

**An Investigation of National and International Press  
Coverage of Ethiopia's Decision to Construct the  
Grand Renaissance Dam on the Nile River**

**Muez Hailu**

**A Thesis Submitted to  
School of Journalism and Communication**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and  
Communication**

**Addis Ababa University  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
June 2012**

# **Addis Ababa University**

## **School of Graduate Studies**

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Muez Hailu, entitled: *An Investigation of National and International Press Coverage of Ethiopia's Decision to Construct the Grand Renaissance Dam on the Nile River* and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in journalism and communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the Examining Committee:

Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ sig. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ sig. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor \_\_\_\_\_ sig. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

---

Chair of Department or Graduate Program Coordinator

An Investigation of National and International Press Coverage of Ethiopia's Decision to Construct the Grand Renaissance Dam on the Nile River

Muez Hailu

Addis Ababa University, 2012

## **ABSTRACT**

The overriding purpose of this study was to examine the national and international press coverage of Ethiopia's decision to construct the GERD project on the Nile River. Theories of agenda setting, framing and political economy of mass media have been employed as theoretical frameworks for this study. Drawing on a six-month textual data, an analysis and interpretation of three newspapers, one from each major Eastern Nile basin member countries (i.e., Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan) was conducted. Besides, three informants, one from each of the aforementioned countries were selected and interviewed, to triangulate the information gained via content analysis.

The result of the study revealed that *Addis Zemen* has provided an exceedingly considerable amount of coverage for the GERD project than *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers. Development and diplomacy were found to be the frequently reported themes. Government officials were employed as major sources of information, simultaneously. The media generally covered the dam positively or neutrally. The selected press outlets mostly framed the GERD in terms of economic consequences, diagnostic, mutual benefit and prognostic frames. Political challenge was found to be a major problem, while national consensus, electricity generation and bi(multi)lateral relations improvements were identified as major opportunities.

What is more, the press coverage on the GERD project shows that those three newspapers have had a tendency towards favoring their country's national interest over the handling of this supranational issue, i.e., the dam. Based on the study, a couple of recommendations that might help to lessen the limitations of the press are suggested.

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to express my sincere thanks to those who have made invaluable support in bringing this study to its completion. First and foremost, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Abdissa Zerai, for his constructive comments, critical review and support throughout this challenging journey, without which this work would not have been possible. I would also like to extend my special gratitude to Dr. Gebremedhin Simon, Dr. Negeri Lencho and Dr. Mohammed Hassen for their much-valued comments, suggestions and material support.

I express my sincere gratitude to the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority, for the sponsorship it granted me to pursue my second degree studies. I am indebted to my friends, Tesfay Gebremeskel and Taddisu Abraha, for their unreserved assistance, material support and encouragement. I have great respect for what they all have done for me. I would also like to offer my deepest gratitude to my colleagues and friends, Adane Tesema and Tewodros Tefera; not only they coded the target newspapers devotedly, but also helped me in many ways, such as giving moral support, encouragement and valuable comments. I also thank Tamrat Mechal for his generous patience in reviewing this paper.

Lastly, I am greatly indebted to my family members for their unconditional love, support and understanding. I thank God, who is the beginning and the end of everything!

# **Dedication**

This piece of work is dedicated to my late brothers, Desta'alem Hailu and Tsigab Hailu.

## Table of Contents

| Contents  | Page      |
|---|-----------|
| List of Figures.....  | ix        |
| List of Tables.....   | x         |
| List of Acronyms.....   | xi        |
| <b>Chapter One:Introduction</b> .....                               | <b>1</b>  |
| 1.1. Background of the Study .....                                  | 1         |
| 1.2. Statement of the Problem.....                                  | 4         |
| 1.3. Objectives of the Study .....                                  | 8         |
| 1.3.1. General Objective .....                                      | 8         |
| 1.3.2. Specific Objectives .....                                    | 9         |
| 1.4. Research Questions .....                                       | 9         |
| 1.5. Significance of the Study .....                                | 10        |
| 1.6. Scope of the Study .....                                       | 10        |
| 1.7. Limitations of the Study.....                                  | 11        |
| <b>Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature</b> .....              | <b>12</b> |
| 2.1. An Overview of the Nile River.....                             | 12        |
| 2.2. Nile and the National Interest of Ethiopia .....               | 18        |
| 2.2.1. Nile - a Potential for Irrigation to Alleviate Poverty ..... | 19        |
| 2.2.2. Nile - a Source for Hydro Power, Hard Currency .....         | 21        |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 2.2.3. Nile - Hub for National/Regional Stability.....                | 29        |
| 2.3. Major Arguments on the Construction of Large Dams .....          | 36        |
| 2.3.1. Arguments in Favor .....                                       | 37        |
| 2.3.2. Arguments Against .....  | 39        |
| 2.4. Theoretical Frameworks .....                                     | 42        |
| 2.4.1. Agenda-Setting Theory.....                                     | 42        |
| 2.4.2. Framing Theory .....   | 51        |
| 2.4.3. Political Economy of Mass Media.....                           | 59        |
| <b>Chapter Three: Research Methodology .....</b>                      | <b>66</b> |
| 3.1. Data Collection Methods of the Study.....                        | 66        |
| 3.1.1. Quantitative Content Analysis .....                            | 67        |
| 3.1.2. In-depth Interview.....  | 72        |
| 3.2. Sampling and Sampling Strategy.....                              | 75        |
| 3.3. Unit of Analysis .....   | 82        |
| 3.4. Analytical Categories.....                                       | 83        |
| 3.5. Reliability of Coding.....                                       | 85        |
| 3.6. Data Analysis Process.....                                       | 87        |
| <b>Chapter Four: Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion .....</b> | <b>89</b> |
| 4.1. Presentation and Analysis of Data.....                           | 89        |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| 4.1.1. Theme of Story for the Target Newspapers .....                             | 89         |
| 4.1.2. Type of Story for the Target Newspapers.....                               | 92         |
| 4.1.3. Type of Source the Story used for the Target Newspapers .....              | 94         |
| 4.1.4. Tone of Story for the Target Newspapers.....                               | 97         |
| 4.1.5. Type of Frame the Story used for the Target Newspapers .....               | 106        |
| 4.1.6. Major Challenges described in the Story for the Target Newspapers .....    | 103        |
| 4.1.7. Major Opportunities described in the Story for the Target Newspapers ..... | 104        |
| 4.2. Discussion of Findings.....  | 107        |
| 4.2.1. Theme of Story .....   | 107        |
| 4.2.2. Type of Story .....  | 111        |
| 4.2.3. Type of Source the story used.....   | 113        |
| 4.2.4. Tone of Story .....  | 116        |
| 4.2.5. Type of Frame the Story used.....  | 119        |
| 4.2.6. Major Challenges described in the story.....                               | 127        |
| 4.2.7. Major Opportunities described in the story .....                           | 131        |
| <b>Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations .....</b>                         | <b>137</b> |
| 5.1. Conclusion .....   | 137        |
| 5.2. Recommendations.....   | 142        |
| <b>Bibliography .....</b>   | <b>143</b> |
| <b>Appendices.....</b>  | <b>164</b> |

## List of Figures

| <b>Figures</b>   | <b>Page</b> |
|--|-------------|
| 4.1 Percentage of Theme distribution all across the Selected Newspapers.....         | 98          |
| 4.2 Percentage of Sources Quoted by the Selected Newspapers.....                     | 102         |
| 4.3 Percentage of Tone of Story distribution all across the Selected Newspapers..... | 104         |
| 4.4 Percentage of Frames employed by the Selected Newspapers.....                    | 107         |

## List of Tables

| Tables   | Page |
|--|------|
| Table 2.1 Current hydropower stations in Ethiopia .....  | 27   |
| Table 2.2 Hydropower stations presently under construction and committed to construct in Ethiopia..... | 29   |
| Table 3.1 Summary of the <i>Addis Zemen</i> newspaper genres and the topics it covers.....             | 85   |
| Table 3.2 Summary of the <i>Al Ahram Weekly</i> newspaper genres and the topics it covers.....         | 86   |
| Table 3.3 Summary of the <i>Sudan Vision</i> newspaper genres and the topics it covers.....            | 87   |
| Table 4.1. Theme, number and percentage of story distribution across the newspapers...                 | 96   |
| Table 4.2. Type, number and percentage of story distribution across the newspapers.....                | 99   |
| Table 4.3. Type, number and percentage of source distribution across the newspapers..                  | 101  |
| Table 4.4. Tone, number and percentage of story distribution across the newspapers....                 | 103  |
| Table 4.5. Type, number and percentage of frame distribution across the newspapers...                  | 106  |
| Table 4.6. Type, number and percentage of major challenges distribution across the newspapers.....     | 109  |
| Table 4.7. Type, number and percentage of major opportunities distribution across the newspapers.....  | 111  |

## **List of Acronyms**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| AAU    | Addis Ababa University   |
| ADLI   | Agricultural Development Led Industrialization                         |
| ATIT   | Absolute Territorial Integrity Theory                                  |
| ATST   | Absolute Territorial Sovereignty Theory                                |
| AP     | Associated Press   |
| BBC    | British Broadcasting Corporations                                      |
| CFA    | Comprehensive/Cooperative Framework Agreement                          |
| EBA    | Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority                                       |
| EC     | Ethiopian Calendar   |
| EEPCo  | Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation                                   |
| ENA    | Ethiopian News Agency  |
| EN-SAP | Eastern - Nile Subsidiary Action Programme                             |
| ENTRO  | Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office                                 |
| FDRE   | Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia                                |
| GDP    | Gross Domestic Product   |
| GERD   | Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam  |
| IMF    | International Monetary Fund  |
| KWH    | Kilowatt per Hour  |
| LTIT   | Limited Territorial Integrity Theory                                   |
| LTST   | Limited Territorial Sovereignty Theory                                 |
| MIDROC | Mohammed International Development Research Organization and Companies |
| MoWR   | Ministry of Water Resources  |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| MW        | Mega Watt  |
| NATO      | North Atlantic Treaty Organization   |
| NBC       | Nile Basin Commission  |
| NBI       | Nile Basin Initiative  |
| NEL-SAP   | Nile Equatorial Lakes - Subsidiary Action Programme  |
| NGO       | Non Governmental Organizations   |
| Nile-COM  | Nile - Council of Ministers  |
| Nile-SEC  | Nile - Secretariat   |
| Nile-TAC  | Nile - Technical Advisory Committee  |
| PE        | Political Economy  |
| PRP       | Public Relation Practitioners  |
| SAP       | Subsidiary Action Programme  |
| SUNA      | Sudan News Agency  |
| TECCONILE | Technical Cooperation Committee for the Promotion of the Development and<br>Environmental Protection of the Nile Basin |
| UN        | United Nations   |
| UNDP      | United Nations Development Program   |
| UNESCO    | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization   |
| UPI       | United Press International   |
| WCD       | World Commission on Dams   |

# Chapter One

## Introduction

### 1.1. Background of the Study

The Nile River is the longest international river in the world, with an approximate length of 6,671 kilometers from its remotest source in the Equatorial Lakes Region (namely Burundi's Ruvyironza River) and it runs through south to north direction before emptying into the Mediterranean Sea (Swain, 2004). But recently, a revised length estimate of 6,718km was established in 2006 as the Nile's furthest tributary, the Rukarara, which springs in the Nyungwe forest, Rwanda (Dumont, 2009). Nile, in its lengthy voyage crosses ten countries; but currently the number of riparian countries has reached 11 as South Sudan already seceded as an independent state at the beginning of 2011. These ten (suppose South Sudan as constant here in this study) Nile riparian countries are normally classified as lower riparian (Sudan and Egypt) and upper riparian (includes all the rest) countries.

Great effort has been made in the past several years to develop an all-Nile consultation so as to set up cooperative Nile-based organizations and regimes such as Hydromet/1967-1992/, Undugu (Swahili for 'brotherhood')/1983-1993/ and the Technical Cooperation Committee for the Promotion of the Development and Environmental Protection of the Nile Basin (TECCONILE) /1992-1999 (Erlich, 2002; Kinfu, 1999EC). However, these efforts were unsuccessful because they were not inclusive and did not consider the rights of all riparian countries equitably. Even the role of Ethiopia in these multilateral Nile basin discussions was negligible, where its role was limited to the status of an observer.

Regarding the effort that has been made and the role of the organizations that were set-up, the notable and favored one as 'promising' to this date is the NBI that founded on February 22, 1999 in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania). Unlike its predecessors, this organization secured the membership of all the Nile riparian states but Eritrea (still an observer). The ministers of water affairs of these nine countries jointly stated their “shared vision,” which was to “achieve sustainable socioeconomic development through the equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile basin water resources” (Erlich, 2002, p.213). This insightful ‘shared vision’ may enable these countries to achieve ‘win-win’ solutions through a joint program to utilize the river in a cooperative manner, share economic benefits, and promote collective regional peace and security.

Both the lower riparian countries, Egypt and Sudan (especially the former), exploited much of the Nile waters since time immemorial; while the upper riparian countries including Ethiopia, a major contributor of the river, are limited to the use of a fraction of it for hydropower purposes alone (Kinfu, 1999EC). However, it is believed that “the development of the River Nile in Ethiopia has the potential to contribute significantly to poverty reduction, meet domestic power and food demands, and become a cornerstone of a future Ethiopian export strategy” (cited in Erlich, 2002, p.7). The recently launched Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (formerly known as the ‘X’ project and Millennium Dam) project with a height of 145 metres and 63 billion cubic metres water reservoir capacity is a good example by itself, which is expected to generate 6,000 Megawatts of hydroelectric power when it completed in the coming five years.

Having mentioned some points about the existing fact and past trends regarding the utilization of the Nile water resources, this paper has tried to investigate how the national and international

print media covered the GERD project. In the contemporary era of globalization, mass media play a great role either constructively or adversely or both in a country's development projects. According to Street (2001, p.231), for example, "the media have power and media power is now almost a commonplace of modern commentary, because it is implicitly or explicitly assumed powerful."

Globalizing tendencies are reducing the distinctiveness of any particular national variant of media content this time (McQuail, 2005; Watson & Hill, 2006). Due to this fact, it is difficult to take a 'distinct shape of African media amidst a nexus of national variations and global influences' (Ndlela, 2009, pp.55-6). Despite these challenges, however, media in Africa are widely regarded as having the potential to contribute to the exercise of the communication of political information and the achievement of sustainable development goals (Wasserman, 2011). So as to realize these objectives properly, Mukhongo (2010) argues that the media need to be at the forefront of guiding the public agenda through catering reliable information.

It can be said that in understanding media content and related aspects, we need to understand the "politics" of journalistic practice: why this story and why that image? And perhaps more importantly, we need to understand corporate politics, and the interests and influences that circulate around the hub of media (Street, 2001) because facts are sometimes distorted for political advantage inter alia (Greenfield, 2002). The media, of course do not simply report what is going on in the political arena or developmental activities around them in a neutral and impartial way. Thus, media 'biases' are of key political importance. According to McNair (2003, pp.12-3), "this is true for both print and broadcast media". Hence, an investigation on the role of

media particularly in their coverage of national and supranational issues requires a cautious scrutiny.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Water is one of the most precious resources for human beings; as it is an indispensable natural resource for the survival of mankind. Even to some, water is the very 'lifeblood' of the world. From time immemorial, the availability of water has determined the rhythms of daily life in many regions (Swain, 2004; de Loe & Bjornlund, 2008; Abdel-Gawad, 2008). However, out of the total volume of water available on our planet, earth, which is estimated to be 1.41 billion cubic kilometers (km<sup>3</sup>), 98 percent is not usable by humans since it is found in the saltwater of the oceans, inland seas and deep underground basins (Swain, 2004). Yet most of the remaining, 2 percent of fresh water is stored in ice caps, glaciers, in the soil and atmosphere and in living things. In contrast, with increasing global population and mankind's pursuit for a better life, the demand for scarce water resource is continuing to increase (Ibid.). This, coupled with lower supplies of freshwater due to possible global climate change, threatens altered rainfall patterns and increasingly frequent extreme weather events (Perret et al., 2006; Connor et al., 2008).

As Swain (2004) further pointed out, though lakes and rivers are the main sources of fresh water for human consumption, in the tropical and arid areas, where most of the world population lives, they are unevenly distributed. Consequently, the continually deteriorating scarcity and unequal distribution of the water resources together with massive population growth, rapid industrialization, hasty urbanization, increasing agricultural activities, acute demand for hydropower generation and high rate of evaporation not only poses a threat to the survival and prosperity of the current and future generations, but also might cause tension and possibly war

between countries; even if as Swain (2004) states, in most instances such happenings will depend on various additional factors like time, risk, aid and power asymmetry assessments among the riparian countries. Thus, “achieving sustainable management of the quantity and quality of freshwater is both a high priority and a serious challenge for most countries worldwide” (cited in Norton et al., 2008, p.234).

One among these international rivers, for instance, is the Nile River which is the focus of this study. As a matter of fact the River Nile is known for its hub of disagreements among riparian countries. Egypt, for instance, claims that: “Her top foreign policy priority has always been to safeguard the natural, acquired and historical rights on the uninterrupted flow of the Nile water” (Yacob, 1997, p.15) as it is an arid country that receives about 98% of its fresh water from the Nile, originating outside its international borders (Abdel-Gawad, 2008) and Egypt itself has almost no rain (Erlich, 2002). Opposing to the Egyptians age-old dictum (“Egypt is the gift of Nile”), Kinfe (1997, p. 8) asks that “Egypt may be the gift of the Nile but is not the Nile also a gift to the countries where it originates and from where it carries rich alluvial soil to the terraced fields of Aswan?” Kinfe’s question seems not simply about articulating the right of upper riparian countries and justice only, but also about morality too.

For centuries, Egypt has sought to be the Master of the Nile - seeking to tame the river's unpredictable flow and ensure exclusive control over its use. But today, upper riparian countries are challenging this dominance and are pushing for a greater say and greater share of the River Nile (Aljazeera English Online, 07 June 2011). Specifically, in the case of Ethiopia, Haggai Erlich (2002, p.7) has written, ‘after centuries of internal wars and underdevelopment during

which the Ethiopians did not have the resources to utilize the Nile, they are now determined to use it for Ethiopia’.

Consequently, ‘Ethiopia, the major contributor to the flow of the Nile, has risen to the forefront in water resources development in Africa. In pursuing its objective of economic development and poverty alleviation it is trying to retain a large share of its crossboundary water, which constitutes more than 90 percent of its renewable freshwater resources’(cited in Kloos & Worku, 2010, pp.2-3). That is why in the ongoing development strategy of Ethiopia, water is seen as a key resource for development, especially in the hydroelectric power and agricultural sectors (cited in Yacob, 2007). Towards this aim, Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR, now renamed as Ministry of Water and Energy) of Ethiopia, summarizes the overall objectives of the national water resources management policy lucidly as: “To enhance and promote all national efforts towards the efficient, equitable, and optimum utilization of the available water resources of Ethiopia for significant socio-economic development on sustainable basis” (MoWR, 2001, p.1). The National Water Act provides the legal framework for utilizing the water resources of the country in an efficient and sustainable way.

Ethiopia has 123 billion cubic meters of annually available water resources, the highest amount in the entire Eastern Nile basin region (Yacob, 2007). Despite this abundant physical availability of water, however, the country is faced with water scarcity (Swain, 2004). Therefore, unlike the traditionally perceived view where water scarcity is considered as the problem of arid and semi-arid countries, today this understanding has changed. Because as Kulindwa and Lein (2008, p.3) put it: “water scarcity is a term linking availability of water with use, implying that regions with ample available water resources may face water scarcity. Water scarcity is the result of the

interplay between resource availability, consumption patterns and the (mis-)management of the resources.” Thus, abundant availability of water resources per se cannot guarantee sufficient water accessibility.

As noted above, Ethiopia has been facing ‘water scarcity’ repeatedly most probably as a result of lack of capacity to use the available water, poor water management and partly climatic changes. This in turn impeded socio-economic development of the country to a larger extent. As a result, it is estimated that around half of the Ethiopian population lives in “absolute poverty” (cited in Gebremedhin, 2006). In light of this, one reasonable suggestion stated that “It is not the amount of water resources available that determines poverty levels in a country, but the effectiveness of how you use those resources” (cited in Yohannes, 2008, p. 2). To tackle the issue of poverty in a sustainable manner, as MoWR of Ethiopia stressed, the country gives more emphasis for the building of multipurpose projects such as irrigation and hydropower (MoWR, 2001).

The GERD is one of these large hydropower projects, which is currently under construction and expected to be completed in 2017. The dam’s total construction cost is estimated to be about 80 billion Birr or 4.8 billion US dollars, which is expected to be wholly financed by the Ethiopian government and citizens’, according to official sources.

This project, however, triggers a mix of feelings. On the one hand, it creates hope among Ethiopians for a better future; breaks the psychology of impossibility both internally and externally; instigates citizens to strengthen their contribution for the accomplishment of the project. Of course, “the Great Millennium Dam, the largest dam on the continent, continues to receive tremendous public support since the plan was made public” (Capital, 17 April 2011). In

contrast, however, “some see the launching of the dam at this particular time as a deliberate attempt by Ethiopian officials to divert the public attention from political turmoil that is raging in the Arab world” (Capital, 10 April 2011). It also faces external condemnation from different parties mainly Egypt, even if we are witnessing a “dynamic policy shift” toward Nile basin following the downfall of Hosni Mubarak’s regime. Environmental lobbyists and other groups who have ‘a special interest’ in the region also criticize the project for its supposed impact on the environment, social (such as displacement of people and inhabitants), political and economic reasons.

And, at the middle of these conflicting views, both the national and international media can play a great role in the political communication through supporting or opposing the agenda or by setting their own agenda instead, by framing some aspects of the issue/GERD and make it more salient in their outlets. As to the researcher’s knowledge, in the Eastern Nile basin context, no research has been done in examining media coverage of huge dam constructions on the Nile River. So this knowledge gap attracted the researcher to conduct a study by taking a specific case (i.e., the GERD project), which aims at assessing how the national and international press covered this magnanimous project. Thus, this issue needs to be investigated and this research to do just that.

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1. General Objective**

The general objective of this study was to analyze the national and international press coverage of Ethiopia’s decision to construct the GERD on the Nile River.

### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives**

The study has also the following specific objectives:

- A) To assess the major themes of the stories, types of sources and their tones given coverage by the *Addis Zemen*, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers;
- B) To identify the dominant challenges and opportunities Ethiopia has faced vis-a-vis its decision to build the GERD;
- C) To assess the main focus of the target newspapers', in their coverage of the GERD;
- D) To examine whether or not the target newspapers' coverage of the GERD project was similar or different with the policies of their governments.

### **1.4. Research Questions**

This study considered the following research questions:

1. How did the *Addis Zemen*, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers cover the GERD project on the Nile River?
2. What were the major themes of the stories, types of sources used, and their tone of reporting in the target newspapers' coverage of the GERD project?
3. What were the predominant challenges and opportunities Ethiopia faced in relation to its decision to build the GERD on the Nile River, as covered by the target newspapers?
4. How similar or different was the target newspapers' coverage of the GERD project with the policies of their governments?

## **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The result of this study would shed some light on the general trend and role of the media in its coverage of the issue. Since there has not been any actual study made on the issue so far, this study can provide an inception for further studies on related issues.

The outcome of the study will be of considerable importance to Ethiopia in relation to designing a strategic public relations work toward media houses and other concerned parties on the Nile basin issue. Besides, the output of the study may also help the country to recognize its weak spots and thereby take corrective measures in relation to its shortcomings.

In a similar vein, it is hoped that media organizations in general and the selected media institutions in particular, will benefit from the outcome of the study. The study can provide these media an opportunity to reflect upon their experiences of reporting and to strive for living up to the canons of journalism in their execution of their daily activities. Besides, Nile basin stakeholders, researchers, policymakers, and donors that may involve in funding big projects shall also benefit in getting valuable information from the results of the study and this in turn may help them make sound decisions.

## **1.6. Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study is limited to the print (newspaper) media; for which purpose three newspapers were selected from the Eastern Nile basin member countries, namely, Ethiopia (*Addis Zemen*), Egypt (*Al Ahram Weekly*) and the Sudan (*Sudan Vision*). The study thus examines the coverage of these selected newspapers with the time frame starting from March 30, 2011 to September 25, 2011, on the decision of Ethiopia to construct the GERD project on the Nile river

basin. Therefore, the study does not include any assessment on the coverage of broadcast media (radio, television), and other print media options such as magazines.

### **1.7. Limitations of the Study**

Though this study involves a combination of both quantitative content analysis and in-depth interview, it inclined toward the former. But there is such limitation that content analysis lacks depth especially in terms of revealing the impact of the media outlets on its audiences. For example Gunter (2000) argues that quantitative content analyses tend to be purely descriptive accounts of the characteristics of media output and often make few inferences in advance about the potential significance of their findings in the context of what they reveal about the impact of media content on audiences.

The study encompasses two (pro-) government newspapers, *Addis Zemen* and *Al Ahrām Weekly*, and one independent/private newspaper, *Sudan Vision*, from Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan, respectively. Though it seems important and helpful to include representative samples from broadcast media, in terms of enriching the research findings, it was not so mainly due to time and resource constraints.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Related Literature**

This part portrays a review of various issues related to the topic. Besides that other issues like agenda-setting theory, framing theory and political economy of mass media were discussed serving as a basis of theoretical frameworks for this study.

#### **2.1. An Overview of the Nile River**

International rivers do not respect the national frontiers across which they flow or the political boundaries of countries (Swain, 2004; Kindiki, 2010). The term international or transboundary watercourse refers to the condition when rivers are shared at least between two or more riparian countries. In this context, according to Swain (2004) and Manson (2004), there are nearly 260 transboundary rivers worldwide and more than 40 percent of the world's population is directly dependent upon the fresh water of these rivers.

While in the African context, the continent has over 80 major transboundary river and lake basins (Okurut & Othero, 2010). Again, 90 percent of the continent's freshwater resources are contained in transboundary river basins and also more than 75 percent of Africa's population lives on these transboundary rivers. Hence, compared with other continents, African countries are by far the most interdependent on shared transboundary water resources (Van Wyk, 2010). The Nile River is one of the aforementioned international river basins, which is shared by at least ten African countries.

The term Nile comes from the Greek word "Nelios", meaning River Valley. The Nile valley is one of the oldest places in the world where its ancient inhabitants began a cradle of civilization, thereby creating ancient polities and empires like the Pharaonic civilization of Egypt, ancient Sudanese state of Merowe and the Aksumite Empire of ancient Ethiopia, firmly rooted in the Nile basin (Yacob, 2007). The Nile waters system consists of numerous tributaries and headwater lakes. Lake Victoria in the equatorial region and Lake Tana in north-western Ethiopia are the most significant natural reservoirs in the Nile upstream. Of the four major tributaries, the Abbay (Blue Nile) which contributes for 59 percent of the total amount of Nile water, Baro-Akobo (Sobat) contributing for 14 percent and Tekeze (Atbara) contributing for 13 percent originate in the Ethiopian highlands, while the White Nile contributing for 14 percent originates from the Equatorial Lakes region (Yacob, 2007; Swain, 2004; Melesse et al., 2011). Based on the above data, it is evident that the Ethiopian water tributaries in general contribute 86 percent out of the total share, while the Great/Equatorial lakes region supplies the remaining 14 percent to the Nile river basin.

The Nile River is one of the world's longest international or transboundary rivers which is shared by ten countries including: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC, formerly Zaire), Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. According to Swain (2004), though the Nile is the longest river system and supports a large population, its average annual runoff (84 billion cubic meters) is modest when compared to other major African river systems such as Congo/Zaire (1,250 billion cubic meters), Volta (390 billion cubic meters), Zambezi (230 billion cubic meters) and Niger (180 billion cubic meters). Comparatively speaking, the annual discharge of the Nile River is much lesser than other major rivers of Africa. For instance, the average annual runoff of river Congo is nearly 15 times bigger than that of Nile.

That is why, Dereje (2010, p.422) describes the Nile basin as: “A giant in terms of length, and a dwarf in terms of the volume of water it carries.”

The famous Greek historian Herodotus described Egypt as the “gift of the Nile” in the fifth century B.C. (Swain, 2004), which holds true to date. This huge dependence of Egypt on the Nile River has led her not only to exploit the Nile waters more than any other riparian country, but also to attempt to control the major source of the river basin, that is the Blue Nile found in Ethiopia, through armed force in 1875 (Gundet) and 1876 (Gurae). But, these two consecutive military expeditions by Kadive Ismail (1863-1879) of Egypt had resulted in devastating defeats by the then Emperor Yohannes IV (1872-1889) of Ethiopia. And many observers argue that, because of this phenomenon and the growing demand of riparian states over the Nile waters with different interests as per their respective national necessities, Nile will be a potential source of conflicts between riparian countries. Despite this speculation, however, Nile can also be a source of mutual cooperation among riparian countries, if they work together for their common development.

In the latter case, we can take the ongoing negotiations taking place among Nile basin countries under the umbrella of NBI to pave the way for the establishment of the Nile Basin Commission as an example of promising condition. The NBI which consists of a Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of the Nile Basin (Nile-COM), a Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) and the Secretariat (Nile-SEC) (Swain, 2004). Towards this end, Nile-COM agreed on a Shared Vision which states: ‘To achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources’ (<http://www.nilebasin.org/newsite>). As Swain (2004) further states, in order to translate the

shared vision into reality, two Subsidiary Action Programmes (SAP) are being prepared, namely, the Eastern Nile (EN-SAP) consisting of Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia, and the Nile Equatorial Lakes region (NEL-SAP) consisting of all the riparian countries except Ethiopia and Eritrea. The SAP is the investment arm of NBI focusing on preparation of investment projects that are trans-boundary in nature. The overriding goal of the investment agenda is to contribute to poverty alleviation, the reversal of environmental degradation and the promotion of socio-economic growth in the riparian countries (<http://www.nilebasin.org/newsite>).

Despite all these developments, however, the pace for realizing the ultimate vision of the NBI is found in deadlock due to the “water security” issue that is introduced by the Cooperative/Comprehensive Framework Agreement (CFA) draft Article 14(b) which says: “not to significantly affect the water security of any other Nile Basin State”, while Egypt and Sudan opposing this article and instead want to replace by: “not to adversely affect the water security and current uses and rights of any other Nile Basin State” (cited in Dereje, 2010, p.428). In this context, Minelik Alemu (2010) says more,

the current differences over the CFA are probably the most intractable obstacles to sustained cooperation in the Nile River basin. The upper riparian states are determined that the new CFA should replace whatever ‘agreements’ existed before. The downstream countries insist that these so called existing agreements should co-exist with the new treaty. The question of existing agreements, currently phrased as a ‘water security’ issue under Article 14(b) of the CFA. (p.43).

The source of this stalemate backs us to the 1929 colonial treaty between England (‘acting on behalf’ of its former upper riparian colonies) and Egypt as well as the 1959 treaty between Egypt and Sudan on Nile Waters Agreement. Following the decolonization process, these existing agreements on their part, created another dimension of disagreement on whether or not they are binding on the newly independent states and the other riparian country (Ethiopia) which is not

part of these treaties. Regarding the role of these treaties, on the one hand there are some arguments. For example, Badr (2010) stressed that the binding nature of these treaties and thus the historic rights of downstream countries, especially Egypt, are to be respected. This stand is related with the principle of absolute territorial integrity theory (ATIT), which insists that the lower riparian countries have an absolute right to have the uninterrupted flow of the river from the territory of the upper stream states. Besides, the concept of the limited territorial integrity theory (LTIT) is also somewhat alike with ATIT. However unlike the ATIT, the LTIT acknowledges in principle the right of upper stream countries to use from the international river waters; but not committed to share the transboundary waters equitably. That is why this theory too is considered as the one in favor of downstream countries.

On the other hand there are some arguments. For example, according to Kindiki (2010), there is no place in the international law that permits the legality of these treaties over the upstream countries. Taking into consideration the principles of the international law on state succession as and how that affects treaty obligations and the dominant 'clean slate' doctrine (also known as the doctrine of non-transmissibility), he argues that "the position of Egypt to the effect that the agreements are binding in perpetuity, despite decolonization, is dictated more by self-interest than by international law." In other words, the international law supports the claims of upstream states that the Nile treaties are invalid in international law and they claim that they cannot stop themselves from using the Nile waters that pass through their territories. This argument is concomitant with the doctrine of absolute territorial sovereignty theory (ATST) that posits the idea that any sovereign country can use whichever resource including transboundary river water that is found within its own territory just without being obliged to respect any precondition from any other riparian countries. In addition, the limited territorial sovereignty theory (LTST) is

similar to the ATST but it recognizes the rights of downstream countries, to some extent, to use from the shared waters.

Unlike the above extreme theories either on the side of upstream or downstream states on the utilization of international waters, Kindiki (2010) offered two fairly better principles that may probably narrow the gap between/among riparian states. The first one is the principle of 'equitable utilization' of shared transboundary river waters by all riparian states, though this does not mean that necessarily 'equal division.' Again, the 1966 Helsinki Rules on the uses of international waters adopted the principle of 'equitable and reasonable use' as the governing doctrine of water law. The second principle is the 'common basin-wide management of international watercourses' (also known as communities of interest theory) that regards transboundary rivers as a "single economic and geographic unit", because international watercourses do not respect political boundaries of countries.

Considering the existence of the above mentioned different kinds of principles regarding the utilization of international water basins, it would be difficult to give fair judgment upon which theory is more relevant to be a solution for the upstream-downstream deadlock and thus anticipate what likely to happen in the future. So what? Will the current NBI impasses hopefully solve the disagreements peacefully? Will the current status quo of the Nile River continue as it is? Will the recently signed CFA in May 2010 by upper riparian countries with the absence of Egypt and Sudan lead them to the establishment of a permanent Nile Basin Commission? What could be the next measure of Ethiopia as being the lion's share contributor to the waters of the Nile basin, while the least beneficiary of it in comparison with downstream states? These are

some of the pivotal questions revolving around the deadlock between upstream and downstream Nile basin countries this time.

