLF.



Rashid Abdi @RAbdiAnalyst · Sep 12, 2022

They have come up with another dumbass slogan - "disarm TPLF".

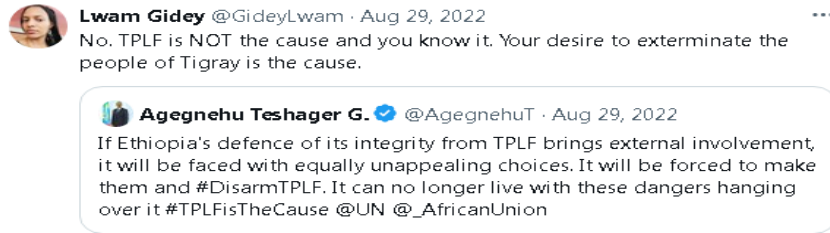


Stalin Gebreselassie @StalinTeklu · Nov 24, 2021

ዶር ይናገር ደሴ ትላንት ከ16 ዓመት የምትሆን ሴት ልጅ (ልጅ ትመስላለች) ዱባይ ውስጥ በቀን 936 ድርሃም የሚከፈልበት ሆቴል ነበር። አዛው ነው የሰነበተው። #ETV አሁን ከባህርዳር ስቱድዮ ብሎ አቀረበው።



Translation-yesterday dr. yanager dese with his 16 year old girl (looks like his daughter) was a hotel in Dubai; the hotel daily fee is 936 dirham. But #ETV now presents him as if he is in Bahirdar studio.

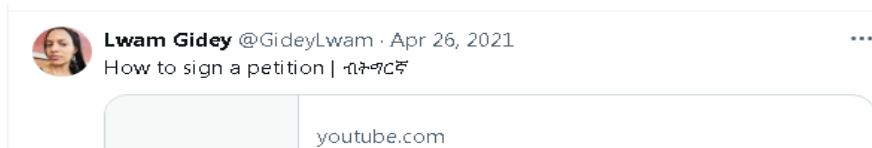


4.3.11. Tweet for tutorial, Campaign and petition

Through these mechanisms, both party activists use the tactic accordingly their narrative motives. Each tweeter campaign requires the engagement of members or supporters. Thus, those supporters are not only participating by supporting the ideas of the campaign but also needs to support in material, engagement and money as well as other means of influencing. For the sake of active participation on certain issues, Pro-TPLF activists use typical tutorial methods for their followers; on the other hand, Pro-government activists use mobilization messages in order to engage their supporters. Signing petition to certain entities is common strategy of pro- TPLF activist’s role.

- To influence the information warfare, Pro TPLF activists use tutorial methods for their new tweeter followers. This tutor demonstrate how to open new account, how to hide name and how to sign *petition and fundraising* procedures. The following data shows this:-

A. Tweet for tutorial purposes



Translation –how to sign a petition by Tigrigna language




B. Tweet for petition

The other unique practice for Pro -TPLF activists use are, calling members to sign **petition** and fund raising via tweeter messages.

- 
Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Dec 23, 2021 ...
 #StopDroneAttacks in Tigray and Oromia - Sign the Petition! chng.it/2kj2nm4c
 via @Change
- 
Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Sep 20, 2021
 Letter to Congresswoman Karen Bass. Please sign and share. 🙏
standwithtigray.com/letter-to-kare...
- 
Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Nov 24, 2021 ...
 Scan this and TEXT your representatives.
 Call to action against #TigrayMassArrests
 via @SWTigray
- 
Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Jul 22, 2021 ...
 URGENT: Please sign Letter to Embassies in Addis Ababa about the Ethnic Profiling, Harassment and Mass Arrests of #Tigrayans in #Ethiopia.
nwmd.io/s/twitter/YR41...
- 
Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Jun 30, 2021 ...
 please sign this letter to President Paul Kagame, Republic of Rwanda!
standwithtigray.com/letter-to-rwan...
- 
Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Sep 4, 2021 ...
 Please sign this urgent petition to #Turkey to Stop Arms Sale to #Ethiopia.
 #share
sjtethiopia.org/petition-to-tu...
- 
Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Sep 20, 2021 ..
 Letter to Congresswoman Karen Bass. Please sign and share. 🙏
standwithtigray.com/letter-to-kare...

