

**USE OF INTERNET AS A MEDIUM OF
DISSEMINATING INFORMATION BY
ETHIOPIAN NEWSPAPERS**

By

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A thesis submitted to the School of Journalism and
Communication, Addis Ababa University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
Journalism

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Addis Ababa
July 2006

Acknowledgement

I thank God for making me accomplish this and everything else in my life. I would like to pass on my earnest gratitude and appreciation to my advisors Terje Skjerdal and Dr. Yacob Arsano. They have been with me from the beginning, giving me their constructive comments and corrections. Every meeting I had with them was edifying and I am grateful about that.

My thanks also is to the Graduate School of Journalism and Communication, Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation, Ministry of Information and all the media organizations and individuals who were cooperative whenever I knock their door for information. Most of all I appreciate German Academic Exchange Service for covering the research cost of the reserach.

I also want to thank my family and friends who have been giving me strength. I specially want to thank my mother Wro Belet Tadesse and my father Ato Chala Fulas, as I would not have done this without their unremitting support.

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Acronyms

ENA	Ethiopian News Agency
ERTA	Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency
ETC	Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation
MoI	Ministry of Information
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
WWW	World Wide Web
ICT	Information Communication Technology

Abstract

The number of newspapers that publish online is increasing, contributing to the development of Internet as a news medium. The present research studied the state of Ethiopian online newspapers by examining the extent that the online newspapers utilize Internet technology and online presentation codes. It is assumed that a state of an online newspaper is significantly related to its usage of the Internet technology.

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were applied. Content analysis and semi-structured interviews were the instruments used to collect data from 11 online newspapers, which were the focus of the study. The data were analyzed using online newspaper genres, particularly the cyberggenre model of Ihlström and Åkesson (2004). The model helps to identify the state of an online newspaper providing content, form and functionality of different online newspapers genres. Ethiopian online newspapers were found to fall in *replicated* and *variant genres* (Ihlström and Åkesson 2004). Their utilization of the Internet's potential was found to be meager.

In the Ethiopian context where there is hardly any previous research in the area. Studying online newspapers gives new knowledge and serves as a foundation for further research. In addition, the study can be taken as constructive feedback for the online publications.

Chapter One

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is underpinning the information age. Regardless of geographical distance, ICT, particularly the Internet, has made it possible for the world to become a virtual village. ICT is not confined to a certain economic sector or a single country. It has a unique feature of providing opportunities for every sector. It can be used by individuals, businesses and government. Moreover, it has enormous contribution for the economic advancement and dissemination of information and knowledge (Dhameja and Medury, ca. 2003: 3; Accenture, Markle Foundation and UNDP, 2001).

When it comes to the media industry, Internet has profound significance. Some scholars compare the transformation that Internet brings about to the media with the change that the introduction of printing press once brought to the industry. According to Pavlik, “the new media are transforming the relationships that exist among news organizations, journalists and their many publics including audiences, advertisers and sources” (2001: xv). As Campbell says, “journalism has always been a profession whose basic capacities and functions are rooted in technology”. He adds that the basic principles of the profession are closely related to the use of technology to journalistic practices (2004: 245).

The Internet speed up newsgathering of news and dissemination of information. Online technologies such as e-mail, discussion groups and alerts assist journalists in accomplishing various tasks in the newsrooms. Summarizing the potential of the Internet for the media, Pavlik contends that the Internet not only embraces all the capabilities of older media such as text, images, graphics, animation, audio, video and real-time delivery, but “offers a broad spectrum of new capabilities, including interactivity, on demand access, user control, and customization” (Pavlik, 2001: 3).

Looking at the prospects of the Internet for the industry, many international newspapers have integrated the technology in their newsroom practices and started publishing online. “The rising potential of the world wide web to serve as a medium has attracted many if not

most of the news organization to the net” (Sundar, 2000: 480).

Statistics from the Newspaper Association of America (NAA) shows that there are around 5,000 daily newspapers with online editions worldwide (NAA, 2004). The proliferation of online newspapers are urging some to consider online journalism as a new genre, while others argue against saying it is just another way of disseminating news (Engebretsen, 2006a; Campbell, 2004: 205).

As in other countries, Ethiopia has some conventional newspapers with an online edition. There are also other news organizations, which publish, online, such as *Ethiopian News Agency* (ENA), *Walta Information Center*, *Ethiopian Radio and TV Agency*, and *the Radio Fana*.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation (ETC) introduced Internet service to Ethiopia in 1996/1997. However, the Internet service has been characterized by slow speed and high service charges, which has undermined the benefit of Internet connections (Mulat and Tadesse, 2002).

ETC has made significant reductions in the Internet service charges and introduced broadband width in 2005 (ETC, 2005). The price amendment and the introduction of the broadband service are believed to have pulled organizations as well as individuals towards the Internet. The number of Internet subscribers, which was 1,042 in 1996/97, exceeds 25,000 in 2006 (ETC: Internet Service Division, 2006).

Use of Internet was limited to big governmental organizations, NGOs and some private businesses for long (Mulat and Tadesse, 2002). Currently, it is observed that Internet cafés flourish, particularly in the capital city Addis Ababa and in other big towns. The mushrooming Internet cafés can be considered as an indicator of the rise in the Internet users in Ethiopia.

A study on the organizational adoption of the Internet is negligible. One master’s thesis

that dealt with the ICT usage in Ethiopian media newsroom shows that that Ethiopian media are utilizing the Internet and other information technologies to the minimum (Nigist, 2005). As indicated earlier, a number of newspapers run online publications. However, there exists no full list of Ethiopian online newspapers.

To the researcher's knowledge, no study has been conducted to analyze whether these online newspapers utilize the potential of the Internet. The newspapers thus lack feedback that could improve the quality of online journalism. In light of this, the present research attempts to assess certain Ethiopian online newspapers by means of four research questions.

1.3. Research Questions

The research has raised the following research questions:

- RQ1. How many Ethiopian online newspapers are there?
- RQ2. What is the state of Ethiopian online newspapers?
- RQ3. Have online newspapers brought a change to their print version and/or their newsroom practices?
- RQ4. What are the factors that determine the quality of Ethiopian online newspapers?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research is to study how Ethiopian online newspapers with a print equivalent utilize the technical and qualitative potential of the Internet. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- (1) provide a list of online newspapers published from Ethiopia and by Ethiopian living outside Ethiopia;
- (2) study to what extent Ethiopian online newspapers' apply the potential of the Internet for online publication;
- (3) identify determinants of the quality of online newspapers in Ethiopia;
- (4) examine if running an online newspaper has brought any change to the print version of the newspaper and its newsroom practices

1.5. Significance of the Study

Following the proliferation of online newspapers since the mid-1990s, scholars have been engaged in researching online publications in different parts of the world. To mention some, Richard Van Der Wurff (2005) studied the impact of Internet on newspapers in Europe; Engebretsen (2006a), Ihlström and Henfirsson (2005), and Ihlström and Åkesson (2004) analyzed the state of online newspapers in Scandinavia; Massey and Levy (1999) examined interactivity of web newspapers in Asia. Their contributions are significant and will be referred to in this study.

However, research conducted in the area of online newspapers in Ethiopia is non-existent. This research therefore provides new knowledge about online journalism. Hopefully, it can also serve as a starting-point for upcoming research in the area of new media in Ethiopia as well as in other developing countries.

Also important, newspapers that have online editions can use the research as feedback on their online publications and use it as a basis for improvement.

1.6. Organization of the paper

This research is presented in five chapters. The first chapter presents introductory information about the study, which includes short contextual background, problem statement, objective, and significance of the study.

Detailed background information about the study area – that is Ethiopian newspapers and Internet in Ethiopia – is given in the second chapter. The chapter also presents conceptual framework for the study and findings of related research.

The third chapter discusses the methodology used in the study. Results of the study are presented in chapter four together with the analysis and discuss the findings in a detailed manner. The final chapter summarizes and concludes the present study with brief recommendations.

1.7. Operational Definition of Terms

- ☞ **Ethiopian online newspaper:** Online or web newspaper that is published in Ethiopia or by Ethiopian expatriates. Terms like 'news sites' and 'online publications' are also used to refer to online newspapers. It may or may not have an equivalent (parent) physical media (such as a printed newspaper).
- ☞ **Web-only newspaper:** Online newspaper that does not have an equivalent physical media.
- ☞ **Parent media house:** Newspaper, TV, radio or other media organization that run an online newspaper

Chapter Two

2. Literature Review

2.1. A brief history of the Ethiopian press

The Ethiopian press was under government's scrutiny and censorship until the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power in 1991 and proclaimed press freedom in 1992. The year has also marked the emergence of private newspapers in Ethiopia (Mekuria, 2005; Kibruyisfa, 2002). However, government media are still under the control of the government and individuals need to have a license from the Ministry of Information to own a press. Between 1992 and 2005, the Ministry of Information issued licenses for 639 newspapers, but 401 of them are not operational. At the end of June 2005 there were 85 newspapers on the street. (Mekuria, 2005)

However, this number declined to 51 by the end of February 2006, after months of political instability in Ethiopia, following the national elections in May 2005. 37 of the newspapers are private, 6 are government-owned, 3 are categorized as 'religious', and 5 are published by political organizations. Most of the newspapers entertain political, economic and social issues (MoI, 2006). Many private newspapers that dealt with political and social issues were shut down following the imprisonment of journalists in relation to consecutive unrests after the May 2005 election. This might explain some of the decline in the number of private newspapers. The poor economy and readership culture, low literacy rate and limited advertising revenue seem to affect the newspaper market (Mekuria, 2005).

Ethiopian newspapers have only recently deployed the Internet as a channel for dissemination of news. But before looking into this issue; we will give a brief review of this new media technology and discuss how it develops its own genre within existing news genres.

2.2. Developments of the Internet and the World Wide Web

A fairly recent communication technology, the Internet is changing the pace and feature of communication worldwide. Through millions of networked computers, the Internet facilitates communication lines between people who reside in vastly different parts of the world. Leiner et al's description of the Internet illustrates these capabilities: "The Internet is at once a world-wide broadcasting capability, a mechanism for information dissemination, and a medium for collaboration and interaction between individuals and their computers without regard for geographic location" (Leiner et al, 2003: Internet).

As expressed by Morris and Ogan, the Internet is a multifaceted mass medium that comprises objects, which allow interpersonal communication (1996: 39). This makes the Internet different from other communication technologies and is one of the main reasons behind its accelerated diffusion all over the world.

Looking at the current diffusion of the Internet and how people, especially the urban educated society, are being dependent on the technology, it is hard think that the Internet is still a young technology. It only became accessible for the general audience in the 1990s, but was developed in the 1970s through American military research. In the 1960s, the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) of the United States was working on networking computers in different locations, which lay the foundation for the Internet technology. According to Reddick and King (2001), the technology, which at that time was limited to academicians and the government, started to grow when non-profit organizations and businesses joined the effort. Still, the Internet was not handy for laypeople until the European Particle Physics Laboratory (CERN) came up with the World Wide Web (WWW) technology in early 1990s. Then various application technologies followed, providing a user interface that made Internet easy to use (Reddick and King, 2001: 22-23; Whittaker, 2004: 20).

WWW was a major breakthrough in the history of the Internet as it allowed users to easily browse information. According to Whittaker, WWW has changed the way people

“communicate, work, consume, find information and entertainment and connect to other people around the world” (2004: 18).

2.2.1. Global diffusion and the challenge of the information gap

No other technology has diffused in the speed that the Internet is now spreading all over the world (Reddick and King, 2001: 162). According to World Internet usage statistics, more than one billion people currently use the Internet. Between the year 2000 and 2005 the usage has increased by 183.4%, and the increase has been particularly big in Africa (423.9%). Still, among Internet users only 2.3% are Africans. (Internet Usage Stats, 2006)

Some scholars suggest that the Internet contributes to globalization by eliminating distances and compressing the time factor. Robertson confirms when he says the world is compressed due to technological innovations that allow people around the world to communicate with each other (Robertson, 1992; Giddens, 1990; and Harvey, 1990, quoted in Rantanen, 2005). Sukkar (2002: 2) agrees: “The digital revolution is one of, if not the main, factor making today’s globalization.”

However unifying tool the Internet is, it is also creating a huge gap among people, and between countries, which may not be physically far from each other. As Sukkar puts it, the Internet creates a digital divide, which is the difference “between those who have access to knowledge and those who either lack it or don’t use it effectively”. The gap between the haves and the have-nots are widening to a serious extent. While those with knowledge and access are benefiting more and more, the unconnected ones are being subjected to “diminished knowledge, low GDP, increased unemployment and deepening marginalization” (Sukkar, 2002: 1-2).

The reason behind the digital divide is mostly economic, i.e. related to per-capita income, poverty, cost of access, illiteracy, low level of skills, and even poor mastering of the English language (Guillén and Suárez, 2005; Nabil Sukkar, 2002) – although it should not be forgotten that most websites today are in non-English languages (Internet World Stats, 2006). Guillén and Suárez (2005) have added regulatory, political and sociological variables to the list.

According to Sonaïke, in the African continent, lack of appropriate telecommunication infrastructure aggravates the gap problem. He argues that the Internet is widening the inequalities in African countries “by providing a minority urban-based elite information that strengthens its links with rich, western countries but [the Internet] is of dubious benefit to the struggle to reduce poverty and disease on the African continent” (Sonaïke, 2004: 42).

Mudhai (2004: 328) seems to disagree to some extent. He argues that the Internet is as powerful as the other news media because not all African societies have equal access to other media as well.

2.2.2. Internet in Ethiopia

Ethiopia started to use basic Internet technology, i.e. storage and e-mail services, in 1993 with support of the UN Economic Commission for Africa. Daily connection was made via direct dial calls to GreenNet’s Internet gateway in London. The service was mainly used by international organizations and NGOs; however, some academics, individuals and private companies also took advantage, as there was no other service available. Up to 1200 people were using the service at its peak (ITU, 2002: 18).

Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation (ETC) availed full Internet access to the general public in 1997. On the first month there were over 600 users and the number grew to 1,750 in a year. Internet services were limited to dial-up access and local website hosting and development (ITU, 2002: 18).

A baseline study on the ICT penetration and usage in Ethiopia, which was conducted in 2002, shows that organizations mainly used Internet technology for e-mail at the time when Internet was first introduced in Ethiopia. The study reveals that only 19% of the education, 2% of the health and 22% of public administration sectors had web sites. The content of those web sites was also limited to providing basic contact and usually outdated information about the institutions. The Internet service was characterized by slow speed and high service charges, which undermined the benefit of Internet connections (Mulat and

Tadesse, 2002).

ETC, which is still the only Internet service provider in Ethiopia, has made significant reduction in the Internet service and installation price. Broadband service was introduced in 2005, although the speed is still slow due to the overall lack of bandwidth in the satellite connection. The dial-up installation price was reduced by 72% from 332.00 Birr to 156.00 Birr. There was also a 68% (122.00 Birr) reduction in the service charge. The service charge of the leased line Internet service has also declined by 790.00 Birr (ETC, 2005).

Currently ETC is providing 56 kbs bandwidth capacity for dial-up service, and the leased line offers from 64kbs to 2mb capacity. The price amendment and the introduction of the broadband service are believed to have pulled organizations as well as individuals towards the Internet. At present ETC has 25,000 dial-up and 463 leased line Internet service subscribers (ETC: Internet Service Division, 2006).

Over 100,000 of the Ethiopian population use the Internet (Internet Usage Stats, 2006). ETC plans to expand the Internet service penetration within four years by expanding Internet network presence and making Internet service easily accessible (ETC: Internet Service Division, 2006).

2.3. The Internet and the newspaper industry

The media industry has been highly affected by the Internet. Pavlik in his book 'Journalism and new media' points out that the Internet is changing the nature of news content and the way journalists do their work. It is also transforming the structure of the newsroom and the news industry. In addition he asserts that the Internet is "bringing about a realignment of the relationships between and among news organizations, journalists, and their many publics including audiences, sources, competitors, advertisers, and governments" (Pavlik, 2001: xiv). As will be discussed in later chapters this may not be true in developing countries like Ethiopia where the media has not yet fully adopted the new medium.

The Internet with its applications such as the World Wide Web and electronic mail appeared as a new form of medium. This has brought its own advantages and

disadvantages to the media industry, particularly to the newspapers, which are the main focus of this research. Both opportunities and threats of the Internet to the newspapers will be discussed here.

2.3.1. WWW as an opportunity for the conventional newspaper

WWW represents the first truly converged mass medium, and provides journalists with many opportunities. There is no scarce space or time for delivering content online (Reddick and King, 2001: 180; Herman and McChesney, 1997: 123). The Internet is a cheap means of disseminating information. Anybody with a web browser can access any website and people can build and run a complete professional website for a minimum investment. Unlike traditional publishing, distributing the information via the web costs the same regardless of the volume of information availed on the website (Reddick and King, 2001: 164)

Online publications are characterized by several distinctive qualities including having multimedia content, interactivity, immediacy and linkages (Engebretsen, 2006b; Ward, 2003; Williams and Nicholas, 1999; Ihlström and Carina, 2004; Eriksen and Ihlström, 2000), and according to Pavlik these are elements that bring about better journalism (Pavlik, 2001: xi).

Internet holds the features of old media in addition to having the unique characteristic of its own that smoothens communication. One of such features is the archive function. Ward points out that online newspapers' archives are effective because they grow to be essential background resources and at the same time provide important context to the current stories (2003: 23). Engebretsen points out that archives are of little use if they are not accessible when needed, and it is important for the news outlet to present a user-friendly interface for the archives (2006b: 14-15).

The Internet has the potential to enable true involvement of audiences in the news-making process (Pavlik, 2001; Pape and Featherstone, 2005; Dennis and Merrill, 2002: 101). According to Pape and Featherstone, readers' participation is higher on the Internet

because audiences determine their way to the content and it is easier for them to respond directly to journalists on the net (2005: 169). Dennis and Merrill say this means that the Internet has a chance to bring better and more harmonious communication between news producers and consumers (2002: 101).

Online technologies such as e-mail, chat rooms, discussion forums and electronic bulletin boards facilitate interactivity of a news site. According to Moore (2002), the interactive potential of the Internet however has been utilized to a very limited extent. For a web publication to appropriately encourage e-mail interactivity, all editorial e-mail addresses must be available on the site showing that the editors are interested to communicate, and all readers' letters must be responded to promptly (Engebretsen, 2006b: 20-22). Ward (2003: 144) points out that sites might suffer rejection or lack of participants if they do not take into consideration the users' level of interactivity when applying interactive elements.

Ward underlines that multimedia can provide "multiple textures to journalism". Readers have the advantage of accessing audio and video online at any preferred time. The clips can include material from international media, which they may not get from their local media (2001: 21, 137).

Online news content is expected to have immediacy and be much more fluid, i.e. continually updated, than printed news (Ward, 2003: 21; Pavlik, 2001: 21). This, Pavlik argues, is a "better representation of events and processes in real life", and people want to get their news in real time and as fast as possible (2001: 21). The Internet's ability to quickly handle breaking news is surely one of its greatest advantages (Pape and Featherstone, 2005: 167). However very few online newspapers actually utilize this potential because it is a challenging activity and as Ward (2003: 27) points out, failing to update an online news site immediately is contradictory to the nature of the Internet medium.

According to Engebretsen, links add context and bring meaning and relevance into perspective (2006b: 15). However, as Ward (2003: 142) and Williams and Nicholas (1999) observe, there are those who discourage external links thinking that readers might leave the

site and not return. Engebretsen is concerned about the content of the linked sites, and urges editors and journalists to check external links to guarantee their relevance. If the publication is not careful about the links, readers may stop following the links and a major potential of WWW will be lost (2006b: 15).

The Internet lets the media customize or personalize news according to user or audience preferences. Although many do not take this feature as an advantage, it helps the media to offer audiences more contextualized, textured, and multidimensional stories (Pavlik, 2001: 22; Rudin and Ibbotson, 2002: 96). The general conclusion among researchers is that news outlets have not utilized this potential of the Internet.

Readers benefit most from using the new medium. They can get a wealth of international or local news regardless of their geographical location. “No popular medium can match the internet for global reach” (Ward, 2003: 135). The nature of the Internet is global; in principle, it can be accessed by anybody from any part of the world. According to Ward, it has got implication for both the news agenda and newsgathering potential of the media. When covering news world wide, the media will be immediately exposed if they do not get things balanced. The practice of placing world news on the front page also makes the media rethink their news agenda. Ward also claims that the web gives millions of small pictures instead of one big picture. He adds that the web has global reach and mass consumption, but at the same time should not be considered a mass product or having the potential for mass reception of a message like TV as each user can get customized news according to their preference.

Some editors claim that their online publication increases their newspaper’s readership, since readers use the Internet in a different manner than the printed newspaper. Readers scan the online publication for breaking news and buy the paper for in-depth analysis (Pape and Featherstone, 2005: 165). It has to be noted that there are also people who use Internet for in-depth analysis as it exposes them to loads of information. Audiences can get their news from different sources and from multiple perspectives, enriching the social and historical context of the story. They also have direct access to various government information, which in countries like Ethiopia, used to be in control of the traditional media.

Online newspapers are characterized by non-linear story-telling style. This is the kind of writing whereby a story is told in different parts and linked together using hypertexts. This form of writing gives the reader the option to choose what to read and enables him/her to access multimedia items attached to the story (Ward, 2003: 121; Pape and Featherstone, 2005: 174).

According to Ward, non-linear form of writing is not the only form of writing on the web (Ward, 2003: 124). Engebretsen agrees, observing that online texts are “still largely written in the manner of the paper based medium”, i.e. in the linear form of writing (2006b: 45). Ward argues this is because readers’ preferences force online journalists to keep the linear form of writing. Some readers approach the online medium preferring its immediacy to its non-linear form of writing. Regardless of its inconvenience there are also some who choose to read news scrolling on the screen and others who want to get the news on the web just like it appears in the traditional paper (2003: 125).

2.3.2. WWW as a threat to the conventional newspaper

At times, some of the benefits of Internet are also found to be a threat by the news industry. Although the customization capability is often talked about as an advantage to the individual reader, it can also expose readers to a limited range of information that can reinforce prejudice rather than create understanding and tolerance (Rudin and Ibbotson, 2002: 96).

Pavlik draws the attention to skeptics who are concerned that personalized or customized news will cause more audience fragmentation. However, he does not seem to consider it as a threat as such. He says personalization currently is a matter of customizing news to an individual’s lifestyle so that the reader does not miss important stories (2001: 22).

Sometimes Internet’s interactive ability is seen as a challenge as there is higher probability for the medium to be misused (Reddick and King, 2002; Dennis and Merrill 2002). Reddick and King emphasizes:

Just because someone is computer savvy enough to participate in a newsgroup or discussion list, does not mean he or she has any special expertise or knows anything factual about the issue. Many newsgroups and chat rooms are filled with rumors and mistakes particularly about current affairs. (2001: 104)

The Internet is a unique medium not only because of its huge amounts of information, but because it is a medium that “the cranky, scurrilous and irresponsible are allowed the same place in the system as the sane, measured and responsible” (Rudin and Ibbotson, 2002: 95). Reddick and King share this view. They point out that people do not have to be scientists or even conduct a research to post their “research” on the net (2001: 159).

Dennis and Merrill agree. They contend that although we have large volumes of information on the Internet, much of it is “almost illiterate and substantially insipid, contributing little to the enlightenment of the public” (Dennis and Merrill, 2002: 102). They add that the Internet will technologically improve, but it will remain an individualistic, personal and amateurish enterprise.

The option to link news articles on the Internet to other sites is a challenge, especially to journalists who think it only creates redundancy (Ward, 2003: 26). It frequently creates difficulties to maintain the difference between journalistic sites and sites that are meant for promotion (Reddick and King, 2001: 177).

As mentioned earlier, the Internet combines its own interactive characteristics with the attributes of the old media. In a converged media, it is challenging for journalists to learn how each medium can be properly utilized (Reddick and King, 2001: 178; Pape and Featherstone, 2005: 167; Ward, 2003: 27). The gate-keeping role may also be threatened by the interactivity of the Internet as it allows audience to become information providers (Ward, 2003: 25).

With online publications come also some delicate ethical dilemmas for the editorial room. Pavlik (2001) and Herman and McChesney (1997) discuss how the Internet could blur the line between advertising and editorial content. Many online news outlets allow advertising

banners at their front page. There are also occasions where commercial companies sponsor certain pages on the news outlet, which triggers ethical questions (Pavlik, 2001: 90). This is the result of the intense competition among Internet content providers in attracting advertisers, which in turn allows advertisers to play a large role in content development (Herman and McChesney, 1997: 128).

Although many publishers do not agree, some point to the Internet as the main reason for the decline of newspaper readership. Van Der Wurff argues that conventional newspapers are unable to attract new young readers who prefer online editions. It is also difficult for the newspaper to compete with foreign online news publishers and other media organizations that publish news for free and offer electronic market and job sites. At the same time Van Der Wurff upholds strong competition as an advantage, claiming that “Publishers make better use of [the Internet technology] when they face stronger competition from online competitors - provided that they possess financial means to do so”(2005: 107-108).

According to Whittaker (2004: 164) online newspaper’s reporting of breaking news can have negative effects on journalism, since in his view reporting as it happens may affect the objectivity and impartiality of the news.

2.4. Theoretical framework

2.4.1. Quality determinants of online publications

There is a potential for online newspapers to utilize the capabilities discussed section 2.3.1. As Pavlik points out, embracing such features enables the publications “to tell each story in a way uniquely suited to it, no longer constrained by the limited modalities available in previous analog media” (2001: 5). However, as said in section 2.4.1 and as will be seen in the research results of this study, online newspapers hardly exploit the potentials of the WWW.

He and Zhu adopt the social environment model when discussing the reasons behind online newspapers’ limited use of the Internet’s capability. Bringing all elements of online

communication into perspective, i.e. communicators, the message, the online channels and the audience, they argue that the elements interact and influence each other. Moreover, the process of online communication depends on the telecommunication infrastructure, and the communication process in return affects the infrastructure. He and Zhu conclude that communication processes and the telecommunication infrastructure are influenced by the social, political, economic and cultural environment (2002: 122).

Regarding the online newspapers and their adoption of online technology, Pablo J. Boczkowski argues that organizational structures, work practices and representations of the users are contributing or delimiting factors (2004: 198). Organizational structure refers to the relationship between print and online newsrooms. This relationship can be integrated or autonomous (Boczkowski, 2004: 203). When the print and online newsrooms are integrated, the print people exhibit “print’s ways of doing things in the online newsroom” (2004: 204). This is in agreement with what Pavlik found: “Some news operations tend to view online reporting as merely an extension of their existing activities, and if they are print based, they tend to not view video and audio as terribly relevant” (2001: 5).

The culture and tradition of the media (print, TV or radio) that run the online publication have an impact on the use of multimedia capabilities in online newspapers. According to Pavlik (2001), it is mostly the broadcasting media that have the tradition and culture of producing multimedia content online, as the process is easy for them.

The ways online publications view their users in terms of “their technical expertise” and “their role as either consumers or producers of content” influence the online publications’ adoption of technologies. When users are envisioned to have less technical expertise and are regarded as passive consumers, online publications tend not to attempt to adopt multimedia technologies. As Boczkowski argues, “Seeing users as consumers of information was tied to reproducing print’s ‘we-publish-you-read’ mode” (2004: 205-206).