Ethiopia is often referred as the 'great unknown' of the region. The massive (86%) upstream discharge undoubtedly confers a very important position to Ethiopia on the sharing of the Nile water. Moreover, the country is not bound by any agreement with Egypt and Sudan over the sharing of the river (Swain, 2004). Though Ethiopia has been known for its being a cradle of ancient civilization and a symbol of black peoples' proud throughout its history – mainly as a result of her victory the 'White colonizer' (Italy) in the battle of Adwa in 1896, today ironically with the presence of abundant water resources within its own territorial sovereignty like the Nile waters, the country's picture is swallowed by its worst poverty and drought. Of course, this problem is a result of long term accumulation of internal and external factors and thus according to some commentators the country awaits a tough homework to tackle it.

## **2.2. Nile and the National Interest of Ethiopia**

The Nile basin has an enormous potential in terms of bringing different changes in the socio-economic conditions of Ethiopia. On the one hand it may promote the 'emerging development' of the country through alleviating poverty. On the other hand, it can serve as a source of hydropower and hard currency. Moreover, it might also serve as a catalyst to achieve the 'promising signs to create a national consensus', which is undoubtedly necessary to the country's socio-economic and political development. So, narrowly speaking let's see some of the major Nile issues that are considered as the national interest of Ethiopia herein below.

### **2.2.1. Nile - a Potential for Irrigation to Alleviate Poverty**

Water plays a great role in realizing food security in the context of persistent poverty (van Koppen, Giordano & Butterworth, 2007). Food security can be defined as an “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life” (Maxwell 1990, cited in Roa, 2007, p. 205). According to World Bank (2003, as cited in Kulindwa & Lein, 2008), an estimated 70 percent of available freshwater resources worldwide are used for irrigation, and irrigated agriculture is of crucial importance for food production and food security, contributing up to 40 percent of the world’s food production. For Kulindwa and Lein (2008), irrigated agriculture has a number of specific agro-economic advantages compared with rain-fed agriculture, such as higher gross yields per unit of land, reduce yield fluctuations and allow more continuous and adaptable production.

For this reason, irrigation is considered an important contributor to global food security, since it increases agricultural yields and helps to stabilize global food production. So, it is likely to expand the size of irrigated land in the future, with the bulk of it occurring in developing countries where population growth and demand for increased food production are strongest (cited in de Loe & Bjornlund, 2008).

As Eleni (2007, p.286) argues that “most countries that undertake poverty reduction strategies and programmes prioritize rural and agriculture-based development, based on the preponderance of the poor who live in generally less-favoured, rural areas.” For example, agriculture is the basis of the Ethiopian economy, accounting for 46 percent of its GDP and 90 percent of its export earnings and employing 85 percent of the country’s labour force (UNDP 2002, cited in Assefa &

van Keulen, 2007). It would be for this reason that the country is now practicing “Agricultural Development Led-Industrialization” (ADLI) as its long-term economic development strategy.

Ethiopia is one of those world’s poorest countries, being a victim of poverty and starvation for years, if not centuries. For Crow (2000, p.56) the 1984/5 Ethiopian famine is one of the worst and widely publicized famines of the 1980s. Kliot (1994, p.3) has properly put it, “...drought and famine seem to be permanently, if undeservedly, associated with the name of Ethiopia.” Accordingly, Thomas (2000, p.10) has strongly suggested that “of the problems to be ameliorated, poverty is perhaps the most basic.” For this reason, Manson (2004, p.158) asserts that “famine is maybe the harshest reality that is pushing Ethiopia to use its abundant water resources better.”

Though Ethiopia is known as the “water tower of the North-East Africa”, its rainfall dependent agricultural driven economy together with the rampant internal political conflicts and war against foreign aggressors, including Egypt, for longer period of time exposed her (Ethiopia) to vicious circle poverty and periodic famine. These terrible political and economic situations allowed neither stability nor economic development in the country; and also these challenges have considerably affected Ethiopia’s right to use the waters of the Nile. However, since recent years, comparatively saying since late 1990s, this situation has been changing to some extent.

By taking these scenarios into account, in 1957 the Ethiopian government declared that: “Ethiopia has the right and obligation to exploit its water resources for the benefit of present and future generations of its citizens [and] must, therefore, reassert and reserve now and for the future, the right to take all such measures in respect of its water resources” (cited in Daniel, n.d.). Yet, due to lack of basin wide agreement and financial bottlenecks in addition to the aforesaid

challenges, Ethiopia's potentially irrigable land on the Nile basin, which is estimated to be about 3.7 million hectares, has remained untouched so far (MoWR, Ethiopia, 22 March 2009).

In Ethiopia, only 3 percent of the available irrigable land has been developed, of which a mere 0.6 percent is found within the Abbay (Nile basin) valley, while Egypt uses 80 percent, compared with 7 percent in Africa (Erlich, 2002; Perret, 2006; Yacob, 2007). By comparison, this shows that despite the huge potential that Ethiopia has, the actual size of the irrigated area is below half of the African average let alone the Egyptian, or by far it is minimal. Admittedly by 2025, it is expected that Ethiopia will have more people to feed than Egypt (UNDP 1994, as cited in Swain, 2004). This in turn may bring a huge influence on the side of the country to develop its water resources so as to increase the agricultural yields to feed her people. To conclude, mentioning the 4.5 million drought affected Ethiopians even in 2010/11, which is a clue to the steady rising demand for food partly due to rainfall variability, high population growth, climate change and possibly bad administration, the country will increasingly come under pressure to engage in extensive irrigation activities to ensure food security. Therefore, it seems that irrigation is a necessity not a choice for the country.

### **2.2.2. Nile - a Source for Hydro Power, Hard Currency**

In most countries, energy policy pursues four goals, namely 'access', 'security', 'efficiency' and 'environment'. The desire is for everyone to have access to electricity on a reliable, continuous basis, and to convert and use it in ways that are not wasteful and do not cause unacceptable harm to human health or the natural environment (Scrase & Ockwell, 2009).

The composition of world primary energy demand in 2004 classified into seven different sources of energy categories, namely, oil (35%), coal (25%), gas (21%), biomass (10%), nuclear (6%),

hydro (2%), and other (1%) (cited in Scrase et al., 2009). This data tell us that the world population has been heavily rely on and exploiting nonrenewable energy sources than renewable sources (e.g., hydropower, wind, solar, biomass), which are underutilized. Here, the focus of this paper is solely on the hydropower sector.

Hydropower is considered as the key source of electric energy and thereby electricity is the most modern and convenient energy form, because it is believed to be clean and versatile in its applications (Otieno & Awange, 2006). It is worth noting that of the total world's hydropower potential, 27 percent is in Africa (about 780,000MW) while South America has about 20 percent (577,000MW). The remaining 53 percent is shared among the rest of the world (Otieno & Awange, 2006). On the other hand, according to International Hydropower Association (2003, as cited in Kloos & Worku, 2010), 75 percent of Europe's, 69 percent of North America's, 33 percent of South America's, 22 percent of Asia's, and only 7 percent of Africa's hydropower potential has been developed. As can be seen in the above data, Africa lags behind any other continents of the world in its hydropower harnessing.

While from the ENSAP perspective, according to Yacob (1997, as cited in Kinfe, 1999EC), the hydropower potential of Ethiopia within the Nile system is estimated about 4,000MW, Egypt 3, 210MW and Sudan 380MW. Of these potentials they have utilized 230MW, 2,700MW and 225MW respectively. Currently, Ethiopia develops some 2,000MW of electric power (Capital, 31 July 2011).

It is easily discernible from the above figure that Sudan and Egypt harnesses more of their potentials, while Ethiopia with its huge hydro potential uses least of it. Yacob (2007) added to

this, only 2 percent of the Ethiopia's hydroelectric power potential has been harnessed and only 13 percent of the country's population has access to electric power.

But as the IMF Report of 2010, entitled "*Regional Economic Outlook: Sub-Saharan Africa: Resilience and Risks*" confirmed that the Ethiopian "economy has recently enjoyed strong and broad-based growth, including rising contributions from the service and industry sectors" (2010, p.8). Consequently, the energy demand of the country has been growing faster than ever this time. This is evident from the annual average energy demand growth rate of the country for the year 2002-2005 was 13 percent, while for the period 1995-2001 has been limited to 5-6 percent (EEPCo, 2007). However, the issue is not just about accessibility alone but also about reliability and security too.

Scrase and Ockwell (2009, p.46) argue that "disruptions to electricity supplies are enormously damaging in economic and political terms." In this light, power blackouts are common in Ethiopia and this resulted for several negative economic consequences let alone the social and political impacts. This is obvious as many factories were forced to interrupt their daily business or to produce below their capacity due to shortage of power, especially during 2008/09. In fact, the country is suffering from a persistent electric shortage throughout, which inhibits mainly the productivity of the industrial sector and thereby its overall development. For example, East Cement Share Company, the biggest Chinese cement investment in Ethiopia, executive general manager Wu Cheng Bing has quoted in The Reporter, "The current power interruption is affecting our production. If there is uninterrupted power supply, we can produce even much more than we do now" (The Reporter, 14 April 2012).

In effect, its continually rising energy demand has forced the country to give attention for the construction of large hydropower dams as a means of long-term availability of secured energy source in order to meet the socio-economic development goals of the country. The energy policy of Ethiopia duly recognizes the relative advantage that the country has in terms of hydropower potential resources (Ethiopia, MoWR, 2001). This seems evident when we look at Ethiopia's total potential capacity of 60,000 megawatts of which 45,000MW from hydropower, above 10,000MW from wind power and 5,000MW from geothermal (Capital, 8 January 2012; EEPCo Newsletter, Vol.1, Issue No.12, Nov-Dec.2011). As depicted from the above figure, hydropower which is three times bigger than the aggregate sum of wind and geothermal energy sources takes the lion's share of the country's potential energy sources. It could be for this comparative advantage (i.e. great hydropower potential), the country is now aggressively developing major hydropower plants, such as the Gilgel Gibe projects series, Tekezé I and II, Tana Beles and the current GERD. It is believed that these ambitious and big hydropower projects may cater the country's power demand to support its sustainable economic progress. Table 2.1 shows the current hydropower generation stations in Ethiopia.

**Table 2.1** Current hydropower stations in Ethiopia

| No. | Name of power station | River Basin     | Installed capacity (MW) | Year of Completion |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1   | Koka                  | Abbay/Blue Nile | 43.2                    | 1960               |
| 2   | Tis Abbay I           | Abbay/Blue Nile | 11.4                    | 1964               |
| 3   | Awash II              | Awash*          | 32                      | 1966               |
| 4   | Awash III             | Awash           | 32                      | 1971               |
| 5   | Finchaa               | Abbay/Blue Nile | 134                     | 1973/2003**        |
| 6   | Melka Wakena          | Wabe-Shebelle   | 153                     | 1988               |
| 7   | Tis Abbay II          | Abbay/Blue Nile | 73                      | 2001               |
| 8   | Gilgel Gibe I         | Omo-Ghibe       | 184                     | 2004               |
| 9   | Gojeb***              | Omo-Ghibe       | 150                     | 2004               |
| 10  | Tekeze I              | Tekeze/Atbara   | 300                     | 2009               |
| 11  | Tana Beles            | Abbay/Blue Nile | 460                     | 2010               |
| 12  | Gilgel Gibe II        | Omo-Ghibe       | 420                     | 2010               |
| 13  | FAN****               | Abbay/Blue Nile | 97                      | 2011               |
|     | <b>Total</b>          |                 | <b>2089.6</b>           |                    |

Source: Data compiled by the researcher from EEP Co (2007, 2010/11 minutes), different media outlets

Note: \* Awash River is an inland river system

\*\*In 2003 a fourth unit of turbine was added to the existed three units of Finchaa plant.

\*\*\*Gojeb hydropower plant is Ethiopia's first independent power project that was constructed by MIDROC. MIDROC per se sells the output of the dam to EEPCo.

\*\*\*\* FAN is an acronym form of Fincha Amerti Neshe

As shown from the above table, Ethiopia has a total of thirteen operational dams of hydropower plants; and so far these dams in general have the generating capacity of around 2089.6MW. Out of this aggregate electric power, more than half become available during the 2009/2010 academic year from three hydropower stations, namely Tekeze I, Tana Beles and Gilgel Gibe II.

**Table 2.2** Hydropower stations presently under construction and committed to construct in Ethiopia

| No. | Name of power station | River Basin     | Estimated installed Capacity (MW) | Status             |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1   | Gilgel Gibe III       | Omo/Ghibe       | 1,870                             | Under construction |
| 2   | GERD*                 | Abbay/Blue Nile | 6000                              | Under construction |
| 3   | Genale III            | Genale/Dawa     | 254                               | Under construction |
|     | <b>Subtotal</b>       |                 | <b>8124</b>                       |                    |
| 4   | Genale IV             | Genale/Dawa     | 256                               | Committed          |
| 5   | Geba I                | Baro-Akobo      | 215                               | Committed          |
| 6   | Geba II               | Baro-Akobo      | 157                               | Committed          |
| 7   | Border                | Abbay/Blue Nile | 1200                              | Committed          |
| 8   | Chemoga Yeda I        | Abbay/Blue Nile | 162                               | Committed          |
| 9   | Chemoga Yeda II       | Abbay/Blue Nile | 118                               | Committed          |
| 10  | Gilgel Gibe IV        | Omo-Ghibe       | 1900                              | Committed          |
| 11  | Tekeze II             | Tekeze/Atbara   | 450                               | Committed          |
| 12  | Beko Abo              | Abbay/Blue Nile | 2100                              | Committed          |
| 13  | Mendaya               | Abbay/Blue Nile | 2000                              | Committed          |
| 14  | Halele-Werabessa      | Omo-Ghibe       | 422                               | Committed          |
| 15  | Karadobi              | Abbay/Blue Nile | 1600                              | Committed          |
|     | <b>Subtotal</b>       |                 | <b>10580</b>                      |                    |
|     | <b>Grand total</b>    |                 | <b>18704</b>                      |                    |

Source: Data compiled by the researcher from EEPCo (2007, 2010/11 minutes), different media outlets

\* Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) is currently under construction on the Blue Nile (*Abbay*) River in the Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State Metekel zone Guba *wereda* (district) some 750km far away from the capital, Addis Ababa. The site of the dam is located near the Sudanese (North) border at about 20-40km away from it.

In addition to those operational dams, there are three dams currently under construction; and if things continue well according to plans, the country would generate about 8124MW (fourfold of the current total hydropower) when the ongoing projects are completed. Besides, as depicted in the above table, the government has committed to construct several hydropower plants phase by phase in the near future. But, the question is whether or not these several hydropower plans can be changed into reality.

Moreover, as the regime repeatedly make it clear that the grand vision of these projects are not only to generate power for domestic needs alone but also to export surplus electricity to neighboring countries, even to other continents as well. This is reflected in the vision of the EEPCo (2007): “To be a center of excellence in providing quality service at every one’s door and be a competitive exporter of electrical energy.” Therefore, the country has targeted to use the Nile waters as a source of hard currency through exporting electric power. If we look at the overall hydropower potential of Ethiopia that is about 30, 000-45,000MW, it seems sound to consider this is actually one potential area of interest for the country. As a point of departure, for example, following the completion of the Ethio-Djibouti and Ethio-Sudan power system interconnections, Ethiopia has began exporting electricity to these countries recently.

Specifically, starting from the end of May 2011 Ethiopia has been exporting some 200MW electric power to Djibouti (Fortune, 2 October 2011) and thereby earns 1.3 to 1.5 million US dollars per month (Capital, 8 January 2012). On average, Ethiopia can get a range of 15.6-18 million US dollars annually just by exporting electricity to Djibouti alone. It would not be difficult to guess and/or calculate the potential income of the country that can be achieved through exporting electric power to other countries too. It is also believed that such kind of hard currency earns will help Ethiopia “to widen plans to fund the generation of electricity from it” (Fortune, 2 October 2011, p.6).

Besides, Nile may also serve as a potential to bridge the national consensus among different Ethiopian citizens; and one can take the timely heated movement of citizens to take part in the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project whether by buying bonds, by giving their labor or technical skill, etc.

### **2.2.3. Nile - Hub for National/Regional Stability, Instability**

The international relationship of countries is guided by scrutiny and primarily concerned with issues of state security in such an insecure world. Competition for resources is a long-standing cause of national insecurities. To take one instance of such an issue, there are growing concerns about water shortages and cross-border conflicts over access to water resources, together with threats to food security (Scrase et al., 2009). It is for this reason that Dolatyar and Gray (2000, as cited in Yacob, 2007) argue that “water security is already one of the most crucial elements in the foreign policy considerations of many countries.”

For Arsel and Spoor (2010), water is a contested resource, with a complex political economy. Upstream and downstream users can be in conflict, in terms of uses of water such as for

irrigation and hydropower generation. But they also comment that shared waters can lead to negotiated solutions. Based on this expression, two positions are easily observable among scholars regarding their view on international waters. Let's look at it separately from the Nile River angle.

To begin with, those proponents of the positivist view; they forwarded many reasons why transboundary river basins could be a source of cooperation rather than a source of conflict in the contemporary highly interdependent world. According to Hiscock, Rivett and Davison (2002), unlike other nonrenewable natural resources such as fossil fuels, oil, natural gas, and uranium, water is a renewable resource and most abstractions are strictly sustainable in that abstracted water will ultimately return to the water cycle. For Hiscock et al. the renewability nature of water and its cycling system makes it less contestable source and promotes cooperation among riparian states to manage it in sustainable way for their common ends.

According to Arsel and Spoor (2010, pp.9-10), water scarcity can be a catalyst for cooperation among co-basin countries and they further argue that "the old 'water wars' determinism has been replaced by a 'water for peace' determinism." The issue of Nile therefore should be seen from this perspective as it had entertained conflicts between riparian states, mainly between Ethiopia and Egypt, over its water resources during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Presently, the total population of the Nile basin countries amounts to some 300 million, of which the livelihood of more than 160 million people directly relies on the river's water. By 2025 the number of people that depend on the Nile River is projected to reach 859 million (Debay, 2010). With this in mind, a basin-wide cooperation rather than unilateral policies and actions could be important to fulfill the needs of the entire population. In this regard Manson (2004) suggested

four major development needs concerning water use in the Nile basin as a whole, namely: water for irrigation and hydroelectric power production; prevention of floods; watershed management, minimization of erosion and siltation of reservoirs; and prevention of water pollution. A Quarterly Newsletter of the NBI (March 2011) also stressed:

The importance of Nile cooperation cannot be over emphasized. More than 160 million people live within the basin and expect benefits from the management and utilization of its shared water resources. Better management could bring a vast range of benefits including increased hydropower and food production, better access to water for domestic use, improved management of water sheds and reduced environmental degradation, reduced pollution and more control over damage from floods and droughts. (pp.1-3).

What this quotation points is the importance of cooperation through various means such as conducting joint investment projects and collaborative management of the river can maximize riparian states' mutual benefits. For example, Allen (1994, as cited in Swain, 2004) estimates, after taking into account the evaporation and seepage at Lake Nasser, the Ethiopian storage facilities could increase water availability for Egypt by as much as 15 billion cubic metres per year.

While those proponents of the pessimistic point of view, on the other hand, insist that the Nile River is potentially a hub of conflict among riparian states. Today, the nexus between the shrinking supply of and rising demand for freshwater has placed water resources at the front and center of national policy priorities, regional competitions, and international concerns (Yohannes, 2008). As Clarke and king (2004, as cited in Elliott, 2006, p. 46) observe, "in a water-short world, mistrust and insecurity are what mark most relations between countries that share rivers." Similarly, Swain (2004) argues that the possibility for water induced conflict has brought global water issues into the arena of 'high politics'. That is why Elhance (1999, p.5) has concluded that "water is likely to become the 'oil of the next century'".

This is a clear indication of the increasingly deteriorating scarce water resources worldwide. In the mid-1980s, for example, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency regarded the Nile basin as one of the ten flash points where war could break out due to shortage of freshwater supply in the contemporary international relations (Swain, 2004; Yohannes, 2008). Moreover, Chaigneau (2002) added to it by noting that the Nile basin region is particularly intricate axis of conflicts.

The problem is that the Nile River, unlike its lengthiness, does not have enough water to meet the competing needs of the co-basin states, yet this is becoming highly exacerbating as a result of rising demand of states from time to time (Plaut, 2010). Plaut in his article “*The Nile Crisis Comes to the Boil*”, further noted that the negotiating endeavors among Nile riparian states for over 10 years under the umbrella of NBI, (a forum for dialogue), have not been able to solve their differences and thus resulted in frustration and losing of confidence of upstream countries vis-à-vis their counterparts, i.e., downstream states. Consequently, upstream states signed a new treaty in May 2010 so as to share the Nile waters equitably, while Egypt and Sudan not only boycotted but also labeled it as a ‘serious’ move. For Plaut (2010, p. 117), “this simmering crisis, which has dragged on for so many years, appears about to boil.”

The Nile River has been considered by many as a source of political tensions and real inter-state war, particularly between two of its major riparians, Ethiopia and Egypt. For example, Yacob (2007) wrote that the most entangled nations in the Nile basin are Ethiopia and Egypt, just because the former supplies the lion’s share (say 86 percent) of the fresh water on which the latter relies on, but surprisingly there is no any agreed accord between them to manage the water usage properly. Yacob (2007) further argues that, this condition has always made Egypt feel as an unsecured and thereby the major objective of its foreign policy had been targeted on the

annexation of Ethiopia. It is for this reason that according to Petrides (1983, as cited in Yacob, 2007, p. 87), “between 1832 and 1876 Egypt invaded Ethiopia 17 times, and all the battles were fought on Ethiopian territory.” Despite these invasions, however, it is known that Ethiopia defeated the Egyptian army in all the successive battles and then foiled the plan of Egypt.

For Egyptians, Ethiopia has always meant the source of ‘their Nile’ and they were convinced themselves that the Ethiopians were capable of obstructing the waters and the flow of the Nile waters (Erlich, 2002). For instance, as quoted in Erlich (2002, p. 41), “the last king, Na’kuto La’ab, of the Zagwe dynasty of Ethiopia was believed to have caused three years and seven months of famine in Egypt.” But for many observers the validity of this statement is equivocal because there was no concrete evidence other than claims on that issue. For this reason Erlich (2002, p.59) argues that: “The Ethiopian elite were too busy with fratricidal wars to think of the Nile as a card in international relations. The myth about diverting and blocking the river was maintained primarily by local tradition, visiting travelers, and European scholars.”

According to Erlich (2002), the concept of Ethiopia in Egyptian eyes has stemming from the very definition of the “self”. Here, the term ‘self’ is crucial to understand as a slogan of realist theorists, (by implication countries), in which they viewed the international relations as a playing field of zero-sum game just like the Football World. Cohn (2008, p. 11) clearly described the international system as a “‘self-help’ system, in which states must build up their own power to prevent being dominated by others.” As a matter of fact, the world is ruled by the “law” of ‘survival of the fittest.’ It would be from this perspective that, as some observers argued, even after the unsuccessful wars on Ethiopia during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries too, Egypt continued its ‘destabilizing strategy’ against upstream states in general and Ethiopia in

particular. In this regard, Erlich (2002, p. 5) claims that “Egypt was behind many regional issues, such as the conflicts in Eritrea and between Ethiopia and Somalia.”

Besides, Martin Plaut (2010), who is BBC world service news African editor, shares the above idea and he further suggests that as Egypt did before it will continue to attempt to halt any development or consolidation endeavors of the upper stream states through using various tactics.

These may include:

Blocking access to funds for development projects from multilateral and bilateral donors; attempting to break the unity and resolve of the upstream states by bilateral initiatives; and using its links with rebel movements and dissident organizations to undermine the stability of its southern neighbors (something Ethiopia has long accused Cairo of undertaking). (pp. 116-17).

As noted earlier, despite the failure of the 19<sup>th</sup> century operations of Egypt over Ethiopia, Anwar Sadat of Egypt, who predicted an unavoidable conflict in the Nile basin, cautioned upstream riparian states in 1979 by noting that: “The only matter that could take Egypt to war again is water” (Yohannes, 2008, pp. 5-6). Since then, other Egyptian leaders have echoed Sadat’s warning. For example, former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali warned: “The next war in our region will be over the waters of the Nile.” The warnings have particularly been directed to Ethiopia, where 86 percent of Nile water resources originate (Ibid.). This speculation seems sound when one looks at the accusations of the former Egyptian Ambassador to Ethiopia, Marawan Badr (2010, p.57), over Ethiopia, by stating that “Ethiopia’s primary concern was inflicting harm on Egypt, rather than benefiting from the Nile water.”

There is also another dimension to consider which reveals the fact that such a stands are not only expressed among the Egyptian leaders, but also shared by realistic scholars like John Waterbury

who notes that “Egypt is capable of imposing a preferred solution” (cited in Yohannes, 2008, p. 6) as a result of her relative military superiority over the rest riparian countries.

In contrast, however, Yohannes (2008) opposes the idea that:

Egypt is any better prepared today to influence the status of the Nile by military means; claims of modern Egypt’s superior relative capability are grounded in illusion. The country is dependent on unsustainable American economic largesse and military protection to the tune of 2.1 billion US dollar a year. With such foreign dependency, Egypt hardly enjoys relative capability vis-à-vis its immediate rival, Ethiopia. Aside from nightmarish logistical problems (troop deployment and repositioning of war material over an extended geographical space), Egypt’s position is complicated by Ethiopian nationalism and Pan-African sentiment. (p. 6).

Now, it is important to note how Ethiopia reacted to the already mentioned Egyptian claims and warnings. Much of the major issues about Ethiopia’s national security were raised in an Ethiopian government White Paper in 2002. Based upon this official paper, the outermost ring of Ethiopian national security concern is the strategic challenge, posed by Egypt.

To quote few examples that reflect conflict laden responses from the Ethiopian side; the Ethiopian ex-Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin, for instance, once retaliated at the so-called Egypt’s continuous threat by noting that “...irresponsible instance of jingoism that will not get us anywhere near the solution of the problem” and added that “...there is no earthly force that can stop Ethiopia from benefiting from the Nile” (Addis Tribune, 30 January 1998). In addition, the present Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi some two years before accused Egypt for backing of Ethiopia’s rebel groups, which is proxy war, to destabilize Ethiopia and thus warned that “Egypt could not win a war with Ethiopia over the River Nile.” And, though he rejected the claims that war could break out between Ethiopia and Egypt, he added “nobody who has tried that has lived to tell the story. I do not think the Egyptians will be any different and I think they

know that” (Reuters, 23 November 2010). Meles also quoted in Aljazeera’s documentary, entitled “Struggle Over the Nile”, as stated that:

Egypt will not be able to stop Ethiopia from building dams on the Nile. That is history ... and that will not be part of the solution .... Ethiopia is able and willing to use its own resources to build dams on the Nile .... The way forward is to seek a win-win solution through diplomatic efforts ... not for Egypt to try and stop the un-stoppable. (Aljazeera English Online, 22 June 2011).

Despite the above warnings and counter warnings between upstream and downstream states in general and between Egypt and Ethiopia in particular, recently especially following the 2011 revolution in Egypt their relations are witnessing an improvement. This is evident partly from the support of Sudan and Egypt officially for the construction of the GERD project citing the paramount benefits they will achieve from the project.

But it is still uncertain to what extent the foreign policy shift of downstream states, especially Egypt, will actually be able to bring a concrete change to the status quo, which is characterized by duo dominated Nile water regime. Therefore, it is important to recognize this reality and thus co-basin Nile states need a comprehensive, equitable and legal water regime that might avoid potential inter-state wars as well as to create an environment of confidence building among riparians through consistent follow-up and forward better solutions to their common challenges and interests.

### **2.3. Major Arguments on the Construction of Large Dams**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a tremendous increase in the construction of dams to meet the growing water demand around the world. By 1949, there were nearly 5,000 dams worldwide, out of which three-quarters were found in industrialized countries. In 50 years, by the end of the century, there were over 45,000 large dams in more than 140 countries (Swain, 2004). This

figure tells us, even by excluding those small and medium dams then, our world had experienced over 800 large dams on average per year ranging from 1949 to 1999 which was preferable to say a period of large dams' construction.

Though building dam as a source of power generation has become out of fashion in North America and Western Europe since early 1970s, it is still considered the panacea for water shortage problems in many developing countries; China, for example, today owns 22,000 large dams, which is almost half of the world's total number (Swain, 2004). In a similar vein, Kloos and Worku (2010) also stated that starting from the 1960s the construction of new dams each year has began to slow and further decelerating in the 1990s. The reasons for the decline of dam construction may probably be related to the "exhaustion of the most suitable dam sites, increasing recognition and criticism of the social and environmental externalities attached to dams, and the growing value attached to the environment" (cited in Kloos & Worku, 2010, p.7).

For this reason, the construction of large dams has now become one of the most debatable issues of sustainable socio-economic development strategies of countries due to their widespread impacts on social, environmental, economic and security issues. As a result, proponents and opponents of large dam construction usually clash upon the issue; taking either sides on its weighing benefits or risks.

### **2.3.1. Arguments in Favor**

Proponents argue that the construction of large dams have tremendous advantages such as electricity, irrigation, water supply, food security, source of export earnings, and flood control. The World Commission on Dams (WCD) (2000), in line with the proponents view commented that:

The more than 45,000 large dams around the world have played an important role in helping communities and economies harness water resources for food production, energy generation, flood control and domestic use. Current estimates suggest that some 30-40% of irrigated land worldwide now relies on dams and that dams generate 19% of world electricity. (p. xxix).

If we take construction of dams for hydropower supply, for instance, it has very low operating costs; produces no air pollution or no carbon dioxide; offers a variety of recreational opportunities: notably fishing, swimming, and boating; and over its lifetime, the total cost of producing power at a hydroelectric facility is typically less than that of a fossil fuel or nuclear plant (McCarthy, 4 October 2010). The main environmental benefit of renewable energy sources such as hydropower is the absence or mitigation of greenhouse gas effect (CO<sub>2</sub>) so that nothing is polluted to the natural environment (Goldemberg & Lucon, 2010). That is why Otieno and Awange (2006) described electric energy as an “undoubtedly clean” energy source. Therefore, hydropower is considered as environmental friendly source of energy.

Moreover, long term strategic investment, regional development, local job opportunity and skills development, encouraging an industrial base, expansion of infrastructure such as schools, clinics/hospitals, roads, rural electrification, etc. are also widely taken as secondary/additional benefits of large dams (WCD, 2000).

Regional problems such as water scarcity, poverty, drought, flooding and sedimentation, which are the most cursing problems to Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan need collective endeavor of the countries to tackle them successfully. Even after looking at the following quotation, one might think more about the value of cooperation among the Eastern Nile States. As Whittington, Wu and Sadoff (2005) noted,

For each cubic metre of water that leaves Lake Tana in Ethiopia, about 40% is lost by the time it reaches the Mediterranean (assuming none is withdrawn for irrigation along the way). Even from Khartoum north, since the Nile flows through severe desert and the net evaporation and seepage losses are substantial. For example, evaporation losses from the Sudd swamps and the Aswan High Dam Reservoir are particularly severe, constituting almost 50% and 15% of the entering flows, respectively. (p.231).

In fact, this is just one indication of failure to those concerned countries. To correct this failure Whittington et al. (2005) suggested the importance of cooperation among Eastern Nile basin countries in constructing mutually advantageous large dams :

Multipurpose dams on the Blue Nile in Ethiopia and elsewhere in the Blue Nile watershed could, for example, manage the Blue Nile flood and enable water resources managers to mitigate both the considerable inter-year and intra-year variations in the flow of the Blue Nile. The construction of such dams could generate hydropower income for Ethiopia and positive downstream externalities for Sudan and Egypt in terms of drought, flood and sedimentation control. Such control structures could also allow water managers to operate the system in such a way that the total flow of water available to the riparians would increase. (p.228).

The underlying point of the above two quotes are illustrative, that is, regional problems need regional solutions too. And it would be better if the cordial commitment toward this end shall begin right-off.

### **2.3.2. Arguments Against**

As anyone can guess every construction of dam has its own benefits and costs. Taking this general fact, the choice lies in gauging these benefits and costs.

It is from the latter perspective that, opponents of large dam constructions mentioning the multifaceted negative impacts of hydroelectricity plants (mainly those over 500MW installed capacity), such as financial cost, social cost (e.g. resettlement and compensation costs), environmental or destruction of ecosystem, debt burden, high cost of transmission lines,

inequitable distribution of costs and benefits, and vulnerability to drought due to climatic change. Besides, they further comment that large dams may trigger earthquakes, associated with risks of dam bursts, build up soil salinity, change groundwater levels and water flows and create water logging, affect visual landscape and social and cultural values (Swain, 2004; Otieno & Awange, 2006; Norton et al., 2008; Goldemberg & Lucon, 2010).

One portrayal among these negative impacts has been reported by the WCD (2000) which revealed that the construction of large dams led to the displacement of some 40 to 80 million people worldwide between 1986 and 1993. Specifically, according to Gleick (2006, as cited in Kloos & Worku, 2010), the Chinese Three Gorges Dam was known for its displacement of some 1.3 and 1.9 million people. He added that public protests took place over the construction of dams in India, South Africa, and elsewhere in the developing world.

In a non-denied discourse from the Eastern Nile member states, Yohannes (2008) gives another dimension for the adverse impacts of large hydropower dam constructions. For him state sovereignty as exclusive internal autonomy and nonnegotiable external equality with other similar actors reinforces in advancing state self-interest, decisions are made not only without giving due regard to the interests of other states, but also for the natural integrity of the biotic diversity of the entire basin. He also added that distorted priorities and the misuse of water resources by individual Nile riparian states is a major cause of their mutual suspicion and tensions.