C. Tweet for campaign

Both parties similarly use different campaign announcement with different themes. Here are some of the data examples-


- 
Seyoum Teshome @seyoum_teshome · Sep 23, 2021 ...
 ውድ ኢትዮጵያውያን 🇪🇹🇵🇸
 ከሰር ከ 1-16 ያሉትን #Click2Tweet በመጫን ከሰፊ የሚገኙትን መፈክሮችን በመጫን ወይንም ትዊተር ገጽዎን ላይ ትዊት በማሰታት ድምፅዎን ለዓለም ያስሙ!
 September 23, 2021
 TWITTER CAMPAIGN #73
 #Unity4Ethiopia
unityforethiopia.net/twitter-campai...

Translation- dear Ethiopians! Show your voice to the world by pressing below from 1-16 #click2totweet slogans on your tweet account

- 
Alula Solomon @Alula_Solomon · Oct 1, 2020 ...
 Twitter Campaign: #AbiyExpires on October 5th, 2020
oromoprotests.org/index.php/2020... via @OromoProtestsHQ
- 
Suleiman Abdella @SuleimanAbdell7 · Sep 3, 2022 ...
 ወልዴይቶ ደሴ የኮምሰልቻ ላይ ወደ ሆስፒታል አየሄድን ደም አንላግሱ! ለኛ ብሰው ደማቸውን ያፈሰሱልን ወገኖቻችን የኛን ደም ይፈልጋሉ ::
 በቀጣይ ሦስት ቀናት የደም ልገሳ ዘመቻ አናደርጋለን::
 #ኢትዮጵያንቅደም


Translation-let's donate blood on our way to the hospital in woldia, desse and kombolcha.our people who shed their blood for us want our blood. We will have a blood donation campaign for the next three days.

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Aug 20, 2021 ..
@SWTigray Twitter campaign launches tonight at 12 AM EST
Hashtag: #TigrayGenocideAccomplices


 **Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Feb 13, 2022 ...
Save Afar (አፋርን አናድን) በሚል ጉዳይ በኢትዮጵያ የሰነድ አቀጣጠር ዛሬ ምሽት አንድ ሰዓት ላይ
Twitter በ"Space አንድ ያለን?
ማንኛውም የtwitter አካላት ያለው ሰው በውይይቱ ላይ አንድ ገጽ ተዘጋጅታችሁ ጠብቁን።

Translation- tonight at one o'clock Ethiopian time, we will have twitter discussion on the topic of let's save afar. Everyone who has tweeter account please ready to join.

 **Seyoum Teshome** @seyoum_teshome · Sep 21, 2021 ...
Ethiopian American Civic Council is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.
Topic: Ethiopian American Civic Council's Zoom Meeting
Time: Sep 21, 2021 09:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting
us02web.zoom.us/j/88214718642?...


 **Suleiman Abdella** @SuleimanAbdell7 · Nov 23, 2021 ...
ሀገሪታችን ተጀምሯል
#History in the making; now we got to follow our #PM footsteps & mark history defending our country's sovereignty from local bandits & international interventionist warmongers!! #March4Ethiopia #EthiopiaPrevails @antonioquterres @UNGeneva

Translation- the hashtag is starting

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Dec 23, 2021 ..
ወፍሪ Campaign ብሔረሰብ ሕራት!
tweet templates 🙌
standwithtigray.com/twitter-campai...