According to He and Zhu, in addition to users or audiences interest, the interest of media practitioners also influence the application of interactive technology (2002: 122). Moore’s research shows that websites utilizes the capacity of the online medium to promote their

global, social and political business networks based on the different interests of their target audience (2002: 177).

Boczkowski (2004: 205) observes that online services tend to skip multimedia and other interactive technologies if they know the users have browsers with limited capacities. This is an issue of infrastructure, and accordingly Engebretsen (2006b: 17) highlights the infrastructure problem from the users' perspective as a reason for the underdevelopment of media in pursuing multimedia applications. Although they looked at it on a macro level, He and Zhu also suggest infrastructure as a factor influencing online publications.

Work practice is the other reason Boczkowski mentions for adopting multimedia and interactive technology. This is also related to the representation of users. By work practice Boczkowski means the issues of information flow, which is related to the gatekeeping function of the media.

The idea that newsroom practices are about mediating between events and consumers is transmitted everywhere from journalism school to on the job socialization and has influenced print's disregard for reader-authored content. (Boczkowski, 2004: 207)

He contends it is therefore not surprising to find that newsroom practice has a great role. His research shows that online papers that took on the gatekeeping role were engaged in the reproduction of print's one-to-many message flow, while the other which configured "newsroom tasks around alternatives to gatekeeping" was related to endorsement of a multiplicity of information flows where users are active participant (2004: 207).

According to Pavlik (2001: 5), lack of skilled staff with multimedia capabilities and background also affects the application of available tools in the online publication. Moreover, Pavlik concludes that the online publication is likely to have the journalistic quality of its parent organ (2001: 28).

In summary, infrastructure; organizational structure; users' interest, technical capacity and representation; availability of skilled staff; editorial policy and goal; as well as the interest

of the media house determine online communication in general and the quality of the online newspaper in particular.

2.4.2. The online newspaper as a distinct genre

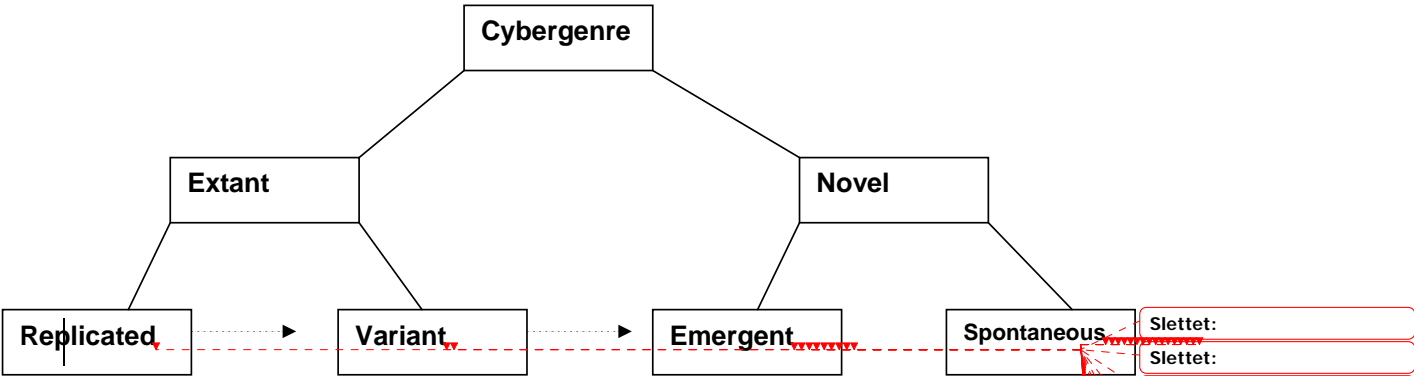
Genre theory (from French ‘type’ or ‘kind’) “deals with the ways in which a work may be considered to belong to a class of related works” (Feuer, 1992: Internet). Eriksen and Ihlström point out that genre theory is not a fully agreed upon theory: “There are competing definitions based on differences in research area, media and case evidence” (2000: 2). However, genre theory has been used when studying different forms of Internet communication. Leen Breure (2001: Internet) argues that this is because genre helps “not only for the sake of categorizing, but also to get a better understanding of the functionality that electronic documents have within a community of users”.

Arguably, the online newspaper is evolving as a genre of its own (Ihlström and Henfridsson, 2005), derived by technology (Shepherd and Watters, 1998). As some researchers put it the integration of Internet and other online technologies with components of traditional media has resulted in a distinct online newspapers genre (Ihlström and Carina, 2004; He and Zhu, 2002).

By studying genre characteristics researchers have described the state of online newspapers in different parts of the world. Eriksen and Ihlström (2000) use the concept of genre to see news dissemination on the web. Engebretsen (2006a) assessed the state of online journalism in Scandinavia using modern genre theory as the main theoretical framework. Similarly, Ihlström and Henfridsson (2005) examined the Scandinavian online newspaper genre evolution in a longitudinal study. Ihlström and Åkesson (2004) studied genre characteristics of 85 Swedish online newspapers. Their study provides a model for categorizing online newspapers based on the cyberggenre model of Shepherd and Watters (1998). The present thesis adopts Ihlström and Åkesson's model and both models are discussed below.

Several scholars maintain that a new form of genre will emerge with the utilization of the new technology. According to Shepherd and Watters, the Internet triggers a distinct online newspapers genre. They explain how an online newspaper genre, which they

Figure 2.1: The evolution of the online newspaper



Source: Shepherd and Watters, 1998:Internet

referred to as cybergenre, could emanate from either existing media or the functionality offered by the new medium. Accordingly, they divide the online newspapers genre into two subgenres; *extant* and *novel*. Extant are those that evolve from the existing media, which can be print or electronic. The evolution continues until the publication utilizes all the capability of the new medium further dividing the subgenre into replicated and variant genres. Novel subgenres are created with Internet’s own capability being the driving force, having no equivalent in other media. This subgenre is further divided into emergent and spontaneous genres (Shepherd and Watters, 1998).

Shepherd and Watters (1998) use *content*, *form* and *functionality* to identify online newspaper genres, where functionality is the defining one in the process. *Content* refers to elements or items on the websites such as text, index, advertisements, etc. *Form* entails the way the items are presented on the web. *Functionality* is to mean the potential or capabilities of the Internet or WWW (Shepherd and Watters, 1998; Ihlström and Åkesson, 2004).

As shown in Figure 2.1, extant cybergenres include *replicated online newspapers*, which are faithfully reproducing or copying the content of the source media. In the online newspapers of this category they say, “The content and form are virtually the same and there is little new functionality based on the new medium”. However, *variant genres* better utilize the capability of the new medium, which includes link to images and video components, even though they have emerged from an existing medium (Shepherd and Watters, 1998).

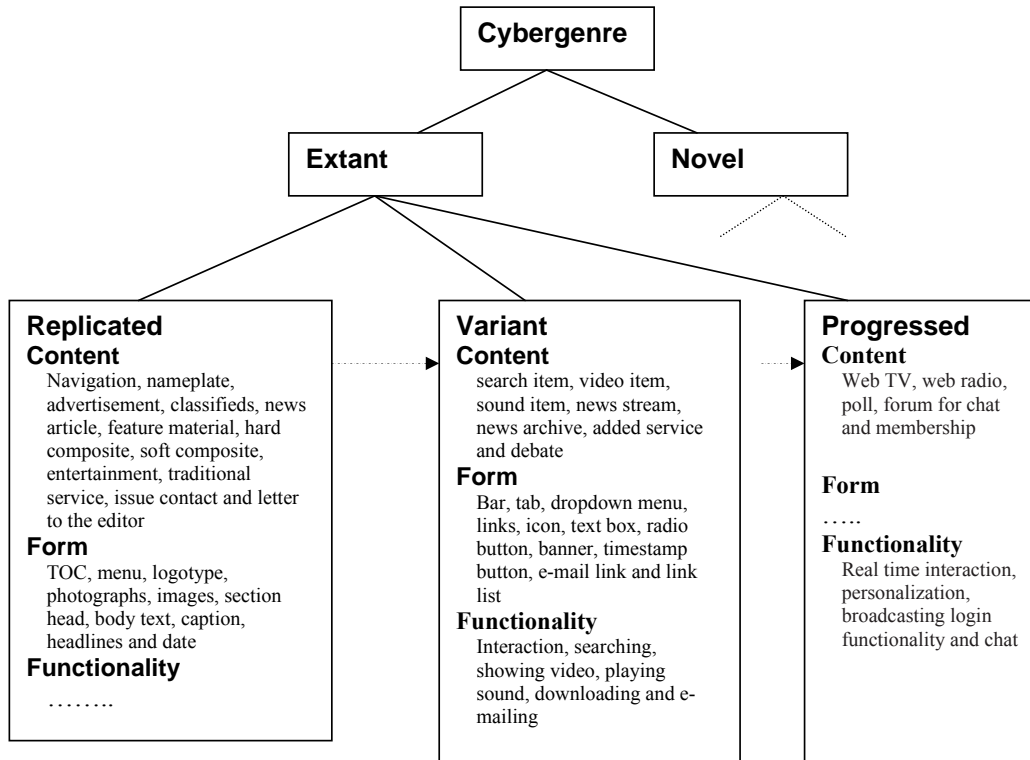
When the publications continue to utilize the potential of the Internet, the assertion is that they reach a point where they appear as a new genre, they become an *emergent cybergenre*. On the other hand, *spontaneous cybergenres* are those that have no equivalents in other media. As shown in Figure 2.1 these two cybergenres are derived from the functionality of the medium (Shepherd and Watters, 1998).

Shepherd and Watters’ model was presented on the Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS) in 1998, and the model can be considered as a foundation for the study of online newspaper genres. Hence, Breure says HICSS has been a platform for presenting the study of digital genres (2001). However, Shepherd and Watters’ model is not without limitations. They admit a problem of clarity in their model when they state that their taxonomy “is fuzzy as the distinctions among the classes are not clearly defined” (1998). Ihlström and Åkesson (2004) did not find the model comprehensive enough for their study when trying to place all sample newspapers in the categories provided by the model. Thus, they made an additional leaf node for online newspapers that are progressing to the emergent genre but have not yet reached there. Accordingly, Ihlström and Åkesson (2004) modified Shepherd and Watters’ cybergenre model, as shown on Figure 2.2.

The present research uses Ihlström and Åkesson’s model to identify the state or genre characteristics of Ethiopian online newspapers as it better distinguishes between the categories or genres. The rules that they constructed to apply the model on the sample is also adopted, and they are: (1) A replicated online newspaper consists of replicated content elements and form; (2) a variant online newspaper must have additional variant content

elements form and functionality, and; (3) a progressed online newspaper must also have additional progressed content elements and functionality (Ihlström and Åkesson 2004: 6).

Figure 2.2: The cybergenre model for online newspapers



Source: Ihlström and Åkesson, 2004: 5

Ihlström and Åkesson's model is similar to the models that He and Zhu proposed to the study of online newspapers. Rather than presenting it as a stage of development, He and Zhu model categorizes the online newspaper into three, i.e. the *transmission*, *interactive* and *community* model (He and Zhu, 2002: 134). The transmission model is similar to Shepherd and Watters' replicated genre; the interactive model is close to the variant genre; and the community model falls into the novel category.

Chapter Three

3. Methodology

The researcher has followed both qualitative and quantitative approaches in the study. Applying the qualitative approach is encouraged because it enables to researcher to get a complete understanding of the subjects and bring in new dimensions. Qualitative researchers are also advised to employ quantifiable schemes to obtain more assurance than a reasonable guess would do (Jick, 1979: 138-139).

3.1. Instrument

Content analysis and semi-structured interviews were the main instruments applied to collect data from the population. Content analysis is described as “a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest of content of communication” (Berelson, quoted in Deacon et al, 1999: 115).

As mentioned earlier, a main purpose of this research is to assess the state of Ethiopian online newspapers. Content analysis is found to be an appropriate method to study these newspapers, like several researchers have done before (e.g. Ihlström and Åkesson, 2004; Van der Wurff, 2005; Massey and Levy, 1999).

According to Orcher, the research’s dependability will improve with the triangulation of instrumentation (2005: 55). In view of this, semi-structured interviews were employed to back up the data obtained from the content analysis. A similar approach has been chosen by researchers in Scandinavia and China (Engebretsen, 2006; He and Zhu, 2002).

One of the objectives of the present study is to provide a list of Ethiopian online newspapers. To find online publications that are run by Ethiopians in and outside the country, the researcher used links on the online newspapers as a main tool.

3.2. Sampling

The population for this research is made up of Ethiopian newspapers, which have an online edition. As discussed in chapter two, Internet has immense potential for the media.

Looking at the opportunities Internet holds for them, newspapers across the globe are embracing the technology. In Ethiopia, the number of newspapers is relatively high compared to other mass media (radio, TV). There is also an arena for competition among them, in contrast to radio and TV. However, their circulation is limited to Addis Ababa and very few towns nearby. Since Internet allows the newspapers to reach wider audiences, and promote their titles, the researcher assumed that they would be attracted towards adopting new technologies. For this reason, the research mainly focuses on the newspapers. However, other mass media are also included in the sample.

There was no list of Ethiopian online newspapers available for the researcher to draw samples from. Thus, the sampling frame was based on the official list of Ethiopian newspapers provided by the Ministry of Information.

At the end of February 2006 there were 51 newspapers operating in Ethiopia (MoI, 2006). Their circulation ranges from 300 to 40,000 copies. From the 51 newspapers a purposive sampling was applied to get list of major newspapers. The criteria used were newspapers that are (1) in English or Amharic, (2) with circulation above 2000, (3) not freely distributed, and (4) published at least once a week were selected in order to get the major newspapers. This gave a list of 23 newspapers. It turned out that only 10 of these would inform about an URL address and thus have an online edition.

Search engines (google.com and altavista.com) were used to get additional results. However, the search engines did not bring any new newspaper to the list, except for Addis Tribune, which ceased to function on the Internet in August 2005.