It was in this regard, Robert Collins, in his 2002 book, *The Nile*, taking the major problems caused by the Aswan High Dam, such as evaporation of more than 10 billion cubic metre of water yearly from the dam, soil salinity, water logging, deterioration of water quality,

displacement of some 90,000 people, etc., blamed the dam by describing it as: “the wrong dam in a wrong place.” Similarly, Sudanese expert Eric Reeves (2008, as cited in Kalron, 2010, p. 112), taking the displacement of Nubian tribes into consideration due to flooding and environmental damages created as a result of Merowe Dam construction argues that: “The Merowe Dam is arguably the environmentally most irresponsible construction project in all of Africa”. Again from the Ethiopian perspective, the construction of Gilgel Gibe III dam hydropower project by itself has been the subject of criticisms by lobbyists including the UN’s organ UNESCO, for its supposed (as they claim) adverse social, cultural and environmental risks over the Lake Turkana in Kenya. Lastly, what would be the reactions over the construction of the GERD? Just the finding of this paper will answer it later.

All in all, acknowledging the risks and costs of unilateral riparian states’ race to construct large dams on international river basins like the Nile waters, various considerations such as the right of co-basin states, potential socio-economic and environmental impact needs serious emphasis.

## **2.4. Theoretical Frameworks**

### **2.4.1. Agenda-Setting Theory**

#### **Conceptual Definition of Agenda-Setting Theory**

The term “agenda setting function of the media” is often used to refer to the process of setting the salience of issues or events in descending order. Watson (2003, p.315) defines this term in a similar way as “media rank of events in a hierarchy of importance.” Agenda setting is the process through which issues bubble up into public attention through mass media selection on what to cover, thereby causing the public to perceive these issues as important (Vivian, 2003; Dominick, 1999). Wright (1986) goes on to state in some detail:

People’s opinions about the issues may or may not be changed by media arguments, but the mere fact that some public issue or policy becomes a topic for mass media attention gives it the appearance of importance and makes it salient to the public. The amount of attention the mass media give to social issues leads people to believe that these are important. (pp.154-55).

It is undeniable that the media’s reporting is often in a state of inclusion or exclusion, favoring or disfavoring various issues for various reasons. Under such circumstances, the mass media can influence individuals, the public, governments and other groups by shaping their agenda through giving more emphasis to some issues while disregarding others. This does not mean that, however, the indirect impact of media through agenda setting role is uniform worldwide; because media scholars do not agree on the degree of media’s agenda setting impact over public agenda.

Media beyond setting public agenda, it also plays a principal role in framing of salient issues (the framework of framing will discuss in the subsequent section in detail). For example, according to the first-level agenda setting model (i.e., what issues the media emphasize and the public cares about), the media influence public opinion by emphasizing certain issues over others. The

“amount of media attention, or the media salience, devoted to certain issues increases their accessibility and consequently influences the degree of public concern for these issues” (cited in Sheafter, 2007, p.22).

In other words, as Watson (2003, p.128) argues: “Even issues of considerable importance may remain of modest or negligible significance in public perception if they suffer media neglect.” Similarly, Wright (1986) claims that issues not given much attention by the mass media are regarded by people as unimportant. Again, Graber (2002, p.7) reports the “media can doom people and events to obscurity by inattention.” Of course, this notion is shared by many mass communication scholars in addition to those from other disciplines who recognize the media both as agenda setters and silencers. Therefore, an issue that would get an intensive access to media coverage is considered as an important step so as to get the attention of the people as ‘salience issue.’ But, this assessment does not necessarily work always.

### **Historical Development of Agenda Setting Theory**

According to Turow (2009, p.155), Lippmann’s notion that “the media create ‘the ideas in our heads’ about what is going on in the world is referred to as agenda setting. Many journalism professors in the 1920s and beyond picked up on Lippmann’s theory of agenda setting as a justification for examining the content of newspapers.” Lin (2004) supported this claim by noting that Lippmann’s (1922) study, *Public Opinion*, was the first to examine the agenda-setting function of mass media. For this reason many scholars consider Walter Lippmann’s (1922) *Public Opinion* as a steppingstone for the establishment and development of agenda setting theory.

Following Lippmann, psychologist and social scientist Harold Lasswell was considered by some as the prominent one, for his study the agenda-setting role of media during the 1948 American presidential campaign between Truman and Dewey, in which the former beaten the latter (Pavlik & McIntosh, 2004). Moreover, political scientist Bernard Cohen (1963, as cited in Rogers, 2004, p.10; Pavlik & McIntosh, 2004, p.491; Griffin, 2006, p.396; Dominick, 1999, p.530) articulated the agenda-setting model more clearly as follows: “The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.” The most widely quoted Cohen’s dictum suggested us that the influence of the media is predominantly indirect, though it may have seldom direct effects as well. Cohen’s view was reinforced by McCombs and Shaw (1978), audiences are aware about the daily news the media releases, but they may be ‘less-conscious’ about the way this news through time may shape their ideas of salient issues. McCombs and Shaw (1978) further put it this way:

This notion of the agenda-setting function of the mass media is a relational concept specifying a strong positive relationship between the emphases of mass communication and the salience of these topics to the individuals in the audience. This concept is stated in causal terms: increased salience of a topic or issue in the mass media influences (causes) the salience of that topic or issue among the public. (p.101).

Hence, when the coverage of media regarding a salient aspect of an issue increases, the perception and attention of the public towards this salient issue also increases, and vice versa. This is what Dennis, Ismach, and Gillmor (1978) referred the agenda setting role of media over public agenda as ‘relational concept’ of positive relationship.

Some twenty years later, from Harold Lasswell’s prominent study in 1948, journalism scholars McCombs and Shaw were carried out the first and decisive empirical experiment of the agenda-setting role of the media during the 1968 US presidential election between Richard Nixon and

his contender, Hubert Humphrey. They made their research findings public in 1972, which in fact showed that the influence of the media agenda on the public agenda. In this regard Turow (2009) notes:

McCombs and Shaw at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, demonstrated this agenda-setting effect in research for the first time in a 1970s article. They surveyed Chapel Hill voters about the most important issues in the presidential campaign. They also conducted a content analysis of the attention that major media outlets in Chapel Hill paid to issues in the presidential campaign. They showed that the rankings of the importance that voters placed on certain issues in the presidential election campaign were related not to the voters' party affiliation or personal biases but to the priorities that the media outlets in Chapel Hill presented at the time. (p.165).

According to Dearing and Rogers (1996, as cited in Rogers, 2004), the Chapel Hill research set off a tremendous number of studies of the agenda-setting process. This proliferation of agenda-setting studies amounted to 357 publications at the time of 1996 synthesis, and the number continues to grow. Similarly, Davie and Maher (2006) proved that this number has reached over 400 published studies. As we have seen the increasing number of agenda setting related publications, it was evident that, and still is, how the original Chapel Hill study was a land mark and authoritative research. That is why, for more than forty years since late 1960s and early 1970s, mass communication scholars have used agenda setting theory as a core conceptual framework for understanding the impacts of news on public opinion (Kioussis, 2005).

Notwithstanding the influence of McCombs and Shaw's study outlined above, the size or amount of issues being studied become diversified by later researchers. For instance, Rogers (2004) noted, many of the early studies of agenda-setting more or less followed the model and methods pioneered by McCombs and Shaw, which concentrated on the set of issues (usually four or five) that were on the national agenda at any one time say a month same as Chapel Hill study; but in more recent years single-issue longitudinal research on agenda-setting also has been conducted.

However, despite these new trends, “In both types of agenda-setting studies, the media agenda is measured by a content analysis, the public agenda by survey data, and the policy agenda by the laws, regulations, and appropriations regarding the issue of study”( Rogers, 2004, p.11).

In short, McCombs and Shaw believe that the “mass media have the ability to transfer the salience of items on their news agendas to the public agenda” (cited in Griffin, 2006, p.395). But even if the study of McCombs and Shaw appreciated by many scholars, they also criticized by some for their inability to see the opposite way - meaning unlike their unidirectional agenda-setting model, does the public agenda may affect or set the media agenda at times? As Watson (2003, p.129) has written, for example, McCombs and Shaw’s “model is oversimplification and it assumes one agenda – that purveyed by the media, which then becomes the agenda of the public. It can be argued that members of the public have their own agendas, shaped by their own personal circumstances.”

In somewhat similar perspective, Wright (1986) and Vivian (2003) strongly argue that the impact of mass media agenda setting role in making some issues more important than others to grasp the attention of the public “is not automatic or certain consequence” under all circumstances; this is because sometimes individual values of selective exposure, perception and retention can thwart media leadership in agenda-setting; moreover, ‘social processes’ such as interpersonal communication and opinion leaders impact rather than media coverage may affect the public’s judgment of the salience of an issue.

Rogers and Dearing (as mentioned in Johnson-Cartee, 2005) later developed an updated model of McCombs and Shaw agenda setting model during late 1990s. Their model encompasses three (media agenda, public agenda and policy agenda) interactive agenda. Even in their prior work,

Rogers and Dearing's (1988, as cited in Johnson-Cartee, 2005, p. 17) synthesized their media agenda-setting research findings as follows:

- (1) The mass media influence the public agenda.
- (2) An understanding of media agenda setting is a necessary requisite to comprehending how the mass media agenda influences the public agenda.
- (3) The public agenda, once set by, or reflected by, the media agenda influences the policy agenda of elite decision makers, and, in some cases, policy implementation.
- (4) The media agenda seems to have direct, sometimes strong, influence upon the policy agenda of elite decision makers, and, in some cases, policy implementation.
- (5) For some issues the policy agenda seems to have a direct, sometimes strong, influence upon the media agenda.

The policy agenda is normally propagated by governments and politicians. Yet as is so often the case, Rogers and Dearing's model also has not escape from criticism. To mention just one example, Watson (2003), asks that why the three agenda are presented as being of equal size and presumably equal power. Because the model is still a linear one, it does not sufficiently indicate the dynamic relationship between their respective agenda or the potential for conflict.

Generally, it is possible to wrap up on the basis of a number of scholars claim (e.g. McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Stone et al., 1999; Weaver, McCombs & Shaw, 2004; Griffin, 2006), in most instances the media agenda precedes public agenda; and the media agenda is the cause, while the public agenda is its somewhat delayed effect. But we should not be totally ignorant of the other

dimension of this conclusion as it may happen rarely. Apart from this generalization, however, it is believed that news sources have influences on media agenda.

### **The Influence of News Sources on Media Agenda**

Here in this study there is a modest concern for the type of sources the media used, when they were reporting their news. According to Weaver et al. (2004), another area of agenda-setting research that seems to be gaining in popularity is the study of influences on news media agenda. And, in this manner, they identify four key entities, among the various kinds of influences on media agenda. These are news sources, public relations efforts, social norms and traditions of journalists, and other media (intermedia agenda setting) are the major ones. While the last three kinds of influences can also be a source of news stories, here I focus solely on the first one, which is the impact of a news source on media agenda.

To begin with a concise concept of the term source, “it is the originator of the message which may be a person, several people or an organization” (Turow, 2009, p.9). Thus, as noted by Ott and Mack (2010), journalists are used different methods and ways for collecting the news to meet their daily demand for news; of which journalistic beats (i.e., places and institutions where news is ‘expected’ to occur on any given day, such as police stations and courthouses, or public and political party officials), news agencies (e.g. Reuters, AP, UPI, ENA, SUNA), and punditry (i.e., a prepackaged news produced by politicians and their communication consultants to promote a favorable image of a politician and his/her specific policy initiatives), and press releases are a few but crucial examples.

A number of scholars have written on this issue, among them Eldridge (1993, p.314) argues that: “Today’s news-gathering is organized around official sources of information and the activities of those in positions of authority make up much of news.” In a similar vein, Bennett (1993, as cited in Ott & Mack, 2010) estimates that nearly three-quarters of all political news comes from government officials in the form of interviews, press conferences, press releases and so on. For example, according to Weaver et al. (2004), in the United States of America context, the single most influential news source is the president.

However, such unduly dependence of journalists on political elites for their news gathering may result in undesirable effects, say media can be a tool of manipulation for those in a better position. That is why Graber (2002) suggested that journalists who depend on political leaders for much of their information are vulnerable to manipulation by those sources. Nashina Saleem (n.d, p.153) has supported this claim and further noted that “U.S. media relied on government sources that play a vital role in shaping media coverage according to government’s point of view”(for better understanding see the section of political economy of mass media below). If the allegedly ‘independent and free’ U.S. media was found as partisan of those elites and their policies, it would not be difficult that much to generalize this finding toward other countries media- elites relationship situation.

Another important news source influence on the media agenda is the corps of public information officers and other public relations practitioners. Because they subsidize the efforts of news organizations to cover the news by providing substantial amounts of information, frequently in the form of press releases (Weaver et al., 2004). One earlier and detailed study in this regard has been conducted by Sigal (1973, as cited in Weaver et al., 2004):

Nearly half of the front-page news stories in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* from 1949 to 1969 were based on press releases, press conferences, and other information subsidies. Considering that both newspapers are major organizations with large staffs and impressive resources, their substantial reliance on public relations sources underscores the key role that information subsidies play in the formation of all media agendas. (p.270).

An alternative option taken as source of news influence on the media agenda can also be other media, which is labeled as intermedia effect (Griffin, 2006; Weaver et al., 2004). To mention a single quote from the United States setting, “there is considerable anecdotal and some empirical evidence about the agenda-setting influence of *The New York Times* on other news media” (Weaver et al., 2004, p.272).

By taking into consideration the various news source influences on media agenda indicated above, some scholars (e.g., Weaver et al., 2004) put under question mark the perceived independent role of mass media as agenda-setters. Just to give one example in light of this, Weaver et al. (2004, pp.268-69) questioned the “active agenda-setting role of the media assumed by many public agenda-setting studies. If the media are merely passing on agendas set by other influential actors and institutions in society, is it accurate to think of the media as the agenda setters?”

All in all, despite some criticisms about the agenda setting role of the mass media, it remained one of the prominent theories in the fields of journalism and mass communication research. And thus media messages more or less put influence over public and policy agenda, so that the media plays particularly a crucial role in setting the public agenda. In other words, media have a power to make issues reinforced, skewed or ignored their value; and such practice of a media is known as framing.

## **2.4.2. Framing Theory**

To know how the GERD project was presented in the selected media, it is crucial to understand the notion of framing; because the term framing shows how the project was portrayed in each of those selected media.

### **History and Conceptual Definition of Framing Theory**

According to Abdissa (2010), there is no consensus among scholars about who was the pioneer of the term framing. For example, as he wrote, most sources credited it to the work of an American sociologist Erving Goffman (1974). While Goffman and some others (e.g., Stone et al., 1999; Vliegthart & van Zoonen, 2011) attributed it to the work of Gregory Bateson (1955, 1972). Still, according to Van Gorp (2005, as cited in Abdissa, 2010, p.25), it were Tuchman (1978) and Gitlin (1980) “who introduced the notion of frames in the area of communication research.” Whereas, Saqib Riaz (2008), on his part, traced back the beginning of the framing theory some 50 years into Walter Lippmann’s publication, *Public Opinion* (1922).

However, aside from the question of who initiated the term “framing”, it is widely understood that the notion of framing is commonly used in the fields of sociology and psychology, a concept that focuses and tries to describe “an abstract phenomenon that can be observed and measured” (Stone et al., 1999, p.277). According to Vliegthart and van Zoonen (2011), the term framing was already being used in sociology in the mid-1950s. Accordingly, it is believed that the inception of the concept of framing had its roots in the fields of sociology and psychology, primarily.

Some three decades after its original growth mainly in the field of sociology, framing in media and communication studies began only in the early 1990s; and thus becomes a buzz-word in current mass communication research (Vliegenthart & van Zoonen, 2011). Weaver (2007), in his article '*Thoughts on Agenda setting, Framing, and Priming*', gave a detailed comparative statistics on the number of studies of these three terms as indexed by communication abstracts starting from 1971 to 2005. For example, categorically from 1971-1975 the number of articles published in communication abstracts on agenda setting (4), framing(0) and priming(0), while in the 2001-2005 period it become 43, 165 and 25 respectively. Relied on the 'pattern of dramatic growth' of framing, he concluded that framing has become much more common or popular in communication research articles this time than either agenda setting or priming.

Though through time the term framing became not uncommon in mass media communication research, there is no universally agreed conceptual definition of framing yet. The concept of framing tell us how something is framed (or presented); the general way an issue or event treated by the media in their reporting as well as by people in their daily intra- and inter-personal communications. According to Rogers (2004), political scientist and communication scholar, Shanto Iyengar, has pioneered framing studies, as having an important influence on the agenda-setting process a decade or so after the Chapel Hill study, in his series of ingenious experiments.

In fact, the notion of framing is highly related with the agenda-setting theory. However, it goes beyond the latter because it includes the discussion of specific elements of an issue or reality rather than the generic issue itself (as in agenda-setting). Thus, it can be said that the concept of framing reinforces people to admit one meaning over another.

Different definitions of “frame” or media frame have been presented by various researchers and authors to date. For example, Goffman (1974, as cited in Kendall, 2005, p.8), defines frame as “cognitive structures that guide perception and the representation of reality. Frames denote schemata of interpretation that make it possible for people ‘to locate, perceive, identify, and label’ occurrences within their life space and the world at large”. According to Todd Gitlin (1980, p.7), frame is a ‘persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation of selection, emphasis and exclusion by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse.’ Gamson and Modigliani (1989, as cited in Stacks & Salwen, 2009, p.461) also defined it more broadly as “a central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events.” In a similar vein, Tankard et al.(1991, as cited in Johnson-Cartee, 2005, p.24), described media frame as “a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration.” Consequently, Watson and Hill (2006) have concluded that, what is not on the page of a newspaper is ‘out of frame’; what does not appear within the frame of the TV is off the public agenda.

For Entman (1993), framing essentially involves two major points namely: selection and salience. Entman (1993, p.52) further argues that: “To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”. Again, frames are used to underline or privilege certain aspects of an issue over others, thereby making them more noticeable and memorable; that is salience (Kendall, 2005). Kendall (2005), in his book, *Framing Class: media representations of wealth and poverty in America*, reveals how the media frame class favorably display the

lifestyles of the upper class, whilst the working-class (or the middle-class) and the poor portray in a deviant and negative way. In fact Kendall's finding is related with Karl Marx's label of the media as tools for ruling class in order to manipulate the masses (or working class). In sum, media critics, Herman and Chomsky (2000, as cited in Saleem, n.d, p.134) concluded that "media frame plays a vital role in presenting, shaping or destroying the picture of an event or story".

The more serious argument, however, arises not from the existence or reality of framing but from the question of whether or not media engaged in framing activities deliberately. Graber (2002, p.172) argues that "media as deliberately framing stories toward their desired ends." But in contrast, Paletz and Entman (1981) argue that, the media's favorable framing toward political elites over the general public is unintentional. Blankenship (2011, p.15) synthesizes these arguments as the "level of unconsciousness in using a frame is always present and may be combined with conscious framing." Besides, Entman (1993, p.52) shares Blankenship's view by stating that "communicators make conscious or unconscious framing judgments in deciding what to say." Fairly to say, at least under certain circumstances, all the above suggestions might be correct as media may perhaps frame an issue consciously or unconsciously or a combination of both; but it needs more research to claim confidently, either the former outweighs the latter, and vice versa.

Entman (1993), in his often-quoted article, '*Framing: toward clarification of a fractured paradigm*', in the journal of communication, identified four main functions of frames in media:

define problems – determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values; diagnose causes – identify the forces creating the problem; make moral judgments – evaluate causal agents and their

effects; and suggest remedies – offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects. (p.52).

Overall, media framing can be conceptualized as the process of selection, emphasizing and presentation of some aspects of “reality” or an issue at the expense of others so that it make them more salient; and thus they hold different slants and angles. In one way or the other framing theory in short, investigates how media people or journalists frame an issue, reality, or story - either what to include or what to exclude. Therefore, media framing refers to a process of selecting an issue from a given situation and furthermore provide more coverage to some aspect of it in order to realize one’s aim by attracting the attention of the audience more importantly to it, whilst minimizing or, at worst, ignoring the other angles of an issue. For example in the case of this study, a newspaper story or article about the GERD’s project can frame in terms of its potential economic significance, financial cost, environmental and social impacts, curse of conflict or source of mutual benefit among Eastern Nile basin countries, and so on.

### **Types of Framing**

According to Stacks and Salwen (2009), when the media decide to discuss some elements of a story and leave other aspects unremarked, the media are “determining” how the audience will interpret the event or issues upon which the story focuses. De Vreese (2005) put it in a simplistic manner by stating that framing issues in a particular way is one influential system which the media uses to shape public perception toward their intended goal. This is the idea of framing, which has different interpretations by different individuals, groups, and even scholars. As a result, inconsistency becomes its central nature. Vliegenthart and van Zoonen (2011), for example, observed that Iyengar’s (1991) ‘episodic’ and ‘thematic’ frames is considerably overlap with De Vreese’s (2005) ‘issue-specific’ and ‘generic’ frames. Irrespective of these confusions

and various interpretations of framing as it would be expected; scholars have developed some commonly known classifications as follows. Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), for example, who have identified five types of framing:

conflict frame (emphasizes conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest), human interest frame (brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem), economic consequences frame (reports an event, problem, or issue in terms of the consequences it will have economically on an individual, group, institution, region or country), morality frame (puts the event, problem, or issue in the context of religious tenets or moral prescriptions), and attribution of responsibility frame (presents an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for causing or solving to either the government or to an individual or group). (pp.95-6).

Alike these categories, Gerhards and Rucht (1992, as cited in Scheufele, 1999), add three additional types of framing, namely: diagnostic framing (emphasizes on identifying a problem and attributing blame and causality), prognostic framing (focuses on a possible solution frame and thus specifying what needs to be done), and motivational framing (the actual engagement in ameliorative or corrective actions).

While on the other hand, according to De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2003, as cited in Stacks & Salwen, 2009), a frame can also be classified and analyzed in terms of its valence, whether it presents an idea in a positive or negative construction. This is because “it is the frame that can shape how the public views an issue, group, or event, casting it in either a positive or negative light” (Pavlik & McIntosh, 2004, p. 444). According to Reichert, Mueller and Nitz (2003), tone of coverage regarding the subject of discussion can be measured in two ways: (1), the tone of the instance (positive, negative, mixed and neutral) about the issue of concern, and (2) whether the instance was cynical or not. Coverage judged to be cynical was defined as that which belittled, disparaged, and/or questioned the motives of issues. Tone can also be measured based on a

'gestalt reading.' Or, to be specific, let us say in this study, the tone of coverage about Ethiopia's decision to construct the GERD project was available in those selected newspapers.

Other significant numbers of scholars also distinguish two major types of media frames. These are episodic frames and thematic frames. Episodic frame is related to specific issues, while the thematic frame in contrast focuses on general contexts. In the words of Iyengar and Simon (1993, as cited in Stacks & Salwen, 2009, p.461), "episodic frames which focus on specific events or happenings and thematic frames which relate to broader, contextual circumstances." Similarly, Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) defined these terms as 'episodic' news, which refers to specific events, and 'thematic' news, which refers to more analytical, contextual, or historical coverage. Similarly, Pavlik and McIntosh (2004) asserted that episodic framing is visually appealing and thus often used by television news that portrays a story in terms of its concrete events through live coverage. In contrast, print news coverage, which is more likely to use thematic framing stories are placed in a more general context as well as in interpretive analyses.

But, it is of course quite difficult, as Iyengar (1991) acknowledges identifying a definite difference between episodic frames and thematic frames. As a result news stories are "classified based on the predominant frame".

### **The Relationship of Framing with Agenda Setting**

Framing theory of mass media has a close relationship with agenda setting theory. So, it is important to look at these ties shortly herein below.

Agenda setting theory (first-level agenda setting) mainly concerned with the transfer of issue salience from the media agenda to the public agenda. In other words, media emphasizes on

certain issues over others increases their accessibility and consequently influences the degree of public concern for these salient issues (Sheafter, 2007; McCombs & Shaw, 1972). In addition, as Weaver et al. (2004) argue that more recently, agenda setting has expanded beyond first-level agenda setting (what issues the media emphasize and the public cares about) to second-level agenda setting (how issues and political actors are reported and perceived). McCombs, Llamas, Lopez-Escobar, and Rey (1997, as cited in Scheufele, 1999, p.116) compared these two levels of agendas and wrote, “The first-level of agenda setting is...the transmission of object salience. The second-level of agenda setting is the transmission of attribute salience”. The agenda of attributes have been called “the second level” of agenda setting to distinguish them from the first level, and thus examines the relative salience of attributes of issues (Weaver, 2007).

In this regard, framing is equated to second level agenda setting, even if Weaver (2007) noted that ‘not all scholars agree’ that on the equivalent meaning of both terms. McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (1997, as cited in Scheufele, 1999) suggested that not only are agenda setting and framing effects related, framing is, in fact, an extension of agenda setting.

Weaver et al. (2004) acknowledged that even if second-level agenda setting and framing are not identical processes, there are similarities in between them because,

Both are more concerned with how issues or other objects (people, groups, organizations, countries, etc.) are depicted in the media than with which issues or objects are most (or least) frequently covered. Both focus on the most salient or prominent aspects or themes or descriptions of the objects of interest. Both are concerned with ways of thinking rather than objects of thinking and with the details of the pictures in our heads rather than the broader subjects. (p.264).

In contrast, they also acknowledge that one decisive difference between them is that the former (i.e., second-level agenda setting) has been more focused on the relationship between media and

audience ways of thinking, while the latter (framing) concentrated on how the media cover and present various subjects.

According to Scheufele (1999), two aspects, selection and salience, of Entman's (1993) definition are especially important for differentiating framing from agenda setting. Agenda setting research (e.g., McCombs & Shaw, 1972) has commonly examined the selection and salience of issues, whereas framing is related with the selection and salience of particular aspects of an issue rather than to the generic issue itself. Here in this regard there is a related area of concern toward theories of agenda setting and framing. This is the case of media ownership and their relationship with various elites (i.e., the concept of political economy of mass media which will be highlighted in some detail below) which is believed to play a considerable role in setting media agenda and framing of issues.

In summary, there are similarities and differences between framing and agenda setting in general, and framing and second level agenda setting in particular. And, the popularity of both theories is becoming increasing from time to time in various fields of disciplines, mainly in the area of media and communication studies.

### **2.4.3. Political Economy of Mass Media**

To achieve a wider comprehension upon the theory of Political Economy (PE) in its media studies; it is important to begin with the foundations of political economy itself. Accordingly, for Offe (1996, as cited in Krause, 2009) and Woods (2000) the concept of PE is a broad term covering a great variety of approaches from social sciences mainly in political science and international relations and interprets differently by different people. Starting from late 18<sup>th</sup>

century to 19<sup>th</sup> century, the term PE was in use to describe what social theorists, political philosophers, and economists did.

It is widely acknowledged that, the classical period of PE starts with the writers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Scottish enlightenment thinking and its critique in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But later, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the notion PE was often used to refer to classical Marxist analysis (Wasko, 2005; Laughey, 2007; Krause, 2009). Downey (2006, p.10) offered a similar clarification for the initiation of PE: “PE as an approach to understanding the world was born in 18<sup>th</sup> century in response to dramatic economic and political change in Europe.”

The term PE is used to describe the theoretical approach that, above all, looks at the economic and the political system of a society in an integrated manner (Krause, 2009). To be specific, PE maintains a shared concern with the politics and economics of any given institution, including mass media (Laughey, 2007). Thus, in the words of Alt and Alesina (1996, as cited in Krause, 2009, p.36), “[P]olitical economy emphasizes both ‘economic behavior’ in the political process and ‘political behavior’ in the market place.” In the case of critical political economists, however, their pivotal emphasis is on the economic factor other than the political one (Laughey, 2007).

To go beyond this could take the researcher out of the scope of this study; so that now turns to the point, i.e., PE of mass media. According to Scagliusi (2010), one decisive factor in the political system, which has been ignored by PE, is mass media because little efforts have been made to familiarize its role. For the purpose of this study, therefore, the researcher will focus on the PE of mass media in regard to its relationship with the national interest and foreign policy of

states, public officials, and other powerful forces. In the context of media and state relations Wasko (2005) explains,

To understand the media's role in society, it is essential to understand relationships between media power and state power....Thus, an important theme in political economic research has been tracking the relationships between political power and media power, and especially those relationship that involve the state. (pp.38-9).

For Laughey (2007) the theory of PE focuses on the politics and economics of media institutions and the texts they produce. In fact broadly speaking media play a crucial role within national and cross-national economic, political and social affairs. Accordingly, Mosco (2008) argues that on balance, most of the research findings in PE of mass media (or communication) had showed that their "nationalist tendencies." For example, Yang (2003, as cited in Saleem, n.d) used a frame analysis technique to reach on similar conclusion,

He compares the way in which Chinese and U.S. media covered the NATO airstrikes on Yugoslavia in 1999. His finding reveals that two different media frames – while the Chinese media framed the airstrikes as an intervention of Yugoslavia's sovereignty and territory, the U.S. media framed the airstrikes as a humanistic aid to Albanians to stop the ethnic cleansing initiated by Serbians. And, finally, he concluded that in international news reportage, national interest often outweighs other factors to play an active role in framing media texts. (pp.139-40).

More importantly, Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky's Book *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (1988), provide a comprehensive picture of the US corporate media of which their analysis of the media – foreign policy relationship shows US media generally support US foreign policy national interest in general, and the media's subservient role of elites in society in particular. Hallin (1986, as cited in Herring & Robinson, 2003, p. 557), consistent with Herman and Chomsky, concludes that "the US media rarely produce coverage deviating" from the stand of US officials. Downey (2006) also strengthen this

idea by noting that during the 2003 American invasion of Iraq, US elite newspapers widely ‘supported the invasion.’

Herman and Chomsky’s (1988, p.2) propaganda mode emphasizes on the “inequality of wealth and power and its multilevel effects on mass-media interests and choices. It traces the routes by which money and power are able to filter out the news....” As a result, in their propaganda model, they identified five interrelated “filters” of mass media news, which are consistently served as propagandists for the interests of US elites. These are ownership/corporate, advertising (as the primary income source of the mass media), sourcing (symbiotic relationship or the reliance of the media on information provided by government, business, etc.), flak (as a means of disciplining the media through adverse criticism, intimidation), and anticommunism (as a national religion and control mechanism via ideology, patriotism).

Their analysis is supported by ample of cases especially in their review of the fate of ‘worthy and unworthy victims’ and treatment of elections in ‘client/friendly’ and ‘errant/unfriendly’ states (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). For instance, the finding of their extensive analysis concerning the former case, which is contrary to their original hypothesis, revealed that “worthy victims” were obviously and greatly neglected, received minimal humanization and coverage, while the “unworthy victims” were treated with excessive and uncritical generosity, humanized and sympathetic story by the US press (Ibid.). The propaganda model consistently portrays people abused in enemy states as worthy victims, whereas those treated with equal or greater severity by its own government or clients as unworthy (Ibid.). Consequently, the media serve this purpose in many ways like through selection of topics, distribution of concerns, framing of issues, filtering of information, emphasis and tone, and by keeping debate within the bounds of acceptable premises (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Mitchell & Schoeffel, 2002). Or, in the words of Scagliusi

(2010), media are mere “megaphone” of the politicians. In short, they labeled the media as tools of the nation or of those dominant elites.

Though the focus of Herman and Chomsky’s study is revolved on the US private media- foreign policy relationships, their position on the private media can also be works in state-controlled media; and ‘by implication elsewhere’ – it’s applicable both in domestic issues and other states too (Street, 2001; Herring & Robinson, 2003).

The controversies are more subtle in the work of Herman and Chomsky along with counterarguments. A number of writers and scholars either refuted or blamed the work of Herman and Chomsky for their oversimplification about the flimsy and instrumentalist function of media. Even some others labeled them as “conspiracy theorists” despite the fact that they preemptively rejected such kind of critics by noting that “evasive.”

Meanwhile, unlike Herman and Chomsky, Bennett (2004, p. 307) argues that “it is common to hear that press-government relations are more conflicted and negative.” In somewhat similar vein, Schlesinger and Tumber (1994, as cited in Hesmondhalgh, 2006) stressed journalists are more independent than is implied by Herman and Chomsky. For instance, according to Gurevitch and Blumler (1990, as cited in Fog, 2004, p. 2), one among the many key democratic functions of media is to “resist efforts of forces outside the media to subvert their independence.” Mass media are powerful forces and thus they “can create you or break you” (Mbaine, 2006, p.120). In effect, that is why leaders have always used the press, particularly the “elite newspapers”, to obtain information and insights on other countries and world affairs (Gilboa, 2002). Here, the researcher has a typical example from the Ethiopian context; PM Meles recently made public his sympathetic to the Economist Magazine for the above reasons.

Taking into consideration all the above conflicting arguments, Wolfsfeld (1997, as cited in Herring & Robinson, 2003) conducted a study that compares media power and the power of political elites (implicitly the state), and he concluded that the latter supersedes that the former because,

The political process is more likely to have an influence on the news media than the news media are on the political process. The political process has a major impact on the press because political power can usually be translated into power over the news media...because the news media are much more likely to react to political events than to initiate them...and because political decisions have a major influence on who owns the media and how they operate. (p.559).

Wolfsfeld's conclusion can be reflected partly in the study of media-source relations, elite sources dominate news production. One commonly acknowledged reason for the domination of elites as news suppliers is that "elites are repeatedly in public negotiation and conflict with each other" and thus "often attempt to use the media to promote their conflicting political and economic goals" (Davis, 2003, p.672). State and corporate elites may precisely be defined by their control of the media texts and talk, because they are the ones that have preferential and active access to public discourse in general and to that of the media in particular. As a result, elites considered by and serve as reliable sources of news gathering for reporters as well as the general public (Van Dijk, n.d; Davis, 2003; Vivian, 2003; Straubhaar & LaRose, 2006). On the other hand, though concomitant with, the mass media are fit themselves into 'a symbiotic relationship with powerful sources of information by economic necessity and reciprocity of interest', such as consistent flow of news availability to satisfy their daily news demands (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, p. 18). Consequently, the media can be heavily influenced by the state and corporate elites.