Translation- campaign with new determination! Tweet templates

 **Neamin Zeleke** @NeaminZeleke · Feb 28, 2021 ...
Fellow #Ethiopians & friends of #Ethiopia
Join today's #TwitterCampaign. Expose: #TPLF's disinformation. Today Feb. 28 - March 1st, 2021
Go to link glean.ethiopiaprevail.com
#EthiopiaPrevails #StandwithEthiopia

 **Lwam Gidey** @GideyLwam · Dec 20, 2021 .
#StopDroneAttacks campaign!

Suleiman Abdella @SuleimanAbdell7 · Oct 8, 2021

#ThefakeCNNreport
ይቸን ነገር ትንሽ አናራጭባቸው

This will happen in 2018, not in 2021. CNN provided a fake image and a fake document!

Statement Refuting CNN's Report.
@RepMcCaul @biannagolodryga @AmanpourCoPBS @kylieatwood

✗ @nimaelbagir is the owner of fake news



Translation- let's ventilate this

Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Dec 23, 2021

Keep tweeting!!! For Tigray 🧡❤️

#StopWarOnTigray
1M+ and still counting
let's get to 3M # exposure by midnight.
standwithtigray.com/twitter-campai...

#StopWarOnTigray Twitter Hashtag Analytics

- The global campaign request mainly focuses on Diasporas and international communities for both Pro activists. Hence, the campaign targets require all supporters in order to join wherever they are. Here are some of the data examples:-

Neamin Zeleke @NeaminZeleke · Feb 28, 2021

Fellow #Ethiopians & friends of #Ethiopia
Join today's #TwitterCampaign. Expose: #TPLF's disinformation. Today Feb. 28 - March 1st, 2021
Go to link glean.ethiopiaprevail.com
#EthiopiaPrevails #StandwithEthiopia
Global Ethiopian Advocacy Nexus @GleanEthiopian
Defend Ethiopia !!

Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Nov 22, 2021

Being Tigrayan in Ethiopia has become a crime.

#TigrayMassArrests MUST STOP NOW!
Join and share!

Lwam Gidey reposted

Stand With Tigray @SWTigray · Sep 10, 2021

Global Campaign: Tigrayan + Oromo orgs

Join us this Ethiopian New Years to raise more awareness about the human rights abuses and violations happening in #Tigray and #Oromia.

Hashtag: #NothingToCelebrate
Date: Saturday, Sep 11 (Ethiopian New Years)

Lwam Gidey @GideyLwam · Jul 22, 2021

URGENT: Pls participate on #TigrayMassArrest Campaign starting tonight!
The campaign will run all day tomorrow to raise awareness about the harassment of #Tigrayans in Addis, Ethiopia.

4.3.12. Meme war

*Meme war*¹⁷ is one of the techniques, which employed by both parties during and after the war. Memes are intertextual. Meaning, they correspond to one another or to particular cultural information. Therefore, interpreting, consuming and producing memes requires prior acquaintance. It is for this reason, that memes facilitate a sense of belonging (Gal 2018, 529). Both parties use meme typically for the purpose of *character assassination* with the help of cartoons or imagery. Besides to disgrace, express satire message, to make the individual or institution weak or useless on the eyes of enemies. Bulling or stalking the targeted person is also common practice for both parties behind each meme. It also serves as psychological tool or weapon to win the enemy with emotional superiority. The following memes gathered from both parties activist's posts:-Sources;-¹⁸

¹⁷A form of information warfare, wherein people try to take control of a dialogue or disrupt their enemies. This warfare involves the spread of false messages on social media by using the format of a meme.

¹⁸https://twitter.com/Alula_Solomon/status/1575143521794793473
<https://twitter.com/SuleimanAbdell7/status/1562529884274294785>
<https://twitter.com/NeaminZelege/status/1338596812006051850>
<https://twitter.com/SuleimanAbdell7/status/1562529884274294785>
https://twitter.com/Reda_Getachew/status/1562371963880091654/photo/1
<https://twitter.com/artssiyad/status/1572151027373162497>