As indicated earlier, the overall research question is how Ethiopian newspapers adopt the Internet technology. Accordingly, blogs and web-only newspapers are not included in the present research.

Finally, 10 online newspapers with a print edition and four that are run by non-print media were identified. Print media with online editions are *Addis Zemen*, *The Ethiopian Herald*, *Abiyotawi Democracy*, *Addis Admass*, *Capital*, *Fortune*, *Reporter – English*, *Reporter – Amharic*, *Sub-Saharan Informer*, and *The Daily Monitor*. The four online news services

that are run by other news organizations include *Ethiopian News Agency (ENA)*, *Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA)*, *Walta Information Center*, and *Radio Fana* (see appendix 1 for information on their addresses).

Since the focus of the research is on newspapers, all newspapers printed in Ethiopia with an online edition were considered for the study. The websites of *ENA* and *ERTA* were included in the research for comparison, thus the study subject increased to 12 units. *ENA* and *ERTA* were selected because they are among the major news organizations in the country.

3.3. Procedure

Two MA students of Addis Ababa University Graduate School of Journalism and Communication carried out the coding using the coding sheet (appendix 5). The coders were trained and provided with a coding book (appendix 6). Inter-coder reliability was checked to ascertain consistency of data collected from the two coders. Kassanjian (no date: 14) suggests that calculating the ratio of coding agreement to a total number of coding decisions is a commonly used measure of reliability. Accordingly the ratio of agreement for the two coders was calculated for each variable.

The coding was carried out for one month (from April 19, 2006 to May 14, 2006) and each news website was seen once a week at different weekdays. This approach is similar to what Engebretsen (2006a) followed to assess 14 Scandinavian online newspapers. One news website was seen at least four times during the period. This is believed to have increased the credibility of the data obtained from the content analysis.

The unit of analysis was the online newspaper as a whole, and variables including text items, linkage, interactive elements, multimedia, archive, and subscription were codified. As indicated in the literature review, the omission or availability of these variables indicates the state of one online newspaper.

Up to eight news items and two pictures were taken from each site whenever the coding was conducted. These items were selected using simple random sampling. Starting from

the first every other item was selected until the sample size was full. Accordingly, 277 data on text and 46 data on pictures were produced for the quantitative analysis.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six editorial staff and personnel responsible for the website of the newspapers (see appendix 7 for their profile). These personnel came from: *The Daily Monitor*, *Sub-Saharan Informer*, Ethiopian Press Agency (*Ethiopian Herald* and *Addis Zemen*), *Reporter* (Amharic and English), *Addis Admass*, and Ethiopian News Agency. The interviews were conducted after the content analysis was completed. The responses from the interviews are qualitatively analyzed together with the data accumulated in the content analysis.

Data from the coding sheet were analyzed quantitatively, while the interview responses were analyzed qualitatively. The results are presented in chapter four.

3.4. Limitation

Twelve news websites were selected for the content analysis. However, no data on *Abiyotawi Democracy* (www.eprdforgans.gov.et) was coded because the site could not be accessed at the time of coding. This should still not affect the research since data obtained from the rest of the sites were assumed to be illustrative enough.

In addition, it was intended to interview staff from all the scrutinized newspapers. However, three of the media houses did not respond on time to the researcher's interview request. As a result the interviewee's number was limited to eight. Since eight out of the eleven newspapers are included in the interviews, the absence of interviewees from the three remaining papers are not thought to affect the outcome of the research.

Chapter Four

4. Presentation and Analysis of Data

4.1. Presentation of data

As stated in the introductory chapter, this research has aimed at studying how Ethiopian newspapers are utilizing the Internet when disseminating information by raising four related research questions:

- (1) How many Ethiopian online newspapers are there?
- (2) What is the state of Ethiopian online newspapers?
- (3) Have online newspapers brought a change to their print versions and/or their newsroom practices?
- (4) What are the factors that affect the quality of Ethiopian online newspapers?

Data that are meant to answer these questions were gathered using different instruments that include content analysis; semi-structured face-to-face interviews; as well as using search engines and links on the online newspapers. The qualitative and quantitative data gathered using the different tools are presented in this section.

4.1.1. Ethiopian online newspapers

The research identified 33 Ethiopian online newspapers and ten blogs. Table 4.1 (appendix 1) lists online newspapers that have either print equivalent or are run by media houses based in Ethiopia. The online-only newspapers listed in table 4.2 (appendix 2), on the other hand, have no equivalent physical media. The online newspapers are published in English and Amharic. Most of them contain general content, i.e. current affairs, social, economic and political issues of the country. Two of the web-only news sites are found to give only syndicated news.

Table 4.3 (appendix 3) shows Ethiopian web logs. Blogs that have content about Ethiopia are considered as Ethiopian blogs regardless of the nationality of the bloggers. Two of the blogs are published from Ethiopia.

4.1.2. State of Ethiopian online newspapers

The contents of eleven news websites were analyzed to identify the extent to which the newspapers utilize the potential of the Internet as content tells much about the state of an online newspaper. Table 4.4 shows that the eleven Ethiopian online news websites in this study provide news items on their front pages. Ten of the websites had feature stories during the period the content of the website was analyzed. 99 percent of the texts are written in a linear fashion, meaning that the stories are written in a similar manner to the paper-based medium, without being divided into sub stories. As can be seen from table 4.5, the majority of the stories (42 percent) covered political issues. Among the text analyzed, 84 percent (233) had source references in the text.

Table 4.5: Issues covered by Ethiopian news sites

Issues covered	Frequency	Percent
Economics	41	15
Entertainment	37	13
Environment	3	1
Health	8	3
Politics	115	42
Social	73	26
Total	277	100

Source: content

analysis of the

present study

All the websites provide new items on the top. Most of the news sites update their online publication, either daily or weekly depending on their publication schedule. Four of the sites update their site daily and another four on a weekly basis. Two of the newspapers update their online publication twice a week. Only one site updates its pages more than once a day. As illustrated in table 4.4, all the websites that also have a print edition update their website after the paper is on the street. Only one newspaper (*Ethiopia Reporter*) releases breaking news online before running the story in the print version. No websites provide stories with flexible formats (for instance as a pdf file).

Space for

Table 4.4: Ethiopian online newspapers' general content

Nine of the news websites have pictures that accompany some of their stories. Out of the 46 pictures analyzed from these sites, only half have captions. As table 4.6 shows, 61 percent of the pictures are in JPEG format while 28 and 11 percent are GIF and PNG respectively. 22 percent of the pictures appear close to the text and it is possible to resize 35 percent of the pictures posted on the news sites.

Table 4.6: Format of pictures on Ethiopian news sites

Picture format	Frequency	Percent
JPEG	28	61
Gif	13	28
PNG	5	11
Total	46	100

Source: content analysis of the present study

Table 4.4 demonstrates that almost all the websites have a separate section for entertainment. All of the newspapers have self-promoting commercials and five have external commercials in addition.

Nearly none of the online news websites incorporate multimedia items, including graphics, audio and video. Only one-site attempts to incorporate video, but it does not function. Search engines are provided by ten of the websites studied. All the online publications have archives of their stories. Archived stories date back to January 2005 on *capital's* website. Among the online newspapers in the study none requires subscription to access information on the web.

Table 4.7 shows that all of the online sites make their e-mail address available for users. However, only two responded to an e-mail message sent from the coders during the one-month period the data were collected. Chat rooms and bulletin boards are missing from all the websites in the study. Three have discussion forums and polls where users can vote on certain issues.

Space for

Table 4.7: Ethiopian Online newspapers' interactive elements

Table 4.8: Ethiopian online newspapers' linkage

All the websites provide navigational links that help the readers go around the websites. None of the news sites link their stories to background information, or sub-stories. Table 4.8 shows that links to external websites are provided by only four of the online newspapers and two of them offer links to only governmental organizations and news organizations respectively. The rest have links to NGOs, commercial and educational organizations in addition the previous two.

4.1.3. Print vs. online editions of Ethiopian newspapers

One of the questions the research raises is if the online newspaper has brought any change to the print edition and/or the newsroom practice of the newspapers. This question is addressed by comparing the print and online editions of the newspapers.

99 percent of the stories analyzed originated from the parent media house. 89 percent of them are found to be both on the web and the paper. No news item was identified to be published only on the website. 88 percent of the texts on the web were compared to their print version. No change was identified between the print and web version. All the interviewees confirmed that their text on the website and print are similar. One said: “There is no such thing as text for the web and for the paper, you write it for the paper and that is what is published on the web.”

The journalistic methods for the web are equivalent with the paper. One of the interviewees confirmed this when he said: “Being on the Internet does not change anything for us. We strictly follow the principles and standards we follow on our paper.” Almost none of the advertisements on print were found on the websites. The interviewees said this is because the advertising on the web requires an additional transaction with the advertisers.

The interviewees maintained that publishing their newspaper online brought no significant change to their newspaper circulation. They also said having an online edition is not causing any increased pressure on the journalists. On the other hand, the news sites serve as promotion for the paper and a means to get feedback. One interviewee also said the website helped them to start a new column in their newspaper, but this was an exception.

4.1.4. Determinants of Ethiopian online newspapers' quality

Ethiopian newspapers started to publish online for various reasons, which includes (1) reaching wider audiences, including the diaspora; (2) the desire to use the technology; and (3) getting financial benefit in the long run. Almost all the online news sites target the diasporas. Since the circulation of the newspapers are limited to local consumption, Ethiopian diasporas benefits from the online publication to get news and be engaged in the debates on political and social issues of their country.

All of the interviewees agreed on the Internet's potential as a new mass medium. But they pointed out that it depends on the telecommunication infrastructure and user capacity and interest. The interviews show that delimiting factors that affect the quality of Ethiopian online newspapers include: (1) consideration of the online edition is as an extra service; (2) lack of financial and professional capability; (3) the Internet infrastructure; (4) awareness problem; (5) Amharic font; (6) the type of media house (being print or broadcasting); (7) quality of the parent media; and (8) the editorial policy of the media house.

The interviewees also revealed that the Ethiopian online newspapers are challenged by (1) the country's telecommunication infrastructure, (2) attitudes of the corporate community towards the Internet, (3) the absence of e-commerce in the country, and (4) people's interest and access to Internet.

4.2. Analysis

The data presented in section 4.1 are meant to address necessary questions needed to achieve the main objective of the research. The main objective is to identify whether Ethiopian newspapers utilize the potential of the Internet when they disseminate information online. In the following section the quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed against the theoretical frameworks and previous research discussed in the literature review. The analysis is organized according to the specific research objectives.

4.2.1. Ethiopian web-only newspapers

One of the specific objectives of this research is to provide a list of current Ethiopian

online newspapers. The collected data recorded 19 web-only newspapers and 10 blogs. The researcher acknowledges that there may be other online newspapers, which are not included in the list for various reasons. However, it can still be said that the number of Ethiopian online newspapers are minimal considering the ease of publishing on the web and the freedom of expression Internet promises. This shows that Ethiopians have still a long way to go before they are exploiting the Internet as a news medium, which might have resulted from awareness and access problems. The minimal number also shows that Ethiopia is affected by the digital divide. As discussed in chapter two, the digital divide is associated with the country's economy and it lags the country further behind.

The research does not give a detailed account of the content and quality of all the web-only newspapers and blogs, as doing so would go beyond the scope of the research. However, a glimpse at the content of the online newspapers shows that web-only newspapers in particular seem to heavily carry political issues. These newspapers also appear to take side of a certain political group. The publishers utilize the Internet's potential to freely express their ideas. However, they can hardly be said to play a check and balance role since they are highly skewed to one side. Most of the online newspapers clearly state their mission, which is beneficial to users as it gives context to analyze the information presented on the particular websites.

Some of the online-only newspapers are currently (July 2006) inaccessible for Ethiopian web users who are dependent on ETC's Internet service. This has been the situation since mid-May 2006, when the ETC blocked the sites (CPJ, 2006: Internet). The sites in question claim that the government has taken action because they criticize the ruling party. According to CPJ's report, Ministry of Information claims that no website is blocked in Ethiopia. ETC is also silent to questions regarding the blocked websites (CPJ, 2006: Internet). This situation puts the potential of Internet as a free medium at a risk in the Ethiopian context. Chinese authorities has openly censored the World Wide Web and blocked access to many sites (Associated Press, 2002: Internet). What is observed in Ethiopia is of a much lower caliber, but the intention behind blocking the sites questions the government's will to freedom of speech and people's right to access to information.

4.2.2. Ethiopian online newspapers use of Internet's potential

4.2.2.1. Writing style

The finding concludes that there are 14 Ethiopian online newspapers that have print equivalents or are owned by broadcasting media or news agencies. Ten of them are scrutinized in this research. The newspapers copy the content of their print edition to their websites without making any changes. Simply copying the printed text to the web conserves the linear writing style. It seems that the newspapers do not find it important to deconstruct the stories. Some of them limit the use of web page tools to giving teasers on the front page and the full story after one click. As discussed in chapter two, for scholars and practitioners who are in favor of non-linear story writing, having the story in a linear form means not exploiting the nature of the medium. This is found to be true in the case of Ethiopian online newspapers. One of the interviewees said there is no distinct writing style for the web and for the print. It is taken for granted that what works for the print works for the web.

Another interviewee said they maintain the linear form of writing on the web to satisfy their customers' need. This is congruent with the argument of Ward (2003: 125), which is discussed in chapter two. Ward claims that some readers, particularly expatriates, prefer to read stories as they appear in the traditional media and this forces the media house to continue writing in a linear fashion. Although they have different reasons for it, all Ethiopian online newspapers follow a linear writing style. The lengths of texts on the websites ranges from 54 words (news story) to 3843 words (feature story). A full linear text may be cumbersome for the reader to approach, especially if the width of the text is as wide as the computer screen, which is the case for most Ethiopian web papers.