The net result of such a symbiotic but unequal relationships between ruling elites (state) and the media sustained that the media are serving as a manipulating tools of elites through keeping the economic and political status quo, including whatever else status over the masses. This in turn, Orthodox Marxists argued that, generates a “false consciousness” in the heart and minds of the masses. It is thus a rule of thumb for political economists of communication, as their central aim of political economies of communication is, “to comprehend and change social inequalities created by communication practices for the better” (Graham, n.d, p.17) virtually at any level, that is local, national, regional and global.

Generally, media plays an important role in informing and misinforming the public about their environment, country and other friendly or unfriendly countries at large. As a matter of fact, media coverage of political, economic, and developmental issues can differ from country to country and from political system to political system. Despite this judgment, however, it is difficult to give a clear generalization that accommodates the above mentioned conflicting views about the political economy of mass media, because “on the part of either those who would say that the media are always mere servants of big business or the state, or of those who would say that producers operate independently of powerful interests” (Hesmondhalgh, 2006, p. 87). Thus, it would not be wrong to say that the fact may not only lie in either of the polarized positions, but also in a mix of them.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **3.1. Data Collection Methods of the Study**

This research has employed quantitative content analytic approach as a pivotal research method, while adding a qualitative method of in-depth interview to it. Using such pair of methods is commonly known as ‘triangulation’ or “mixed methods” approach, which is helpful in mitigating and/or compensating one method’s weaknesses/disadvantages by the strengths/advantages of the other (Gray, 2004; Hansen et al., 1998; Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). And the key benefit of using such a combination of research methods, as Graber (2004) asserts, is to make sure that the findings are not artifacts of one particular method of analysis.

According to Trochim (2006), despite the fundamental philosophical differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods, in practice however, there is little difference in between them, chiefly for the following two reasons: “All qualitative data can be coded quantitatively, and all quantitative data is based on qualitative judgment.” For this reason, qualitative is not to be taken as an opposite of quantitative and vice-versa (Westley & Stempel III, 1989, p.7). Therefore, these methods of enquiry are not absolutely exclusive or unconnected to each other.

The next sub-sections tried to elaborate why these methods of enquiry have been selected and how much they are relevant in answering the questions raised by this paper.

### **3.1.1. Quantitative Content Analysis**

Different researchers use different types of research methods depending on their peculiar area of research. Content analysis, surveys, and experiments are some of the methods that fall under the quantitative research methods. Since this research focuses on the analysis of the content of the national and international print media coverage of Ethiopia's decision to construct the GERD on the Nile River, quantitative content analysis lends itself well for the purpose. Besides, in-depth interview was employed to fill the limitations of the content analysis method.

#### **History of Content Analysis**

Historically, according to Rogers (2004), the beginning of content analysis dates back to early 1920s and he further argued that the works of Walter Lippmann pioneered in conducting one of the first scholarly content analyses of The New York Times coverage of the 1917 Russian Revolution. In this regard, Lippmann and Merz (1920, as cited in Rogers, 2004) found an anti-Bolshevik bias in The New York Times news coverage.

But, in its modern form, the history of content analysis can be traced back to the Second World War, when allied intelligence units monitored the number and types of popular songs played on European (German and occupied Europe) radio stations. And similar exercises took place in the Pacific theatre, where American intelligence monitored communications between Japan and its various island bases (Gunter, 2000; Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). In this perspective, modern content analysis began at least in late 1930s as part and parcel of western military intelligence operations when they had always sought to have an ample knowledge about their enemies' military movements and spirits vis-à-vis the amount and types of music played in their respective radio stations.

Aside from these specific military applications, content analysis evolved methodologically and was used by academic researchers to study a wide range of media issues (Gunter, 2000; 2002). Specifically, after the WW II researchers used it to study propaganda in newspapers and radio. For instance, Berelson's 1952 Book entitled, *Content Analysis in Communication Research*, signaled that the technique had gained recognition as a tool for media scholars (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). Generally, content analysis has been able and continues to be one of the most widely used research methods dealing with media and communication studies (Hansen et al., 1998; Berger, 2000). Thus, today, content analysis becomes a common and popular research technique of media and communication.

### **Definition of Content Analysis**

Many scholars give various definitions of the term content analysis. The first or possibly the classic and frequently quoted definition of content analysis is given by Berelson (1952, as cited in Stone et al, 1999, p.323) as "content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication". The "manifest" content communication is anything spoken (and recorded), written, published, broadcast, presented as a graphic or on film, or digitized (Stone et al, 1999). Generally, Berelson's definition is supported by many scholars of the area; for instance, Fiske (1990, p.136) suggested that 'content analysis is designed to produce an objective, measurable, and verifiable account of the manifest content of messages.' Moreover, Stempel III (1989) who highlights the key to understanding content analysis as heavily dependent on understanding the meaning of the four major components of Berelson's definition itself, namely objective, systematic, quantitative and manifest (i.e., observable) content as follows:

A) Objective means the opposite of subjective and it is achieved by having the categories of analysis defined so precisely that different persons can apply them to the same content and get the same results; or the research findings should not be tainted by the researcher's personal biases; B) Systematic means, 'triple things', that a set of explicit and consistent procedure is applied in the same way to all the content being analyzed; categories are set up so that all relevant content is analyzed; and it means that the analyses are designed to secure data relevant to a research question or hypothesis; C) Quantitative means simply the recording of numerical values or the frequencies with which the various defined types of content occur; and D) Manifest content means the apparent content, which means that content must be coded as it appears rather than as the content analyst feels it is intended. (pp.125-26).

But, Berelson's definition is criticized by some (e.g., Gunter, 2000) for its pure restriction on quantitative analysis and its concern with manifest content only, inter alia.

Taking these limitations of Berelson's definition into account, other scholars rather presented alternative definitions of the term content analysis. According to Walizer and Wienir (1978, as cited in Gunter, 2000, p.56), "content analysis is any systematic procedure devised to examine the content of recorded information." Kerlinger (2000, as cited in Wimmer & Dominick, 2006, p.150) defines it as "a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective and quantifiable manner for the purpose of measuring variables".

When we look at these three definitions, they are cautiously articulated not to repeat the problems raised in the definition given by Berelson. By comparison, these latter definitions have omitted references, or did not mention explicitly, to the manifest aspect of the content analysis and instead their emphases were targeted on the systematization, objectivity and quantification aspects of the method. However, critics say that content analysis could never be objective in a value-free world. Because human beings by their nature are subjective and thus cannot be absolutely value-free in their judgments.

## **Purposes of Content Analysis**

Content analysis as a research method can be applied in different fields of studies, such as media and communication studies, sociology, political science, gender and feminism issues, and humanity. At the same time, it can be applied to all types of message content analysis, including written or printed documents, recorded messages, films, and audio tapes (Graber, 2004). The content analysis of various media messages can serve us as an insight to know the socio-economic and political situations, policies and strategies, and the style of political communication of different governments. Content analysis, thus, as a research technique has a number of functions or purposes. According to Gunter (2000; 2002), the central thrust of content analysis is to provide a descriptive account of what a media text (i.e. TV programme, newspaper report, magazine feature) contains, and to do so in a form that can be repeated by others. However, its application can go beyond simple description and it was regarded as being able to provide insights into the intentions or objectives of media content producers. Moreover, it serves a crucial function by comparing the way various media within a particular country, or between various countries covered an issue. Wimmer and Dominic (2006, pp.152-53) identified five main purposes of content analysis: “Describing communication content, testing hypotheses of message characteristics, comparing media content to the “real world”, assessing the image of particular groups in society and establishing a starting point for studies of media effects.”

In a similar vein, Stone et al.(1999) and Wright (1986) also stated five uses of content analysis as follows: a) describing the content itself, b) testing hypothesis, c) documenting trends, d) relating media content to the real world, and e) assessing the motives of the messenger/drawing inferences about the nature or intention of the communicator.

In sum, if we look at the above mentioned purposes of content analysis articulated by a few authors and, of course, presumed by many others, too, the uses of quantitative content analysis are almost common to all, namely describing media content, testing hypotheses or research questions, comparing media content with the real world, assessing media trends over time, and providing clues about the objective of media institutions or producers. But it is somewhat difficult to take for granted content analysis as a standalone method for media effects research because it is more of descriptive type of research technique by nature.

### **Advantages and Limitations of Content Analysis**

Quantitative content analysis as a research technique has a number of advantages, which enable it to be a popular research method. To list some of the advantages,

- It is unobstrusive (and thus does not influence its subjects),
- It is relatively inexpensive to conduct,
- Material is usually accessible,
- It yields quantifiable data,
- It can deal with current events/topics of present-day interest, past events, or both
- It enables to cover a large study population as compare to qualitative research methods,
- It enables to include large amounts of textual information with relative ease in a given study.

(Stone et al, 1999; Berger, 2000; 2005)

With all these advantages, however, content analysis could not be free of limitations as there is no any research method devoid of defects. Accordingly, the limitations or problems associated with content analysis include, but not limited to,

- It is hard to be certain that the sample studied is representative,
- It is extremely time consuming, tedious and costly technique,
- Lacks depth due to its higher tendency on purely descriptive accounts of the media text,
- Usually it disregards the human aspects like value judgments.

(Graber, 2004; Berger, 2005)

### **3.1.2. In-depth Interview**

Interviews are one of the most commonly used and most fundamental research techniques. Perhaps, the simplest way to describe the term an ‘interview’ is to say that it is a conversation or an interaction between interviewer and interviewee, in which the former has the role of researcher; or it is a conversation between a researcher (someone who wishes to gain information about a subject) and an informant (someone who presumably has information of interest on the subject) (Berger, 2000; Gray, 2004). Kumar (1999) also defines the term interview as any person-to-person interaction between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind.

Interviewing is one of the most widely used data collection methods in media and communication research (Gunter, 2002), and it is mainly applied in the qualitative research method. There are a number of different types of interviews, such as informal conversational interview, structured interview, semi-structured interview, unstructured interview, in-depth interview and focus group interview, among other things. But, the focus of this study is limited to in-depth interview alone, as a qualitative research method for data collection.

In the literature, though the term in-depth interview is used interchangeably with terms like unstructured interview, non-directive interview (Gray, 2004) or intensive interview (Wimmer &

Dominick, 2006), strictly speaking they are not the same. In an in-depth interview, the interviewer develops a framework called an interview guide, within which to conduct the interview. Within this structure, the interviewer formulates questions spontaneously during an interview (Kumar, 1999). The interview guide (See Appendix C), thus, should comprise the central topic and usually the key open-ended list of questions that will help the researcher (interviewer) to keep focus on the topic that is deemed to be investigated during the interview process.

In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives, (by implication their country's stand), on a particular idea, program, or situation (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Respondents are allowed to talk freely around the subject, while the role of the interviewer is mainly confined to checking on any doubtful points and rephrasing answers to check for accuracy of understanding (Gray, 2004).

In considering the appropriateness of in-depth interview as a data gathering method, it is important to look at its advantages and limitations. Hence, some of the main advantages of in-depth interview include:

- Data are collected in natural setting,
- Provides a detailed information about a topic or issue from few but key respondents,
- Provides more accurate responses on sensitive issues,
- Facilitates access for immediate follow-up data collection for clarification and omissions,
- Provides flexibility for interviewer during interview process,

- Facilitates analysis, validity checks, and triangulation.

(Kumar, 1999; Hughes, 2002; Wimmer & Dominick, 2006)

On the other hand, the limitations of in-depth interview which include:

- Time-intensive evaluation activity because of the time it takes to conduct interviews, transcribe them, code them and analyze the results,
- Depends especially on the honesty of those providing the data as respondents don't always tell the truth,
- Prone to interviewer bias unless researchers be able to be honest and systematic to control it,
- Difficult to make generalizations partly due to the small sample size of informants,
- Difficult to replicate.

(Kumar, 1999; Berger, 2000; Hughes, 2002; Boyce & Neale, 2006; Wimmer & Dominick, 2006)

For the purpose of this study, an in-depth interview was used at least for three reasons. First, it is used to triangulate or complement the data gained through quantitative content analysis from those selected three newspapers so as to verifying the credibility of their results. Second, in-depth interview is employed to assist in exploring the deeper understanding of an issue at hand; in other words it provides an in-depth knowledge or detailed information about the topic. And lastly, it is pertinent to investigating some of the research questions raised in this study.

To this end, three informants (See Appendix D), one from each major Eastern Nile basin member countries (i.e., Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan) were selected. And this was made

intentionally by the researcher as the subject of the study affects either directly or indirectly the national interest of all these states. Moreover, since the issue is politically sensitive, the informants are high profile officials in their respective countries.

### **3.2. Sampling and Sampling Strategy**

Samples are taken from populations. In research, the term ‘population’ can refer to people, aggregates of texts, institutions, or anything else being investigated. The size of a population can thus be small or large depending on what the researcher is investigating (Deacon et al., 1999). In principle, it is desirable to study all of the units that form the population of interest in a given study. However, in practice this is rarely done or it is often not practicable because of the following main reasons: cost, feasibility, time and quality (Lynn, 2002). As a result, sampling has been taken as a solution to the aforementioned problems.

A sample is any sub-set or representative of a total population from which sample is drawn in order to generalize the finding of a given study to the population as a whole (Stone, et al, 1999; Kumar, 1999; Gunter, 2000; 2002; Wimmer & Dominick, 2006; Turow, 2009). In other words, sampling is the process of selecting elements from a population (the aggregate number of elements or units that are included in the study or about which the researcher wants to make inferences) of interest (Shoemaker & McCombs, 1989; Gray, 2004).

Broadly speaking, sampling techniques can be divided into two categories, namely, random or probability sampling (e.g., simple random sampling, stratified random sampling, cluster sampling) and non-random or non-probability sampling (e.g., purposive sampling, quota sampling, convenience/volunteer sampling, snowball sampling, accidental sampling). While in

random sampling, each member of the population has a known nonzero chance of being selected for the sample, in non-random sampling, the units are selected through other means, for example, by the researcher's own judgments on what he/she believes with respect to whether the selected samples are "representative" of the total population. The advantage of random sampling is that it allows researchers to gauge the frequency of sampling error, while the non-random sampling does not (Gunter, 2002; Gray, 2004).

By making a tradeoff in their feasibility with respect to this study as well as the relative strengths and weaknesses of the above mentioned types of sampling methods, I opt to focus on the purposive sampling technique. According to Gray (2004, pp. 87-8), "purposive sampling may succeed in achieving a true cross-section of the population." Similarly, Kumar (1999) states that the primary concern in purposive sampling (also known as judgmental sampling) is the judgment of the researcher as to who and what can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of the study. Or, in purposive sampling, the researcher samples with a purpose in his/her mind. In addition, Riffe and Freitag (1997, as cited in Wimmer & Dominick, 2006) confirm the importance and popularity of purposive sampling in content analysis. For instance, in their study, they found that 68 percent of all the content analyses in *Journalism Quarterly* from 1971 to 1995 used a purposive sample.

**Media Selection:** On the basis of purposive sampling, the following three newspapers were chosen as the media outlets for the study: *Addis Zemen*, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision*. While *Addis Zemen* is available in hard copy, the remaining two newspapers were accessed online. These three newspapers were chosen purposefully for the following reasons: selecting newspapers across countries provided a wider view of coverage of the GERD project than would have been gotten from the media of a particular country; they have oriented coverage on the Nile

basin issue; with the exception of Sudan Vision, that is an independent or private newspaper, the rest are (pro-)government newspapers in their respective countries and this would be useful to achieve some stands of the parties on the issue; lastly, they are more of continental media and possibly represent the key actors of the Eastern Nile basin countries namely Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan, respectively.

As can be easily discerned from the three media outlets mentioned above, the study depends on newspapers at the exclusion of other media outlets mainly for the following reason: “Print media [particularly newspapers] supply the largest quantities of factual political information and analysis” (Graber, 2002, p. 5); thus, “newspapers play a greater role as facilitators of social and political expression than other media...newspapers emphasize conveyance of information and ideas about contemporary events and issues to a greater degree than other media that are entertainment oriented”(Alexander et al., 1998, p. 111).

Here, the researcher would like to note one critical problem that has encountered at the initial stage in beginning of the selection process of media outlets for this research. The researcher intended to select either government or pro-government media from the major Eastern Nile basin countries. But, in the process, the researcher encountered language problem regarding the Sudanese government owned print media, which is published in Arabic language. Weighing the difficulties of finding the hardcopy from Sudan, the time and financial costs the researcher would have to incur for interpreters, finally opted for an alternative media. Hence, the researcher selected an independent/privately owned *Sudan Vision* newspaper that is published in English language and is easily accessible electronically. A brief profile of the three selected print media outlets is presented below.

*Addis Zemen* (Amharic language newspaper) was established in 1941 by the then Emperor Haile Selassie I as a national weekly newspaper; later on, this newspaper shifted from a weekly to a daily publication since 1958 (Maeregu, 1995EC\*). *Addis Zemen*, which means 'New Century', covers both national and international topics and it continues to exist hitherto as a government newspaper despite the fact that the country experienced three successive government changes.

\*EC refers to Ethiopian Calendar

**Table 3.1** Summary of the *Addis Zemen* newspaper genres and the topics it covers

| Type of Genre                     | Topics covered in the genre   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| News [national and international] | A collection of national and international news   |
| Editorial                         | Reveals the stand of the newspaper on various timely and major issues of concern  |
| Commentary                        | News analysis on various issues of concern by the newspaper staff writers in an attempt to influence or assimilate readers outlook into their desired aim |
| Economy                           | National and international issues of economics, finance and business  |
| Political                         | National and international issues of politics   |
| Agenda/ Letters                   | Interested individuals, groups and institutions reflect their view on various argumentative issues like political, economic and social                    |
| Letter from Readers               | Comments or reaction of readers on various issues of their concern  |
| Social                            | Health, education, society, women, children, etc.   |
| Art and Culture                   | Topics related with art and culture   |
| Entertainment                     | Different entertainment items across the globe  |
| Science and Technology            | Scientific and technological discoveries  |
| Advertisement                     | Vacancy announcements, promotion of goods and services, invitation for bids, etc.   |
| Sports                            | Various national and international sport events   |

*Al-Ahram Weekly* is a weekly English-language newspaper issued since 28 February, 1991. The newspaper is government owned and it covers both national and international topics. According to Merrill and Fisher (1980), the term *Al Ahram* (Arabic word) stands for “The Pyramids.” In fact, *Al Ahram Weekly* is an English version of the *Al Ahram* (Arabic language issue) that was established in 1875, that is, 116 years prior to *Al Ahram Weekly*.

**Table 3.2** Summary of the *Al Ahram Weekly* newspaper genres and the topics it covers

| Type of Genre   | Topics covered in the genre   |
|-----------------|---|
| Egypt           | Whatever issues related to the national interest of Egypt   |
| Focus           | Commentary on various topical issues  |
| Economy         | National and international economic issues  |
| Region          | Various issues associated to the Middle East and North Africa region  |
| International   | Different topics of international concern   |
| Interview       | Interview with different persons on various issues  |
| Opinion         | Scholarly opinion on different topics including the editorial part  |
| Press Review    | A summary of various press coverage on different issues   |
| Reader's Corner | Readers comment on various issues of their concern  |
| Special         | Dedicated to special events like war and truce, ethnic cleansing, peace talks, globally debatable issues, etc.                                    |
| Culture         | National and international aspects of cultural issues   |
| Living          | Horoscopes, living style/standard and interests of people   |
| Features        | Detailed analyses about various topics such as political, economic, social as well as events  |
| Entertainment   | Various entertainment items across the nation plus globally   |
| Sports          | National and international sports items   |
| People          | Covers on various success stories as well as misery and discrimination of different ethnic races, groups and people from all corners of the world |
| Cartoons        | Presentation of comics using drawing and text   |
| Listings        | Listings of programmes for cinema, exhibitions, lectures, theatre, music and dance, containing information such as place and time.                |
| Heritage        | Supplies reports and reviews about historical heritages global wide   |
| Sky High*       | News, reports and information about air travel  |
| Books*          | Review of books with special focus on recent publications   |
| Travel*         | Guidelines of travel, traveler's notes, and tips on potential tourism sites   |
| Advertising     | Advertising of goods and services, etc.   |

\*columns of monthly supplement

*Sudan Vision* is a daily Sudanese privately owned newspaper that has been established on December 30, 2003 (30/12/2003). In the Sudanese context, *Sudan Vision* is historically the oldest issued English language newspaper starting from 2003. It gives a range of local, national and international coverage.

**Table 3.3** Summary of the *Sudan Vision* newspaper genres and the topics it covers

| Type of Genre    | Topics covered in the genre  |
|------------------|--|
| News             | A collection of national and international news items  |
| Editorial        | Stand of the newspaper on various timely issues  |
| Reports          | various institutional work assessment activities, negotiation results between opposing parties, facts about various things and issues of importance        |
| Features         | Readers, scholars and experts reflect their perspective on various issues like political, economic and social  |
| Commentary       | News analysis on various issues of concern by the newspaper staff writers in an attempt to influence or assimilate readers' outlook into their desired aim |
| Current Affaires | News and analysis about local, national and international topical issues   |
| Opinion          | Scholarly opinion of readers on different issues   |
| Comments         | Any reaction or comment of readers on various issues of their interest   |
| Studies          | Carries new research findings in different fields  |
| Business         | national and international issues of business, economy   |
| Science          | News on latest scientific inquires and discoveries   |
| Sports           | Various national and international sport types   |
| Arts and Culture | Issues related with arts and culture   |
| Advertisement    | Advertising of goods and services, real estate, vacancy announcements  |
| Currency Rates   | The currency exchange rate of selected countries including Sudan   |
| Caricature       | Presentation of satirical or comics through drawing cartoons or vivid description  |
| Photo Gallery    | Shows different photos of historical places, heritages, cultural costumes, famous persons  |

**Time Frame:** The time frame for the analysis of the news content of the selected media outlets covers from the day the GERD project officially launched on March 30, 2011 to September 25, 2011 (when a week before, i.e., September 17-18, 2011, the Ethiopian premier officially visited Egypt to discuss about the two countries relations in general and the GERD project in particular).

**Story Selection:** As Gunter (2002, p.221) argues, "In some instances, the universe may be small enough to be analysed in its entirety." Taking into consideration the small amount of coverage of *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers over issues of concern to this study, the

researcher has taken all their editions within the prescribed time frame. However, considering a huge textual data of *Addis Zemen* newspaper, sampling is an imperative and, hence, eight editions per month were taken from the newspapers textual output. The sampling process for *Addis Zemen* editions looked like this: from the first week of the first month (April 2011), Monday and Tuesday editions were selected, from the second week of the first month, Wednesday and Thursday editions,....from the first week of the second month (May 2011), Tuesday and Wednesday editions, and so on, until September 25, 2011. Such a technique for sampling edition dates, as Wimmer and Dominick (2006, p.157) put it, is known as “stratification by week of the month and by day of the week.” According to Wimmer and Dominick (2006), a sampling rule that no more than two days per week can be chosen is one way to ensure a balanced distribution across the month.

Moreover, the selection of story content of the three selected newspapers is confined to news and current affairs genres/types (e.g. editorial, news, feature, and interview); hence, any article item that is explicitly or implicitly associated with the GERD project was analyzed.

### **3.3. Unit of Analysis**

Once the media type, dates or time frame and story/content type have been determined, the next step is to decide on and select the unit of analysis (or measurement unit), which is an important part of content analysis.

The unit of analysis is the entity that is counted in a content analysis. It is the smallest element of a content analysis but also one of the most important one. In written content, the unit of analysis might be a single word or symbol, a sentence, a paragraph, a theme (a single assertion about one

subject), or the whole article or story (Stempel III, 1989; Hansen et al., 1998; Gunter, 2000; Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). Besides, Stempel III (1989) asserts that the decision about the unit of analysis depends primarily on what information is required for the purposes of the study.

With these ideas in mind, the unit of analysis for this specific study is the central idea or major theme of each story/article of the selected newspapers that explicitly or implicitly deals with the GERD project.

### **3.4. Analytical Categories**

After the unit of analysis has been chosen, the most needed task of the content analysis is to specify and define analytical categories clearly. Gray (2004) indicates, the importance of categorizing data because the statistical tests that are used for data analysis will depend on the type of data being collected. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2006), at the heart of any content analysis is the category system that is used to classify media content. They further note that to be practical, all analytical categories should be mutually exclusive (when a unit of analysis can be placed in one and only one category), exhaustive (there must be an existing category/slot into which every unit of analysis can be placed) and reliable (different coders should agree in the great majority of instances about the proper category for each unit of analysis) (Ibid.).

According to Stempel III (1989), analytical categories must be pertinent to the objectives of the study, must be functional and manageable. Along the same line, Hansen et al. (1998) suggests that analytical categories should always depend entirely on the objectives, foci, theoretical framework and research questions of the research.

To this end, the researcher has identified mutually exclusive analytical categories. Moreover, the researcher has attempted to state clearly an operational definition for each of the categories used. And this was helped the coders to understand the conceptual meanings of the analytical categories easily, which in turn increased, if not guaranteed at all, the demanding coder reliability.

Taking the above premises into account, for this study, the researcher has decided on the following main categories presented along with their operational definitions. For the operational definitions of their respective sub-categories (See Appendix B).

1. Theme of Story:- this refers to the central idea, subject, message or focus of the story. The main themes of the stories on the GERD coverage were coded as- sovereign rights, historical rights, development, diplomacy, legal regime and other.

2. Type of story:- refers to the nature or type a story belongs to. The dominant types of stories were coded as- news, editorial, feature, commentary, interview, reader's letter and other.

3. Types of Sources:- source refers to the originator or the key source of the story. The dominant type of sources were coded as- government officials, public relation practitioners (PRP), news agencies, other media, Individuals/experts, institutions, journalist/writer, anonymous and other.

4. Tone of story:- stands for the 'overall impression' or value judgment (e.g. unfavorable, favorable, supporting or criticizing) of the story about the GERD. Thus, the overall tone of the selected newspapers stories over the dam were coded as- positive, negative, mixed and neutral.

5. Type of frame the story used when covering the GERD:- refers to the frame type, portrayal or presentation of the GERD by each story item. The frame types of the stories were coded as-

diagnostic frame, prognostic frame, conflict frame, mutual benefit frame, economic consequences frame, human interest frame, attribution of responsibility frame and other.

6. Major Challenges described in the story:- refers to the predominant challenges and/or problems Ethiopia has faced in the aftermath of its decision to construct the GERD, which were described in the stories. The major problems (negative impacts) were coded as- political, social, financial, environmental, nothing and other.

7. Major Opportunities described in the story:- refers to the dominant opportunities Ethiopia has achieved and/or potentially will achieve following its decision to construct the GERD, which were described in the stories. The major opportunities were coded as- electricity generation, irrigation use, flood and sedimentation control, national consensus, bi(multi)lateral relations improvement, job opportunity, environment friendly and other.

### **3.5. Reliability of Coding**

Reliability is concerned with the question of whether the results or findings of a study are repeatable or not. To assess the reliability of a measure of a concept, the procedures that constitute that measure must be replicable by someone else. Therefore, reliability can be met if the findings of one researcher can be repeated by another researcher following the same method of procedures over a period of time (Gray, 2004; Bryman, 2004).

Alternatively, Oppenheim (1992, as cited in Gray, 2004,) recommends that a research tool to be reliable, it must be consistent. Hansen et al. (1998, pp.120-21) also notes that “reliability in content analysis is essentially about consistency: consistency between different coders (inter-coder reliability), and consistency of the individual coder’s coding practice over time (intra-

coder reliability).” Thus, reliability is both an indication and measure of consistency – this condition will be met if and only if different coders code the same content/story in the same way (i.e. consistently). In light of this, Berger (2000) notes that the simplest way of testing reliability (“intercoding reliability” in content analysis jargon) is to have several coders analyze the identical content and then compare the results.

To know the degree of consistency between different coders, it is measured by a reliability coefficient using a scale from 0.00 (very unreliable) to 1.00 (perfectly reliable). In most instances, however, ‘perfect reliability’ is not achieved and that is why a score of 0.9 (i.e., a reliability level of 90 percent or higher) is generally deemed to be acceptable (Berger, 2000; Gray, 2004). To calculate the extent of inter-coder reliability, the researcher employed Holsti’s (1969, as cited in Wimmer & Dominick, 1997) formula, that is,

$$\text{Reliability} = 2M / (N1 + N2)$$

Where, M represents the aggregate number of coding decisions with which the two coders agreed upon, while N1 and N2 represent the total number of coding decisions made by coder one and coder two, respectively. Hence, the overall inter-coder reliability for this study ranged from 97 percent to 99 percent.

The outlets of the selected print media coverage of the project have been coded by two coders. One of them is an MA holder in Human Rights from AAU; while the second one is a BA holder in Ethiopian Language and Literature from the same institution, and he had worked as an editor-in chief for the state owned *Merewa* Magazine previously. Fortunately, the two coders had participated in coding and preparing a survey (sponsored and conducted by the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority) of the national print (both private and government owned) media outlets in their coverage of the 2010 Ethiopian general election; thus, they have got the experience in

coding similar contents. As a matter of fact, the researcher was part of the team then. Now, both of them are working in the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority (EBA) as senior print media monitoring and regulation experts as well as analysts. Besides, the researcher himself has played a facilitator or moderator role during the whole coding process for the study.

Moreover, the researcher has trained the coders on how to code the stories of the selected newspapers and provided them an orientation about the coding sheet (See Appendix A) and the coding guides (See Appendix B).

### **3.6. Data Analysis Process**

The data analyses process began with the presentation of the findings of the selected media contents in terms of the previously laid down analytical categories, which are mainly drawn from the research questions, objectives, focus and theoretical foundations of the study. This is because, “the data analysis needs to address the questions set out in the definition of the research problem” (Hansen et al., 1998, p.122). To describe the findings of the collected data, the researcher was utilized tables and figures. Following the preliminary data descriptions, the researcher has proceeded to analyze, interpret and compare the results and focus of the selected media coverage in relation to the GERD project.

Next, the findings from the three in-depth interviews were analyzed thematically (i.e., in terms of their major ideas or themes). The researcher has also tried to correlate the findings of the selected newspapers along with their textual analysis vis-à-vis the gathered data through an in-depth interview and followed by qualitative discussion. What is more, some cues from the theoretical framework of this study and other formerly conducted similar findings also used as supporting inputs to enrich the analysis and discussion section.

## **Chapter Four**

## **Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion**

This chapter highlights the findings of the study along with their analysis and discussion. Since the essence of the research focused on how the media covered Ethiopia's decision to construct the magnanimous hydropower project on the Nile River, three newspapers (*Addis Zemen*, *Al Ahrum Weekly* and *Sudan Vision*) were selected and coded with their respective contents concerning the issue spanning from March 30, 2011 to September 25, 2011. Moreover, in-depth interview were also conducted with three informants who are working for the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) Ministry of Water and Energy, the Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Ethiopia and the Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan in Ethiopia. The findings of the research have been presented, analyzed and discussed in the following sub-sections.

### **4.1. Presentation and Analysis of Data**

Out of 253 newspapers (49 editions of *Addis Zemen*, 24 editions of *Al Ahrum Weekly* and 180 editions of *Sudan Vision*) covering the time period ranging from March 30, 2011 to September 25, 2011 a total of 148 (119 from *Addis Zemen*, 12 from *Al Ahrum Weekly* and 17 from *Sudan Vision*) stories/articles that focused on the GERD were identified. These stories were further examined in relation to the seven analytical categories identified for the study. The findings have been presented together with their analyses here below.

#### **4.1.1. Theme of Story for the Target Newspapers**

Based upon research question number two, which asked "what were the major themes of the stories?", development has been ranked as one of the most common themes of the GERD related articles for *Addis Zemen*. Out of a total of 119(100%) stories that dealt with the dam, 92(77.31%)

stories were connected to this theme. Themes of diplomacy with 19(15.97%) stories and legal regime with 8(6.72%) stories were ranked second and third, respectively. While the remaining three clusters of themes namely, ‘sovereign rights’, ‘historical rights’ and ‘other’ attracted no stories from *Addis Zemen*.