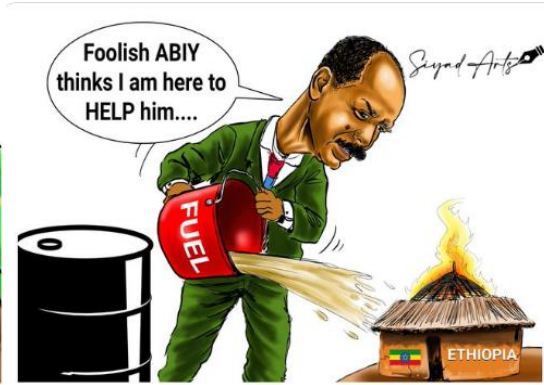
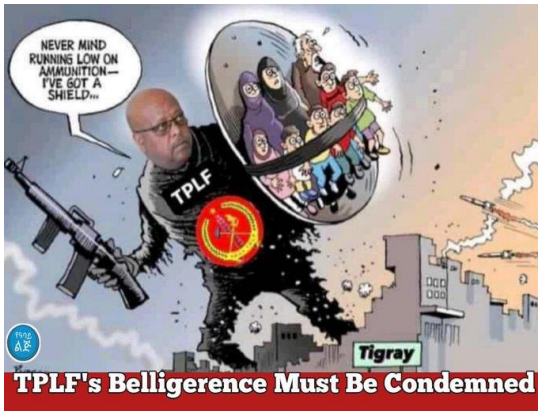


Figure 3. Meme war data screenshot samples

To sum up, the researcher analyzes more than three thousand tweets per- individual within two years time range. The findings additionally indicates that there was engagement difference between Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists at the beginning of the war. For instance, some data indicates Pro- TPLF activists begun ‘#TigrayGenocide before the war begins or ahead of one month¹⁹.

On the other hand, Pro- government activists had begun active social media campaign after the civil war erupted four months later. The research also analyzes two-months tweet contents of those selected activists after and during the Pretoria agreement signed. Hence, for those Pro-TPLF activists there is an assumption that “the existing peace agreement might be important if the federal government implement all preconditions without delay, and still suspicious of any act of federal government commitment to do so.

Furthermore, Pro –TPLF activists highly criticize the presence of Eritrean force and Amhara Special Forces inside Tigray’s territory. Those activists claim on their tweet that even though the peace agreement signed there is still military atrocities’ by Eritrean forces, government blocked humanitarian aid to Tigray and still Tigray siege occurs; and the federal government, international community and interim Tigray government gives *elephant ear* for such atrocities.

On the side of Pro –government activists, there seem cross road discussions between those pro- government activists themselves. Some of which believes the FGE accepts the peace deal because of US warning and involvement, for others the peace agreement shows the wise decision of federal government and need support. All Pro-government activists either suspicious of any act of TPLF or dubious and full of conspicuous individuals presented in it (TPLF). Two among the three Pro -government activists shifts their stand for supporting to blaming the FGE.

¹⁹<https://twitter.com/ETFactCheck/>,<https://abren.org/premeditated-tigray-genocide-cyber-warfare-in-the-age-of-social-media/>

Because of alignment shift or other reasons, there seems three activists deleted some of the past tweets. So, this alignment shift creates slight limitation to get on time tweets of three of the selected activists.

As it mentioned in the scope of the study, the research typically focuses only the tweet messages and it is intentionally exclude the replay, retweet, number of likes and dislikes as it is out of the scope of the study. Furthermore, it requires further academic research, time and resource.

4.4. DISCUSSION

This study set out to analyze and assess the content, the importance and impact of the social media activism in the context of Ethiopia's 2020-2022 civil war. One of the aims of this study as it mentioned in(section 1.8) was adding to the body of knowledge on social media activism and conflict/peace studies, and will be an important resource to anyone seeking to explore the dynamics to the concept of activism through social media.

Social media increasingly plays a role in conflict and contentious politics. Politicians, leaders, insurgents, and protestors all have used it as a tool for communication. At the same time, scholars have turned to social media as a source of new data on conflict.