4.2.2.2. Immediacy

It seems that the online newspapers are highly dictated by the structure and schedule of the print edition. As presented in earlier sections, only one news site, ENA, updates its site more than once a day. This news agency is the major news agency that sells news stories to almost all government media in the country. It produces a number of news items every day and it need not exert additional effort to produce news for the website. The other news sites

update their websites according to their publishing schedule. Daily newspapers update their newspaper daily, weekly ones update their sites weekly and those that publish their printed paper twice a week update their websites accordingly. As one of the interviewees said, “it is difficult for a weekly newspaper to produce news daily and that is what is required of them to do if they want update the website daily”. This clearly indicates how the traditional media dominates the online versions. In line with this, Fortunati reports from Italy that rather than the Internet influencing the traditional media, it is the traditional media that is influencing the Internet (quoted in van der Wurff, 2005: 109).

Updates in the case of Ethiopian news sites are consequently not about fresh news. Updates occur only after the newspaper has hit the street, which means that the news in a daily news outlet is really at least one day old. This is contrary to what was observed in Scandinavia where the newspapers first publish the news in the online edition and then publish it as it is or with some change in the printed paper (Engebretsen, 2006a: 7-9).

None of the interviewees said they felt threatened by the Internet. They thought the web did not affect the circulation of the printed newspaper. At the same time, they delay the publishing of news on the web site fearing that it might affect the printed paper’s circulation. Only *The Ethiopian Reporter* practices publishing of breaking news first on the online edition. However, they only do so when they feel that the news will be obsolete if they wait until the next publication date of the printed paper. During the election time in May 2005, *The Ethiopian Reporter* ran breaking news throughout the day. According to the interviewed website administrator in *The Ethiopian Reporter*, the web edition saw a higher number of users during that period. The same increase of web users has been observed during election time in US, UK and in some African countries like Kenya and Zambia (Mudhai, 2004: 325).

4.2.2.3. Multimedia elements

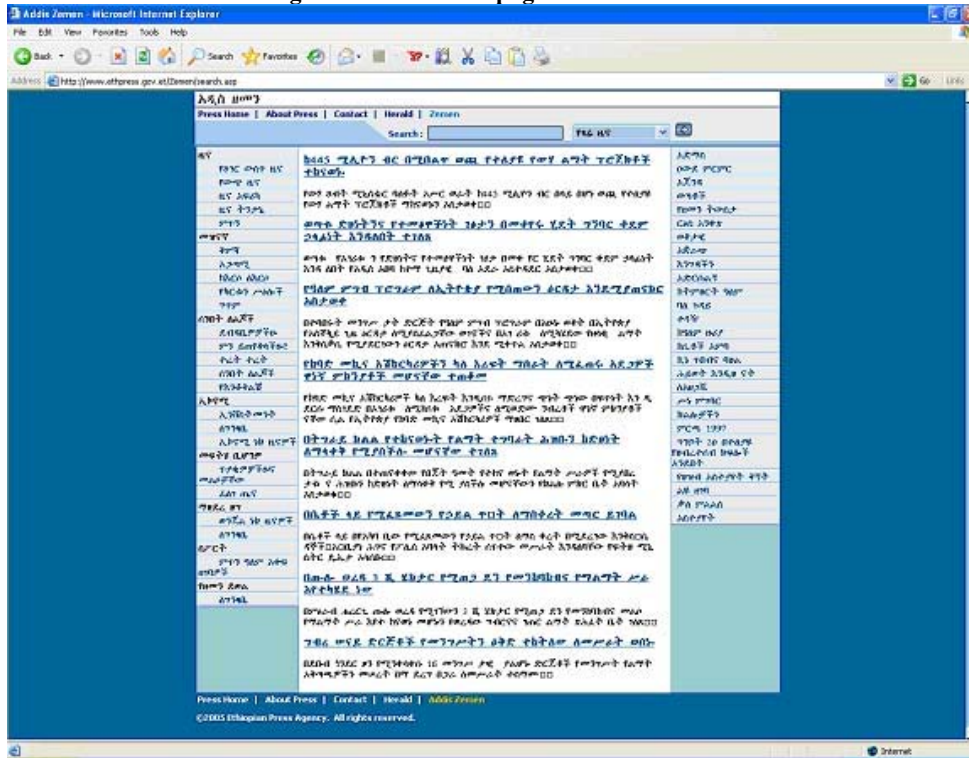
As said before, nine of the eleven news sites have pictures on their website. The remaining three sites do not publish pictures at all. Again, this is a meager use of the medium’s potential. As Pavlik (2001: 3) says, the main advantage of the Internet is its ability to

integrate the potential of both the traditional and the new media. Pictures are a powerful means of communication in the traditional media, and the Internet gives a choice not only to continue using this tool, but also expanding on it. Some online newspapers fail to use this potential because of lack of resources. A case in point is *The Ethiopian Herald*. The printed version only uses black and white pictures, and according to the interviewee, since that is not suitable for the website, they choose not to post any pictures on the web. On the other hand, *Addis Fortune* and *ENA* better exploit the online presentation technology when they use different pictures to illustrate some news items.

Out of the total 46 pictures analyzed, half did not have captions. Some of the captions only give the names of the photographed persons. This shows that less attention is given to captions. It is said that the typical behavior of Internet users is to skim the website to see if there is something appealing. Captions could definitely be used to catch users' attention. It is surprising to see that not all the pictures appear close to the text and when the pictures appear randomly it can indicate a design problem. In addition, not all the pictures are resizable, adding to the inconvenience of readers.

Ethiopian online newspapers with equivalent print media do not have multimedia items like graphics, audio and video. The interviewees from *Addis Admass* said that because they are primarily running a print media product, it is demanding to include audio and video on the web edition. They copy what they produce for the print edition. One of the interviewees added, "If we were broadcasting media things would have been a lot easier." This is similar to Boczkowski's argument discussed in chapter two. He said, when the print and online newsroom is combined, the print people exhibit "print's ways of doing things" (2004: 204).

Figure 4.1: The front page of Addis Zemen.



Both *Zemen's* and *The Ethiopian Herald's* websites are devoid of pictures

Source: www.ethpress.gov.et

However, there is no audio or video on the ENA websites either, and it is among the news organizations that are producing such multimedia items every day. *ERTA* does in fact have a link to a video footage. But it is never updated (during the one month data collection time) and the content is not even related to the news presented on the website. *ERTA* said this is because their website is yet under construction.

The interviewee from ENA said that his site lacks multimedia items due to infrastructure problems. Their server doesn't have the capacity to host audio and video and the agency does not have budget for a server with bigger capacity. This shows that inadequate attention is given by the media houses to provide sufficient resources to the Internet. It seems that Ethiopian online newspapers try to take advantage of Internet up to the point where it does not incur additional costs. Engebretsen's research has a parallel result.

Scandinavian online newspapers also barely use multimedia to strengthen journalism on the net (2006: 16). However, integrating multimedia and text could enhance the journalistic presentation, as audio and video strengthen the content of written text and vice versa.

4.2.2.4. Interactivity

The crucial element in describing the state of online newspapers is interactivity. According to Massey and Levy (1999), news sites will have potential responsiveness if they provide e-mail addresses. All the Ethiopian news sites are potentially responsive, but only two of them responded to e-mails sent from the researchers in this study. Providing all editorial addresses encourage readers to respond, but none of the websites were found to do so. Hence, the majority of the news sites are not inviting the readers to respond – they are less interactive. However, *Addis Fortune* has a 'guest book' where users are free to post any kind of message. The message posted are mostly constructive comments on the website, although the heading 'guest book' does not give connotations to an interactive news medium.

As Van der Wurff (2005: 115) points out, interactive elements such as chat rooms, bulletin boards, online letters, opinion polls and discussion forums move the news sites from being display media to becoming interactive media. Only few of the news sites utilize one or more of these interactive elements. *Addis Fortune*, for instance, has the platform for discussion but the icon is not yet activated. *Addis Admass* has a place for polls. But it did not post topics during the one-month time of data collection. The websites could easily have used issues from their printed papers as topics for polls and discussion forums. It is when the news sites start to bring debatable issues to the websites that the Internet serves as a marketplace of ideas.

The newspapers relate the lack of interactivity to the behavior of their readers. The interviewee from *Addis Admass* said that it is a bit early to work actively in that area because the society is not yet ready. As discussed in chapter two, lack of participants or their rejection may hinder interactivity. It is good to take into consideration the capacity and interest of potential users before introducing interactive elements.

Almost all the interviewees complained that the locals are not actively using the websites. Considering the bandwidth of Internet in Ethiopia, this is not surprising. However, it can hardly be used as an excuse for canceling interactive elements. People are namely observed to be interested in participating in the interactive forums. The interviewee from *Addis Admass* himself said, “people are raising various kind of questions and answering among themselves on our discussion forum”. The *Ethiopian Reporter*’s interviewee confirmed, “people are online, and there is good interaction” when asked about audiences participation.

As discussed in section 2.3.2, the main setback of the online interaction is the possibility to entertain both the wheat and the chafe. The online newspapers that have discussion forums also feel this. The interviewee from *Ethiopian Reporter* claimed that some individuals get out of line when they read stories they don’t agree with. To maintain order and civility among the discussants, the media house decided to register those who are interested to enter their discussion forum. Around 1076 people were registered in July 2006. The newspaper has also employed external moderators to balance the issues.

On the contrary, *Addis Admass* has chosen not to moderate their discussion forum. The interviewee from the newspaper informed, “we have not yet decided on how to direct the forum”. Unless they reach a decision soon, their discussion forum may not stay orderly and credible as people can disrupt the forum, which ultimately may affect the quality and appearance of the entire online newspaper.

4.2.2.5. Linkage

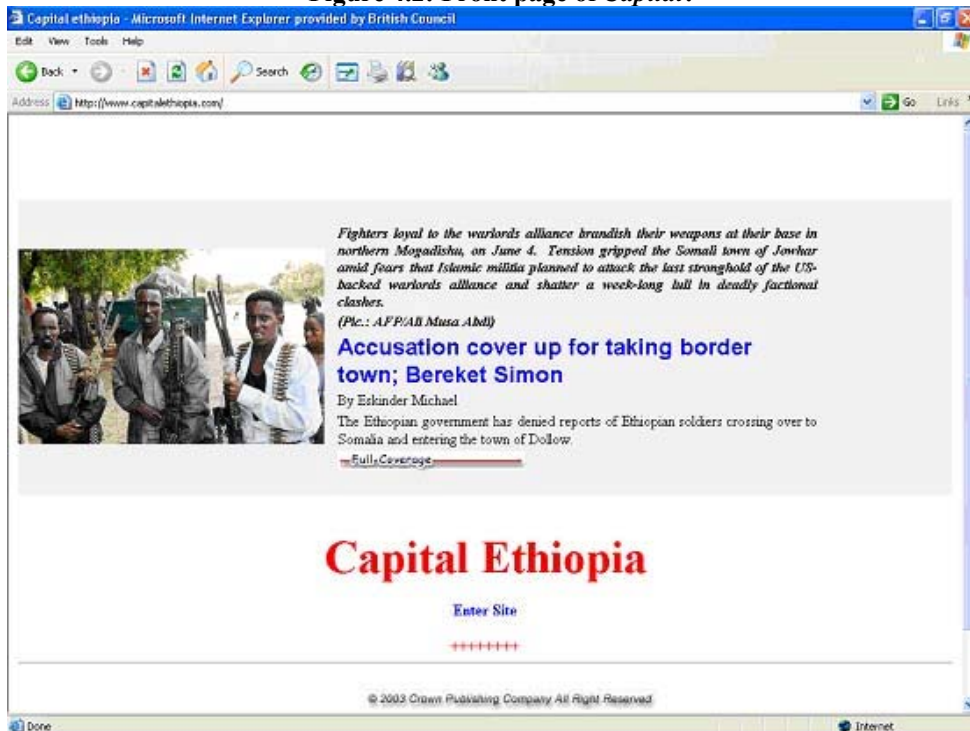
Hyper linking is an important feature of online newspapers. All the newspapers scrutinized here have navigational links that help the readers go around the websites. They usually have a menu at the left corner of the front page. Since this is a widely practiced and recognizable design, people can easily find their way around the website. However, as illustrated in figure 4.2, *Capital*’s website dedicates the whole front page for one major news item. This may be risky with regard to keeping the users of the website. Unless the main story is catchy, users may leave the site without even entering it. Probably taking this

into consideration, *Capital* started to entertain more than one news items on its front page from July 19, 2006.

All of interviewees underlined the benefit of providing links of background information, pictures or any other multimedia to a story. They said such links are helpful as they increase the credibility of news in addition to providing more information to readers. However, none of the news sites linked their stories to background information, or sub-stories. It seems that they are not exploiting the WWW more than they utilize the paper. Most of them said they go online because they are tempted by the new technology. Even so, they hardly utilize the hyperlink technology, which is the essence of the Internet.

The result clearly shows how little Ethiopian online newspapers make use of the hyperlink potential of the Internet. The same has been reported in studies of online newspapers in Ireland, (O'Sullivan, 2005: 54-56), China (He and Zhu, 2002: 133), and Scandinavia (Engebretsen, 2006a: 16), although these must still be said to be several steps ahead of Ethiopian online papers.

Figure 4.2: Front page of *Capital*:



The front page of *Capital* is dedicated to one major story until very recently

Source: www.capitalethiopia.com

4.2.2.6. Archives

The finding shows that almost all the online newspapers have archives. As discussed in chapter two, the way the news site organizes its archive is equally important to its availability. The web papers present their archives in different ways. For example *Addis Zemen* and *Ethiopian Herald* present the choice of period (this week stories, this months etc) in a combo box and list all the stories on the front page according to the users' choice. Figure 4.3 (appendix 4) shows how the website looks when accessing archived stories. In some cases the websites provide choice of volume, month or year and then list out the items accordingly. As shown in figure 4.4 *Addis Fortune* provides one edition of the paper in addition to the choices. With some of the papers it is difficult to access archived stories and in another case they only present stories from 2005 and earlier.