**Table 4.1. Theme, number and percentage of story distribution across the newspapers**

| Theme of Story    | Newspapers         |       |                        |       |                     |     | Total number of stories | Percentage on average |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|---------------------|-----|-------------------------|-----------------------|
|                   | <i>Addis Zemen</i> |       | <i>Al Ahram Weekly</i> |       | <i>Sudan Vision</i> |     |                         |                       |
|                   | No. of stories     | %     | No. of stories         | %     | No. of stories      | %   |                         |                       |
| Sovereign rights  | ND*                | ND    | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND  | ND                      | ND                    |
| Historical rights | ND                 | ND    | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND  | ND                      | ND                    |
| development       | 92                 | 77.31 | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND  | 92                      | 62.16                 |
| diplomacy         | 19                 | 15.97 | 11                     | 91.67 | 17                  | 100 | 47                      | 31.77                 |
| Legal regime      | 8                  | 6.72  | 1                      | 8.33  | ND                  | ND  | 9                       | 6.08                  |
| other             | ND                 | ND    | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND  | ND                      | ND                    |
| Total             | 119                | 100   | 12                     | 100   | 17                  | 100 | 148                     | 100                   |

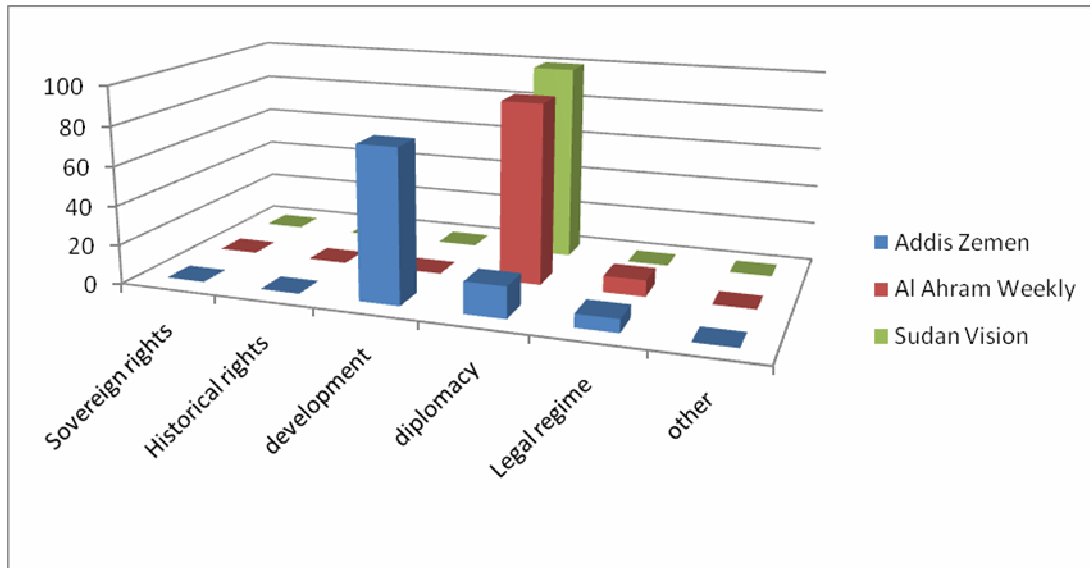
\*ND refers to no data

For *Al Ahram Weekly* newspaper, diplomacy was almost the sole and predominant theme of those GERD related stories. The evidence is that out of a total of 12(100%) articles, 11(91.67%) articles mainly focused the diplomatic activities of Egypt, particularly following the downfall of Hosni Mubarak’s regime, with the rest of the Nile Basin riparian states. Next to diplomacy, legal regime stood as a second theme with a single story (8.33%). The remaining four different types of themes received no treatment in the paper.

On the other hand, *Sudan Vision's* standalone theme was diplomacy. The newspaper has provided an aggregate of 17 stories and their themes were wholly (100%) focused on diplomacy. In other words, *Sudan Vision* did not give any attention, as its major theme, to the remaining four themes (sovereign rights, historical rights, development and legal regime) including the category 'other'.

On average, as can be easily discerned from figure 4.1 below, diplomacy was the recurring theme in all the three newspapers since they reported on it; it was also the only shared theme among them. *Addis Zemen*, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* committed a total of 47 (19, 11 and 17 respectively) stories toward diplomacy, accounting for 31.77 percent of its total coverage. The second shared theme between *Addis Zemen* and *Al Ahram Weekly* was legal regime which published an aggregate of 9 (8 from *Addis Zemen* and 1 from *Al Ahram Weekly*) stories and it accounted for 6.08 percent of the coverage. But the single recurring theme of the story was 'development'. It attracted a total of 92 (62.16%) stories contributed from *Addis Zemen* newspaper. On the other hand, all the three newspapers did not pay any attention to the remaining two themes, i.e., sovereign rights and historical rights. The apparent disregard of all the selected newspapers to those antagonistic claims: sovereign rights versus historical rights over the utilization of the shared international Nile water may shed alight as a positive step forward between upstream and downstream countries in bridging their differences.

**Figure 4.1 Percentage of Theme distribution all across the Selected Nwespapers**



**Types of Themes**

#### 4.1.2. Type of Story for the Target Newspapers

The distribution of story type across the selected newspapers revealed great disparity. News genre, for example, accounted for 38(31.93%), 4(33.33%) and 11(64.71%) of the story types covered by *Addis Zemen*, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers, respectively. When we compare the three newspapers, the *Sudan Vision* has a larger number (64.71%) of news stories than the *Al Ahram Weekly* (33.33%) and *Addis Zemen* (31.93%). This might signify that predominantly *Sudan Vision's* stories more or less relied on facts, current events and occurrences than opinions. In contrast, the *Addis Zemen* and *Al Ahram Weekly* newspapers stories inclined toward opinion rather than facts. But it would be naïve to conclude that these ‘opinion stories’ were completely devoid of facts at all.

**Table 4.2.Type, number and percentage of story distribution across the newspapers**

| Type of Story   | Newspapers         |       |                        |       |                     |       | Total number of stories | Percentage on average |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
|                 | <i>Addis Zemen</i> |       | <i>Al Ahram Weekly</i> |       | <i>Sudan Vision</i> |       |                         |                       |
|                 | No. of stories     | %     | No. of stories         | %     | No. of stories      | %     |                         |                       |
| News            | 38                 | 31.93 | 4                      | 33.33 | 11                  | 64.71 | 53                      | 35.81                 |
| Editorial       | 18                 | 15.13 | ND*                    | ND    | ND                  | ND    | 18                      | 12.16                 |
| Feature         | 34                 | 28.57 | 2                      | 16.67 | 4                   | 23.53 | 40                      | 27.03                 |
| Commentary      | 22                 | 18.49 | 4                      | 33.33 | 2                   | 11.77 | 28                      | 18.92                 |
| Interview       | 6                  | 5.04  | 1                      | 8.33  | ND                  | ND    | 7                       | 4.73                  |
| Reader's letter | ND                 | ND    | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND    | ND                      | ND                    |
| other           | 1                  | 0.84  | 1                      | 8.33  | ND                  | ND    | 2                       | 1.35                  |
| Total           | 119                | 100   | 12                     | 100   | 17                  | 100   | 148                     | 100                   |

\*ND refers to no data

Next to news articles, feature articles received the second major attention, 27.03 percent on average. *Addis Zemen* has reported 34(28.57%) stories and then *Sudan Vision*, 4(23.53%) stories. In contrast, *Al Ahram Weekly* supplied the least number of stories, 2(16.67%). The third major type of story was identified as commentary and it accounted for 18.92 percent of the coverage on average. *Al Ahram Weekly* has dedicated its 4(33.33%) stories to it, whereas, *Addis Zemen* and *Sudan Vision* have contributed 22(18.49%) articles and 2(11.77%) articles to the commentary type of stories, respectively.

One important point to remind here is that out of a total of 119(100%) GERD related stories reported by *Addis Zemen*, 18(15.13%) stories were disclosed under the “editorial” type of story. Neither in *Al Ahram Weekly*, 12(100%) nor in *Sudan Vision* newspaper, 17(100%) did news stories fall in the category of editorial genre. This implies that in comparison *Addis Zemen* gave

more emphasis to the issue of the GERD project, which was mentioned as a “sign of national parade” repeatedly by the paper. In contrast, the issue of the GERD did not capture any attention to be reported in the editorial part of *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers. Informants 2 and 3 reasoned out that this was partly because the GERD project was not a big issue for Egypt and Sudan at this particular time because they were preoccupied with other pressing issues.

#### **4.1.3. Type of Source the Story used for the Target Newspapers**

All across the three newspapers, government officials have been used as major sources of information to those stories that were related to the GERD project (See figure 4.3). Specifically, out of a total of 119(100%) stories and 170(100%) sources, 56(32.94%) were quoted from different government officials for *Addis Zemen*. Similarly, out of a total of 23(100%) sources for *Al Ahram Weekly*, 12(52.17%) and out of a total of 26(100%) sources for *Sudan Vision*, 11(42.31%) were quoted from government officials.

For *Addis Zemen*, next to government officials, the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> major sources, which were mentioned as sources of GERD project related stories include individuals/experts, institutions, anonymous, news agencies and public relations practitioners (PRP) representing an aggregate number of sources 31(18.24%), 29(17.06%), 15(8.82%), 14(8.24%) and 11(6.47%) respectively. Besides, though in a lesser extent, the newspaper also used other media and journalist/writer as sources of story, 7(4.12%) each of the total sources described above.

**Table 4.3.Type, number and percentage of source distribution across the newspapers**

| Type of Source    | Newspapers         |       |                        |       |                     |       | Total number of sources | Percentage on average |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
|                   | <i>Addis Zemen</i> |       | <i>Al Ahram Weekly</i> |       | <i>Sudan Vision</i> |       |                         |                       |
|                   | No. of sources     | %     | No. of sources         | %     | No. of sources      | %     |                         |                       |
| Gov't official    | 56                 | 32.94 | 12                     | 52.17 | 11                  | 42.31 | 79                      | 36.07                 |
| PRP               | 11                 | 6.47  | ND*                    | ND    | 4                   | 15.39 | 15                      | 6.85                  |
| News agency       | 14                 | 8.24  | 1                      | 4.35  | 3                   | 11.54 | 18                      | 8.23                  |
| Other media       | 7                  | 4.12  | ND                     | ND    | 3                   | 11.54 | 10                      | 4.57                  |
| Individual/expert | 31                 | 18.24 | 4                      | 17.39 | 2                   | 7.69  | 37                      | 16.90                 |
| Institution       | 29                 | 17.06 | 2                      | 8.70  | 2                   | 7.69  | 33                      | 15.07                 |
| Journalist/writer | 7                  | 4.12  | 4                      | 17.39 | ND                  | ND    | 11                      | 5.02                  |
| Anonymous         | 15                 | 8.82  | ND                     | ND    | 1                   | 3.85  | 16                      | 7.31                  |
| other             | ND                 | ND    | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND    | ND                      | ND                    |
| Total             | 170**              | 100   | 23**                   | 100   | 26**                | 100   | 219                     | 100                   |

\*ND refers to no data

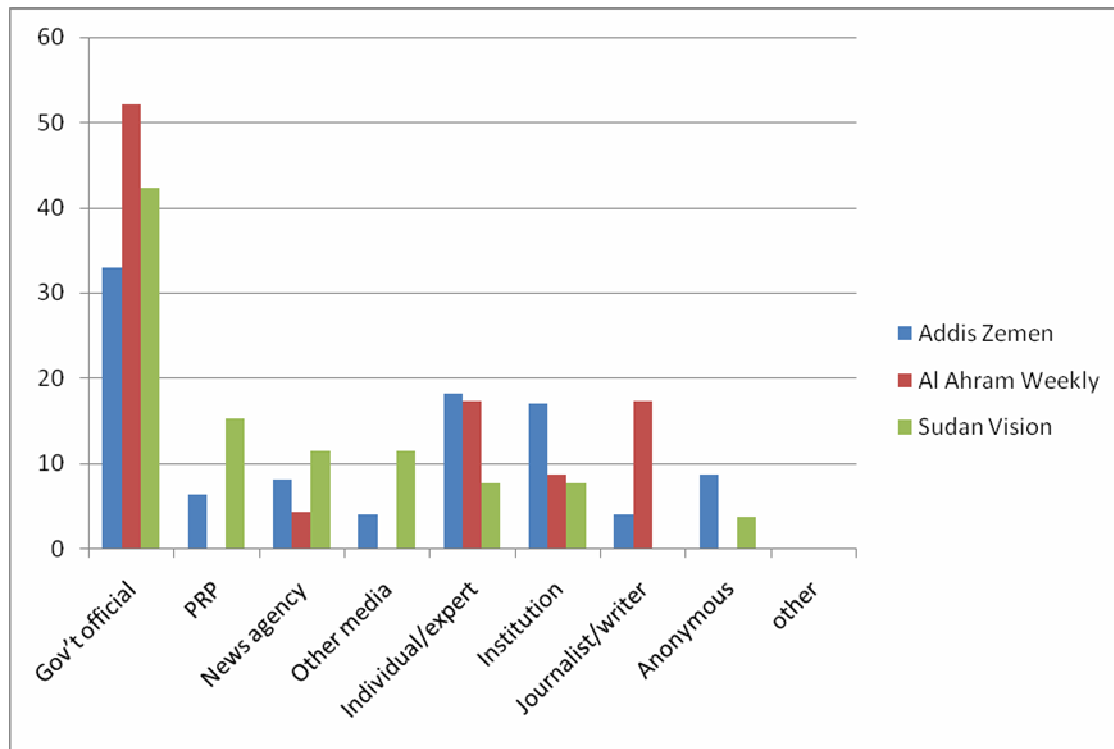
\*\*apart from the other categories, the aggregate number of sources for these specific categories are 170, 23 and 26 for *Addis Zemen*, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers, respectively. In fact, this is because some of the stories have used more than one type of source.

For *Al Ahram Weekly*, other than government officials, individuals/experts and journalists/writers have been used as somewhat major sources too, which accounted for 4(17.39%) of the source each. Institutions and news agency sources were ranked as 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, which accounted for 2(8.70%) and 1(4.35%) of the source respectively.

On the other hand, *Sudan Vision* newspaper has used public relations practitioners as the second common sources, 4(15.39%), following government officials. Out of a total of 26 (100%)

sources used, news agency and other media 3(11.54%) each as well as individual/expert and institution 2(7.69%) each have been used as sources of stories by the newspaper.

**Figure 4.2 Percentage of Sources Quoted by the Selected Newspapers**



**Types of Sources**

In general, regarding sources used in the stories it can be said that, more or less varied kinds of sources were used, on average. Irrespective of this fact, however, government officials were widely quoted, 36.07 percent, and thus outstripped the other sources with a significant degree. This may suggest that all the selected newspapers' sources of stories were highly dependent on government officials. Individuals/experts and institutions were employed as the second and third vital types of sources, 16.90 percent and 15.07 percent, respectively.

#### 4.1.4. Tone of Story for the Target Newspapers

**Table 4.4. Tone, number and percentage of story distribution across the newspapers**

| Tone of Story | Newspapers         |       |                        |       |                     |       | Total number of stories | Percentage on average |
|---------------|--------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
|               | <i>Addis Zemen</i> |       | <i>Al Ahram Weekly</i> |       | <i>Sudan Vision</i> |       |                         |                       |
|               | No. of stories     | %     | No. of stories         | %     | No. of stories      | %     |                         |                       |
| Positive      | 90                 | 75.63 | ND*                    | ND    | 6                   | 35.29 | 96                      | 64.87                 |
| Negative      | ND                 | ND    | 2                      | 16.67 | ND                  | ND    | 2                       | 1.35                  |
| Mixed         | 7                  | 5.88  | 4                      | 33.33 | 1                   | 5.88  | 12                      | 8.11                  |
| Neutral       | 22                 | 18.49 | 6                      | 50    | 9                   | 58.82 | 38                      | 25.68                 |
| Total         | 119                | 100   | 12                     | 100   | 17                  | 100   | 148                     | 100                   |

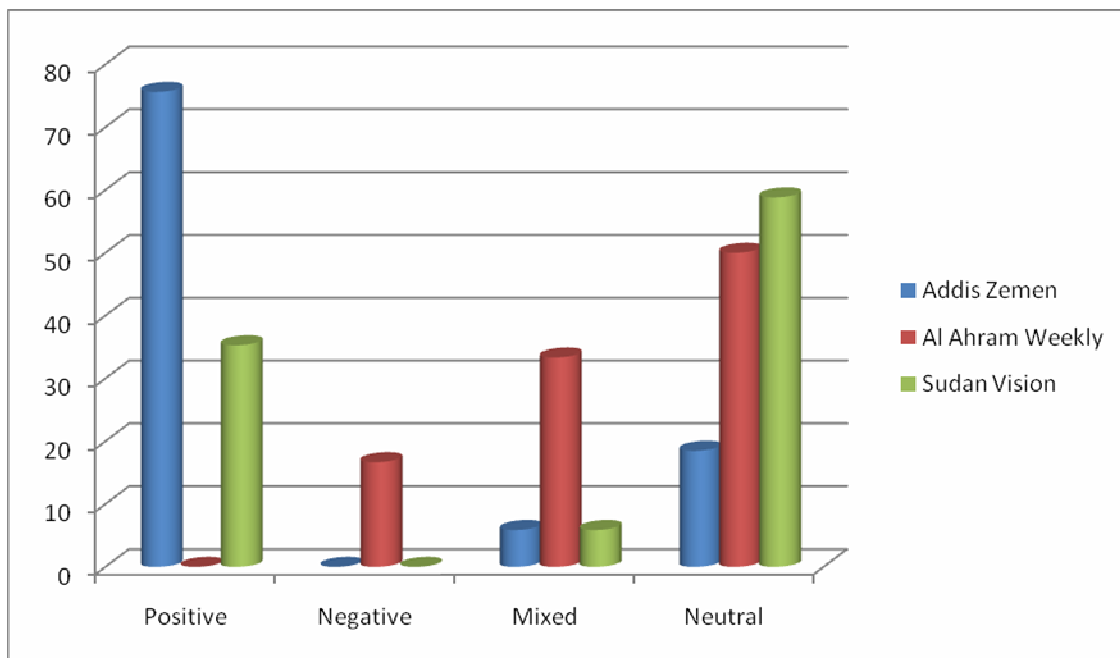
\*ND refers to no data

Regarding the tone of stories, clear differences were revealed among the three newspapers, particularly between *Addis Zemen* and *Al Ahram Weekly*. The first one which is the *Addis Zemen* newspaper has reported 90(75.63%) stories out of a total of its 119(100%) stories in a ‘positive’ tone. The second major tone of the newspaper was labeled as ‘neutral’, which accounted for 22(18.49%) of the total number of stories. Similarly, the term ‘mixed’ tone of story was placed as a third and it accounted for 7(5.88%) of the stories out of the total number of stories described above. But, the newspaper has reported nothing in line with a ‘negative’ tone. Generally, the stand of the newspaper seems in favor of the GERD construction.

The second one which is the *Al Ahram Weekly* newspaper, has given half of its coverage in a ‘neutral’ tone since the data revealed that out of a total of 12(100%) stories, 6(50%) were reported in a ‘neutral’ tone. The second and third major tones of the newspaper were labeled as

'mixed' and 'negative', which accounted for 4(33.33%) and 2(16.67%) of the stories respectively. As indicated on the above table, *Al Ahram Weekly* gave nil attention to the category 'positive' tone. This might suggest that half of the newspaper's stories were systematically abstained from mentioning either the dam's positive or negative consequences. The newspaper featured 16.67 percent report (negatively) against the GERD project, while it declined from supporting (positively) the dam.

**Figure 4.3 Percentage of Tone of Story distribution all across the Selected Newspapers**



**Tone of story**

The last one which is the *Sudan Vision* newspaper has reported 10(58.82%) stories out of a total of 17(100%) stories in a 'neutral' tone regarding the dam. Next to neutral, the term positive tone was placed as a dominant tone which gained 6(35.29%) stories. The category mixed tone achieved 1(5.88%) story, while the newspaper never reported in a negative tone in relation to the

dam. Given the fact that the *Sudan Vision* newspaper has published 58.82 percent of its reports in a ‘neutral’ tone, similar to *Al Ahram Weekly*, this may mean that the newspaper avoided any explanation concerning the GERD’s impact. But, unlike *Al Ahram Weekly*, *Sudan Vision* reported 35.29 percent in favor of the dam (See figure 4.3).

To wrap up, out of a total of 148(100%) stories, 64.87 percent has been labeled as positive in tone, of which *Addis Zemen* contributed the lions share followed by *Sudan Vision*. *Al Ahram weekly*, unlike *Addis Zemen* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers, has been covered no story with a positive tone towards the construction of the dam. The second major tone was ‘neutral’ which accounted for 25.68 percent on average. *Al Ahram Weekly* was the only press that reported a fraction of its stories (negatively) against the dam.

#### 4.1.5. Type of Frame the Story used for the Target Newspapers

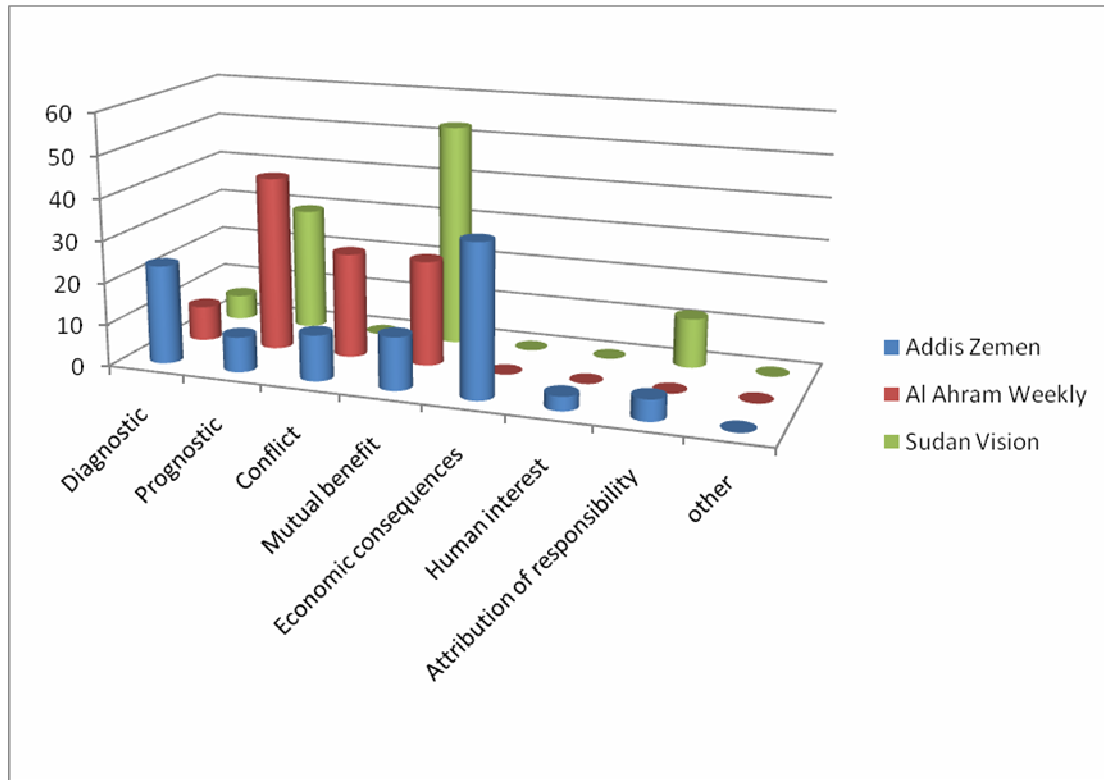
**Table 4.5. Type, number and percentage of frame distribution across the newspapers**

| Type of Frame                 | Newspapers         |       |                        |       |                     |       | Total number of stories | Percentage on average |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
|                               | <i>Addis Zemen</i> |       | <i>Al Ahram Weekly</i> |       | <i>Sudan Vision</i> |       |                         |                       |
|                               | No. of stories     | %     | No. of stories         | %     | No. of stories      | %     |                         |                       |
| Diagnostic                    | 28                 | 23.53 | 1                      | 8.33  | 1                   | 5.88  | 30                      | 20.27                 |
| Prognostic                    | 10                 | 8.40  | 5                      | 41.67 | 5                   | 29.41 | 20                      | 13.51                 |
| Conflict frame                | 13                 | 10.92 | 3                      | 25    | ND*                 | ND    | 16                      | 10.81                 |
| Mutual benefit                | 15                 | 12.61 | 3                      | 25    | 9                   | 52.94 | 27                      | 18.24                 |
| Economic consequences         | 43                 | 36.14 | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND    | 43                      | 29.05                 |
| Human interest                | 4                  | 3.36  | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND    | 4                       | 2.70                  |
| Attribution of responsibility | 6                  | 5.04  | ND                     | ND    | 2                   | 11.77 | 8                       | 5.41                  |
| other                         | ND                 | ND    | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND    | ND                      | ND                    |
| Total                         | 119                | 100   | 12                     | 100   | 17                  | 100   | 148                     | 100                   |

\*ND refers to no data

The striking question here is how the selected media framed the GERD project. Accordingly, the finding revealed that a range of types of frames were employed by all the newspapers. With regard to *Addis Zemen*, economic consequences frame was the dominant frame type that has been repeatedly used and accounted for 43(36.14%), out of a total of 119(100%) stories. Diagnostic frame was the second widely employed type of frame, 23.53 percent. Mutual benefit, conflict and prognostic frames obtained somewhat a moderate access, 12.61 percent, 10.92 percent and 8.40 percent respectively.

**Figure 4.4 Percentage of Frames employed by the Selected Newspapers**



**Types of Frames**

For *Al Ahram Weekly*, prognostic frame was frequently used as a major frame, which accounted for 5(41.67%), out of the aggregate of 12(100%) stories. Both conflict and mutual benefit frames received 3(25%) stories each. Diagnostic frame, on the other hand, gained 1(8.33%) story.

Concerning the *Sudan Vision* newspaper, mutual benefit frame has been employed as a dominant type of frame which accounted for 52.94 percent. Then after, prognostic frame was applied by the newspaper as a second common frame, 29.41 percent. Attribution of responsibility frame obtained some 11.77 percent. Similarly, diagnostic frame received 5.88 percent.

To sum up, though the three selected newspapers framed the dam through multiple types of frames, their respective dominant frames were divergent. *Addis Zemen's* outstripped frame was

of economic consequences, which accounted for 36.14 percent. This might mean that the newspaper has mainly framed the GERD in terms of its actual and/or potential economic impacts on citizens', community, country or riparian countries in general. In contrast, *Al Ahram Weekly* newspaper's major frame was labeled as prognostic, 41.67 percent; and it seems that the newspaper's attention revolved at explaining possible solutions that can avert the probable problems associated with the dam. On the other hand, *Sudan Vision's* dominant frame was of 'mutual benefit' which obtained 52.94 percent; and this in turn may signify that the newspaper's pivotal frame was targeted on elaborating the dam's potential in bringing mutual benefits for Nile basin riparian countries in general and Eastern Nile basin countries in particular.

#### 4.1.6. Major Challenges described in the Story for the Target Newspapers

**Table 4.6. Type, number and percentage of major challenges distribution across the newspapers**

| Type of Major Challenges | Newspapers         |       |                        |       |                     |       | Total number of stories | Percentage on average |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
|                          | <i>Addis Zemen</i> |       | <i>Al Ahram Weekly</i> |       | <i>Sudan Vision</i> |       |                         |                       |
|                          | No. of stories     | %     | No. of stories         | %     | No. of stories      | %     |                         |                       |
| Political                | 62                 | 52.10 | 10                     | 83.33 | 13                  | 76.47 | 85                      | 57.43                 |
| Social                   | 14                 | 11.77 | ND*                    | ND    | ND                  | ND    | 14                      | 9.46                  |
| Financial                | 23                 | 19.33 | 1                      | 8.33  | ND                  | ND    | 24                      | 16.22                 |
| Environmental            | 2                  | 1.68  | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND    | 2                       | 1.35                  |
| Nothing                  | 15                 | 12.61 | 1                      | 8.33  | 4                   | 23.53 | 20                      | 13.51                 |
| other                    | 3                  | 2.52  | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND    | 3                       | 2.03                  |
| Total                    | 119                | 100   | 12                     | 100   | 17                  | 100   | 148                     | 100                   |

\*ND refers to no data

Of all the predetermined major challenges that have been examined with respect to each story of the selected newspapers, political challenge has frequently been mentioned as a major focus for each *Addis Zemen*, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers, accounted for 52.10 percent, 83.33 percent and 76.47 percent, respectively (See Table 4.6). So that it is important to acknowledge that political challenge was the most common problem that Ethiopia has faced and/or would face as described by all the selected newspapers. Following political challenge, financial challenge was the second common problem mentioned by *Addis Zemen* which accounted for 23(19.33%) stories, out of a total of 119(100%) stories. Social challenge has been placed as the third frequently mentioned problem 14(11.77%) stories.

Similar to *Addis Zemen*, the second major challenge that has been mentioned in *Al Ahram Weekly* was financial, which gained 1(8.33%) story, out of a total number of 12(100%) stories. The newspaper's single story, 8.33 percent, was grouped under the category "nothing". For *Sudan Vision* newspaper, next to the political challenge, the category of "nothing" has obtained 4(23.53%) stories, out of a total of 17(100%) stories.

Generally, out of a total of 148(100%) stories of *Addis Zemen*, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision*, on average 57.43 percent of the three newspapers' cumulative stories talked about the political challenges (both internal and external) that Ethiopia has faced and/or would face as a result of her decision to construct the dam. The second major problem associated with the dam was labeled as financial, 16.22 percent. Both *Addis Zemen* and *Al Ahram Weekly* contributed 23 and 1 stories respectively for the latter (i.e. financial) challenge.

#### **4.1.7. Major Opportunities described in the Story for the Target Newspapers**

Other than challenges, it would be desirable to ask what kinds of opportunities have been raised by the media in relation to Ethiopia's decision to build the Renaissance Dam. Thus, the selected print media highlighted some various opportunities regarding the issue. Specifically, in the examined stories of *Addis Zemen* newspaper, national consensus has been described as a major opportunity, retaining 60(50.42%) stories, out of a total of 119(100%) stories. The second widely highlighted opportunity, according to this newspaper, was electricity generation, which accounted for 34(28.57%) stories. Flood and sedimentation control as well as bi(multi)lateral relations improvements among Nile co-basin states were presented as 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> opportunities and obtained 10(8.40%) stories and 7(5.88%) stories respectively.

**Table 4.7.Type, number and percentage of major opportunities distribution across the newspapers**

| Type of Major opportunities             | Newspapers         |       |                        |       |                     |       | Total number of stories | Percentage on average |
|---|--------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
|   | <i>Addis Zemen</i> |       | <i>Al Ahram Weekly</i> |       | <i>Sudan Vision</i> |       |                         |                       |
|   | No. of stories     | %     | No. of stories         | %     | No. of stories      | %     |                         |                       |
| Electricity generation                  | 34                 | 28.57 | 2                      | 16.67 | 3                   | 17.65 | 39                      | 26.35                 |
| Irrigation use                          | 1                  | 0.84  | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND    | 1                       | 0.68                  |
| Flood and sedimentation control         | 10                 | 8.40  | ND                     | ND    | 1                   | 5.88  | 11                      | 7.43                  |
| National consensus                      | 60                 | 50.42 | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND    | 60                      | 40.54                 |
| Bi(multi)lateral relations improvements | 7                  | 5.88  | 9                      | 75    | 12                  | 70.59 | 28                      | 18.92                 |
| Job opportunity                         | 3                  | 2.52  | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND    | 3                       | 2.03                  |
| Environmental friendly                  | 1                  | 0.84  | ND                     | ND    | ND                  | ND    | 1                       | 0.68                  |
| other                                   | 3                  | 2.52  | 1                      | 8.33  | 1                   | 5.88  | 5                       | 3.38                  |
| Total                                   | 119                | 100   | 12                     | 100   | 17                  | 100   | 148                     | 100                   |

\*ND refers to no data

For *Al Ahram Weekly*, bi(multi)lateral relations improvements was the single most widely demonstrated opportunity, 9(75%) stories, out of a total of 12(100%) stories. Electricity generation has been placed as a second major opportunity, 2(16.67%) stories.

Alike to *Al Ahram Weekly*, *Sudan Vision's* commonly mentioned opportunity was labeled as bi(multi)lateral relations improvements that accounted for 12(70.59%) stories, out of a total of 17(100%) stories. The GERD potential electricity generation that intended both domestic use and foreign export was the second major opportunity, 3(17.65%) stories.

To summarize, of all the GERD related stories dealing with opportunities, the content of national consensus among Ethiopian citizens' has been frequently described as a vital opportunity (40.54 percent). However, *Addis Zemen* was the only newspaper that catered all the national consensus related stories. Unlike the national consensus, electricity generation and bi(multi)lateral relations improvements were the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> major opportunities (26.35 percent and 18.92 percent respectively) on average shared by all the three newspapers'. Flood and sedimentation control opportunity which achieved 7.43 percent was also shared by the *Addis Zemen* and Sudan Vision newspapers.

## 4.2. Discussion of Findings

### 4.2.1. Theme of Story

The GERD interestingly continued to generate lots of buzz in the Ethiopian scene starting from its announcement on March 30, 2011. Of course it is not an exclusive concern of Ethiopia. It is rather considered, by many experts, as a ringing bell to the foreign policy direction/strategy of the remaining river Nile riparian countries in general and downstream countries in particular. This is because in one way or the other, the dam could affect, either positively or negatively or both, the national interest of the co-basin states, and it may also serve as an exemplary project to other upstream states in terms of initiating similar activities on the Nile river waters.

**Development:** As far as the theme of stories in the selected press is concerned, explicit differences and similarities were found in the overall coverage of the GERD. The sole visible difference between *Addis Zemen*, on the one hand, and *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision*, on the other hand, centered on the agenda (theme) of their preponderance of stories. *Addis Zemen* was the only newspaper that put development as its central theme (77.31 percent). The newspaper, understandably, interprets the dam as Ethiopia's development hope of the government rather than agenda diversion, which was claimed by some opposition political parties and Diaspora.

In this regard, informant 2 argued that: "I do not think such a big project is being constructed just for agenda diversion purpose. The dam takes a lot of money, a lot of effort, so it has to have a real developmental impact, which we understand and which we believe Ethiopia needs." In the same token, informant 3 also argues along the same line as follows:

I do not think the dam is being constructed due to the fear of revolution or as an agenda diversion strategy. If you look at the Ethiopian government and its efforts to boost the

economy, you will find that this scheme is consistently going with the others, because what we think now is, this government is really economically oriented, they want to boost the economy, they want to create more job opportunities, they want to raise the income of the people, they want to have more hard currency for the country, they want to attract investments and now they are achieving big successes.... So, this is the way we look at it, it is something economical. For this reason, it does not have anything to do with political calculation.

In contrast, the remaining of the dyad newspapers (*Al Ahrām Weekly* and *Sudan Vision*) failed to report any development related stories during the entire period of investigation (time frame) and instead their fundamental theme was diplomacy.

**Diplomacy:** It is plausible to say that the coverage of both *Al Ahrām Weekly* (91.67 percent) and *Sudan Vision* (100 percent) newspapers were diplomacy-conscious, since diplomacy was a common theme in their respective coverage of Ethiopia's decision to construct the dam at the Nile River. The remaining newspaper, which is *Addis Zemen*, too, covered the theme of diplomacy but it was to a lesser degree, 15.97 percent. Thus, what this might mean is that, unlike the theme of development which received a perfunctory coverage by *Addis Zemen* alone, diplomatic theme was shared by all the selected media even if some degrees of discrepancies were there between them.