With respect to the first research question of the technique which used by activists at (section 1.4), the research found and identifies twelve different manipulative techniques which was used by Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists during the civil war.

The fifth question of the research was about the impact and contribution of those activists on the process of peace agreement at (section 1.4). Hence, the research found very little contribution on both sides. Furthermore, all activists has extensive role on exuberating the conflict through different tweet and message crafting methods.

This result might go in line with the constructivism research paradigm as it mentioned (section 3.2)Honebein (1996) ; he describes the constructivism philosophical paradigm

as an approach asserts that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences.

On top of that, the victim and victor mentality on both sides of activists' create vacuum to the urgent need of peace process to the warring parties

As mentioned in the literature review (section 2.1.3), social media communication plays vital role during peace and war time, Similarly Social media communication like twitter, is also an elite base platform which engages different level and techniques of elites to ordinary individual's participation.

Digital activism was influential in Ethiopian politics for the first time during the lead up to the 2005 elections (Abbink, 2006) at (section 2.4). Unlike the election time, this study found that there was high digital activism to manipulate information as well as mobilize the public during the 2020-2022 Ethiopian civil war

The research finding shows that those selected activists in the research has impactful role to expose military atrocities, war crimes, sabotages, verify truth, warn civilians, show urgent need of humanitarian activities and immediate actions to certain areas and so on. On the contrary, as it mentioned in (section 2.3.1) of the literature, some of the real information on the ground diverted to manipulation practice by both Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists for their own cause. For instance, the case of humanitarian activities, humanitarian truce, and the case of cease fire used in double ways

As mentioned in the literature review (section 2.3), Information manipulation as a process where actors leverage specific conditions or features within an information ecosystem in an attempt to generate public attention and influence public discourse through deceptive, creative, or unfair means. Some of the findings in the research also strengthen this assumption. As some international institutions and countries like (UN and US,EU), different media outlets-(like BBC, CNN, Aljazeera ,the guardian...) has made several announcements and reports based on highly crafted manipulative information provided by Pro-TPLF activists irrespective of the fact. The research finding shows that the case of 'genocide' allegation, 'the involvement of Eritrean force in Tigray war,' 'the

attack of historical and cultural heritages in Tigray’, stories regarding humanitarian activities in different areas of the war zone were exemplary.

In a similar tone, a Pro-government activist stands in a *defensive way* of information manipulation as well as providing deceptive information to twitter audiences. In this case information about the ‘drone attacks’ and its impacts, ‘the presence of Eritrean forces in Tigray’, the humanitarian activities’ and the involvement of some international organizations like (WHO,USAID,OCHA) in the war can be a good examples.

The most obvious finding to emerge from the analysis is that there was a tit- for -tat twitter social media campaigns, techniques, and information warfare between activists unlike the military confrontation in the ground. Both Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists are working to reach more audiences so that to create impactful result of their campaign. This assumption is quiet similar with the *Distributed amplification* strategy which mentioned at (section 2.3.1) of the literature—it is a tactic whereby a campaign operator explicitly or implicitly directs participants to rapidly and widely disseminate campaign materials

Perhaps the most compelling finding is that both Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists working hard in line with the war situation in the ground during the civil wartime, but keep silent during and after the peace deal signed On. This interesting result finding might related with situational theory of problem solving (as it mentioned section 2.1), be a result of people’s motivated communicative actions when they encounter problematic life situations. (Jeong-Nam Kim, 2006)

What is curious about this result is that some of the pro- government and Pro-TPLF activists change their alignment immediately after the peace deal signed and come up with their own new side. These results further support the idea of (Waller, 2013) that People use social media and micro blogging sites, such as Twitter, for many given purposes.(mentioned at section 2.1.2.).It may also the result of new information added to their own experience as the constructivism philosophical assumption argues (section 3.2.)