Figure 4.4: Archive at Fortune's website



Addis Fortune provide the archived articles as they appeared when they were first published

Source: www.addisfortune.com

4.2.2.7. Advertisements

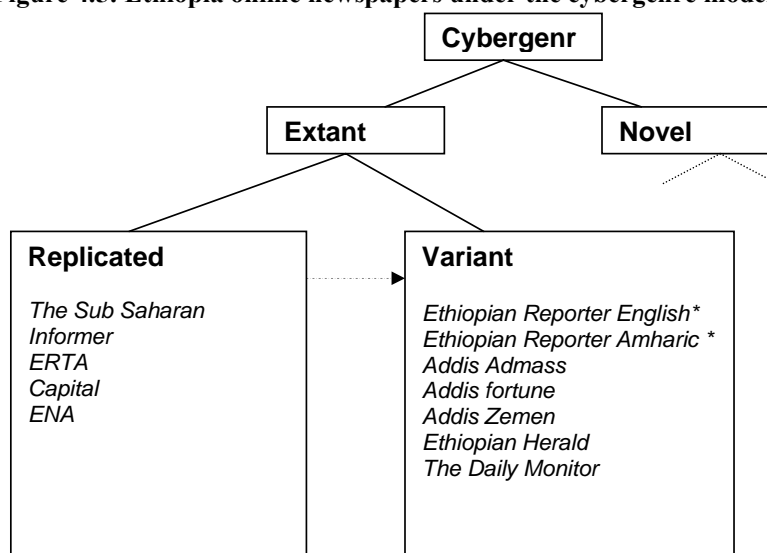
All the websites contain self-promotion. As discussed in section 2.3.1, this is common practice because for many of them, the motivation for going online is to promote their print version. In the words of an interviewee from the *Sub Saharan Informer*, “the website is our front page and our PR.” He also stated that going online is a less costly way of introducing the paper. This clearly indicates that the newspapers use the Internet primarily to promote their print editions.

Other than the self-promotion, the news sites have very few external advertisements. Almost all said they get offers from advertisers, but they are at a too early stage to utilize that. An interviewee from the *Ethiopian Reporter* said they are ready to have advertisements on their website but there is no means to make a deal with advertisers because of absence of e-commerce in the country. It looks as if getting money from advertisement is on every Ethiopian online newspaper’s plan, but they assert what is hindering them is the technological infrastructure. Chinese online newspapers have faced a similar problem. They had limited advertisement on their websites because they did not have the means to collect payments due to the underdeveloped e-business (He and Zhu, 2002: 133). However, one could critically comment that if the newspaper manages to collect charges for advertising in the print edition, it should also be able to collect the charges for web advertising.

As indicated in the data presentation, no news sites require subscription to access its website. This is encouraging in a society where people have just started to get familiar with the new media. But some of the interviewees, for instance from the *Ethiopian Reporter*, indicated that they will require subscription in the future. On the contrary, the interviewee from the *Sub Saharan Informer* said he has no intention of asking subscription in the future since people do not pay for the information that they get free other places: “People are not willing to pay for news; be the best and you will have big constituency.” It is too early to predict whether Ethiopian subscribers will pay for news. But it is for sure that the audience is attracted towards better and independent news.

Based on the findings discussed so far, it is difficult to make a generalization of the state of Ethiopian online newspapers since each online newspaper has its own traits. Still, these traits contribute to the general image of Ethiopian online newspapers. Ihlström and Åkesson’s cybergenre model that was discussed in section 2.4.3 is used here to describe Ethiopian online newspapers and categorize them in an online newspaper genre. According to the model, *replicated cybergenres* reproduce or copy the content of the source media and the *variant genres* includes capabilities such as links, multimedia and interactive elements (Ihlström and Åkesson, 2004). Figure 4.5 categorizes Ethiopian online newspapers based on Ihlström and Åkesson’s cybergenre model. If the online exhibit one of the functionality of the *variant* genre, it is categorized under variant genre.

Figure 4.5: Ethiopia online newspapers under the cybergenre model



Source: analysis of the present research

As the finding indicates, all of the news sites copy their print to the web, adding limited functionality of the Internet. Only *Ethiopian Reporter* English and Amharic have the functionality of both searching and interactivity. The rest have either one of the two as illustrated on table 4.4 and 4.7.

4.2.3. Effect of the online edition on the print version

As discussed in section 2.3.2, online newspapers may pose a threat on the readership of the print version. However, the interviews show that the Ethiopian newspapers do not yet feel the pressure. All the interviewees said that the online publication has not led to a decline in the circulation of the paper. Some of them said this might be because most of the web users are Ethiopians living outside the country and they do not buy the paper anyway. Besides, reading on the screen is not that convenient. It is also much cheaper to buy the newspaper than to print from the websites for reading.

It is positive that the print versions do not feel threatened by the online versions because it will encourage them to work more on the online editions. But as discussed earlier, the newspapers are clearing all the possibilities (e.g. printing first on the web) that they think might jeopardize their print versions.

The website, on the other hand, is having some positive contribution to the paper. Many of the interviewees stated that they get advertisements and subscriptions for their paper through the website. The interviewee from the *Sub Saharan Informer* said the web and print complement each other a lot and he does not think one can live without the other.

The result shows that the origin of news on the website is the print edition. This is similar to the conclusion of the Scandinavian studies. The content of the online edition is mainly copied from the print version.

On the other hand, as in the case of the Chinese online newspapers, most of the Ethiopian newspapers do not make an effort to exploit the Internet potential to produce content for their print version. Only one newspaper (*Ethiopian Reporter*) got new content on its print edition because of the website. According to the interviewee from the media house, they started a new column with the comment and feedback they collected from the website. This is encouraging as it is one way of gaining from the Internet to pursue better journalism.

Journalists from the newspapers that have online editions are not under bigger pressure because of the web edition, as they are not preparing special stories for the web. The finding indicates that the journalistic methods for the website are the same as for the paper.

4.2.4. Factors affecting the quality of Ethiopian online newspapers

The research shows that there are a number of factors that affect the quality of Ethiopian online newspapers. According to the responses the interviewees gave, the quality of their newspaper is not concordant with their attitude towards the Internet. All of them feel strongly about the potential of the Internet as a mass medium regardless of the problems in infrastructure and people's interest, which they found to be very challenging. They said in addition to the telecommunication infrastructure that limited access to Internet, people who have got access do not have a culture of browsing. According to one of the interviewees, the corporate community also does not appreciate IT usage in the country and companies do not invest in IT, which is discouraging to advancement in the area. These are problems that will be alleviated as more and more citizens are using the Internet.

The number of people in Ethiopia who use the Internet is on the rise, especially around towns where Internet cafes are mushrooming. The interviewees confirm this trend. This is a positive sign for online newspapers as the visitors to these cafes are their potential users. Of course they still have to work on attracting the audience towards their website in competition with many foreign sites.

ETC claims that it has improved its Internet service introducing broadband width at cheaper price ranges. Some media houses say that the price is too high for national businesses. Yet others claim the price is very encouraging to start using the technology. It seems that the media houses need to choose the affordable price within ETC's price range.

The interviewee from *The Daily Monitor* claims that the quality of his online newspaper is not up to the expected standard because his newspaper sees the online edition as an extra service offered to their readers. As it is not included in the main activities of the media house, the necessary manpower is not assigned. This case is similar with other news organizations. Obviously this affects the online publication's quality and it is such a scenario that Pavlik (2001: 5) describes when he says some consider the online edition as

an extension of their existing activities and they tend to take audio and video as irrelevant – particularly if they are print-based.

It seems that the newspaper publish online just to maintain their existence on the Internet, although they do not have the adequate manpower and finance to run an online newspaper. This is highly related to the focus the media houses give to their online publication. As mentioned earlier (section 4.2.2.3), *ENA* did not assign enough resources for upgrading its server, until recently.

Amharic font is presented as one obstacle. Since it is not part of Unicode characters, users have to go an extra mile to get the articles if they don't have the right program. Most of the Amharic website avail programs to download for readers who do not have Amharic fonts on their computer. This is a constructive measure taken by the web papers to make their articles accessible.

The type and quality of the parent media also significantly influence on the quality of the online newspapers. As mentioned earlier, all the material for the online publication come from either the newspapers or the broadcasting media. For the print media, as one of the interviewees indicated, it was difficult to get audio material, because they don't usually produce such content. For a weekly newspaper, updating the online newspaper more frequently is a challenge, as immediacy requires daily news production. The print media have to make an effort to include multimedia items, and the weeklies must update their website more frequently. Once again, this shows that the content and immediacy depends on the content and schedule of the parent newspaper.

Shortage of skilled manpower was also raised as a problem. The interviewee from *Sub Saharan Informer* said the professionals who could take some of the task are not there. Such problems could have been tackled by giving training. However, he found it difficult to keep them working for his newspaper after training them because “they are going to the greener pasture”. The media houses do not have the capacity to pay enough to keep their IT professionals. This is related to the financial problem mentioned earlier. This factor is also apparent in the quality of Scandinavian countries online newspapers (Engebretsen,

2006a). In fact it is not a problem unique to the media industry. Many other sectors are facing high staff turnover, which may have an impact on the activities of the organizations.

The editorial policy also influence on the quality of the Ethiopian online newspapers. Studies conducted in Slovenia and Scandinavia (Oblak, 2005: 103; Engebretsen, 2006a: 16) reached similar conclusions. *ENA* for instance does not alter the top news even for weeks unless the editorial board orders to change it.

Indeed, all the other determinants of the quality of the online newspaper are linked to editorial decisions, which in turn is the responsibility of the editorial board of the media house, which is the top management and decisive body. Based on the available resources, the editorial board decides whether to run the online version independently of the printed paper, allocate sufficient budgetary resources and qualified staff. All these elements have an impact on the quality of the Ethiopian online publications.

Chapter Five

5. Summary And Conclusion

5.1. Summary

The main purpose of the present research was to study how newspapers in Ethiopia use the Internet technology to publish stories, assuming that the state of online newspapers is significantly related to their usage of the technology. Subordinate aims were to (1) map out all Ethiopian online newspapers; (2) study how online newspapers utilize the Internet's potential; (3) identify factors that determine the quality of the online newspapers; and (4) examine if running an online newspaper brings about any change to the print edition and the newsroom practices.

A study of the online publications of a country is an indication on how the country is coping up with the present information communication technology. In the Ethiopian context where there is hardly any previous research in the area, studying online newspapers in particular gives new knowledge and serves as a foundation for further research. The media outlets can also use the analysis of the present study as a feedback on their online publications.

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were followed in the study. Content analysis and semi-structured interviews were the instruments applied to collect data. Two MA students of Journalism and Communication coded the content of nine online newspapers that have a print equivalent as well as websites of *ENA* and *ERTA* for about a month. Interviews were subsequently conducted with six editorial staff and two personnel who update the news sites.

The data were used to analyze Ethiopian online newspapers against general standards of online newspapers discussed in chapter two. Online newspaper genres, particularly the cybergenre model of Ihlström and Åkesson (2004), were used to describe the state of Ethiopian online newspapers. The cybergenre model of Ihlström and Åkesson helps to identify the state of an online newspaper providing content, form and functionality of the different online newspapers genres.

Based on their form content and functionality, the studied online newspapers fall in the *replicated* and *variant* genres (Ihlström and Åkesson 2004). *The Sub Saharan Informer*, *ENA*, *ERTA*, and *Capital* belong to the *replicated genre*. *Reporter* (both English and Amharic), *Addis Admass*, *Addis Zemen*, *Ethiopian Herald*, *The Daily Monitor*, and *Addis Fortune* are of the *variant genre*, since they have at least the searching functionality (Ihlström and Åkesson 2004). Only *Ethiopian Reporter* and *Addis Admass* show an effort to make their online publication more than a duplication of the print media by adopting interactive elements.

The online editions do not threaten Ethiopian newspapers. Rather they contribute to the printed editions through advertisement. In addition, although very few, there are newspapers who produce content for their print edition based on ideas from the website. However, Ethiopian online newspapers present the telecommunication infrastructure and the very limited number of Internet users in the country as a challenge.

The main factors that affect the quality of Ethiopian online newspapers are consideration of the online edition as an extended service by the media houses, inadequate resources, type and quality of the media houses, and the editorial policy of the media houses.

5.2. Conclusion

Internet caters for new ways of using mass communication. Traditional or conventional media such as newspapers, television and radio converge in this new medium. It also has limitations as a medium for dissemination of journalistic material. A customized news site can expose readers or audiences only to a limited range of information. Audiences may misuse discussion forums and other platforms. Journalists may not have the skills to properly utilize the medium. There are also some ethical issues that may arise as the Internet can blur the distinction between advertisements and editorial content.

Nevertheless, Internet opens up new opportunities for the news industry. It is a cheap means of disseminating information that enables the media business to reach a wide audience in a short time. It holds the features of the conventional media in addition to its own new qualities. Both interpersonal and mass communications are present in a well-

running online publication, as it has potential for true involvement of audiences. Moreover, Internet makes it possible to continuously update the news and provide links to background information and in-depth analysis to contextualize the news item. These features of the Internet can also enhance journalism. Immediate provision of news, active discussion forums, and provision of context and analysis are tools that journalists can borrow from the Internet to better enact their watchdog role. However, as this study shows, few Ethiopian newspapers make use of the Internet as a publishing tool, and those who do, are not utilizing the Internet to a full extent.

There are around 33 Ethiopian online newspapers and of these 19 are web-only newspapers. The web-only newspapers are published mainly from Europe and North America and some of them are not accessible in Ethiopia (since May 2006). Some of the web-only newspapers accuse the government for blocking them, while the government disregards the accusation (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2006: Internet). Blocking web sites can have a negative impact on free speech and open debate on the Internet.