All the informants agreed that the GERD project was initially started by Ethiopia unilaterally, but later Ethiopia reached consensus with both Egypt and Sudan to review whether or not the dam has any impact on downstream states through a panel of experts, which was established jointly by three of them including international experts. Thus, the establishment of the joint technical committee has been considered as a sign of healthy diplomatic cooperation between them away from previous warnings such as “redline” and counter-warnings like “they know the history”, particularly between Egypt and Ethiopia. In light of this, informant 2 asserts,

A country which wants to have a project to utilize its resources, presents the feasibility studies to the ENTRO....The situation with the Grand Renaissance Dam is that it was not submitted to ENTRO. That is why we had to use another channel to review the dam. And it was actually a proposal by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.... I remember that when Prime Minister Meles Zenawi announced his initiative to establish this panel of experts, he said that “if Egypt is affected by one liter of water, Ethiopia will redesign the dam.” This mainly projects the confidence of the Ethiopian side that it will not negatively affect Egypt and this panel of experts is mainly a confidence building measure to show us the details and we discussed together in.... especially since the revolution in Egypt, the interaction and dialogue between Egypt and Ethiopia jumped, there were genuine positive developments and relations between both countries and we believe this will continue.

**Legal Regime:** *Addis Zemen* and *Al Ahram Weekly* have given a relatively, modest coverage, 6.72 percent and 8.33 percent, respectively, to the theme of legal regime. However, in comparison to the development and diplomatic themes, the legal regime has received a lesser coverage. Even worse, *Sudan Vision* newspaper ignored the theme of the legal regime totally. Here, it is important to note about the unfinished business (endeavor) by Nile co-basin states in order to establish a legal regime over the utilization of the Nile river water. This is because riparian states are still struggling with unabated negotiations to establish a commonly binding regime so as to benefit from the Nile waters fairly and ‘equally’. Anyhow, the current impasse of the negotiation between upstream and downstream states finally turned out to be positive as the interim government of Egypt, unlike the previous regimes, came up with new initiatives to share the water fairly. In this regard, *Al Ahram Weekly* reported that: “Egypt intends to adopt a different approach concerning plans to share the waters of the River Nile....The fresh talks will be based on an equitable share of the distribution of the waters of the River Nile so that all Nile Basin countries benefit without affecting the water share of any” (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 14 - 20 April 2011, Issue No. 1043).

To achieve this aim, informant 2 who actually recognizes the right of any Nile basin country to development pointed out that: “... we have to include all countries’ concerns.....we need to find

some sort of paragraph that will put all countries' concern in it; because on the Nile basin, each country has the right to development and no one is disputing that". Similarly, informant 3 expressed his optimism concerning the current deadlock between upstream and downstream countries upon the water security issue of CFA Article 14(b) by stating that it would not be far before the Nile basin countries may reach an inclusive agreement to use their shared waters fairly as indicated below:

We need to work together more, we need to discuss and we need to negotiate and the negotiation is the assonance and an art. So you have to know how to push them to the right direction to bring them to consensus and I do not think if there is any country that has the power to block the consensus, at least in Africa, we are not talking about the United States, it is just Egypt. So it is reasonable that when you are reasonable, then, others have to accept your point. If it is not reasonable, then, they have the right to opt out but if it is reasonable enough and if you gather the people around you, other countries with you, then, it is easier because nobody can bear or can withstand being isolated.

Our country's stand is that we all need to agree; we are open to a new agreement as Sudan. But, we all of us should agree on it. So this is the case. It seems for the people that Sudan and Egypt are in one block but this is not the case; the case is that we in Sudan want the water to bring us all together and not to be a cause for wars or problems. So, that is why we want consensus and we think it is doable.

Informant 1, on the other hand, explained his suspicious view toward the downstream states and blamed them for their tactics of delays and he further suggested that the solution is just applying a new strategy that must push them to come back to the negotiation table:

Egypt and Sudan employed systematic endeavors to make the Nile riparian countries have an endless negotiation over the NBI. Even now, they withdraw, apart from signing the CFA, because they do not want to close the negotiations in agreement. So, if they are not willing to come to the agreement through negotiation, we should have to follow a strategy that can push them to return to the agreement; and one of such a pressurizing tool is building huge projects such as the GERD.

Yet, if such calculations were to fail to bring the desired aim, there would be a probability of having two uncompromising treaties over the Nile basin waters utilization and this may create a

tough challenge not only to the riparian states but also to the world community as well. In this regard informant 1 adds more, “if the downstream countries cannot turn back and sign the agreement, there could be two treaties within a single basin. If that is so, it would be a great challenge for the world community. Indeed, this situation will test the world community itself.”

Despite this fear, however, he is still optimistic mentioning an alternative pushing factor that is the probability of establishing the NBC in the near future which can play its own role in enforcing the downstream states to embrace the effort because they do not want to be left out. The NBC would have its own institutional structure and decision making power over the Nile issues.

#### **4.2.2. Type of Story**

**News:** As far as the type of GERD project-related stories covered by the selected print media is concerned, the result of the study showed that momentous attention was given to the news genre. This is because out of a total of 148(100%) stories scrutinized, 53(35.81 percent on average) were grouped under the news narratives. In comparison, Sudan Vision has carried its overwhelming majority of GERD-related stories in the form of news stories, accounting for 64.71 percent. On the other hand, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Addis Zemen*, reported with almost equal proportion of news stories, 33.33 percent and 31.93 percent, respectively. In other words, this may mean that *Sudan Vision's* stories were mainly fact based instead of opinion and commentaries, while the latter two newspapers have tilted toward opinion stories. In general, all the newspapers' stories were more or less tilted toward news narratives of the dam.

**Feature and Commentary:** Next to the news genre, feature type of story received the second major attention, 27.03 percent on average. Specifically, *Addis Zemen* has reported some 28.57

percent and *Sudan Vision*, 23.53 percent in feature type. *Al Ahram Weekly* employed slight a lesser proportion of feature stories, 16.67 percent. The third major type of story was identified as commentary, which accounted for 18.92 percent on average. *Al Ahram Weekly* has given a predominant coverage, that is, 33.33 percent to it. *Addis Zemen* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers have contributed 18.49 percent and 11.77 percent, respectively to this genre.

**Editorial:** According to Turow (2009, p.323), the term ‘Editorial’ is used to “describe both all non-advertising matter included in the newspaper and opinion pieces created by a newspaper’s editorial writers.” The finding of this study revealed one obvious difference between the selected print media outlets, and that can be easily understood from the editorial section of their respective stories. As described in the presentation and analysis section above, *Addis Zemen* was the only newspaper that has given a central focus to the GERD project in its editorial section, which accounted for 15.13 percent. This indicates that the newspaper has paid considerable attention to the dam.

In contrast, however, both *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers completely abstained from posting any story within their editorial section about the dam. Hence, it seems that the issue of concern for this study (i.e., the GERD project) was not able to gain attention in the editorial pages of the latter pair of newspapers. Or, it would be right to look at other direction so as to gauge if there was/were other ‘dire’ issue(s) that absorbed their attention at the expense of the dam. In light of this, informants 2 and 3 reasoned out that the ongoing instabilities within Sudan along with the secession of South Sudan and Egypt’s 2011 revolution and the subsequent cases with the presidential election were forwarded as possible factors for their media not to give enough coverage for the GERD project on the Nile River. Specifically, informant 3 noted, “The

GERD is not a big issue for Sudan; is it an important issue? Yes, but it is not the biggest issue ever because we have a lot of issues we are dealing with. So the Nile is not the most important, maybe for the Ethiopians it is number one, but in Sudan it can be number three, number four, number five, and even number ten. Even in Egypt, it is not number one this time.”

#### **4.2.3. Type of Source the story used**

According to Eldridge (1993, p.316), “the more authoritative the source, the higher the credibility, and authoritativeness is often associated with those who hold high positions....” In fact, credible source is virtually considered as the backbone of any piece of story, especially to the news aspect otherwise it can be simply a rumor. This is partly because unverified stories cannot confirm their reliability as far as their sources are relying on speculative ones. In light of this, Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007, p.6) express their fear concerning the limitations of media role in catering reliable facts to the public this time as: “We are facing the possibility that independent news will be replaced by rumor....” To the contrary, however, it is crucial to recognize that there might be situations when journalists are forced to quote unnamed sources, even if they have the responsibility to make it clear why the source want to be named as anonymous.

As far as the type of sources the selected media used is concerned, all the selected newspapers have employed different kinds of sources in their respective stories. Generally, nine (including the category “other”) major types of sources were identified for the purpose of this study, and each newspaper’s story source(s) was/were coded under their relevant category. And the result of the study showed that government officials were quoted overwhelmingly, 36.07 percent on average, while the category “other” was completely ignored by all three newspapers.

**Government Officials:** *Addis Zemen* (32.94 percent), *Al Ahram Weekly* (52.17 percent) and *Sudan Vision* (42.31 percent) have used government officials as their major sources, simultaneously. Accordingly, it seems evident that all the three newspapers' were heavily dependent on government officials for their sources of stories. By comparison, the average percentage of official sources quoted by *Al Ahram Weekly* exceeded the rest. And, this finding is consistent with Eldridge's (1993, p.314) conclusion: "Today's news-gathering is organized around official sources of information and the activities of those in positions of authority make up much of news".

According to Graber (2002), however, such an excessive dependence of media on government officials can jeopardize their independence and in effect they would serve as instruments of manipulation or propaganda by those authoritative sources. In our case, the aim of manipulation or propaganda might be centered on defending and reinforcing the policies and strategies of the governments of Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan over their handling of the river Nile water utilization in general and the Renaissance Dam in particular. In light of this, all the three informants assured that the content of media anywhere is characterized by its nationalistic perspective; in so doing though the degree may vary from one another, they lack balance and impartiality in their coverage. Therefore, the media of the Eastern Nile Basin countries in particular cannot be unique of this reality as per the informants. But, to some extent, informants 1 and 2 acknowledged that there are occasions when the media report about some regional issues not only from their national interest but also responsibly from a regional perspective.

**Individuals/experts:** Individuals/experts were used as the second common types of sources, on average, both in *Addis Zemen* and *Al Ahram Weekly* accounting for 31(18.24 percent) and 4(17.39 percent) number of sources, respectively. By comparison, *Sudan Vision* newspaper (7.69

percent) employed the least number of sources of individuals/experts in its stories. With regard to *Addis Zemen*, an overwhelming majority of sources (27 out of a total of 31 number of sources) were grouped under the “individuals” category vis-à-vis the “experts” category, which accounted for only 4 sources. This might tell us that though it is normally uncommon, the newspaper has paid more attention for individuals in using them as a source of story in its coverage of the GERD. Perhaps the problem with such kind of sources, as the researcher has observed, is that other than expressing their emotional feelings regarding the dam, they did not discuss the issue from a wider perspective.

It can be said that *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers, on the other hand, used expert sources instead of individual sources, since out of a total number of six sources (4 from *Al Ahram Weekly* and 2 from *Sudan Vision*) that have been quoted in their respective stories, all fell under the category of “experts” (for example, international water expert, retired diplomats and officials, and researchers) type of sources, while they totally ignored “individuals” as a source to employ in their stories.

**Institutions:** Institutions were used as the third common types of sources on average, 15.07 percent. *Addis Zemen* entertained more institutional sources, 17.06 percent in comparison to *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* which in turn employed 8.70 percent and 7.69 percent, respectively. In this regard, governmental, private, religious and political institutions (organizations) have been quoted.

**News Agencies:** News agencies have been placed as the fourth frequent type of sources that accounted for 8.23 percent on average. Of which *Addis Zemen* predominantly sourced a total number of 14(8.24%) news agencies and specifically they are ENA, Reuters and the Egypt

Governmental News Agency. The former (i.e., ENA) used 12 times that is about 86 percent, while the remaining pair of news agencies were sourced just once each. By taking these figures into account, it seems that *Addis Zemen* was heavily dependent on the government owned news agency (ENA) for its major news sources so that this may signal its affiliation with the government too.

Next to *Addis Zemen*, *Sudan Vision* sourced a total of 3(11.54%) news agencies. But, all these sources have been quoted from a single news agency, that is, the SUNA, which is of course run by the Sudanese (North) government. This revealed that the newspaper in one way or the other receives more news from the government owned news agency (SUNA) while sourcing nothing else (news agency) either inside or outside the Sudanese soil. As a result, this may mean that the newspaper has a symbiotic relationship with the regime of Sudan. *Al Ahram Weekly*, on the other hand, sourced a single news agency, which was named as the Official Middle East News Agency.

#### **4.2.4. Tone of Story**

**Positive Tone:** In relation to the selected newspapers tone of stories, the category positive tone obtained a major coverage in comparison to the rest of categories and it accounted for 64.87 percent on average. Of which *Addis Zemen* has contributed the largest share, that is, 75.63 percent. Besides, *Sudan Vision* provided some 35.29 percent. Unlike *Addis Zemen* and *Sudan Vision*, *Al Ahram Weekly* reported nothing with a positive tone towards the GERD project. As the illustration above indicates, the former pair of newspapers (mainly *Addis Zemen*) favored the dam (positively) in their coverage; whereas, *Al Ahram weekly* chooses silence from covering the GERD in a positive manner.

**Neutral Tone:** The second major tone of story was termed as ‘neutral’ that received some 25.68 percent on average. Both *Sudan Vision* (58.82 percent) and *Al Ahram Weekly* (50 percent) newspapers have reported their stories with ‘neutral’ tone regarding the dam. While on the other hand, *Addis Zemen* has given the least coverage to this category, 18.49 percent. As such, this may suggest that the predominant stories of *Sudan Vision* and *Al Ahram Weekly* as well as a minimal portion of *Addis Zemen* stories said nothing regarding the impacts (it may be positive or negative) of the GERD.

**Mixed Tone:** All the three newspapers shared some degree of convergence, for their coverage on the mixed tone of story. *Al Ahram Weekly* reported the highest proportion (33.33%) of its stories as mixed tone. *Addis Zemen* and *Sudan Vision* stated 5.88 percent each in the category of mixed tone.

**Negative Tone:** As far as the remaining ‘negative’ tone of stories is concerned, the findings of the research showed that an apparent difference was found between the selected media. Accordingly, *Al Ahram Weekly* paid some 16.67 percent against the dam; meaning such proportion of its coverage questioned, criticized and blamed the GERD for its immediate and potential side effects (problems) over downstream countries, especially Egypt. To mention just one example, a staff-writer of the newspaper described the dam as a cause for escalating tensions between Ethiopia and Egypt and he further elaborates the trepidation of Egyptians concerning the dam, which can affect negatively the volume of Nile water that naturally flow towards Egypt:

Tension...flared when Ethiopia announced its plans to build the Millennium Dam, a hydroelectric power dam along the Blue Nile River, despite objections from Egypt and Sudan. Egyptian fear emanates from the fact that a huge dam on the Nile will in all likelihood influence the flow of water volume to Egypt, which depends on the river for 90 percent of its needs. (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 5 - 11 May 2011, Issue No. 1046).

Apart from *Al Ahram Weekly*, neither *Addis Zemen* nor *Sudan Vision* newspapers has covered negative tone in their stories. This might mean that these latter pair of newspapers did not publish any negative impact of the dam in their reportings, or it may also mean that they are not interested in covering negative aspects of the dam.

Taking the overall tone of the print media into account, surprisingly, informant 3 also suggested somewhat similar conclusion with the findings of the content analysis arguing that, "...the media in Sudan is different from the media in Egypt and is different from the media in Ethiopia regarding their coverage of the GERD. For example, in Ethiopia it is of course very positive, in Egypt in one way or another, it is negative, in Sudan to some extent it is neutral and sometimes it is positive." Consequently, informant 2 concluded that all the three countries' media are not balanced in their coverage of regional developmental issues like the GERD, and instead they cover the issue from a national point of view, "The Nile is not belongs to everyone alone, it belongs to all of us. But the journalists and media people of all countries addressed the issue from a national perspective, no one is talking about the regional cooperation, no one is talking about how to address the concerns of everyone."

The findings of the study regarding the selected newspapers have some degree of resemblance with the open policies (not necessarily the ideal backstage policies) of their respective governments. In line with the conclusions of Herman and Chomsky (1988), Yang (2003), and Abdissa (2010), the political economy of mass media of the sampled media of this study also showed that they were siding with their respective government's foreign policy directions, national interests and it seems that they have a symbiotic relationship toward their respective

governments. Hence, in other words, this may mean that they served subservient role for the interests of their respective elites, too.

#### **4.2.5. Type of Frame the Story used**

The important concern in media framing is how they framed an issue (in this case the GERD project). In so doing, it is anticipated that their presentation of facts/information regarding the issue potentially encompassed with emphasis and exclusion to some aspects of it at the expense of others. In light of this, Kendal (2005, pp.9-10) notes that “in the process of selecting some topics as important, other issues are discarded. Once a topic has been selected, which aspects of that topic are to be emphasized and which minimized or excluded is largely left up to the journalist.” This is all about the framing nature of media and at this juncture, this study tried to look at how the selected media framed the dam.

The findings of the study showed that various frames were employed by the selected print media in their coverage of the GERD project. *Addis Zemen* has covered the dam in a wider and significant number of frames (seven out of eight) in comparison to *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers (each employed four out of eight frames).

**Economic Consequences Frame:** Economic consequences frame was the dominant frame that has been used, which accounted for 29.05 percent on average. *Addis Zemen* was the only newspaper that contributed the largest coverage, 36.14 percent to it. The remaining newspapers (i.e., *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision*) have ignored it totally in their respective coverage of the dam.

Therefore, it is apparent that the *Addis Zemen* newspaper has mainly framed the dam as bedrock that can potentially bring up a difference in assuring sustainable economic development on an

individual, community, and country level at large. Besides, the participation of citizens' in supporting the dam through buying bonds brings dual benefits; on the one hand they are executing their national responsibility, while on the other hand they would potentially empower their culture of saving. The newspaper, for instance, in one of its editions reported that "when every individual citizen buys an investment bond, it should not be simply based on his/her nationalistic sentiments toward development but his/her support or decision to buy bond must be done based on enough knowledge about the reward of buying investment bond" (Translated from Amharic, *Addis Zemen*, April 19, 2011, Vol.70<sup>th</sup> year, No. 221, p.3).

On the other hand, all the informants framed the decision of Ethiopia to construct the dam as a need for development and thus they highlighted the potential positive impact of it not only toward the people of Ethiopia but also toward the peoples of Sudan and Egypt. Specifically, informant 1 has detailed the various economic consequences or advantages of the dam towards Ethiopia that include: "Hydropower electricity that intended to utilize by the industry, agriculture, and services; fishery, tourism, and navigation; it increases the water storage capacity of Ethiopia and it can bolster the negotiating power of the country."

**Diagnostic Frame:** Diagnostic frame was found to be the second major and commonly shared frame (20.27 percent on average) among the three sampled media. Despite this fact, however, *Addis Zemen* supplied the dominant portion, 23.53 percent. *Al Ahram Weekly* (8.33percent) and *Sudan Vision* (5.88 percent) were the least contributors to it. For this reason, the diagnostic frame distribution between the newspapers displayed a significant disparity.

As far as the *Addis Zemen* newspaper was concerned, recurrent drought, poverty, acute demand of electricity, hence, the need to support the five years "Growth and Transformation Plan", the

necessity of alternative/clean energy source, and assuring sustainable development were predominantly mentioned as the essential causes or reasons why Ethiopia decides to build the dam; whereas the agenda diversion mechanism was mentioned only in passing, mainly, as a counter reaction against the comments reflected around the bush by the ‘dominant’ opposition political party, commonly known as Forum (“*Medrek*”).

*Al Ahram Weekly* by itself labeled Egypt’s minimal/zero-respect for the Nile riparian countries (Africa) in general and Ethiopia in particular as the underlying reason/cause for the Ethiopia’s unilateral decision to construct the Renaissance Dam. In this regard, the newspaper noted that, “Egypt under Mubarak made an elementary mistake in discounting Africa. Predictably, this oversight backfired, pushing African nations and, especially the Nile Basin nations to adopt more hawkish positions on the Nile waters” (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 31 March - 6 April 2011, Issue No. 1041).

*Sudan Vision* newspaper, on the other hand, published one article which was targeted on the potential effect of the dam, and it stated “...possible water crisis that threatens Egypt and Sudan due to the construction by Nile Basin countries of a number of dams on the river stream” (*Sudan Vision*, May 03, 2011) as the Egyptian geological researcher, Dr. Mohammed Al Bastaweesi, has said. In fact, the comment was targeted toward Ethiopia, and partly on the Renaissance Dam, because, as to the knowledge of the researcher, no other upstream country is being engaged in constructing huge dams at this particular time other than Ethiopia.

**Mutual Benefit:** Mutual benefit frame was the third major frame, accounting for 18.24 percent on average. Cogently, the sampled print media altogether framed the GERD as a mutual benefit project, even if their share of contribution toward the dam’s mutual benefits revealed a wider

variance between them. Particularly, *Sudan Vision* has predominantly framed the dam as mutual benefit, 52.94 percent. This is apparent in the following quote: “On 20 June 2011 the Sudanese Ambassador in Ethiopia has declared Sudan support to the construction of the Century Dam on the Blue Nile about 40 km from the Sudanese borders citing the many benefits that Sudan will receive from the project” (*Sudan Vision*, August 15, 2011). As a result, the FDRE deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister, Hailemariam Desalegn, acknowledged the support of Sudan for the GERD and he further specifies some of the benefits Sudan would gain from the dam: “Sudan supports Ethiopia’s project on Nile as it learns the benefits in terms of electric power supply and regular water flow” (*Sudan Vision*, May 08, 2011). In addition, the newspaper savored the magnanimous dam for its positive externalities over Sudan because it would play a key role in overcoming the overwhelming problems of the country such as seasonal flooding and silt accumulation. Similarly, Sudanese Consultant Engineer, Omar Bakri Abuharaz, reasonably exemplified the mutual benefit of the GERD (formerly known as Millennium Dam) for neighboring countries, particularly to Sudan in the following excerpt:

Side one- Sudan: Power consumption in the national grid in 2010 was 23 billion KWH. The expected forecast consumption in 2014 is 35 billion KWH, i.e. a deficit of 12 billion KWH is anticipated which is equivalent to generation of 2000 MW....Side two- Ethiopia: Ethiopian Electricity Corporation started the construction of the Millennium Dam 40 kilometers from the Sudanese borders on April 11, expected to be completed by the end of 2014.... The Dam will generate 5250 MW by 2015. The expected and planned power generation surplus in Ethiopia in 2015 is between 2500 to 3000 MW planned to be exported to neighbouring countries....The Smart partnership - The equation is simple: Surplus in Ethiopia + Deficit in Sudan = Mutual benefits. (*Sudan Vision*, June 21, 2011).

*Al Ahram Weekly* was the second major newspaper that has proportionately framed the dam as mutual benefit, 25 percent. For instance, Ali Soliman, who is a professor in the Department of Economics at the British University in Egypt, argued that unlike the previous confrontation

between Nile basin states, the demise of Hosni Mubarak government has resulted in the opening of a new chapter in their relations and Egypt is likely to benefit from the GERD project:

The last two years of the Mubarak regime witnessed a high degree of intransigence in the dialogue with the Nile Valley countries, with threats and counter threats being used on both sides. Happily, the new face of Egypt ushered in by the 25 January Revolution that has opened new doors and promises a new beginning with our Nile brothers, especially Ethiopia....The Millennium Dam is conceived as a hydro-electric dam, and it will not retain water for irrigation. Egypt is likely to benefit from the power generated, and it has offered to invest, with Sudan, in it. So far as we can tell, and as Ethiopia has insisted, this is a win-win situation for all involved. (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 19 - 25 May 2011, Issue No. 1048).

*Addis Zemen* per se allocated some 12.61 percent to the mutual benefit frame out of its entire examined stories, which is in fact the least proportion in comparison to *Sudan Vision* and *Al Ahram Weekly* newspapers. With reference to the mutual benefits of the GERD, a writer from *Addis Zemen* cheered the dam for its positive side effects to Sudan and Egypt as follows:

Other than the social and economic benefits that Ethiopia intended to get from the Renaissance Dam, it would also provide several benefits to downstream riparian states such as making the Nile River waters flow regulated and consistent, reducing sedimentation, strengthening their irrigation and electricity capabilities. Moreover, it decreases the loss of water due to evaporation from various dams of Sudan and Egypt and this in turn saves more water for purposive development. (Translated from Amharic, *Addis Zemen*, May 20, 2011, Vol. 70<sup>th</sup> year, No.252, p.11).

In a similar vein, the newspaper further argued, “an estimate of 6 billion cubic meter of water that is normally evaporated from the Sudanese Jebel Aulia dam and Egypt’s Aswan High Dam can be saved as a result of the GERD construction....Besides, Sudan and Egypt would have the chance to get electric power with minimal cost from Ethiopia following the completion of the Dam” (Translated from Amharic, *Addis Zemen*, April 28, 2011, Vol. 70<sup>th</sup> year, No.230, p.3). Moreover, informant 3 also suggested that the suitability of Ethiopia’s weather condition to build huge dams in comparison to the downstream states as follows:

When you have a large dam then you have electricity and some countries need storage of water for some reasons. It depends on the climate in the country that does so. For example, having a large dam in some areas in the Nile basin is not good because it wastes water through the evaporation but in Ethiopia we do not have this case.

**Prognostic Frame:** Prognostic frame was placed fourth, and actually it has been used by the selected newspapers to some extent, 13.51 percent on average. Out of the sampled media, *Al Ahram Weekly* has provided a greater (41.67 percent) proportion of coverage in line with the prognostic frame. In other words, this newspaper has emphasized on a possible solution or remedy frame for the issue of concern. For instance, the newspaper quoted Diaaeddin El-Qousi, international water expert, who criticizes not only the former Egyptian regime for its disregard of the Nile riparian countries, but also explains his frets concerning the post-revolutionary Egyptian interim government's confusing or unclear policies over the handling of the Nile River water and, therefore, he pointed out an indispensable solution, that is, Egypt should return back to the negotiation table:

El-Qousi was not happy with Egypt's handling of the River Nile portfolio, believing that negotiating personnel should be different from those of the past in order to be accepted by the African countries. He blamed the previous regime for mismanaging the issue but added that the newly adopted policies are also muddled and blurred....According to El-Qousi, the only way out for Egypt is to return to the negotiating table. (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 14 - 20 April 2011, Issue No. 1043).

Next to *Al Ahram Weekly*, the second major contributor for the prognostic frame was the *Sudan Vision*, 29.41 percent. Prognostic frame has received a least percentage from *Addis Zemen* (8.40 percent). *Sudan Vision* newspaper in its 17/06/2011 issue reported that Sudan and Egypt together with Ethiopia agreed to set up the joint tripartite technical committee in order to evaluate the impact of the GERD project over the downstream countries. And this step by itself deemed as an utmost remedy to avoid the fear and suspicion of Egypt and [Sudan] concerning the dam. Similarly, a reporter from the *Al Ahram Weekly* also wrote, "the proposed committee would look

into the advantages and disadvantages of the dam in order to help the government take an informed decision. ‘It should be an unbiased committee that considers the negatives and positives of the project, together with the interests of the states involved’” (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 19-25 May 2011, Issue No.1048). Along the same line, *Addis Zemen* published an article that runs, “we are sure that starting from the design of the GERD project, the dam could not harm the interests of Egypt and Sudan....But for the sake of avoiding the fear of Egyptian people over the dam and to build psychological trust between the concerned states we have agreed with the Egyptian Public Delegates to establish a joint technical committee so as to evaluate the impact of the dam” said the FDRE deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Hailemariam Desalegn (Translated from Amharic, *Addis Zemen*, May 11, 2011, Vol.70<sup>th</sup> year, No.243, p.11).

**Conflict Frame:** The finding of the research revealed that conflict frame relatively obtained a medium coverage, where it has a 10.81 percent of coverage on average. Only *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Addis Zemen* newspapers paid some stories in line with the conflict frame, 25 percent and 10.92 percent respectively. Conversely, *Sudan Vision* newspaper used none of its stories as conflict frame with regard to the GERD project.

Comparatively speaking, *Al Ahram Weekly* has viewed the dam as conflict laden project especially between the major actors of the Nile basin riparian countries, namely Ethiopia and Egypt. In this regard, in illuminating the fundamental cause for the unhealthy relations between upper riparian and lower riparian states, particularly between Ethiopia and Egypt, the *Al Ahram Weekly* cited the following in one of its articles, “Ibrahim Nasreddin, head of the Centre for African Studies and Research, pointed to the fractured relationship between upstream and downstream countries, especially Egypt. Nasreddin noted that Ethiopia played an antagonistic

role and that irrespective of Egypt's policies 'it will be difficult to change this role'" (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 14-20 April 2011, Issue No.1043). But, the newspaper has avoided any mention of how "Ethiopia played an antagonistic role" in the Nile basin region, even if the criticism might be drawn from the following excerpts, as a reporter from the same newspaper wrote:

Tension erupted between Egypt and Sudan on the one hand and Ethiopia and the other Nile Basin states on the other when they failed to reach an agreement on the fair distribution of Nile waters. Failure to reach an agreement prompted Ethiopia, along with Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Kenya, to sign a new pact in the Ugandan capital Entebbe in May 2010....The new pact is supposed to substitute the 1929 agreement between Egypt and Great Britain on behalf of Britain's colonies which gave Egypt the right to most of the more than 100 billion cubic metres of water that reaches the downstream countries annually. It also gave it the right to veto any new projects or dams to be built by the other Nile states....Tension further flared when Ethiopia announced its plans to build the Millennium Dam, a hydroelectric power dam along the Blue Nile River, despite objections from Egypt and Sudan.... The relations deteriorated to such an extent that many, including Ethiopian opposition leaders, feared military action by Egypt. (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 5-11 May 2011, Issue No.1046).

Along the same line, Doaa El-Bey from *Al Ahram Weekly* noted that, "Tensions between Egypt and Ethiopia had increased when Ethiopia declared that it was building a multi-billion dollar 'Millennium Dam' on its share of the Nile, which provides 85 percent of the Nile's water" (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 19-25 May 2011, Issue No.1048).

On the other hand, a writer for the *Addis Zemen* quoted the former Ethiopian Ambassador to Egypt Ambassador Ibrahim Idris statements regarding the Egyptian strategies in relation to upstream states, particularly Ethiopia as follows:

Egypt has followed various policies so as to use the Nile waters unilaterally and at the same time to weaken the upper stream states in general and Ethiopia in particular not to use from the Nile River waters. Some of its main policies include, seeing the 1929 and 1959 Nile water agreements as untouchable; thwarting development activities of upstream riparian countries; preventing upstream states from gaining aid and loan accesses; propagating that the problem in Ethiopia is lack of water management not water scarcity; trying to separate or instigate quarrel between the people and politicians of

upstream states with the help of NGOs and Civil Society Associations; and lobbying/coordinating Nile riparian states not to sign the NBI Comprehensive Framework Agreement. (Translated from Amharic, *Addis Zemen*, May 2, 2011, Vol.70th year, No.234, p.11).

On the other hand, a reporter from Sudan Vision made a vivid statement, which highlighted Ethiopia's ever-increasing and pivotal role in the Nile Basin region: "Egypt and Sudan have locked themselves in their past bilateral agreements that were concluded in the absence of other Nile countries. Ethiopia has flexed its water diplomatic muscles and managed to get the majority of the ten Nile countries to its side to forge ahead with a new Nile water treaty" (*Sudan Vision*, August 15, 2011). As a consequence, "Sudan and Egypt have jointly launched a diplomatic offensive against a treaty signed by six of the Nile's upstream countries to alter shares of the Nile water as defined in a colonial-era accord which gives Egypt the lion's share of the water and the right to veto Nile projects proposed by other countries" (*Sudan Vision*, August 12, 2011). Taking these tensions between upstream and downstream riparian countries into consideration, a writer for Sudan Vision has realistically advised for all the conflicting parties in the following manner: "The Nile Basin countries have to.... understand that conflicts between developing countries can only hinder and delay development and the welfare of their people and it is a game in which no one wins" (*Sudan Vision*, August 15, 2011).

#### **4.2.6. Major Challenges described in the story**

**Political Challenge:** Political challenge was overwhelmingly mentioned as a major problem by all the selected print media outlets, which gained 57.43 percent on average. Explicitly, *Addis Zemen*, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers mentioned the political challenge as their primary concern, and accounted for 52.10 percent, 83.33 percent and 76.47 percent, respectively. As could be seen from their respective attention to the political challenge,

Ethiopia is likely to be confronted with significant political problems due to its decision to build the magnanimous renaissance dam on the Nile River Basin and *Al Ahrām Weekly* has stated an outstripped coverage in comparison to the remaining two newspapers.

In explaining the points of discussion between Egyptian interim government's ex-Prime Minister Essam Sharaf and Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir's summit in Khartoum, simultaneously aftermath of the demise of Mubarak's regime and announcement of the Ethiopian government to construct the GERD on the Nile River, a writer from the *Al Ahrām Weekly* noted, "They stressed the strategic importance of a common stance in the face of Ethiopia's intentions to go ahead with the completion of the Chinese-constructed Tekeze Dam on the Blue Nile, modelled on China's controversial Three Gorges Dam. This will inevitably affect Egypt and North Sudan's access to the Blue Nile, which account for 80 percent Egypt and North Sudan's water" (*Al Ahrām Weekly*, 31 March- 6 April 2011, Issue No. 1041). It is clear from this statement that the essence of the meeting was centered on strengthening their strategic alliance so as to defend the status quo against Ethiopia's unprecedented move to build Africa's largest dam (i.e., the GERD) on the Nile River. Though it is widely known and undeniable that the bond of their "strategic alliance" has been rooted on the Sudan's geopolitical and historical relations and cultural affinity to Egypt, some commentators blamed the Sudanese government, for example, *Sudan Tribune* posted an article which stated that, "many observers in Sudan have questioned the government's keen interest in siding with Egypt on the matter [regarding Nile issue] despite needing more" (*Sudan Tribune*, May 10, 2010).