This study confirms that those who selected for the study have similar line of information and manipulation messages with respect to their supporting warring parties. Similar messages crafts or framing from specific own hub on both sides. This (rather) intriguing result finding could be due several of the messages crafted with the participation of inline professionals and politicians' too. Besides, it indicates there are multiple interesting groups behind the civil war.

Social media(SM) activism can make supreme contribution in conflict situations both at the pre- and post-conflict level. There remains a world of unexplored prospects vis-à-vis the social media's applicability in peace processes. Therefore, further studies, which take these variables into account, will need to be undertaken.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the conclusion of the research on the comparative contents analysis of Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists in the context of the Ethiopian 2020-2022 civil war. This study has examined thoroughly each and every inferences and tweets made by those selected activist's in order to get full and comprehensive result. The main findings and conclusions of the study are presented below:

The findings clearly indicate that both Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists played major role in exacerbating the war through twelve selected information manipulation techniques. Their manipulative role influenced local and international public opinion during the course of the war and the prospect or otherwise of peace situation too

The most obvious finding that emerged from the analysis is that there was a tit- for -tat twitter social media campaigns, techniques, and information warfare between both activists unlike the military confrontation in the ground. Beyond its creative way the techniques most of which were very deceptive, biased and emotional

The research finding shows those both parties' activists used extremely derogatory terminologies via their tweet messages, which left severe psychological wound that would take time to heal. Intentionally dehumanizing and disrespectful approaches toward opponents of the other side were very common practices on both sides.

Similarly, the careful analysis of each tweet confirms the indispensable role of social media activism to create impactful messages to pertinent audience of the platform. Thus, the trend shows that social media activism by itself have importance in its good cause. In the case of goodwill, both Party activists gave due attention to the civil war and create further emphasis to those who have not additional information about the civil war situation.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that, the disparity of involvement and supporting stance from both party activists during the war time or after peace deal signed. Hence, there were high engagement during the war and dormant after the cessation of hostilities agreement was signed. This result might shows that there is high activist's engagement during wartime than peace time.

The other interesting finding of the research was the participation of- 'for and against' camp of foreign 'scholars or experts' and 'lobby groups' towards the civil war. In some instances the two 'camps' go in line with Pro-government or/and Pro-TPLF activists information manipulation tracks with their tweets and opinions. This research simply included those scholars along with both parties' activists' amplification strategies only. Therefore, the findings of this research provide insights for additional study on this issue.

Overall, the results indicate behind each tweets of both Pro-government and Pro-TPLF activists seeds a fruit of enmity, hatred, lies, suspicion, victimization, and pointing finger each other-This trend of social media activism sustains scars rather than healing on the minds of conflicting parties, and those who participate in the war directly or indirectly. Besides, the bad rhetoric and bad tweets leads to a vicious war trend.

The strengths of the study included the in-depth content analysis of each selected tweets from the open source of twitter platform along with inferential figures and pictures. This in-depth analysis gives a chance to understand various techniques and involvement of each selected activists in the civil war.

The findings reported here shed new light to show each and every technique along with their tweets data used by Pro-government as well as Pro-TPLF activist's .Thus, these findings are relevant to both practitioners and peace and security policy-makers since it gives tangible and extensive insight .moreover, the research topic and findings shows the need for further research on such topics.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A