11 Ethiopian newspapers have online editions. Each online newspaper has its own traits that differentiate it from the others. A common feature, however, is that all of them copy the content of their print version to the web without making any changes. As Mudhi (2004: 328) argues, copying the content of the print to the website is an important initial stage for free expression. The online editions are expected to gradually grow out of that and begin to produce content exploiting the capabilities the technology offers.

The newspapers take their online editions as extensions of the printed papers and it is affecting the quality of the online edition. As the online editions follow the print's schedule they lack immediacy. Pictures are missing from some of the websites because of the papers do not usually carry pictures. This is evident on how the quality of the parent media house (the print edition in this case) is affecting the quality of the Ethiopian online newspapers.

Ethiopian online newspapers are barely interactive. It looks as if the online newspapers are reluctant to create discussion forums or utilize the tools they already have. The newspapers claim that they are hindered by the reader's interest and capacity. However, they confirmed

that readers show interest to participate in discussions and debate. As discussed in section 2.3.2, the media's interest to involve readers is related to the gate-keeping role. The lack of interactive elements in the Ethiopian online newspapers might have resulted from the newspaper's interest to maintain the role of an information provider. Further research is required to find out the real reason for the lack of interactivity on Ethiopian online newspapers.

Most of the online newspapers have archives and search potentials, but the tools are less functional. Moreover the newspapers are devoid of hyperlinks and multimedia elements. Such tools can potentially enhance journalism by giving in-depth background information and analysis. But the Ethiopian online newspapers have not yet started utilizing them. This is partly due to capacity problems. The media houses are not equipped with enough staff to handle their online editions.

The study reveals that Ethiopian online newspapers are challenged by the country's poor telecommunication infrastructure and bandwidth, and the absence of e-commerce. It is true that these elements can be discouraging for the online publication to go forward. However, they are not advanced even up to the level that the existing infrastructure allows them. This is mainly because most of the newspapers do not give adequate attention to the online edition, nor do they allocate sufficient budgets and human resources. They publish online just to maintain a website.

Although the online newspapers do not currently utilize the Internet resources at their disposals, having an online edition by itself can be considered a starting point. It is from the initial stage where the online newspapers only copy contents from their print version that they move to fully exploit the Internet's capability for better journalism. Ethiopian online newspapers have a long way to go to reach that stage. However, the future is not gloomy. Most of the newspapers seem to have a plan to revamp their online publications and that effort may put the online newspapers one step ahead.

5.3. Further research

The research has provided a foundation for further research in the area of online newspapers or new medium in Ethiopia. Further research should also be directed in the area of web-only newspaper that this research barely touches; (1) analysis of audience or user reception, which is not addressed in the present research; (2) a longitudinal study of similar subjects to show the progress of Ethiopian online newspapers; and (3) an ethnographic newsroom study to see how journalistic methods are changed in the light of online technologies and the new media. Research in these areas is important for the development of online newspapers and usage of new technology for the enhancement of the journalistic craft in Ethiopia.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethiopian online newspapers owned by media houses in Ethiopia

Table 4.3: Ethiopian online newspapers with equivalent print or broadcasting media

No.	Name of media	Adress	Content	Location	Language
1.	Abiytawi Democracy	www.eprdforgans.org	General	Addis Ababa	Amharic
2.	Addis Admass	www.addisadmass.com	General	Addis Ababa	Amharic
3.	Capital	www.capitalethiopia.com	General	Addis Ababa	English
4.	Ethio Sports	www.ethiosports.com	Sport	Addis Ababa	Amharic
5.	Fortune	www.addisfortune.com	General content	Addis Ababa	English
6.	Reporter English	www.ethiopianreporter.com	General content	Addis Ababa	English
7.	Reporter Amharic	www.ethiopianreporter.com	General	Addis Ababa	Amharic
8.	Sub-Saharan Informer	www.ssinformer.com	General	Addis Ababa	English- Slettet:
9.	The daily Monitor	www.theafricanmonitor.com	General	Addis Ababa	English
10.	The Ethiopian Herald	www.ethpress.gov.et	General	Addis Ababa	English
11.	Addis Zemen	www.ethpress.gov.et	General	Addis Ababa	Amharic
12.	Radio fana	http://www.radiofana.com/	General	Addis Ababa	Amharic
13.	Walta information center	http://www.waltainfo.com/	General	Addis Ababa	English and Amharic
14.	ENA	www.ena.gov.et	General	Addis Ababa	Amharic

Appendix 2: Ethiopian online newspapers and web logs

Table 4.1: Ethiopian online-only newspapers

No.	Name	Address	Content	Location	Language
1.	Addis Voice	www.addisvoice.com	Not accessible		
2.	Aiga forum	www.aigaforum.com	General		English
3.	Creative SELEDA	http://seleda.com	Entertainment		English
4.	CyberEthiopia	http://www.cyberethiopia.net/	General	Geneva, Switzerland	Amharic & English
5.	Deki Alula Ethiopian online newsletter	http://www.dekialula.com/	General		English
6.	EMF	www.ethioforum.org	Not accessible		
7.	Ethio Media	www.ethiomedia.com	General	Seattle, USA	
8.	EthioIndex	www.ethioindex.com	News links		
9.	Ethiopia daily	http://www.ethiopiadaily.com/	Syndicated news		
10.	Ethiopia First	www.ethiopiafirst.com	General		English
11.	Ethiopian News Headline	www.news.com.et	Not accessible		
12.	Ethiopian Review	http://ethiopianreview.com	Not accessible		
13.	Ethiox.com	http://ethiox.com	Not accessible		
14.	EthioZena	http://pfr.ethiozena.net	Not accessible		
15.	Finote Democracy Radio	www.finote.org	Not accessible		
16.	Media ethiopia.com	www.ethiopia.com	General		English
17.	Tigrai Online	www.tigraionline.com	General		
18.	TZTA	http://www.tzta.ca/tzta/	General	Toronto Canada	English amharic
19.	Tecola Hagos	www.tecolahagos.com	Politics	Washington	

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Appendix 3:Ethiopian blogs

Table 4.2: Ethiopian web logs

	Name	Address Loc	ation	Language
1.	Addis Ferenji	- Addis Ferenji	A.A.	English
2.	Enset	http://enset.blogspot.com	Not accessible	
3.	Ethio Pundit	http://ethiopundit.blogspot.com	Not accessible	
4.	Ethiopian Politics	http://ethiopianpolitics.blogspot.com	Not accessible	
5.	Ethio-Zagol	www.seminawork.blogspot.com	Not accessible	
6.	Meskel Square	www.meskelsquare.com	A.A	English
7.	Nazret	www.nazret.com	Not accessible	
8.	Weichegud!	http://weichegud.blogspot.com	Not accessible	
9.	Quatero	www.quatero.net	Not accessible	
10.	Debteraw	www.debteraw.com	Not accessible	



Appendix 4: Addis Zemen's website

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Figure 4:3 Addis Zemen's website when users choose to access archived stories.
Source: www.ethpress.gov.et

Appendix 5: Content analysis coding sheet

This coding sheet is designed to analyze the content of **12** Ethiopian online newspapers. The result will be used for the analysis on the use of Internet as a medium of disseminating information by Ethiopian newspapers.

Nine online newspapers that have equivalent print version, ENA and ERTA websites and are included in the study.

Instruction

The unit of the analysis is the whole news website. Depending on the nature of the category, coders will take items from the homepage or any other place in the websites. For ‘Text’ and ‘Multimedia’, systematic random sampling will be used. The sample size for text is eight while Multimedia include two pictures, one graphics, one audio and one video. Starting from the first, every third item will be taken.

Date of coding _____

Name of coder _____ Date of online publication _____

1.	General Content of the website (At the homepage)		
1.1.	Text		
1.1.1.	News	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.2.	Entertainment	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.3.	Commercial		
1.1.3.1.	The newspapers commercial	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.3.2.	External commercial	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.4.	Feature story	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

1.2.	Multimedia		
1.2.1.	Picture	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.2.	Graphics	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.3.	Audio	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.4.	Video	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.3.	Chat room	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.	Bulletin board	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.5.	E-mail	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.6.	Archive	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.7.	Readers polls available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.7.1.	TYPE: Polls on news item <input type="checkbox"/> poll entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
1.8.			
1.9.	Search engine	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
1.10.	Other		
2.	Interactivity (any where in the website)		
2.1.	Responsiveness		
2.1.1.	Potential responsiveness : e-mail address to news desk or editorial	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

	staff		
2.1.1.1.	All editorials e-mail addresses are available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
2.1.1.2.	The signatures are click able	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
2.1.2.	Actual responsiveness: The contacted person from the publication responded to the e-mail sent	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.	Interpersonal interaction		
2.2.1.	Moderated chat rooms available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.2.	Un moderated chat rooms available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Immediacy		
3.1.1.	Publication date available -	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.2.	Update time: more than once a day <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
3.1.3.	Prioritizing new items	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.4.	TYPE: New item on the top <input type="checkbox"/> New item highlighted <input type="checkbox"/> New item mixed with other <input type="checkbox"/>		
4.	Linkage (any where in the website)		
4.1.1.	Internal		
4.1.1.1.	Navigational link that guide the user around the site available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

4.1.1.2.	Link to other part of story	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
4.1.1.3.	Link to multimedia element	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
4.1.1.4.	Link to Archive	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
4.1.2.	External		
4.1.2.1.	Link to other websites	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
4.1.2.2.	Type of websites linked	Governmental <input type="checkbox"/>	Educational <input type="checkbox"/>
		Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		News organization <input type="checkbox"/>	others <input type="checkbox"/>
4.1.2.3.	Warning regarding the external link	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
4.1.2.4.	If yes specify(describe the kind of warning the site regarding the content of the external link)		
5.	Text (at the home page)		
5.1.	Text 1		
5.1.1.	Date of publication on the web		
5.1.2.	Date of publication on the print		
5.1.3.	Head line		
5.1.4.	Organization of information Linear <input type="checkbox"/> Non linear <input type="checkbox"/>		
5.1.5.	If not linear how many sub articles		

5.1.6.	Text length _____ words		
5.1.7.	Issue covered Politics <input type="checkbox"/> Social <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Sport <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
5.1.8.	Linked to Sub articles	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.1.9.	Linked Multimedia	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.1.10.	Linked to external websites	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.1.11.	Origin printed version <input type="checkbox"/> other news organization <input type="checkbox"/>		
5.1.11.1.	If the origin is print version, copied <input type="checkbox"/> modified <input type="checkbox"/>		
5.1.11.2.	If modified, what kind of change Shortened <input type="checkbox"/> Deconstructed <input type="checkbox"/> other <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
5.1.12.	Source	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.1.13.	Web only story	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2.	Text 2		
5.2.1.	Date of publication on the web		
5.2.2.	Date of publication on the print		
5.2.3.	Head line		
5.2.4.	Organization of information Linear <input type="checkbox"/> Non linear <input type="checkbox"/>		
5.2.5.	If not linear how many sub articles		
5.2.6.	Text length _____ words		

5.2.7.	Issue covered	Politics <input type="checkbox"/>	Social <input type="checkbox"/>	Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Sport <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Other <input type="checkbox"/>	specify			
5.2.8.	Linked to Sub articles			YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.2.9.	Linked Multimedia			YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.2.10.	Linked to external websites			YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.2.11.	Origin	printed version <input type="checkbox"/>	other news organization <input type="checkbox"/>			
5.2.11.1.	If the origin is print version, copied <input type="checkbox"/>	modified <input type="checkbox"/>				
5.2.11.2.	If modified, what kind of change	Shortened <input type="checkbox"/>	Deconstructed <input type="checkbox"/>			
		other <input type="checkbox"/>	specify			
5.2.12.	Source			YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.2.13.	Web only story			YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.3.	Text 3					
5.3.1.	Date of publication on the web					
5.3.2.	Date of publication on the print					
5.3.3.	Head line					
5.3.4.	Organization of information	Linear <input type="checkbox"/>	Non linear <input type="checkbox"/>			
5.3.5.	If not linear how many sub articles					
5.3.6.	Text length _____ words					
5.3.7.	Issue covered	Politics <input type="checkbox"/>	Social <input type="checkbox"/>	Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Sport <input type="checkbox"/>	

	Other <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
5.3.8.	Linked to Sub articles	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3.9.	Linked Multimedia	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3.10.	Linked to external websites	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3.11.	Origin printed version <input type="checkbox"/> other news organization <input type="checkbox"/>		
5.3.11.1.	If the origin is print version, copied <input type="checkbox"/> modified <input type="checkbox"/>		
5.3.11.2.	If modified, what kind of change Shortened <input type="checkbox"/> Deconstructed <input type="checkbox"/> other <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
5.3.12.	Source	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3.13.	Web only story	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.4.	Text 4		
5.4.1.	Date of publication on the web		
5.4.2.	Date of publication on the print		
5.4.3.	Head line		
5.4.4.	Organization of information Linear <input type="checkbox"/> Non linear <input type="checkbox"/>		
5.4.5.	If not linear how many sub articles		
5.4.6.	Text length _____ words		
5.4.7.	Issue covered Politics <input type="checkbox"/> Social <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Sport <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> specify		

5.7.11.	Origin	printed version <input type="checkbox"/>	other news organization <input type="checkbox"/>
5.7.11.1.	If the origin is print version, copied <input type="checkbox"/> modified <input type="checkbox"/>		
5.7.11.2.	If modified, what kind of change Shortened <input type="checkbox"/> Deconstructed <input type="checkbox"/> other <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
5.7.12.	Source	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.7.13.	Web only story	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.8.	Text 8		
5.8.1.	Date of publication on the web		
5.8.2.	Date of publication on the print		
5.8.3.	Head line		
5.8.4.	Organization of information	Linear <input type="checkbox"/>	Non linear <input type="checkbox"/>
5.8.5.	If not linear how many sub articles		
5.8.6.	Text length _____ words		
5.8.7.	Issue covered	Politics <input type="checkbox"/>	Social <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Sport <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> specify
5.8.8.	Linked to Sub articles	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.8.9.	Linked Multimedia	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.8.10.	Linked to external websites	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.8.11.	Origin	printed version <input type="checkbox"/>	other news organization <input type="checkbox"/>