With an apparent criticism of the dam, *Al Ahrām Weekly* published an article that read as, "according to the popular press and statements by the former Egyptian minister of irrigation and water resources, the Millennium Dam will threaten Egypt's quota of Nile water and will be

detrimental to Egypt's interests” (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 19-25 May 2011, Issue No. 1048), However, in opposing the assessment of the GERD in such a way, a writer and scholar for the same newspaper within a same story argued, “such hyperbole has proven to be wrong and misleading.... It turned out that the idea of this dam was an old one, and Egypt had known of it for at least three years. The dam is conceived as a hydro-electric dam, and it will not retain water for irrigation. Egypt is likely to benefit from the power generated” (Ibid.). As could be understood from the above debates, the GERD has been able to be an issue of discussion in the Egyptian context to some extent and it is also evident that there is a different assessment about the dam by the Egyptian “popular press”, politicians and scholars.

Along the same line, with reference to a 48-member Egyptian popular delegation to Ethiopia on May 2011, *Al Ahram Weekly*'s Doaa El-Bey reported the following: “The delegation called for the preservation of Egypt's historical water rights and a fresh start to the relationship between the two countries following the 25 January Revolution” (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 19-25 May 2011, Issue No, 1048). The ideas of this quotation bear two conflicting meanings, because on the one hand it called for the ‘preservation of Egypt's historical water rights’, while at the same time called for the beginning of new ties between Ethiopia and Egypt. How could these conflicting claims be matched or fulfilled concurrently? It would be for such kind of muddling statements and initiatives, as I have mentioned above, one writer from the same newspaper blamed even those post-Mubarak regime elites partly for their unclear policies on the handling of the Nile issue.

Some of the major political challenges that have been described in the outlets of *Addis Zemen* basically include: Egypt’s thwarting role against upstream countries in general and Ethiopia in particular in blocking access to financial aids for development projects from various

international donors; Egyptian fear concerning the potential impact of the dam; suspicion and criticism of some political parties over the way the government decided to build the dam at this particular time labeled as agenda diversion tactic of the regime in power due to fear of the spillover effect of the Middle-East and North African countries revolutions during 2011/12; Egyptian “misperceptions” over the intent of Ethiopia’s intensive engagement in building series of dams on the Nile tributaries; fear of rent seeking and corruption over handling of the money that has been contributed from citizens’ and institutions in support of the dam; ineffective institutional governance; and fear of water conflict as a result of the dam (this was actually forwarded from the Forum/*Medrek* party). For instance, *Addis Zemen* in one of its news narratives wrote that,

We (Forum party) support the construction of the GERD in principle, but we have questions to raise with regard to the implementation of the project....*Medrek* party explains its fear over the plan of the dam as it might be designed for political manipulations since it was planned with almost zero budgets. Besides, the party added its suspicion on the dam as it could be planned to bypass other timely and more serious projects that deemed to rid of the current problems of the people. (Translated from Amharic, *Addis Zemen*, April 20, 2011, Vol.70<sup>th</sup> year, No.222, p.2).

Moreover, informant 1 has suggested one additional historically rooted psycho-political challenge and in so doing he labeled the GERD as a panacea for the existing problem as follows:

Since Egypt and Sudan have utilized the Nile waters for centuries solely; now they are not convinced enough or willing to accept the idea that better benefit can be gained through cooperation. So that one aim of the GERD project is to encourage them to come to the real cooperation. And the other aim of this project is to ensure that if we work together such a big project jointly or when constructing such a huge project they also have the chance to get and share benefits out of it.

**Financial Challenge:** Next to the political challenge, financial challenge was the second major problem as per the selected print media outlets. Of which *Addis Zemen* predominantly paid a major focus to this problem, 19.33 percent, followed by *Al Ahram Weekly*, 8.33 percent. In

contrast, *Sudan Vision* newspaper said nothing towards this issue. With reference to the economic challenges of the dam, a writer for the *Al Ahram Weekly*, for example, wrote:

On the economic side, the Millennium Dam is going to be an expensive undertaking that far exceeds the domestic capabilities of Ethiopia. If the Aswan High Dam was a national challenge for Egypt in 1956, the Millennium Dam is many times more challenging for Ethiopia today. Ethiopia will need foreign assistance in financing and implementing it. The project is said to cost more than \$4.8 billion at the official exchange rate, but it is likely to cost twice as much. This amount far exceeds the annual revenue of the country. (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 19-25 May 2011, Issue No.1048).

On the other hand, informant 1 rejects the claims that stated Ethiopia has faced tough financial challenges to build the dam and instead he asserts: “For the whole period of Growth and Transformation Plan, the government has allocated 180 billion birr to the energy generation alone; of which the predominant budget was apportioned for the Renaissance Dam. So, the government has no deficiency to finance this dam.”

#### **4.2.7. Major Opportunities described in the story**

Parallel to the major challenges described in the outlets of the selected print media, I also attempted to look at the major opportunities that were reported by the same newspapers. Accordingly, as the result of the research indicated, the national consensus, electricity generation and bi(multi)lateral relations improvements were found to be major opportunities. The opportunity flood and sedimentation control was used to some extent as per the outlets of the sampled media. In contrast, however, job opportunity, irrigation use and environmental friendly including the category ‘other’ were mentioned to a lesser degree.

**National Consensus:** Out of the several categories of major opportunities, national consensus was able to be the leading one, which obtained an outstripped coverage of 40.54 percent on average. *Addis Zemen* out of its total stories has paid 50.42 percent in line with the national

consensus. On the contrary, both *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers rejected it absolutely. In fact, this is not uncommon as far as the existing trends are concerned where the selected newspapers content of coverage were more or less inclined toward their respective countries national interests and governments policy orientations.

*Addis Zemen* has supplied lots of stories that stressed to corroborate the GERD as a stunning stone in bringing all Ethiopian citizens' in support of it and thus the dam has been cited frequently as historic project in the Ethiopian scene. Furthermore, in spite of the "gloomy" political differences between citizens', particularly between the current regime in power and diaspora, the dam is labeled by the newspaper as a decisive opportunity that can serve as a catalyst to bridge the national consensus among different Ethiopian citizens wherever they live. Among other things, the newspaper has forwarded the following examples as a sign of national consensus with regard to the Renaissance Dam: popular demonstrations throughout the country in support of the government's decision to construct the dam on the Nile tributary; financial contribution of citizens', associations and various institutions (for example religious, business) either in the form of gifts or through buying investment bonds or both for the accomplishment of the dam; citizens' moral support and their commitment to give a labor service for the accomplishment of the dam; all (legal) opposition political parties have accepted in principle and supported the construction of the dam even if few of them raised some criticisms along with; and signs of increasing artistic works that deemed in encouraging national feelings in relation to the Renaissance Dam. More importantly, the newspaper in one of its editorial section noted:

Starting from day one that the government officially announced the commencement of the project of the GERD, the whole Ethiopian people have been contributing their own stake for the success of construction of the dam....This dam has mobilized our people from all corners of the country in unity and it has been a source of great historical occurrence in enabling us to create a national consensus. (Translated from Amharic, *Addis Zemen*, May 19, 2011, Vol. 70<sup>th</sup> year, No.251, p.3).

Despite these claims, however, few private presses have reported some criticisms and grievances of employees over the alleged pressures of the government in ‘enforcing’ especially those government workers to pay their monthly salary for the dam though they are living in a state of subsistence livelihood. For instance, a couple of sayings run as: “In the old times it had been said that *Abbay* (Blue Nile) traveled holding a stem, but now it begins to travel holding our salary; in the old times it had been said that *Abbay* (Blue Nile) washed our soil, but now it starts to wash our pocket” said anonymous government employees. These complaints suggested, generally speaking, when we say that the dam has enabled to strengthen and/or to create national consensus among citizens’, it does not necessarily mean that all 80 million Ethiopians have supported it. Of course this is one nature/aspect of politics.

**Electricity Generation:** Electricity generation has been placed as second major opportunity represented by 26.35 percent on average. All the selected newspapers reported the electricity generation as a second dominant opportunity in their respective stories. Of which *Addis Zemen* has provided larger proportion, 28.57 percent; whereas, *Al Ahrām Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* have featured it with almost equal amount of coverage, 16.67 percent and 17.65 percent respectively. Concerning the aim of the dam, as it is intended to generate electricity, a reporter for *Al Ahrām Weekly* noted that, “In March 30, 2011 Ethiopia announced the construction of the Renaissance Dam, planned to be the continent's largest hydroelectric plant” (*Al Ahrām Weekly*, 22-28 September 2011, Issue No.1065). While this fact is widely known, the potential electricity generation of the GERD is deemed to be utilized for domestic use and for foreign export of electricity. In a similar assessment of the dam, a writer for *Sudan Vision* noted, “The dam will generate 5250MW by 2015. The expected and planned power generation surplus in Ethiopia in

2015 is...2500MW planned to be exported to neighbouring countries” (*Sudan Vision*, September 20, 2011).

Similar to the print media’s content, all the three informants acknowledged the expected mammoth electricity generation of the dam and its positive snowball effect not only to the Ethiopian economy, but also to neighboring countries in one way or the other. In this regard, informant 2 states, “the GERD is a development project which will help Ethiopia in its plans to export electricity, cheap renewable energy sources to raise Ethiopian income.” Informant 1 on his part noted that “the Renaissance Dam is projected to cover its total cost within less than five years so that it is very profitable project.” In addition to that informant 3 also commented about the comparative advantage and suitability of the Ethiopian climate and topography to build huge dams in comparison to the downstream states; and further he elaborated the mutual benefit of the GERD project:

This dam will generate a lot of electricity that will cover the needs of the country and it would be also enough for export and when they export it they will gain hard currency and they will get more support to their economy. So, we look at it from this angle; but also it may be the most suitable place to build this dam because the water is getting from the high mountains down; so it will generate more electricity in that place in particular; I mean if the same dam is built in another area it will not generate the same amount of electricity. So, this is also beneficial to other countries because they will benefit from the electricity they are going to buy from it.

**Bi(multi)lateral Relations Improvements:** The third common and widely mentioned type of opportunity was found to be the bi(multi)lateral relations improvements in between Nile basin states and it accounted for 18.92 percent on average. The research finding revealed that *Al Ahram Weekly* gave primarily more coverage to bi(multi)lateral relations improvements, 75 percent. Similarly, *Sudan Vision* also paid nearly larger amount which accounted for 70.59

percent. In contrast, *Addis Zemen* has contributed minimal proportion, 5.88 percent to the bi(multi)lateral relations improvements.

In the aftermath of the collapse of the Hosni Mubarak's regime, Egypt has come up with new foreign policy direction and thus the interim government of Egypt together with Egyptian popular delegation and partisan delegations are playing their own endeavors to remedy the mistakes committed by the ousted regime as per the *Al Ahram Weekly* outlets. For instance, *Al Ahram Weekly* once has published,

The partisan delegation, which visited Sudan, Southern Sudan and Ethiopia this week, aspired to improve Egypt's relation with Africa especially with the Nile Basin states. It planned to build on the efforts of the popular diplomacy delegation that visited Ethiopia last week and Uganda last month.... In another encouraging move, Prime Minister Essam Sharaf is scheduled to visit Ethiopia next week. The visit is supposed to mark Egypt's return as a key player in Africa and opens a new chapter in ties with the continent. (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 12-18 May 2011, Issue No.1047).

The newspaper further reported about the major success of ex-Prime Minister Essam Sharaf's visit to Ethiopia as follows: "...the most important achievement of Sharaf's visit ['to Ethiopia'] was the formation of a committee of Egyptian, Sudanese and Ethiopian experts to study the effects of the proposed Millennium Dam in Ethiopia on the flow of Nile water to Sudan and Egypt" (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 19-25 May 2011, Issue No.1048). Besides, following the Ethiopian premier similar visit to Egypt on September 2011, *Al Ahram Weekly's* Doaa El-Bey wrote, "Egypt's Prime Minister Essam Sharaf and his Ethiopian counterpart Meles Zenawi highlighted the positive impact of their talks this week on relations between Cairo and Addis Ababa, using win-win phrases and depicting the River Nile as a bridge rather than a barrier to warm ties" (*Al Ahram Weekly*, 22-28 September 2011, Issue No.1065).

Along the same line, with reference to the joint tripartite technical committee, *Sudan Vision* newspaper quoted Sudanese Spokesperson of Foreign Ministry Khalid Musa as he said that “Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia agreed to form a technical committee to study the possibility of building the Millennium Dam in Ethiopia” (*Sudan Vision*, May 18, 2011). What we see from the above passages is that the major parties of the Eastern Nile Basin riparian countries have experienced positive signs of relations, goodwill between them and their tripartite agreement to establish a joint technical committee that intended to study the impacts of the GERD project to the downstream states can be considered as a starting point to improve their relations better.

Last but not least, the finding of this study also showed that there was the agenda setting function of the media. This is because two out of the three informants (i.e., informants 2 and 3) have made it clear that they heard the announcement of the GERD project from the newspapers’ for the first time; though they were not able to remember exactly from which newspapers they heard the news first. Whereas, informant 1 on his part admitted that he had information about the plan of the project/dam before it was made public on March 30, 2011.

## Chapter Five

### Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter of the study presents the conclusion of the key findings of the thesis and thereafter forwards some recommendations that would be helpful for further studies on similar issues.

#### 5.1. Conclusion

This study set out to investigate how the national and international print media cover Ethiopia's decision to construct the GERD project on the Nile River. The study, thus, on the basis of purposive sampling has selected three representative newspapers which were drawn from the Eastern Nile basin member countries, namely, Ethiopia (*Addis Zemen*), Egypt (*Al Ahram Weekly*) and the Sudan (*Sudan Vision*). Besides, three informants were also interviewed, one each from the aforementioned countries. For this reason, it can be said that this research has applied quantitative content analysis approach as a pivotal research method, while adding a qualitative method of in-depth interview.

The time frame for the analysis of the selected media outlets ranges from the day the GERD project officially launched on March 30, 2011 to September 25, 2011, when a week before, i.e., September 17-18, 2011, the Ethiopian premier officially visited Egypt, following the Egyptian ex-interim Prime Minister Essam Sharaf and Egyptian public delegates made similar visit to Ethiopia, to discuss about the two countries relations in general and the GERD project in particular. To this end, a total of 148 (119 from *Addis Zemen*, 12 from *Al Ahram Weekly* and 17 from *Sudan Vision*) stories dealing with the GERD project were identified out of 253 editions. These stories were further examined in relation to the seven analytical categories of the study

that include: theme of story, type of story, type of source the story used, tone of story, type of frame the story used, major challenges and opportunities described in the story.

The finding of the study revealed that *Addis Zemen* has provided an exceedingly considerable amount of coverage to the GERD project than *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers. But, according to the informants, this is not an uncommon result as the dam is being built in Ethiopia and also since it was able to be a foremost agenda on the Ethiopian scene; while both Egypt and Sudan were entangled with their own more challenging issues, other than the dam, such as the unfinished Egyptian Revolution of 2011/12 and Sudanese internal instabilities (for example, secession of South Sudan, Darfur conflict, South Kordofan and Blue Nile states tension with the central government) thwarted their media from giving that much attention to the GERD. This was also evident from the editorial section of the sampled media. *Addis Zemen* was the only newspaper that has given more focus to the GERD project in its editorial section, while the remaining two newspapers paid no attention to it.

As far as the theme of story was concerned, development and diplomacy were found as frequently reported themes. The predominantly employed theme of stories was labeled as 'development', which was solely contributed by the *Addis Zemen* newspaper, which put it as its central theme. On the other hand, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers were diplomacy-oriented because they catered diplomacy as their overwhelming theme of the GERD related stories. *Addis Zemen*, too, covered the theme of diplomacy but to a lesser degree. Therefore, unlike the theme of development which received a significant coverage by *Addis Zemen* alone, diplomatic theme was shared by all the selected media even if some degrees of discrepancies were visible between them.

All across the three newspapers government officials were used as major sources of information, simultaneously. Accordingly, it seems evident that the target media were heavily dependent on government officials for their sources of stories. This signifies that these media's stories were more or less inclined toward news narratives other than opinion and commentary.

Regarding the tone of the stories, an overriding coverage of *Addis Zemen* was positive in tone towards the GERD project. In other words, the newspaper has favored the dam (positively) in its almost all stories. Besides, *Sudan Vision* also covered the dam positively to some extent. On the other hand, both *Sudan Vision* and *Al Ahram Weekly* newspapers reported the majority of their stories in a neutral tone towards the dam. In other words, they systematically refrained from mentioning any impact of the dam on downstream countries. It seems that the media were aware of the mutual benefits of the dam but they chose silence due to historical and nationalistic point of view. Moreover, one would wonder if or whether the Egyptian and Sudanese media discourse towards the dam would have been different if the two countries were not experiencing domestic political crises as they were at the moment. It is also crucial to note that *Al Ahram Weekly* was the only newspaper that supplied its fraction of stories (negatively) against the dam. As far as the tone of the media outlets is concerned, the media generally covered the dam positively or neutrally. Therefore, this finding suggests that the tone of the sampled media towards the dam seems similar with the policies and stands of their respective government on the issue.

The selected newspapers have framed the dam through multiple types of frames, but their respective dominant frames were different. *Addis Zemen's* dominant frame was that of economic consequences frame. This suggests that the newspaper has mainly framed the GERD in terms of its actual and/or potential economic impacts on citizens', community and the country in particular as well as riparian countries in general. Diagnostic frame was the second widely

employed frame. In light of this, *Addis Zemen* noted recurrent drought, poverty, acute demand of electricity, the necessity of alternative/clean energy source, and assuring sustainable development as the essential causes or reasons why Ethiopia decided to build the dam.

For *Al Ahram Weekly*, prognostic frame was frequently used as a major frame. It seems that the newspaper's attention revolved at explaining possible solution or remedy frame that could avert the probable problems that might be associated with the dam and to use from it in a cooperative way. Both conflict and mutual benefit frames were employed equally as second major frames by the newspaper. On the other hand, *Sudan Vision's* dominant frame was labeled as mutual benefit frame, which means the paper framed the GERD as a potential mutual benefit for Eastern Nile basin states in general and Ethiopia in particular. Then, the newspaper utilized prognostic frame as its second common frame.

In relation to the major challenges, the findings of the study showed that political challenge (both internal and external) was overwhelmingly mentioned as a major problem in all the selected print media outlets. As could be seen from their respective attention to the political challenge, Ethiopia is likely to be confronted with significant political problems due to its decision to build the magnanimous renaissance dam on the Nile River Basin. The second major problem associated with the dam was labeled as financial challenge. Overall, the findings of the study suggest that there are enormous political challenges that Ethiopia has been struggling with and it can be said that the country faces modest financial problems to finance the dam. Unlike political and financial challenges, however, social and environmental challenges received trivial coverage on average. This may mean that even if the GERD is assumed as the biggest dam in the African continent and world's seventh biggest dam with an estimated 6,000MW generating capacity, the

outlets of the selected media was paid minimal coverage toward social and environmental side effects of the dam.

Concerning the major opportunities that were mentioned in the print media outlets, national consensus was found to be the predominantly highlighted opportunity in the examined stories of *Addis Zemen* newspaper. The newspaper has supplied lots of stories that stressed to corroborate the GERD as a stunning stone in bringing all Ethiopian citizens' in support of it and thus the dam has frequently been cited as historic project in the Ethiopian scene and as a catalyst to bridge the national consensus among different Ethiopian citizens wherever they live. On the other hand, the opportunity of bi(multi)lateral relations improvements has commonly been employed as key opportunity both by *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers. "New foreign policy direction" towards the handling of the Nile water utilization following the 2011 Egyptian Revolution by the Egyptian side together with Ethiopia's "preemptive" and/or self-financing magnanimous dam project on the Nile River, were taken as root activities in order to improve their relations better in a new spirit.

Fortunately, all the selected media reported electricity generation as a second major opportunity in their respective outlets. Therefore, they all recognized that the GERD is potentially significant for electricity generation, which is intended for domestic use as well as neighboring states through electric power export. Generally, the national consensus, electricity generation and bi(multi)lateral relations improvements were found to be major opportunities. The opportunity flood and sedimentation control was used to some extent.

Taking the overall findings of the study into account, the study concludes that the press coverage on the GERD project by the selected newspapers tended to be in favor of the papers' respective

country's national interests and government policy orientations over the handling of the supranational issue (i.e., the dam). Thus, they lacked balance and impartiality in their reportings.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

It would be important if oriented researchers will be able to conduct a study on the public opinion of all the three countries (Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan) regarding the GERD project since they have at least a four-year time to do so and/or any other similar project(s) anywhere across the riparian countries. This may help us to know how the people of these countries view such projects and look at whether or not their perception toward such projects are influenced by the media outlets. The result of such multidirectional researches could be helpful for concerned bodies to take remedial measures right in time.

Considering the vital role that the media can play in bringing all the Nile Basin riparian countries together and to use their shared water resources equitably and reasonably, first they have to have enough information about all Nile riparian countries and people's concerns over the issue. So as to fulfill this objective, states themselves or any other interested organization should initiate some sort of a forum that journalists and media professionals of the riparian states can take part in and get a better understanding of all co-basin states' expert views. This may help them to report knowledge-based and balanced stories about the regional issues. Otherwise, the media can redirect or instigate the people to a wrong direction by conveying nationalistic, one-sided and incomplete information, which could potentially exacerbate the situation.

## Bibliography

- Abdel-Gawad, S. (2008). Actualizing the Right to Water: An Egyptian Perspective for an Action Plan. In A. Biswas, E. Rached and C. Tortajada (Eds.), *Water as a Human Right for the Middle East and North Africa* (pp.133 - 146). London and New York: Routledge.
- Abdissa, Z. (2010). “U.S. Press Representation of the Southern Sudanese Civil War, 1983-2005” (Unpublished PhD Dissertation). University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, Mexico.
- Addis Tribune, (30 January, 1998), “Egypt is Diverting the Nile through the Tushkan and Peace Canal Projects”, an Interview with Ethiopia's ex-Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin.
- Aljazeera English Online (07 June, 2011). “*Struggle Over the Nile: Masters No More*”, Documentary. Retrieved from <http://english.aljazeera.net/programmes/struggleoverthenile/2011/06/2011667594146703.html>; accessed on September 20, 2011.
- Aljazeera English Online (22 June, 2011). “*Struggle Over the Nile: Tension and Suspicion*”, Documentary. Retrieved from <http://english.aljazeera.net/programmes/struggleoverthenile/2011/06/20116695818330430.html>; accessed on September 20, 2011
- Alexander, A., Owers, J. and Carveth, R. (Eds.) (1998). *Media Economics: Theory and Practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Assefa, A. and van Keulen, H. (2007). Soil Nutrient Dynamics in Integrated Crop-Livestock Systems in the Northern Ethiopian Highlands. In R. Ruben, J. Pender and A. Kuyvenhoven (Eds.), *Sustainable Poverty Reduction in Less-Favored Areas* (pp.135-158). UK and USA: CAB International.

Arsel, M. and Spoor, M. (Eds.) (2010). *Water, Environmental Security and Sustainable Rural development: Conflict and Cooperation in Central Eurasia*. London: Routledge.

Arsel, M. and Spoor, M. (2010). Follow the Water. In M. Arsel and M. Spoor (Eds.), *Water, Environmental Security and Sustainable Rural development: Conflict and Cooperation in Central Eurasia* (pp.3-17). London: Routledge.

Badr, M. (2010). The Role and Experiences of Egypt in Managing Transboundary Water Conflicts. In T. Debay (Ed.), *Climate Change and Transboundary Water Resource Conflicts in Africa* (pp.55-60). Workshop Report (29-30 September, 2009), Mombasa, Kenya.

Bennett, W.L. (2004). Gatekeeping and Press-Government Relations: A Multigated Model of News Construction. In L.L.Kaid (Ed.), *Handbook of Political Communication Research* (pp.283-313). Mahwah, New Jersey and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Berger, A.A. (2000). *Media and Communication Research Methods: An Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, London: Sage Publication.

Berger, A.A. (2005). *Media Analysis Techniques* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London: Sage Publication.

Blankenship, A. (2011). “*While the Nation Looked on: A Framing Analysis of Print News Media Coverage of Terri Schiavos’ Final Days*” (Unpublished Master’s Thesis). Liberty University School of Communication Studies.

Boyce, C. and Neale, P. (May 2006). “*Conducting In-Depth Interviews: A Guide for Designing and Conducting In-Depth Interviews for Evaluative Input*” (Pathfinder International Tool Series, Monitoring and Evaluation-2). Watertown, USA: Pathfinder International.  
Retrieved from <[http:// www.esf-agentschap.be/.../m\\_e\\_tool\\_series\\_indepth\\_interviews.pdf](http://www.esf-agentschap.be/.../m_e_tool_series_indepth_interviews.pdf)>; accessed on October 16, 2011

Bryman, A. (2004). *Social Research Methods* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Capital (10 April, 2011). “*Great Millennium Dam Moves Ethiopia: Public Responds from Hailing a ‘Milestone’ to Suspecting ‘Political Diversionary Tactics’*”, Year 13, No.643, P.6

Capital (17 April, 2011). “*Millennium Dam Project Draws Huge Public Support*”, Year 13, No.644, P.20

Capital (31 July, 2011). “*FAN Hydropower Project Starts Generating Power*”, Year 13, No.659, P.3

Capital (8 January, 2012). “*Sudan to be on Ethiopia’s Grid*”, Year 14, No.682, P.26

- Chaigneau, P. (2002). "The Geopolitics of African Conflicts", *African Geopolitics, Quarterly Magazine*, 155-161.
- Cohn, T.H. (2008). *Global Political Economy: Theory and Practice* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Pearson Longman.
- Collins, R.O. (2002). *The Nile*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Connor, J., Schwabe, K. and King, D. (2008). Irrigation to Meet Growing Food Demand with Climate Change, Salinity and Water Trade. In Y.V. Esteve, C.A. Brebbia, and P. Rico (Eds.), *International Conference on Sustainable Irrigation Management, Technologies and Policies II* (pp.43 - 52). Southampton, Boston: WIT Press.
- Crow, B. (2000). Understanding Famine and Hunger. In T. Allen and A. Thomas (Eds.), *Poverty and Development into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (pp.51-74). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Daniel, K. (n.d). "Egypt and the Hydro-Politics of the Blue Nile River." Retrieved from <http://chora.virtualave.net/kendie-nile.htm>; accessed on January 31, 2012
- Davie, W.R. and Maher, T.M. (2006). *Maxwell McCombs: Agenda-Setting Explorer*. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 50(2): 358-364.
- Davis, A. (2003). *Whither Mass Media and Power? Evidence for a Critical Elite Theory Alternative*. *Media, Culture and Society*, 25, 669-690.
- Deacon, A., Pickering, M., Golding, P. and Murdock, G. (1999). *Researching Communications: A Guide to Methods in Media and Cultural Analysis*. London and New York: Arnold.

- Debay, T. (2010). Review of Early Experiences, Current Challenges and Opportunities among the Nile Basin Riparian States. In T. Debay (Ed.), *Climate Change and Transboundary Water Resource Conflicts in Africa* (pp.7-13). Workshop Report (29-30 September, 2009), Mombasa, Kenya.
- De Loe, R.C. and Bjornlund, H. (2008). Irrigation and Water Security: The Role of Economic Instruments and Governance. In Y.V. Esteve, C.A. Brebbia, and P. Rico (Eds.), *International Conference on Sustainable Irrigation Management, Technologies and Policies II* (pp.35 - 42). Southampton, Boston: WIT Press.
- Dennis, E., Ismach, A. and Gillmor, D. (Eds.) (1978). *Enduring Issues in Mass Communication*. New York: West Publishing Company.
- Dereje, Z. (2010). “Nile Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement Negotiations and the Adoption of a ‘Water Security’ Paradigm: Flight into Obscurity or a Logical Cul-de-Sac?”, *The European Journal of International Law*, 21(2): 421-440.
- De Vreese, C.H. (2005). *News Framing: Theory and Typology*. *Information Design Journal/ Document Design*, 13(1): 51-62.
- Dominick, J.R. (1999). *The Dynamics of Mass Communication* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Downey, J. (2006). *The Media Industries: Do Ownership, Size and Internationalisation Matter?* In D. Hesmondhalgh(Ed.), *Media Production* (pp.7-47). UK: Open University Press.

- Dumont, H.J. (Ed.) (2009). *The Nile: Origin, Environments, Limnology and Human Use*.  
Dordrecht: Springer.
- EEPCO (2007). *Excerpts from the Power System Master Plan [Power Point Slides]*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- EEPCo Newsletter (Nov-Dec.2011). “*Ethio-Djibouti Interconnection Power Line Project Inaugurated*”, Vol.1, Issue No.12, p.1
- Eldridge, J. (1993). News, Truth and Power. In Glasgow University Media Group (Ed.), *Getting the Message: News, Truth and Power*. London: Routledge.
- Eleni, Z.G. (2007). Making Markets Work for the Poor: The Challenge in the Age of Globalization. In R. Ruben, J. Pender and A. Kuyvenhoven (Eds.), *Sustainable Poverty Reduction in Less-Favored Areas* (pp.273-300). UK and USA: CAB International.
- Elhance, A. P. (1999). *Hydropolitics in the Third World: Conflict and Cooperation in International River Basins*. Washington; D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Elliott, J.A. (2006). *An Introduction to Sustainable Development* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London and New York: Routledge.
- Entman, R. (1993). *Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm*. Journal of Communication, 43(4), 51-58.
- Erlich, H. (2002). *The Cross and the River: Ethiopia, Egypt, and the Nile*. London and Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

- Fiske, J. (1990). *Introduction to Communication Studies* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London and New York: Routledge.
- Fog, A. (2004). *The Supposed and the Real Role of Mass Media in Modern Democracy*. Working Paper, 2004-05-20. Retrieved from <<http://www.agner.org/cultsel/mediacrisis.pdf>>; accessed on December 23, 2011
- Fortune (2 October, 2011). “*Ethiopia and Djibouti to Sign Electricity Export Agreement this Week*”, Vol.12, No.596, p.6
- Gebremedhin, S. (2006). *Ethiopia: Country Report Context*. London: BBC World Service Trust. Retrieved from <[http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust/pdf/AMDI/ethiopia/amdi\\_ethiopia\\_full\\_report.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust/pdf/AMDI/ethiopia/amdi_ethiopia_full_report.pdf)>; accessed on November 9, 2011
- Gilboa, E. (2002). *Global Communication and Foreign Policy*. Journal of Communication, 731-748.
- Gitlin, T. (1980). *The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Goldemberg, J. and Lucon, O. (2010). *Energy, Environment and Development* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London: Earthscan.
- Graber, D.A. (2002). *Mass Media and American Politics* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Graber, D.A. (2004). Methodological Developments in Political Communication Research. In L.L.Kaid (Ed.), *Handbook of Political Communication Research* (pp.45-67). Mahwah, New Jersey and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Graham, P. (n.d). “*Political Economy of Communication: A Critique.*” Retrieved from <[http://www.philgraham.net/MME%20Chapter\\_Final.pdf](http://www.philgraham.net/MME%20Chapter_Final.pdf)>; accessed on November 12, 2011

Gray, D. (2004). *Doing Research in the Real World*. London: Sage Publications.

Greenfield, T. (Ed.) (2002). *Research Methods for Postgraduates* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. ). London: Arnold.

Griffin, E. (2006). *A First Look at Communication Theory* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

Gunter, B. (2000). *Media Research Methods: Measuring Audiences, Reactions and Impact*. London: Sage Publications.

Gunter, B. (2002). The Quantitative Research Process. In K.B. Jensen (Ed.), *A Handbook of Media and Communication Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies* (pp.209-234).London and New York: Routledge.

Hansen, A., Cottle, S., Negrine, R. and Newbold, C. (1998). *Mass Communication Research Methods*. New York: New York University Press.

Herman, E. and Chomsky, N. (1988). *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Herring, E. and Robinson, P. (2003). *Too Polemical or Too Critical? Chomsky on the Study of the News Media and US Foreign Policy*. *Review of International Studies*, 29, 553-568.

DOI: 10.1017/S0260210503005539

Hesmondhalgh, D. (2006). *Media Organisations and Media Texts: Production, Autonomy and Power*. In D. Hesmondhalgh(Ed.), *Media Production* (pp.49 - 89). UK: Open University Press.

Hiscock, K.M., Rivett, M.O. and Davison, R.M. (2002). *Sustainable Groundwater Development* (Geological Society special publication No.193). In K.M. Hiscock, M.O. Rivett and R.M. Davison (Eds.), *Sustainable Groundwater Development* (pp.1-14). London: The Geological Society Publishing House.

Hughes, M. (2002). *Interviewing*. In T.Greenfield (Ed.), *Research Methods for Postgraduates* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) (pp. 209-217). London and New York: Arnold.

International Monetary Fund (October, 2010). *Regional Economic Outlook: Sub-Saharan Africa: Resilience and Risks* (world economic and financial surveys, 0258-7440). Washington, D.C.: Author.

Iyengar, S. (1991). *Is Anyone Responsible? How Television Frames Political Issues*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Johnson-Cartee, K.S. (2005). *News Narratives and News Framing: Constructing Political Reality*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Kalron, N. (2010). *A 'Transparent Gold' Rush?* *African Security Review*, 19(3), 110-113.

Kendall, D.E. (2005). *Framing Class: Media Representations of Wealth and Poverty in America*.

Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Kindiki, K. (2010). Water and Food Security in the Nile River Basin: legislative, policy and institutional arrangements for cooperation. In T. Debay (Ed.), *Climate Change and Transboundary Water Resource Conflicts in Africa* (pp.29-37). Workshop Report (29-30 September, 2009), Mombasa, Kenya.