KEY EVENTS OF THE CIVIL WAR

2020	
3 Nov, 2020	Tigray Special Forces (TSF) and allied militia attacked the Northern Command
4,Nov, 2020	War broke out
5 Nov, 2020	The federal army began to conduct air strikes.
9 Nov , 2020	Mai-Cadra Massacre’
11 Nov, 2020	SOE Fact Check appeared on Twitter
13Nov, 2020	a rocket was fired towards Bahirdar& Gondar cities by TPLF
14 Nov ,2020	TPLF fires rockets into Asmara
28Nov, 2020	‘Axum Massacre’ on, amnesty Report
28 Nov, 2020	FGE announced that Mekelle was under the control of the ENDF
2 Dec, 2020	FGE declared “law enforcement operation”
18 Dec, 2020	10 million birr bounty announced to be given to anyone who identifies and reveals the locations of the fugitive members of the ‘criminal clique ‘by FGE.
2021	
1 Jan,2021	FGE announces that several senior members and military leaders of TPLF have been capture
27 Jan 2021	US calls on Eritrea to immediately withdraw its troops
3 Feb,2021	Many civilians move to east because of the war
12Feb, 2021	FGE allowed access to humanitarian aid into Tigray
16 Feb,2021	Amnesty International accused Tigray forces of murder, rape and pillage on Amhara civilians
10 March, 2021	US secretary of state Anthony Blinken for the first time used the term “ethnic cleansing”
23March, 2021	PM Abiy Ahmed admitted the presence of Eritrean troops in Tigray during his speech at HPR
23Mar, 2021	The EHRC released a preliminary report on the Axum Massacre
1 May ,2021	FGE declared the TPLF a terrorist organization
24 May ,2021	US state dpt announces it is imposing economic and security sanctions on Ethiopia
11Jun 2021	UN says 350,000 Tigrayans experiencing famine
21 Jun2021	Ethiopia held its 6th National Elections except in Somali, Hariri and Tigray regions
22 Jun 2021	Addigrat was recaptured by TDF
28 Jun 2021	FGE declared a unilateral ceasefire,
28 Jun 2021	TDF recaptured Mekelle
10 July 2021	PP wins the most seats in the country’s parliamentary election
18 July 2021	PM declared total war on TPLF

19 July 2021	Tigrayan forces attack neighbor Afar region
17 July 2021	WFP request to the Federal Government of Ethiopia, a flight to Mekelle for the First time
2 Sep, 2021	'Cheenamassacre'
16 sep, 2021	UN ETH Concerning. None of the 149 trucks in the convoy that reached Mekelle
29 sep, 2021	Food aid reach Tigray
4 Oct, 2021	Abiy sworn in for a new five year term as PM
11 oct, 2021	ENDF begun ground offensive to push TDF from Afar and AMHARA Regions
2 Nov, 2021	FGE declaring a six-month state of emergency
3 Nov, 2021	The Joint Investigation Team (JIT) by EHRC and UNHRO released report
12 Nov, 2021	The U.S. OFAC designated four entities and two individuals pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.)
24 Nov, 2021	PM Abiy goes to the frontlines to lead his troops
7 Dec, 2021	Lalibela recaptured by ENDF
2022	
7 Jan 2022	FGE announces that it will pardon and release high profile political detainees
8 Jan, 2022	Air strike in Mekelle kills 56
15 Jan, 2022	Eth parliament vote for end of STE
24 Mar, 2022	FGE declares unilateral truce
1 April 2022	Trucks carrying aid enter Tigray for the first time since dec 15
14 Jun, 2022	FGE forms committee to negotiate with TPLF
20 Aug, 2022	WFP says almost half of Tigray is in 'severe' need of food
24 Aug, 2022	Fighting again erupts around town of KOBO
5 oct 2022	Both fighting sides say they have accepted an invitation by AU
25 OCT 2022	Peace talk begun in Pretoria
2 Nov, 2022	FGE and TPLF signed CoHA Agreement.
7 Nov 2022	Both representatives meet in Kenya, Nairobi to discuss the implementation of terms
12 Nov, 2022	Top military commanders a follow-up agreement in Nairobi.

Source- different publications

Declaration

This thesis titled, “**A Comparative content analysis of Pro- government and Pro-TPLF Social Media Activism in the Context of Ethiopia’s 2020-2022 Civil War,**” is a new contribution of mine. The sources of all the information utilized in the thesis are properly cited, and it has not been presented for a degree at any other institution.

Declared by:

Name of the student: _____

Signature: _____

Date of submission: _____

Approved by:

With my endorsement as a university adviser, this work has been submitted to Addis Ababa University's Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) for examination.

Name of Advisor: _____

Signature: _____

Date of submission: _____