5.8.11.1.	If the origin is print version, copied <input type="checkbox"/> modified <input type="checkbox"/>		
5.8.11.2.	If modified, what kind of change Shortened <input type="checkbox"/> Deconstructed <input type="checkbox"/> other <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
5.8.12.	Source	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5.8.13.	Web only story	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Multimedia (at the home page)		
6.1.	Picture (Moving picture Animated picture)		
6.1.1.	Picture 1		
6.1.1.1.	Contextual	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6.1.1.2.	Format JPEG <input type="checkbox"/> Bitmap <input type="checkbox"/> Gif <input type="checkbox"/> others <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
6.1.1.3.	Proximity Close to the text <input type="checkbox"/> Randomly at the corner of the window <input type="checkbox"/>		
6.1.1.4.	Possibility of resizing	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6.1.1.5.	Caption available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6.1.2.	Picture 2		
6.1.2.1.	Contextual	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6.1.2.2.	Format JPEG <input type="checkbox"/> Bitmap <input type="checkbox"/> Gif <input type="checkbox"/> others <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
6.1.2.3.	Proximity Close to the text <input type="checkbox"/> Randomly at the corner of the window <input type="checkbox"/>		
6.1.2.4.	Possibility of resizing	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

6.1.2.5.	Caption available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6.2.	Graphics		
6.2.1.	Contextual	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6.2.2.	Format JPEG <input type="checkbox"/> Bitmap <input type="checkbox"/> Gif <input type="checkbox"/> others <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
6.2.3.	Proximity Close to the text <input type="checkbox"/> Randomly at the corner of the window <input type="checkbox"/>		
6.2.4.	Size ____pixel by ____pixel		
6.2.5.	Caption available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6.3.	Audio		
6.3.1.	Contextual	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6.3.2.	Format Real Player <input type="checkbox"/> QuickTime <input type="checkbox"/> WMA <input type="checkbox"/> MP3 <input type="checkbox"/> MPEG <input type="checkbox"/> other <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
6.3.3.	Proximity Close to the text <input type="checkbox"/> Randomly at the corner of the window <input type="checkbox"/>		
6.4.	Video		
6.4.1.	Contextual	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6.4.2.	Format Rea Player <input type="checkbox"/> QuickTime <input type="checkbox"/> WMV <input type="checkbox"/> MPEG <input type="checkbox"/> others <input type="checkbox"/> specify		
6.4.3.	Proximity Close to the text <input type="checkbox"/> Randomly at the corner of the window <input type="checkbox"/>		
7.	Archive (at the homepage)		

7.1.	Search engine available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
7.2.	Today's news available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
7.3.	TYPE: The whole paper <input type="checkbox"/> Text only <input type="checkbox"/> Picture available <input type="checkbox"/> Graphics available <input type="checkbox"/> Audio available <input type="checkbox"/> Video available <input type="checkbox"/>		
7.4.	Organization By subject <input type="checkbox"/> chronological <input type="checkbox"/>		
8.	Global reach (any where in the website)		
8.1.	International news available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Flexible delivery platform		
9.1.1.	Articles in pdf format available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.2.	Printer friendly version available	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.3.	If other accessory specify		
10.	Subscription		
10.1.	Subscription for free	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
10.2.	Subscription for payment	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 6: Content analysis coding book

This coding book is designed to give explanation on some of the terms used in the content analysis coding sheet.

Reliability of the coders was checked at the end of the first and third week using the percentage method. Agreements of the two coders on each variable are placed in bracket at the end of each explanation.

1. Text: stories or various news items posted on the news sites. (100%)
2. Entertainment: various entertaining elements under separate 'entertainment' menu or icon. (96%)
3. Commercial: advertisement on the website.
 - 3.1. The newspapers commercial: self-promotion or advertisement of the parent media house. (100%)
 - 3.2. External commercial: advertisements of organizations other than the parent media house. (100%)
4. Feature story: availability of different kind of articles that are different from hard news stories. (95%)
5. Multimedia: availability of elements including pictures, graphics, audio, and video. (100%)
6. Interactivity: availability of tools that facilitate interaction between readers and the newspapers and among the readers. (94%)
7. Responsiveness: the tendency of the news sites to communicate.
 - 7.1. Potential responsiveness: the availability of tools (e-mail address) that allows the site to get feedback. (93%)
 - 7.2. Actual responsiveness: when the web site responds to the e-mails sent from the coders. (97%)
8. Chat room: platform that enables readers to be engaged in an interpersonal communication on the web. (100%)
9. Poll: platform for users to vote on certain issue (96%)
 - 9.1. Poll on entertainment: if the topic selected is of entertaining nature. (100%)
 - 9.2. Poll on news item: if the topic is drawn from news item Archive: storage for previous dates articles (94%)

10. Bulletin board: platform that enables users to post message on the web (98%)
11. Moderated chat rooms available: a chat room with moderator. (96%)
12. Un moderated chat rooms: chat room without moderator. (95%)
13. Update time: how frequently the news site is updated. (96%)
14. Linkage: hyperlinks on the websites that are connected to texts, multimedia or other elements on the website.
 - 14.1. Internal link: links to contents within the website. (98%)
 - 14.2. External link: links to contents outside the website. (97%)
15. Type of websites linked (98%)
 - 15.1. Governmental when the link is made to governmental organization.
 - 15.2. Educational: when the link is made to educational institution.
 - 15.3. Commercial: When the link is made to business organizations.
 - 15.4. NGO: when it is linked to the non-governmental organizations.
 - 15.5. News organization: when the link is made to news organizations.
16. Organization of information: the writing style followed on the web (100%)
 - 16.1. Linear: a story is written in a paper-based manner with out being divided in to sub stories.
 - 16.2. Non-linear: when a story is told in different parts and linked together using hypertexts.
17. Origin: source of the story. (97%)
 - 17.1. Printed version: when it is copied from the print edition.
 - 17.2. Other news organization: when the story is taken from other news organization.
18. Picture: availability of photographs on the web
 - 18.1. Contextual: when the picture is relevant to the story presented. (100%)
 - 18.2. Format: the file format of the pictures. (100%)
 - 18.3. Proximity: the position of the picture on the screen. (100%)
 - 18.4. Caption: availability of description of the picture. (98%)
 - 18.5. Possibility of resizing: the possibility for the users to enlarge or minimize pictures.(97%)
19. Immediacy: freshness of the news (98%)
20. Archive: storage for previous dates articles (94%)

- 20.1. Search engine available: if users are able to search archives.(95%)
- 20.2. Today's news available: if current news is available in the archive (97%)
- 20.3. TYPE: how the archive is organized (98%)
 - 20.3.1. The whole paper: if the whole newspaper is archived
 - 20.3.2. Text only: if only articles are archived.
 - 20.3.3. Picture available: if the pictures are archived.
- 20.4. Organization: arrangement of material in the archive. (100%)
 - 20.4.1. By subject: if the archive is arranged by theme.
 - 20.4.2. Chronological: if the archive is arranged by time.
- 21. Global reach: the availability of global or international news. (98%)
- 22. Flexible delivery platform: different choices given to users.
 - 22.1. Articles in pdf format available: if users are provided with articles in pdf format. (98%)
 - 22.2. Printer friendly version available: if users are provided with articles that are rearranged for printing (96%)
- 23. Subscription: the requirement needed to access the website (100%)
 - 23.1. Subscription for free: when the sites does not require payment or registration to access it (98%)
 - 23.2. Subscription for payment: when users are required to pay to access the website. (96%)

Appendix 7: Interview guide

The information from this interview is going to be used for the Master's Thesis study on the Ethiopian Newspaper's Website

News Organization _____ Date _____

1) Personal profile

1. Name of interviewee
2. Sex
3. Position
4. Educational background
5. Experience in the media house in years
6. Age range 20-35 35- 45 above 45

2) General

1. How do you see the Internet as a media?
2. How do you assess Internet's potential to as a medium in Ethiopia?
3. How do you see online journalism in Ethiopia?

3) Why

1. Why is your paper publishing online?
2. Who is your target?
3. What are the advantages of going online?

4) Running online newspaper

1. Do you have strategic plan regarding the online publication?
2. What was your anticipation when you launch online newspaper?
3. Have you hired additional staff to work on the online edition?
4. If not who is taking care of the job?

5) Infrastructure

1. Have you found the Internet facility enabling to add new technologies?
2. Have you faced lack of skilled professionals in the area of Internet and or online journalism?
3. Any other infrastructural problem?

6) Product

1. How do you assess your online publication?
2. What is your observation about the journalism on your website?

7) Content

1. Is your web content different from the print one? If yes why?
2. Do you have web only news?
3. Do you believe that news/articles should be treated differently on the web?
4. How often is your website updated?
5. Why does your website lack pictures?

6. Do you have regulation as to how many pictures should be on the front page?
7. Why are you not using the multimedia technologies?
8. Do you provide links to other news organization?
9. If no, why?
10. How do you see link's contribution to the media?
11. Do you fear that readers will be diverted to other media because of external link?
12. Do you provide e-mail address of the all journalists?
13. Are all journalists willing to reveal their e-mail?
14. Do you respond to readers' e-mails?
15. What do you aim to achieve with the discussion forums?
16. How far have you succeeded?
17. Do you have regulations regarding e-mails, links, forums or any other content on the web?
18. Why do you present archive?
19. Why do you register?
20. Have you ever provided special service to the registered users?

8) Response

1. How do you get the response in terms of advertisement?
2. Have you ever assessed the user friendliness of your website
3. Is the paper getting any money out of the website?
4. Are you in a competition with other similar news sites?

9) Effect

1. Have you observed any change in the print after launching online edition?
2. Do the journalists have more work now because of the website?

10) Challenges

1. What are the challenges or running online newspaper?
2. What are the things that are affecting the quality of your online newspaper?

11) Prospect

1. Do you plan any change on the website in the near future?

**Space for
Appendix 8: Interviewees' profile**

Table 4.9: Profile of Interviewees

Table 4.4: Ethiopian online newspapers' general content

	<i>News</i>	<i>Feature story</i>	<i>Entertainment</i>	<i>Picture</i>	<i>Multimedia</i>	<i>update frequency</i>	<i>Printer friendly</i>	<i>pdf format</i>	<i>self promotion</i>	<i>external ads</i>	<i>Search</i>	<i>Archive</i>	<i>subscription</i>
Reporter English	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		bi-weekly			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Reporter Amharic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		bi-weekly			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Addis Zemen	Yes	Yes	Yes			daily			Yes		Yes	Yes	
Ethiopian Herald	Yes	Yes	Yes			daily			Yes		Yes	Yes	
The Daily Monitor	Yes	Yes		Yes		daily			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
The Sub Saharan Informer	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		weekly			Yes	Yes			
Addis Admass	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		weekly			Yes			Yes	
Fortune	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		weekly			Yes		Yes	Yes	
Capital	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		weekly			Yes			Yes	
ENA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		continuous			Yes	Yes		Yes	
ERTA	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	daily			Yes				
Total	11	10	10	9	1		0	0	11	5	6	9	0

Source: Content analysis of the present research

Appendix 8: Interviewees' profile

Table 4.9: Profile of Interviewees

	Name	sex	Educational backgrounds	media house	current position
1	Tefera Demese	Male	BA in Accounting	Addis Admas	Deputy director
2	Abera W.Kidan	Male	BA in English	The daily Monitor	Editor in chief
3	Hiwot Mossie	Female	Diploma in secretarial science	The daily Monitor	Layout designer and updates website
4	Wondimagegn Terefe	Male	BSC in electrical engineering	ENA	Computer section head and web administrator
5	Solomon Betre	Male	Diploma in electrical engineering	Addis Zemen and The Ethiopian Herald	responsible for the website and computer network
6	Eyerusalem Hailu	Female	Diploma in secretarial science	Addis Zemen and The Ethiopian Herald	update the website
7	Habtamu Assefa	Male	BSC in Computer Science and Certificate in Software Engineering	Reporter Amharic and English	Department Head and Web Administrator
8	Joseph Aboulfaki	Male	BSC in Information Technology	Sub Saharan informer	Founder and Manager

Table 4.7: Ethiopian Online newspapers' interactive elements

	<i>E-mail</i>	<i>Discussion forum</i>	<i>chat room</i>	<i>bulletin board</i>	<i>Opinion poll</i>
Reporter English	Yes	Yes			
Reporter Amharic	Yes	Yes			
Addis Zemen	Yes				Yes
Ethiopian Herald	Yes				Yes
The Daily Monitor	Yes				
The Sub Saharan Informer	Yes				
Addis Admass	Yes	Yes			Yes
Fortune	Yes				
Capital	Yes				
ENA	Yes				
ERTA	Yes				
Total	11	3	0	0	3

Source: Content analysis of the present research

Table 4.8: Ethiopian online newspapers' linkage

	<i>navigational link</i>	<i>link to full story</i>	<i>Link to sub story</i>	<i>link to background</i>	<i>link to multimedia</i>	<i>external link</i>
Reporter English	Yes	Yes				Yes
Reporter Amharic	Yes	Yes				Yes
Addis Zemen	Yes	Yes				
Ethiopian Herald	Yes	Yes				
The Daily Monitor	Yes	Yes				
The Sub Saharan Informer	Yes	Yes				Yes
Addis Admass	Yes	Yes				
Fortune	Yes	Yes				
Capital	Yes	Yes				
ENA	Yes	Yes				Yes
ERTA	Yes	Yes			1	
Total	11	11	0	0	1	4

Source: Content analysis of the present research