Kinfe, A. (February, 1997). “*The Nile Issue: Psycho-political Hurdles to an Agreement and the way forward towards Rapprochement*”, Paper presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> Nile 2002 Conference, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

**ክንፈ አብርሃም (1999EC)፣ የአባይ ጉዳይ፣ ፍትሐዊ የውሃ ክፍፍል ጥያቄ? አዲስ አበባ፣ EIIPD ::**

Kiousis, S. (2005). *Compelling Arguments and Attitude Strength: Exploring the Impact of Second-Level Agenda Setting on Public Opinion of Presidential Campaign Images*. The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics, 10(2):3-27.

Kliot, N. (1994). *Water Resources and Conflict in the Middle East*. London: Routledge.

Kloos, H. and Worku, L. (Eds.) (2010). *Water Resources Management in Ethiopia: Implications for the Nile Basin*.USA: Cambria Press.

Kovach, B. and Rosenstiel, T. (2007). *The Elements of Journalism: What News People Should Know and the Public Should Expect*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Krause, M. (2009). *The Political Economy of Water and Sanitation*. New York and London: Routledge.

Kulindwa, K. and Lein, H. (2008). Water and Poverty: The Inextricable Link. In D. Hemson, K. Kulindwa, H. Lein and A. Mascarenhas (Eds.), *Poverty and Water: Exploration of the Reciprocal Relationship* (pp.1-12). London and New York: Zed Books.

Kumar, R. (1999). *Research Methodology: A Step-By-Step Guide for Beginners*. London: Sage Publications.

Laughey, D. (2007). *Key Themes in Media Theory*. Berkshire, England: McGraw-Hill.

Lin, Y. (2004). Fragmentation of the Structure of Political Communication Research: Diversification or Isolation? In L.L.Kaid (Ed.), *Handbook of Political Communication Research* (pp.69-107). Mahwah, New Jersey and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Lynn, P. (2002). Principles of Sampling. In T.Greenfield (Ed.), *Research Methods for Postgraduates* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) (pp. 185-194). London and New York: Arnold.

**ማዕረጉ በዛጠህ (1995EC)፣ የጋዜጠኝነት ሙያ፣ ንድፈ ሐሳብና አተገባበሩ፡፡ አዲስ አበባ፣ ሜጋ አሳታሚ ድርጅት፡፡**

Manson, S.A. (2004). “*From Conflict to Cooperation in the Nile Basin*”, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Center for Security Studies, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, Switzerland.

Mbaine, A. (Ed.) (2006). *Media in Situations of Conflict: Roles, Challenges and Responsibility*.

Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

McCarthy, K.E. (4 October, 2010). “*Pros and Cons of Hydropower*”, Retrieved from

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2010/rpt/2010-R-0401.htm>; accessed on August 4, 2011

McCombs, M. and Shaw, D. (1972). “*The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media*”, *Public*

*Opinion Quarterly*, 36, 176-187.

McCombs, M. and Shaw, D. (1978). The Agenda-Setting Function of the Press. In E. E. Dennis,

A. H. Ismach and D.M. Gillmor (Eds.), *Enduring Issues in Mass Communication* (pp.95-

103). New York: West Publishing Company.

McNair, B. (2003). *An Introduction to Political Communication* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London and New

York: Routledge.

McQuail, D. (2005). *McQuail’s Mass Communication Theory* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). London: Sage

Publications.

Melesse, A.M., Abteu, W., Setegn, S.G. and Dessalegn, T. (2011). Hydrological Variability and

Climate of the Upper Blue Nile River Basin. In A.M. Melesse (Ed.), *Nile River Basin:*

*Hydrology, Climate and Water Use* (pp.3-37). Dordrecht: Springer.

Merrill, J.C. and Fisher, H.A. (1980). *The World’s Great Dailies: Profiles of Fifty Newspapers*.

New York: Hastings House Publishers.

- Minelik, A. (2010). Challenges of Cooperation on the Nile River: An Ethiopian Perspective. In T. Debay (Ed.), *Climate Change and Transboundary Water Resource Conflicts in Africa* (pp.41-47). Workshop Report (29-30 September, 2009), Mombasa, Kenya.
- Ministry of Water Resources, Ethiopia, FDRE, (22 March, 2009).“*Transboundary Waters: Shared Waters Shared Opportunities*”, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Ministry of Water Resources, Ethiopia, FDRE, (2001). “*National Water Strategy of Ethiopia*”, Retrieved from <[http://www.uneca.org/groundwater/ethiopian\\_water\\_sector\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/groundwater/ethiopian_water_sector_strategy.pdf)>; accessed on November 10, 2011
- Mitchell, P. and Schoeffel, J. (Eds.) (2002). *Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky*. New York: The New Press.
- Mosco, V. (2008). “*Current Trends in the Political Economy of Communication*”, *Global Media Journal - - Canadian Edition*, 1(1), 45-63.
- Mukhongo, L.L. (2010). “*Can the Media in Africa Shape Africa’s Political Future?*”, *Journal of African Media Studies*, 2(3):339-352.
- Ndlela, N. (2009). “*African Media Research in the Era of Globalization*”, *Journal of African Media Studies*, 1(1):55-68.
- Nile Basin Initiative (Quarterly Newsletter, March 2011). “*Our Countries have Benefited from the Nile Cooperation*”, 8(1), 1-3. Retrieved from

<[http://www.nilebasin.org/.../Nile%20News\\_March%202011%20issue.pdf](http://www.nilebasin.org/.../Nile%20News_March%202011%20issue.pdf)>; accessed on November 10, 2011

Nile Basin Initiative (November 9, 2011). *Nile Basin Initiative*. Retrieved from <<http://www.nilebasin.org/newsite/>>; accessed on November 9, 2011.

Norton, N., Dawson, S., Ellwood, B. and Mead, L. (2008). Predicting Environmental Sustainability for Proposed Irrigation Schemes. In Y.V. Esteve, C.A. Brebbia, and P. Rico (Eds.), *International Conference on Sustainable Irrigation Management, Technologies and Policies II* (pp.233 - 243). Southampton, Boston: WIT Press.

Okurut, T.O. and Othero, D.M. (2010). Assessing Regulations of International Water Utilization and Inequalities of Water Distribution and Consumption in Africa. In T. Debay (Ed.), *Climate Change and Transboundary Water Resource Conflicts in Africa* (pp.21-26). Workshop Report (29-30 September, 2009), Mombasa, Kenya.

Otieno, H.O. and Awange, J. L. (2006). *Energy Resources in East Africa: Opportunities and Challenges*. Netherlands: Springer.

Ott, B. and Mack, R.L. (2010). *Critical Media Studies: An Introduction*. UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

Paletz, D.L. and Entnam, R.M. (1981). *Media Power Politics*. New York: Free Press.

Pavlik, J.V. and McIntosh, S. (2004). *Converging Media: An Introduction to Mass Communication*. Boston: Pearson Education.

Perret, S. (2006). Introduction: New Paradigms, Policies and Governance in the Water Sector. In S. Perret, S. Farolfi and H. Rashid (Eds.), *Water Governance for Sustainable Development: Approaches and Lessons from Developing and Transitional Countries* (pp. xxi-xxiv). London: Earthscan.

Perret, S., Farolfi, S. and H. Rashid, H.(Eds.) (2006). *Water Governance for Sustainable Development: Approaches and Lessons from Developing and Transitional Countries*. London: Earthscan.

Plaut, M. (2010). *The Nile Crisis Comes to the Boil*. African Security Review, 19(3), 114-118.

Reichert, T., Mueller, E.J. and Nitz, M. (2003). *Disengaged and Uninformed: 2000 Presidential Election Coverage in Consumer Magazines Popular with Young Adults*. Journalism and Mass Communication quarterly, 80(3), 513-527.

Reuters Online (23 November, 2010). “*Ethiopian PM Warns Egypt of Nile War*”, an Interview with Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. Retrieved from <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/11/23/us-ethiopia-egypt-meles-idUSTRE6AM5V820101123>>; accessed on January 31, 2012

Riaz, S. (2008). “*The Relationship between the Public and Print Media Agendas on National Issues in Pakistan: A Study of the Agenda setting Role of Print Media in Pakistan*” (Unpublished PhD Dissertation). Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Roa, J.R. (2007). Food Security through the Livelihoods Lens: An Integrated Approach. In R. Ruben, J. Pender and A. Kuyvenhoven (Eds.), *Sustainable Poverty Reduction in Less-Favored Areas* (pp.205-227). UK and USA: CAB International.

Rogers, E.M. (2004). Theoretical Diversity in Political Communication. In L.L.Kaid (Ed.), *Handbook of Political Communication Research* (pp.3-16). Mahwah, New Jersey and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Saleem, N. (n.d). “U.S. Media Framing of Foreign Countries Image: An Analytical Perspective”, *Canadian Journal of Media Studies*, 2(1), 130-162.

Scagliusi, C. (2010). “*Political Economy of Mass Media: Public Good, News and Voting Behavior*. Economics Department Discussion Papers Series ISSN 1473-3307, Paper number 10/02.” Retrieved from <<http://business-school.exeter.ac.uk/economics/papers/>>; accessed on December 11, 2011

Scheufele, D.A. (1999). “*Framing as a Theory of Media Effects*”, *Journal of Communication*, 49(1), 103-122.

Scrase, I. and Ockwell, D. (2009). Energy Issues: Framing and Policy Change. In I. Scrase and G. MacKerron (Eds.), *Energy for the Future: A New Agenda* (pp.35-53). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Scrase, I., Wang, T., MacKerron, G., McGowan, F. and Sorrell, S. (2009). Introduction: Climate Policy is Energy Policy. In I. Scrase and G. MacKerron (Eds.), *Energy for the Future: A New Agenda* (pp.3-19). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Semetko, H.A. and Valkenburg, P.M. (2000). “*Framing European Politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News*”, *Journal of Communication*, 50, 93-109.
- Sheafter, T. (2007). “*How to Evaluate It: The Role of Story-Evaluative Tone in Agenda Setting and Priming*”, *Journal of Communication*, 57, 21-39.
- Shoemaker, P.J. and McCombs, M.E. (1989). Survey Research. In G.H. Stempel III and B.H. Westley (Eds.), *Research Methods in Mass Communication* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) (pp.150-172). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Stacks, D.W. and Salwen, M.B. (Eds.) (2009). *An Integrated Approach to Communication Theory and Research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York and London: Routledge.
- Stempel III, G. H. (1989). Content Analysis. In G.H. Stempel III and B.H. Westley (Eds.), *Research Methods in Mass Communication* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) (pp.124-136). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Stone, G., Singletary, M. and Richmond, V.P. (1999). *Clarifying Communication Theories: A Hands-On Approach*. Iowa: Iowa State University Press.
- Straubhaar, J. and LaRose, R. (2006). *Media Now: Understanding Media, Culture, and Technology* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Australia: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Street, J. (2001). *Mass Media, Politics and Democracy*. New York: Palgrave.

Sudan Tribune (10 May, 2010). “*Sudan Formally Rejects the Nile Basin Pact.*” Retrieved from <http://www.sudantribune.com/Sudan-formally-rejects-the-Nile,35041>>; accessed on August 18, 2011

Swain, A. (2004). *Managing Water Conflict: Asia, Africa and the Middle East*. London: Routledge.

Turow, J. (2009). *Media Today: An Introduction to Mass Communication*. London and New York: Routledge.

The Reporter (14 April, 2012). “*East Cement Starts Export: Company Blames Power Interruption for Falling Production*”, Vol.XVI, No.814, P.3

Thomas, A. (2000). Poverty and the ‘End of Development.’ In T. Allen and A. Thomas (Eds.), *Poverty and Development into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (pp.3-22). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Trochim, W. M. (2006). ‘*The Research Methods Knowledge Base*’ (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Retrieved from <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/>>; accessed on September 21, 2011

Van Dijk, T.A. (n.d). “*The Mass Media Today: Discourses of Domination or Diversity?*” Retrieved from < <http://www.daneprairie.com>>; accessed on September 21, 2011

Van Koppen, B., Giordano, M. and Butterworth, J. (Eds.) (2007). *Community – Based Water Law and Water Resource Management Reform in Developing Countries*.Uk and USA: CAB International.

- Van Wyk, J.A. (2010). An Overview of the Responses of the AU, Regional Economic Communities and African Governments to Climate Change and Transboundary Water Conflicts in Africa. In T. Debay (Ed.), *Climate Change and Transboundary Water Resource Conflicts in Africa* (pp.101-107). Workshop Report (29-30 September, 2009), Mombasa, Kenya.
- Vivian, J. (2003). *The Media of Mass Communication* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Vliegenthart, R. and van Zoonen, L. (2011). *Power to the Frame: Bringing Sociology back to Frame Analysis*. *European Journal of Communication*, 26(2), 101-115. DOI: 10.1177/0267323111404838
- Wasserman, H. (Ed.) (2011). *Popular Media, Democracy and Development in Africa*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Wasko, J. (2005). “*Studying the Political Economy of Media and Information*”, *Comunicacao e Sociedade* 7, 25-48.
- Watson, J. (2003). *Media Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Process* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Watson, J. and Hill, A. (2006). *Dictionary of Media and Communication Studies* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). London: Hodder Arnold.
- Weaver, D.H. (2007). *Thoughts on Agenda Setting, Framing, and Priming*. *Journal of Communication*, 57, 142-147. DOI: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00333.x

Weaver, D., McCombs, M. and Shaw, D.L. (2004). Agenda-Setting Research: Issues, Attribute, and Influences. In L.L. Kaid (Ed.), *Handbook of Political Communication Research* (pp.257-282). Mahwah, New Jersey and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Westley, B.H and Stempel III, G.H(1989). The Systematic Study of Mass Communications. In G.H. Stempel III and B.H.Westley (Eds.), *Research Methods in Mass Communication* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) (pp.1-9). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Whittington, D., Wu, X. and Sadoff, C. (2005). *Water Resources Management in the Nile Basin: The Economic Value of Cooperation*. *Water policy*, 7, 227-252.

Wimmer, R.D. and Dominick, J.R. (1997). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Wimmer, R.D. and Dominick, J.R. (2006). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Woods, N. (2000). The Political Economy of Globalization. In N. Woods (Ed.), *The Political Economy of Globalization* (pp.1-19). New York: St Martin's Press.

World Commission on Dams (November, 2000). *Dams and Development: A New framework for Decision-Making*. London and Sterling: Earthscan Publications.

Wright, C. (1986). *Mass Communication: A Sociological perspective* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Random house.

Yacob, A. (December, 1997). “*Predicaments of Cooperation in the Nile Basin*”, Paper Submitted for the XIIIth International Conference of Ethiopian studies, Kyoto, Japan.

Yacob, A. (2007). “*Ethiopia and the Nile: Dilemmas of National and Regional Hydropolitics*”, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Center for Security Studies, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, Switzerland.

Yohannes, O. (2008). *Water Resources and Inter-Riparian Relations in the Nile Basin: The Search for an Integrative Discourse*. New York: State University of New York Press.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A**

#### Coding Sheet

Name of Coder: \_\_\_\_\_

Code for coder one= 01

Code for coder two= 02

Name of Newspaper: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Publication (date/month/year): \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Story: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Analytical Categories:**

##### **1. Theme of Story:**

- Sovereign rights \_\_\_\_\_
- Historical rights \_\_\_\_\_
- Development \_\_\_\_\_
- Diplomacy \_\_\_\_\_
- Legal regime \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

##### **2. Type of story:-**

- News \_\_\_\_\_

- Editorial\_\_\_\_\_
- Feature\_\_\_\_\_
- Commentary\_\_\_\_\_
- Interview\_\_\_\_\_
- Reader's letter\_\_\_\_\_
- Other\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Type of Source the story used:-**

- Government officials\_\_\_\_\_
- Public relation practitioners (PRP)\_\_\_\_\_
- News Agencies\_\_\_\_\_
- Other media\_\_\_\_\_
- Individuals/Experts\_\_\_\_\_
- Institutions\_\_\_\_\_
- Journalist/Writer\_\_\_\_\_
- Anonymous\_\_\_\_\_
- Other\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Tone of story:-**

- Positive\_\_\_\_\_
- Negative\_\_\_\_\_
- Mixed\_\_\_\_\_
- Neutral\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Type of frame the story used:-**

- Diagnostic frame\_\_\_\_\_
- Prognostic frame\_\_\_\_\_
- Conflict frame\_\_\_\_\_
- Mutual benefit frame\_\_\_\_\_
- Economic consequences frame\_\_\_\_\_
- Human interest frame\_\_\_\_\_
- Attribution of responsibility frame\_\_\_\_\_
- Other\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Major Challenges described in the story:-**

- Political\_\_\_\_\_
- Social\_\_\_\_\_

- Financial\_\_\_\_\_
- Environmental\_\_\_\_\_
- Nothing\_\_\_\_\_
- Other\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Major Opportunities described in the story:-**

- Electricity generation\_\_\_\_\_
- Irrigation use\_\_\_\_\_
- Flood and sedimentation control\_\_\_\_\_
- National consensus\_\_\_\_\_
- Bi(multi)lateral relations improvement\_\_\_\_\_
- Job opportunity\_\_\_\_\_
- Environmental friendly\_\_\_\_\_
- Other\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B**

Coding Guide

Operational definitions for the sub-categories of the main analytical categories

1. Operational definitions for the sub-categories under the theme of story:

- Sovereign rights- if the main theme of the story revolves around ‘propagation’ of the sovereign right of Ethiopia to build the GERD and the same is true for other upstream states.
- Historical rights- if the main theme of the story revolves around ‘propagation’ of the historical rights of Egypt and Sudan over the Nile waters utilization, as described in the 1929 and 1959 agreements and thus labels the GERD as a wrong move against these rights.
- Development-focuses on the economic value and mutual benefits of the dam.
- Diplomacy- emphasizes on the necessity of cordial diplomatic endeavors among riparian states in order to benefit the Nile waters reasonably and equally.
- Legal regime- stresses on the necessity of comprehensive legal regime to utilize the Nile waters equally. An all inclusive legal regime may also avoid mutual suspicion and threat between co-basin states.
- Other- any theme other than the above mentioned theme(s) was included under this category. In addition, unclear or ambiguous theme(s) of the story was/were also grouped to this category.

## 2. Operational definitions for the sub-categories under the type of story:

- News- for the purpose of this study, the term ‘news’ refers to the topical happenings and events or previously unknown/unpublicized facts about the GERD project.

- Editorial- this refers to the stand or opinion of the newspaper over the dam. In other words, it reflects the stand of the newspaper's editorial writers and/or its owners concerning an issue/GERD.
- Feature- this stands for the detailed analysis of the GERD project accompanied with tangible facts on the issue of concern.
- Commentary- this refers to the news analysis along with the writers' personal opinions regarding the issue/GERD and intended to influence readers' perception toward their own end.
- Interview–this refers to the interview genre with different persons concerning the issue.
- Reader's letter- this represents any comment, reaction/counter-reaction, or outlook of readers concerning the dam.
- Other- any type of story other than the above mentioned ones was coded under this category. Stories with unclear genres were also grouped in this category.

### 3. Operational definitions for the sub-categories under the type of source:

- Government officials- this stands for those who hold public office in different levels of government administration including federal government officials, regional/state government officials of the Nile basin member countries in particular and possibly other countries, too. Even though Egypt is now ruling by an interim (quasi) government, for the sake of this study, Egyptian public delegates who were playing a decisive diplomatic role on behalf of their country following the downfall of the Mubarak regime were grouped in this category. Leaders of legally registered opposition political parties were also coded in this category.

- Public relation practitioners (PRP) – PRP are the mouthpieces of various institutions including governmental, private/NGOs, regional and international organizations (e.g. NBI, UNDP, and UNESCO).
- News agencies – News agencies are corporations and/or agencies (e.g. Associated Press (AP), Reuters, United Press International (UPI), Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), and Sudan News Agency (SUNA) that produce, collect and sell stories to different news providers such as newspapers, radio and TV.
- Other media- for the purpose of this study the term ‘other media’ refers to any media other than *Addis Zemen*, *Al Ahram Weekly* and *Sudan Vision* newspapers themselves. For instance, it could be like BBC, Xinhua, Fortune, Daily Nation, Sudan Tribune, Ethiopian Television, etc.
- Individuals/Experts- for the purpose of this study the term ‘individual/expert’ is one who represents neither government nor private institutions (e.g. Experts on geopolitics, hydrologists (who studies earth’s water), or any individual/layman who was quoted as direct source of a story).
- Institutions – this category stands for those governmental, private and religious institutions. Political party organizations also coded in this category.
- Journalist/writer- this category was used when the writer of the story himself/herself has served as the only source of that story.
- Anonymous- this category was used if the personality (source) of the story was unspecified clearly. Specifically, as Ericson et al. (1991, as cited in Hansen et al., 1998) put it, anonymous/unspecified sources are possibly “referenced through non-

specific terms such as ‘analyst’, ‘reports’, ‘observers’, ‘intelligence sources’, ‘authorities’, ‘experts’....”

- Other- any source of story other than the above mentioned ones was coded under this category.

**N.B.** If a story uses more than one type of sources, all sources were taken and grouped under their respective categories.

#### 4. Operational definitions for the sub-categories under the tone of story:

- Positive- a story was coded as ‘positive’ in tone if the story predominantly appreciated, favored, and reinforced the dam as righteous as well as one that mainly focuses on giving examples of its positive impacts.
- Negative- a story was coded as ‘negative’ in tone if the story predominantly criticized, blamed, and questioned the GERD for its current and potential problems.
- Mixed- a story was coded as ‘mixed’ in tone if the story has mentioned both the dam’s positive and negative impacts fairly, accompanied with concrete facts unlike the above (i.e., ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ tones) imbalance or extreme positions.
- Neutral- a story was coded as ‘neutral’ in tone if the story has described nothing either about the dam’s positive or negative impacts.

#### 5. Operational definitions for the sub-categories under the type of frame:

- Diagnostic frame – when the story notes on reinforcing causes or reasons (such as poverty, acute demand of electricity, or agenda diversion mechanism or to exploit the instability of downstream states) for the Ethiopia’s decision to build the dam; if a story

focuses on the tangible and/or potential problems due to the GERD construction and attributing blame for those creators of the problems.

- Prognostic frame - emphasizes on a possible solution or remedy frame and thus specifying what needs to be done to solve the problems that are associated with the dam.
- Conflict frame - emphasizes on conflict laden coverage of the dam between riparian countries, individuals and groups within a state and other possible actors. In short, if the story caters disagreements or opposing statements of concerned parties over the issue.
- Mutual benefit frame – when the story suggests about the potential mutual benefit of the dam for Nile basin riparian countries in general and Eastern Nile basin states in particular.
- Economic consequences frame – focuses on the actual and/or potential economic impacts of the dam on an individual, community, country or riparian countries.
- Human interest frame - when a story brings a detailed human face and their testimonies about the dam or an emotional/empathic angle to the presentation of the dam.
- Attribution of responsibility frame – suggests the responsible body, institution, country, or a collective of countries to solve the problem.
- Other - any type of frame other than the above mentioned ones was coded under this category.

**N.B.** If a story uses more than one type of frames, the dominant frame would be chosen. The term ‘dominant frame’ refers to the frame type that was repeatedly mentioned in a given story.

6. Operational definitions for the sub-categories under the major challenges described in the story:

- Political – due to the claim of ‘historical rights’ by downstream countries over the Nile waters uninterrupted flow, Ethiopia’s engagement to build the dam on the Nile River tributary, may reinforce them to pose a security threat over the latter. Besides, others may label the dam as agenda diversion tactic of the Ethiopian government from the popular Arab world revolutions during 2011/12.
- Social - the GERD construction may create ‘unintended’ social problems such as local residents displacement, disturbance of downstream (both within Ethiopia and Sudan and Egypt) peoples due to the probable water flow reduction, inequitable distribution of costs and benefits and the problems associated with the loss of historical and cultural values of the society, where the dam is constructing on. Besides, problems such as poverty and lack/shortage of electricity and/or power interruption were also coded in this category.
- Financial – the country awaits resettlement and compensation costs for those displaced people as a result of the dam (if there are displaced people at all), debt burden, since the cost of the dam (i.e., about 4.8 billion U.S. dollar) is assumed to be covered by the Ethiopian government including citizens’ who would bear huge financial costs, and this in turn could jeopardized the citizens’ livelihood.
- Environmental – environmental problems associated with the GERD may include destruction of ecosystem, alter water flow, blocking fish migration, flooding, build up soil salinity or sediment accumulation, water logging. Moreover, the dam could be vulnerable to natural disasters like drought due to climatic change and risks of dam burst; it may also trigger earthquakes, etc.
- Nothing – if a story says nothing about any challenge/problem that Ethiopia would face following its decision to construct the GERD.

- Other - if a story has stated whatever challenge other than the above mentioned major challenges was put under this category.

**N.B.** If a story describes more than one kind of major challenge/problem, the dominant problem would be chosen. The term ‘dominant challenge’ refers to the problem that was repeatedly mentioned in a given story

7. Operational definitions for the sub-categories under the major opportunities described in the story:

- Electricity generation – the construction of the GERD could generate domestic power supply and hydropower income via power export.
- Irrigation use- the GERD other than electricity catering can be utilized for irrigation purposes and irrigation in turn may improve or ensure food security of the country in question (Ethiopia) through increased food production. Consequently, problems such as water scarcity, poverty and recurrent droughts can easily be handled.
- Flood and sedimentation control – the GERD possibly can generate positive downstream externalities for Sudan and Egypt in terms of flood and sedimentation control, decreasing water loss due to evaporation, inter alia.
- National consensus – Ethiopia’s decision to construct the GERD on the Nile River is considered by a number of people as a turning point in its entire history. For this reason, the dam is believed as a catalyst to bridge the national consensus among different Ethiopian citizens. Thus, citizens’ financial contribution, moral support and their commitment and request to give a labor service for the accomplishment of the dam can be taken as examples of national consensus.

- Bi(multi)lateral relations improvement – this stands for both bilateral and multilateral diplomatic relations initiatives and improvements among the Nile Basin countries in general and Eastern Nile Basin countries in particular. This category gives special emphasis to Egypt’s new foreign policy trend in the aftermath of the 25 January Revolution.
- Job opportunity – The construction of the huge dam (i.e., GERD) needs a paramount workforce either skilled or unskilled. In this regard, it creates conducive environment of job opportunity along with skill and experience sharing for a number of Ethiopian citizens and outsiders.
- Environmental friendly – since hydropower almost produces no air pollution or no carbon dioxide to the natural environment, it is considered as a clean or environmentally friendly source of energy
- Other – if a story has stated whatever opportunity other than the above mentioned major opportunities, it was put under this category.

**N.B.** If a story describes more than one kind of major opportunity/benefit, the dominant benefit would be chosen. The term ‘dominant opportunity’ refers to the benefit that was repeatedly mentioned in a given story

## **Appendix C**

### Interview Guide

1. Of the different theories of international water courses management (such as absolute territorial sovereignty theory, absolute territorial integrity theory, the principle of ‘equitable utilization’ and the doctrine of common basin-wide management) which one is

the most important principle that is relevant to the Nile basin states, in your view and why?

2. Do you believe that there is a legal regime over the utilization of the Nile River waters so far? If yes, please specify it, and to what extent is it adhered to by all riparian states, in your view? If no, what is the reason for the apparent absence of such a legal regime?
3. As you may guess, there are two opposing ideas in relation to the construction of large dams in general: arguments in favor or against depending on their own rationales. What is your stand on this?
4. Do you remember through which medium of communication you have heard the announcement of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) project for the first time?
5. How do you see the decision of Ethiopia to construct the GERD on the Nile river tributary?
6. In your view, what could be the underlying reasons of Ethiopia's decision to build such a huge dam at this particular time?
7. Do you think that Ethiopia's unilateral decision to construct the dam on an international river tributary is acceptable? If yes, on what rationale? If no, why not?
8. What possible challenges/problems and opportunities/benefits do you expect from the dam with respect to your country's national interest? Gauging these problems and benefits, what is your stand on the construction of the dam?

9. The GERD is expected to hold about 63 billion cubic meters of water and the dam would take, to fill such amount of water, some 18 months (a year and six months). Within this prescribed time would not been reduce/endanger the amount of water that is normally flowing to the downstream states? If so, what possible solutions are prepared to minimize (if possible to avoid) such a ‘temporal’ negative impacts on downstream states?
10. Some ‘observers’ claim that the current deadlock between upstream and downstream countries over the signing of the Comprehensive Framework Agreement (CFA) due to the “water security” issue of Article 14 of the CFA may reinforce individual states to undertake unilateral projects such as the GERD; and such a move in turn can pose potential conflict between riparian countries. What is your reaction on this claim?
11. How would you judge the role of media, newspapers in particular, in covering basin-wide developmental issues like the GERD project in a balanced manner?
12. Some ‘commentators’ argue that national media, particularly newspapers’, reports of the Eastern Nile basin countries are often in line with their respective governments’ stand, and distorts the fact on the scene. Do you agree with such an assessment?

**I Thank You for Your Time and Cooperation**

**Appendix D**

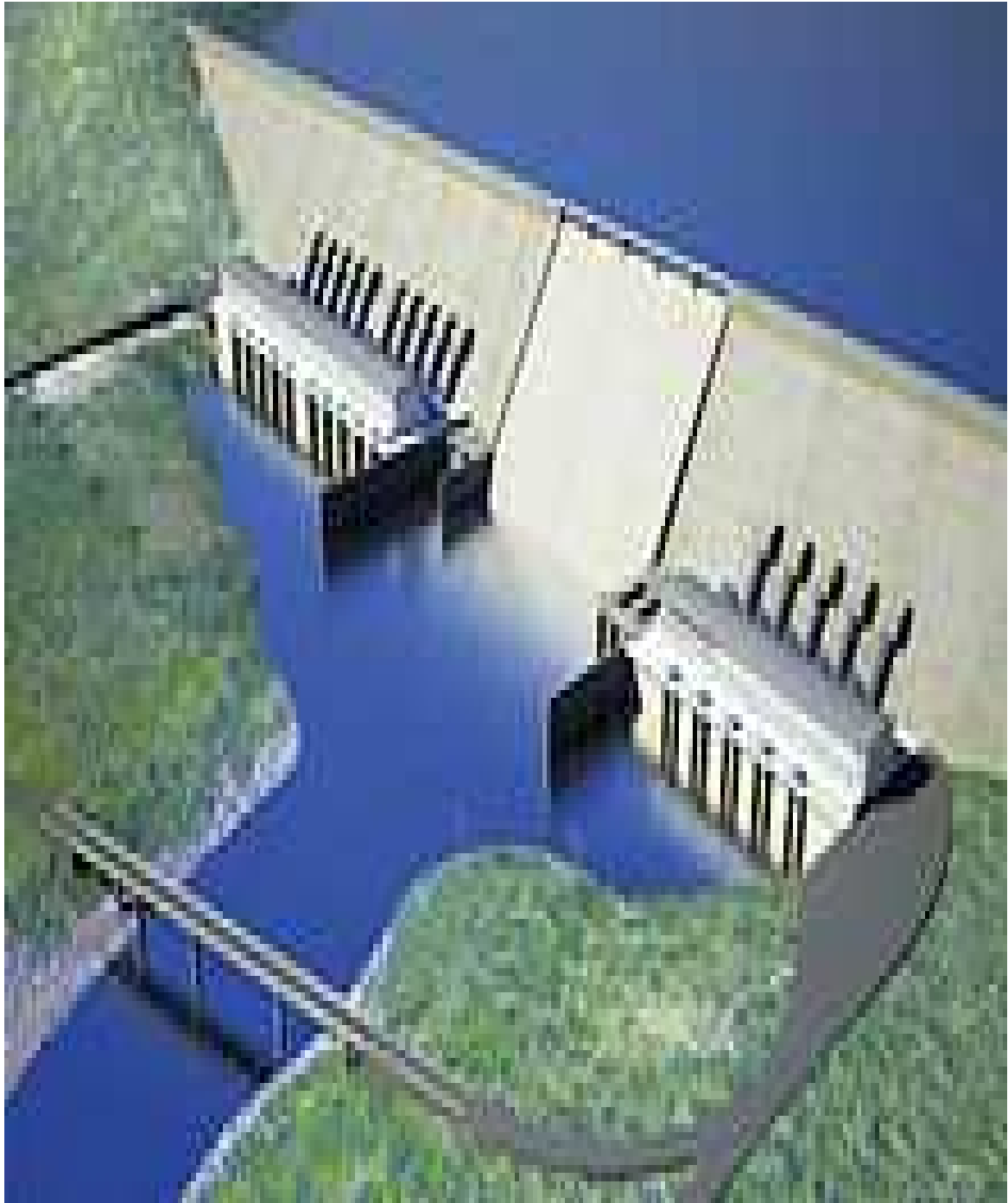
List of Informants:

| No.            | Name of Informant       | Position   | Nationality |
|----------------|-------------------------|--|-------------|
| Informant<br>1 | Fekahmed Negash<br>Nuru | Director, Basins Administration<br>Directorate of the FDRE Ministry<br>of Water and Energy | Ethiopian   |

|                |                             |  |          |
|----------------|-----------------------------|--|----------|
| Informant<br>2 | Abdelmoneim M.<br>El-Shazly | Third Secretary of the Embassy of<br>The Arab Republic of Egypt to<br>Ethiopia   | Egyptian |
| Informant<br>3 | Mohamed<br>Mirghani         | Director of Bilateral and Regional<br>Affairs Department of The<br>Embassy of the Republic of the<br>Sudan to Ethiopia | Sudanese |

## Appendix E

### Map of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam



## Appendix F

Logo of Addis Zemen, Al Ahram Weekly and Sudan Vision Newspapers:

(A) Logo of *Addis Zemen*



(B) Logo of *Al Ahram Weekly*



(C) Logo of *Sudan Vision*



I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and all sources of materials used for this study have been appropriately acknowledged.

Name: Muez Hailu

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Submission: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Submission: Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia