



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**

**The Framing of Tigray Conflict: The Case of ETV 57 and TTV Evening
Amharic News**

by

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**A Thesis Submitted to Addis Ababa University Graduate School of
Journalism and Communication, in partial fulfillment for the requirements
of Master of Arts Degree in Multimedia**

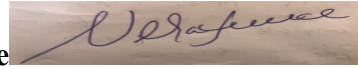
**September, 2021
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

DECLARATION

I Nega Feleke, hereby declare that this thesis, which is entitled “**The Framing of Tigray Conflict: The Case of ETV 57 and TTV Evening Amharic News**” is my original work, and has not been submitted for any degree in any other University or institution; and that all sources of material used for the thesis have dully been acknowledged.

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Signature

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my thanks to the Almighty God, who is the Alpha - Omega and His only begotten Son Lord Jesus Christ who saved us from eternal curse!

Next, in spite of the fact it was the endeavor of my day and night struggle, I will never forget the efforts of the following people. My beloved wife, Elisabeth Alemayehu and my daughter El-Shalom Nega, how can I get enough words to pay to your contribution? Any ways, no words, but I love you so much!! My mom Eteye (W/o Askale Belate), I cannot forget your hardship in my life.

It gives me a great pleasure in acknowledging the support and help of my adviser Ato Amanuel Abdissa, without his guidance, this work would have been difficult to finalize. The other contributor in various ways Dr. Andrew G. Steele, the former head of International Communication Training Institute (ICTI), and my boss and IBRA-Africa (International Broadcasting Radio Association – Africa) Director Mr. Jan-Erick Nyman, I would like to express the deepest gratitude to you. My brothers, Temesgen and Ashenafi, my beloved sister Wudenesh (Teale) Feleke thank you for your support, moral encouragement and prayer.

I would like to give deep thanks to all Addis Ababa University instructors whom are teaching in School of Journalism and Communication – Multimedia Department. My all - office colleagues, thank you to your prayers. My all-class mates, thank you for your friendship and help.

I am also thankful to ETV and TTV Amharic journalists whom contributed by giving their answer to my guide line questions in their short period of time.

Nega Feleke

ACRONYMS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
ATV	Amhara Television
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CNN	Cable News Network
E.C	Ethiopian Calendar
EBC	Ethiopia Broadcasting Corporation
ENA	Ethiopia News Agency
EPRDF	Ethiopia Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front
ESAT	Ethiopia Satellite Television
ETV	Ethiopian Television
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GERD	Great Ethiopia Renaissance Dam
HOF	House of Federation
KMN	Kush Media Network
METEC	Metal and Engineering Corporation
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NRM	National Resistance Movement
OBN	Oromia Broadcasting Corporation
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OMN	Oromo Media Network
OPDO	Oromo People's Democratic Organization
PhD.	Doctor of Philosophy
PM.	Prime Minister
PMO	Prime Minister Office
PP	Prosperity Party
SNNPR	South Nation Nationalities and Peoples' Region
SRTV	Somali Region Television
TMH	Tigray Media House
TMMA	Tigray Mass Media Agency
TPLF	Tigray People Liberation Front
TRS	Tigray Regional State
TSF	Tigray Special Force
TTV	Tigray Television
USA	United States of America

ABSTRACT

The study aims at analyzing the contents of ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news programs on Tigray conflict aired between September - November, 2020. It specifically focuses on examining the contents of ETV 57 and TTV Amharic evening news in order to determine whether the narratives have contributed to the escalation or de-escalation of the conflict. It also pays particular attention to identifying the news sources the selected media outlets used before the break out of the conflict as well as during the conflict, examining the tone of the two news outlets, and identifying the dominant frames employed by the two media outlets. The study employed framing theory as its theoretical framework to inform the study. The researcher used mixed methodology to assess the specific research question answer. In order to realize the objectives of the study, the study employed both Quantitative and qualitative methods to gather data. The quantitative method has been used to collect data that would help identify tone of the news, the dominant news frames, themes of the news stories and duration of the news. On the other hand, the qualitative method has been used to gather qualitative data by conducting interviews with selected media professionals working in the two media outlets. The interview data have been analyzed in light of the tone of the news narratives, the dominant news frames used in the two media outlets, the themes of the news and duration of the news across the selected outlets. The analysis revealed that TTV Amharic portrayed negative images of federal government and institutions in its news stories. Likewise, ETV 57 depicted the Tigray Regional Government in a negative light. Both media outlets had their own share of contributions to exacerbation of the conflict before and during the break out of the actual conflict. This being the case, however, there was a slight difference between the two selected media outlets. The ETV 57 news narratives had less focus on the war of words before the break out of the actual conflict. But it ratcheted up its polarizing news narratives once the conflict broke out. On the other hand, the TTV Amharic news narratives have consistently focused on fueling the conflict before and after the actual break out of the conflict. Based on the findings, a few pertinent recommendations have been suggested.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will deliver information on the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study. Similarly, research questions, significance of the study, limitations, scope and organization of the study will be part of it.

1.1. Background of the Study

In November 2020, serious armed conflict began between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and one of the regions of the country Tigray Regional Administration (TRA). The federal government of Ethiopia stated,

it has been forced to take rule of law enforcement measures to effectively respond to the unceasing ‘belligerence perpetrated’ by the Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) in violation of the Constitution of the FDRE (Office Of Prime Minister - PMO, para. 2).

However, the Tigray regional state called it is an invasion or “an act of war” (Marishet, 2020).

Although there were several causes to bring and widen the gap between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and the Tigray Regional Administration (TRA). First of all, as Semir (2019) notes that after popular grievances over administrative, political and economic challenges, together with the growing of cyber technology in the country erupted a series of ethnic based riots in the country and pushed the ruling party into reform. Later, Abiy Ahmed (PhD), became the new chairman of the Ethiopian Peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and Prime Minister in April 2018, championed what he dubbed the “politics of addition” (መጋጠሚያ), that calls for the unity of Ethiopians from all walks of life and opening up the political space (Tefera, 2019).

Although all EPRDF parties agreed to reform the political situation of the country, the reform brought an end to Tigray’s ruling party’s dominancy within the ruling coalition, which had been in power since 1991 (Crisis Group, 2020). After Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, purged

many Tigray People Liberation Front's (TPLF) appointees and unified the EPRDF to a new party which is called "Prosperity party" (PP), and TPLF refused to join it (Crisis Group, 2020). The tension had been growing up and the gap between the new party PP and TPLF was widened. Later, after a sudden and unexpected attack on Ethiopian Northern Military Command, which was based in Tigray region, by Tigray Special Forces (TSF) at mid night of November 3, 2020, the Ethiopian government ordered to take power and bring law enforcement in the regional state (Addis Media Ethiopian News , 2020).

During the time, in particular from September - November 2020, the state media Ethiopia Television (ETV) and Tigray Television (TTV) were broadcasting evening news in Amharic language. The researcher intended to assess whether the two media news reporting was intensifying or not the tension in the country regarding on the armed conflict in sampled period of time. In addition the researcher will try to find that the ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news whether they show or not their partisanship in their news program for the federal government of Ethiopia or for Tigray regional government.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The title of this academic research is "The Framing of Tigray Conflict: The Case of ETV 57 and TTV Evening Amharic news".

Conflict news reporting is a serious matter due to its attractive character of the news audience. Nowadays, ethnic violence, religious issues, historical narratives and demand of self-administration can be sensitive causes of conflict in Ethiopia (Bekalu, 2017). Media practitioners are not free from those sensitive issues and they are related with ethnic, religious and historical issues (Fuller, 1996).

The purpose of journalism is to provide people with facts and information (McLeish and Link, 2016). In order to achieve the purpose, journalism's first obligation should be focused on provision of truth (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2007). Adisu (2019) in his study expressed that the media's role is often said to serve the public interest by being a reliable information provider,

a forum for speech and a watchdog of government. That means, it reveals the truth to public based on strong evidences and arguments or discussions reveals the truth to public.

Conflict or war is always newsworthy. Because of war news attracts a large audience and often deeply engages people both emotionally and intellectually, most of the time journalists like to cover war news (Nohrstedt, 2009). Based on their ethnic identity and background opinion, journalists sometimes frame their conflict reporting according to their own news elements.

In the meantime, though there are several studies about media framing on conflict or war in Ethiopia. Melkamu (2020) in his thesis, “The framing of interethnic conflict: The case of the Amhara - Kemant conflict in Amhara and Tigray Regional Television Companies” found that biases have been observed in Ethiopian media when covering the ethno-political conflicts with different frames and different amounts of coverage. Similarly, Mulatu (2017) in the title of “Why Silence? Reporting Internal Conflict in Ethiopian Newspapers” study notes that the media can either show a negative or positive intervention in the escalation of conflicts in a given society/country. Moreover, Adisu (2019) in his thesis identified that the internal conflict reporting in the selected media presented the conflict as unstoppable and did not show the causes and consequences clearly. Further, Getnet (2019) in his study found that the ownership and political ideology of the media has an impact in covering ethnic conflicts. All of the mentioned researchers found that the media bias, escalation, propagation and the impact of ownership have a role in ethnic conflict reporting.

Thus, this researcher assumed that the following gaps must be filled. First, they have not been able to show what the role of media should be when reporting armed conflict between the federal government and a regional state. Second, most of them have focused on comparing two regional state media content. Not the content of state and region media. For instance, Adisu (2019) focused his research on the Oromo Broadcasting Network (OBN) and Somali Region Television (SRTV), Melkamu, (2020) also focused on Amhara Television (ATV) and Tigray Television (TTV). Third, Melkamu, (2020) Adisu (2019), Mulatu (2017) and Getnet (2019) tried to find the media role in conflict between ethnic groups in Ethiopia. Not the media news role while the clash of federal government and regional government had taken place. Fourth,

Mulatu (2017) and Getnet (2019) tried to find the role of print media considering conflict rather than broadcast media.

Thus, this research will find the gap of the media in conflict time and analyze how ETV 57 and Tigray Television (TTV) Amharic news reported the conflict before the war began and when it was underway. Actually, the researcher believe that everybody knew that no body this study will undertake the research to confirm widely held view the research to be supported and demonstrated that is true or not. Furthermore, the study will analyze the news content of the two media and explore the projected role in escalating or deescalating the conflict in Tigray region.

1.3. Objective of the study

1.3.1. General objective

The general objective of the study is to analyze the framing of ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news program on the framing of Tigray war during the period of September - November, 2020.

1.3.2. Specific objectives

- 1.3.2.1. To investigate the news content of ETV 57 and TTV Amharic evening news to escalate or deescalate the war.
- 1.3.2.2. To analyze news sources before and when the war was taking place.
- 1.3.2.3. To examine the tone of the two news outlets.
- 1.3.2.4. To assess the dominant frames employed in the coverage of the war between FDRE and Tigray Regional state.

1.4. Research Questions

To show the coverage of the two media evening Amharic language news programs in the conflict/war between the FDRE and Tigray region, the researcher would raise the following questions.

- How did the ETV 57 and TTV Amharic portray the conflict?
- What were the two media news source before and when the war was taking place?
- How was the tone of ETV 57 and TTV Amharic news?
- What were the dominant news frames in the coverage of ETV 57 and TTV Amharic news on Tigray war?

1.5. Significance of the Study

This research study is the tool to identify, evaluate and understand the existence and activity of the two media institutions. It will help to evaluate and understand their weaknesses and strengths in terms of conflict news reporting. In addition to this, the significance of the study is to determine who will be benefitted from the study and how the audience will get benefit from the findings. This research will also fill knowledge gaps in the area of media framing in conflict news. Moreover, it will show the media coverage and journalistic reporting by showing strengths and weaknesses of two media in order to take measures and perform in a better way. Furthermore, media practitioners will benefit from this study and it will also help to conduct further studies in the area and they may use as the groundwork for their study.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The research proposal focuses on only ETV 57 and TTV Amharic news programs broadcast from September 1 – November 30, 2020. Similarly, the study mainly concentrated on prime-time news, which is transmitted at 7:00 pm and 8:00 pm. ETV 57 has been broadcasting from Monday to Friday, and TTV Amharic is also transmitting all week. Therefore, the scope of this study is the news of Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in both media due to be selected in purposive sampling method.

1.7. Limitation of the study

The study is not examining on ETV or TTV similar or other language programs and program formats which did not focus the war between FDRE and Tigray Regional Administration. Similarly, documentary, press release, interviews, talk show programs , and discussions from two media or other national or international broadcast services will not be covered by this research. Likewise, the limitation of the scope to ETV 57 and TTV Amharic news allowed the comparisons of the two broadly similar programs.

1.8. Organization of the study

The research thesis will have five chapters including this introductory part. The second chapter will be the review of related literature and theoretical framework, the third chapter is the methodology of the study, chapter four presents the analysis and discussion of study, the last one, chapter five is the summary of the findings, and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Background

2.1.1. The Federal Government of Ethiopia

By its very nature, federalism is a form of governance in which power is divided and shared between central government and powerful member states. According to Senayet (2011), “the term ‘federal’ derives from the Latin ‘*Foedius*’ which means covenant” (p.7). The Ethiopian Federal Government is parliamentary and that allows the legislature to exercise oversight and control over the executive (Habib, 2010). In 1991 Ethiopia set up an ethnic federal system. that gave full acknowledgment to ethnic autonomy whilst keeping up the unity of the state. The constitution established a federal government based on ethnic territorial group (Alemu, 2003). The country follows a multiparty federal democracy with legislative authority resting with the government headed by an executive prime minister and the elected House of representatives - 547 members and the House of Federation - 110 members (Embassy of Ethiopia in USA, 2020). The Prime Minister is chosen by the party in power following multi party democratic national and federal state elections which are held every five years (FDRE National Report:5). According to the constitution, both the federal and regional states establish their own institutional organs, legislative, executive and judicial bodies and exercise autonomous power within their sphere of influence (Siraw, 2015). As various authors remarked that the constitution and the federal system encourages regional governments to declare their self-determination and thereby encourage national separation. Siraw (2015) argued that according to Article 39(1) of the Ethiopian constitution, every ethno-territorial community has “an unconditional right to self-determination, including the right to secession.” However, Addisu (2019) agreed in Siraw (2015) argument and he concluded that many Ethiopians support the constitution’s article 39 that gives separation right to ethnic groups. Equally, Ababa (2019) elaborated that in the last three decades, the ethnic-based federal system and its embedded political strategy reinforced ethno-national thoughts and deepened divisions along ethnic lines. Nevertheless, the country is governed by the current constitution and ethnic federalism is the main ideology of the ruling party. Article 62 (9) the constitution of FDRE says “the second

chamber of the state, the House of the Federation has an authority to order Federal intervention if any state, in violation of the constitution, endangers the constitutional order” (Federal Negarit Gazeta, No.1, 1995). The House of Federation may exercise its powers in accordance with Article 62, Sub-Article 9 of the Constitution and Proclamation No. 359 of the Constitution (Federal Negarit Gazeta, No. 1, 1995). Similarly, proclamation No. 359/1995 was a proclamation issued to regulate the federal government intervention in regional states. Under a preliminary proclamation in accordance with sub-article one of Article 51 of the Constitution, the Federal Government is empowered to protect and defend the Constitution.

2.1.2. Regional States in Ethiopia

Ethiopia has eleven regional states (Killil), the two and recently added Sidama and South West Ethiopia Regional States which were created by referendum from South Nation Nationalities and People Region (SNNPR) on November 20, 2019 and September 2021 (Addis, 2019). The FDRE constitution grants the option of different people groups forming their own state and significant powers and responsibilities (Habib, 2010). For instance, regional states have power if “all power not given expressly to the Federal Government alone, or concurrently to the Federal Government and the States are reserved” (Federal Negarit, 1995, Article 52(1)). They can also establish a state administration that best advances self-government (Federal Negarit, 1995, Article 52(2)) and they establish and administer a state police force to maintain public order and peace within state. However, the turmoil escalates every time and conflict is still prevalent at the lower level especially in those regional administrations where multiple ethno-linguistic self-administration, are often denied (Siraw,2015).

Tigray Regional State is one of these eleven regional states and it has own autonomous power to fulfill self-administration in the region. The regional state was governed by TPLF, a member of the coalition party EPRDF. The party chairman and the Vice President of the region was Dr. Deberetsion Gebremichael who became the “President” of the region after the Tigray region election took place in September 2020. Instead of presenting the all details of ongoing conflict of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and Tigray Regional Administration (TRA), the researcher investigates the role of two main stream media during the time of war in next pages.

2.1.3. Ethiopia Television (ETV)

Television was first introduced to the Ethiopian in 1955 by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on the occasion of the silver jubilee anniversary and the Coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie (Meseret, 2013). Later on, after the idea accepted by the emperor and it announced launch of the TV station in October 1964 and the Television service was inaugurated by the King on November 9, 1964 (Yohana, n.d).

Today, Ethiopian Television reaches every part of the country (Meseret, 2013). Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) in its present situation has three television channels, ETV News, ETV Entertainment and ETV language (Seid, 2019). Since 2017, because of reforms, ETV designed and launched new content and format and the tv station's new channel ETV News started *Tenayestelegn* (Breakfast hour program), *Arat Maezen*, (Lunch hour program) and *ETV 57* (Evening hour) program from Monday – Friday (Seid, 2019). The reason that the name given *ETV 57* related with the first beginning year of Ethiopia television in accordance with Ethiopian calendar 1957 (1964). The evening Amharic program ETV 57 has been broadcasting from Monday – Friday at 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 pm. local time. Now a days, ETV broadcasts through various satellite channels, web and social media platforms.

2.1.4. Tigray Television (TTV)

Before the Television launched formally, in order to control all broadcasting media of Tigray, the Tigray Mass Media Agency (TMMA) was established by the Tigray House of People's Representative Proclamation no. 142/2000 (Daniel, 2019). Tigray Mass Media Television established on July 24, 1983 E.C, (1991) broadcasting an hour Tigrigna Television news and programs within Ethiopian Television (Daniel, 2019). TMMA was under Tigray Communication affairs office (Melkamu, 2020). In Ethiopia, stations owned by the regional governments are operated by their respective state media agencies and they are free from the control of the central government (Meseret, 2013). Nevertheless, they have a relationship with state media in sharing experiences, program exchange, training, etc. (Meseret, 2013). In 2017, TTV built and inaugurated its own studio in Mekelle and it began broadcasting 76 programs in

a week in Tigrigna, Saho, Kunama and Amharic languages (Daniel, 2019). One of this region news outlets which is owned by Tigray regional administration and transmitting its program on television is Tigray Television (TTV) Amharic news program, which is on the air every day in evening hour from 8:00pm to 8:45pm.

2.1.5. The Main Causes of the War

Before Abiy Ahmed (PhD.) became Prime Minister, there was a popular uprising and violent protests devastated the country (Directorate for S.S. Africa, 2021). Particularly, since 2014 protests in Ethiopia had taken an unexpected and unprecedented turn, which has pushed the regime into permanent crisis (Mebratu, 2019). Students from the Oromo ethnic group had been protesting for weeks against an urban expansion plan around Addis Ababa and the protest spread quickly through out the Oromo region (Joseph and Duzor, 2015). This protest and the election preparation for May 2015 prompted the government to suspend the city expansion project temporarily (Mebratu, 2019). However, it could not stop the protests against the government and in more than 200 towns and villages across Oromia in 2015 (Allo, 2016). Human rights groups estimated that security forces killed over 1,000 Ethiopians, during the 2015-2017 protests, and the government admitted detaining over 29,000 people including opposition leaders, in the crackdown (Blanchard, 2020). This, Oromo mobilization motivated other ethnic groups to join in the protests, including several Amhara youths, who have problems with the TPLF including a territorial wrangle with Tigray region (Blanchard, 2020). A ten-month national state of emergency did not stop the protest (BBC, 2018). Later on, amid political crisis and lingering unrest, the Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn resigned (Aljazeera, 2018). Thus, it became visible the tension between the TPLF and the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) increasingly more assertive (BBC, 2018).

In the early days of April, 2018, Ethiopia's parliament elected Abiy Ahmed as the new prime minister, a week after the ruling coalition nominated him to succeed Hailemariam Desalegn (Aljazeera, 2018). Following Abiy's election, the state of emergency was dissolved, thousands of detainees were released, exiled dissidents were permitted to return home and hundreds of websites and satellite Tv channels were unblocked (BBC, 2019). The peace agreement with Eritrea agreed on September 18, 2019 at Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in order to end the

war and bring peace and cooperation (Eritrea Ministry of Information, 2018), and it became the reason to Prime Minister Abiy won the Nobel peace prize for his part in this peace process (The Nobel Peace Prize announcement, 2019). Even though, after fifty days from the Prime Minister taking office, he had toured the country and visited neighboring countries and got wide support from all over the country, including the Tigray region along with Ethiopians and Eritreans diasporas.

Nevertheless, some the Pro-TPLF site, Tigray online (2018), posted the fear of extremist groups suggesting that and they will have a better chance to attack TPLF along with the People of Tigray and they are seeing some indications of that (Tigray online, 2018). Similarly, at the bottom of one of the articles (comment section), a person name as mentioned “*Deqi Anadil*” commented,

...Their plan is (to) take it easy and purge one by one specially at the security and military and for sweeping against Tigrayans, unless we are smart and alert enough to arm ourselves and secure our assets and bring our friends to our side now when we are relatively armed and controlled the region (Tigray online, 2018, para. 19).

In June 2018, Dr. Abiy was targeted in an attack with two people killed in an explosion at a rally held to show support for him in *Mesqel* Square, and it became clear that there is opposition against him in the country (BBC, 2019). The government shortly after identified the former TPLF security chief, Getachew Assefa, as the mastermind, but he had already fled to the Tigray region (Kassahun, 2020). A federal court issued an arrest warrant for him for the attempt and other previous human rights violations, but the Tigrayan regional government refused to hand him over (Kassahun, 2020). On the other hand, the arrest of the former director of Metals and Engineering Corporation (MetEc) and an ex-deputy head of National Intelligence were among 65 people arrested for torture and corruption, created tension in the TPLF side (Davison, 2018). Despite the fact that Amnesty International and other rights organizations have welcomed the arrests, TPLF chair Debretsion Gebremicael said the arrest warrant is being utilized to harm Tigrayans under the guise of “corruption and human rights” (Reuters, 2018). He added that in February, 2019 press conference, although the Federal Attorney informed four suspects hiding in the region, when it is compared with regions the suspects that are hiding in Tigray is very few (Muluken, 2019). Since taking the office, Abiy has been at odds with Tigrayans

elites, many of whom he has evicted from government and state institutions (International Crisis group, 2020).

Things were getting worse and the Prime Minister Abiy on several occasions, called upon the TPLF leadership to cease its destabilizing conducts and to become a force for peace and development (ENA, 2020). In April 2018, he visited Mekele, the capital city of Tigray region and discussed with community leaders and people of Tigray (Tigray Online, 2018). Further, at the end of 2019, the Ethiopian parliament adopted a land mark proclamation establishing a national reconciliation commission, the first ever such institution in Ethiopia (Solomon, 2019; Oteng, 2018). In contrast, the TPLF did not accept the reconciliation commission (ENA, 2020).

Later, Ethiopian's ruling coalition party EPRDF, was rebranded the "Prosperity Party" (PP), and the party espousing a liberal economy doctrine (Adisu, 2019). The political philosophy based on "Medemer" (Synergy), which Dr. Abiy has promoted, unlike the EPRDF, it includes people from all ethnic groups in PP. (Kalkidan, 2019). In contrast, in February, 2020, the TPLF party reached the resolution after a two-day emergency meeting held in Mekele and legally separated from the ruling coalition and the relations with the federal government should be based on the rule of law and it expects divisions of assets from EPRDF (Mumbere, 2020).

Conditions which were sparking the situation had been escalating every day. On the Tigray side, Debretsiion accused the federal government of attempting to intensify the conflict and a military convey was sent to Alula Aba Nega Airport, which they considered as an offensive attempt to get into conflict, but the case was settled in a calm manner (Muluken, 2020). On other hand, TPLF officials stated that the highway linking to Amhara region via Woldia closed and the closure of this road has brought some hardship to the people living on both sides, and especially to the people of Tigray (Teka, 2019).

The situation was tense and the federal government's restraint from taking action against on the TPLF was criticized. For more than two years, the federal government chose for maximum restraint, despite criticism by citizens including the federal parliament, for not taking more measures to apprehend fugitives from law that were at large in Tigray (office of Prime Minister-POM 2020). Correspondingly, regional governments in Oromia and Amhara as well as

members of the federal parliament, stated that the TPLF played a significant role by providing ammunitions to the rebels of the “Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) military wing – Shene” group in order to act against civilians (Samuel, 2020).

The other crucial problem which intensified the dispute between two parties was the sixth round of elections. A year ago, the election board stated that for security reason, which according to the United Nation, had driven 2.4 million people out of their homes could delay 2020’s parliament vote (African news, 2019). During that time opposition political party leaders, including TPLF were describing their concerns and saying that not holding the election on time is unconstitutional and it could damage the Prime Minister Abiy’s democratic credential (African news, 2019). The main issue was according to the country’s law, the terms of the current government (both national and federal) automatically will be ending on October 10, 2020 (Kiruga, 2020). The Constitution has no definitive answer regarding the fate of an incumbent government whose term comes to an end before an election is held in the country (Yonatan, 2020). Later, due to the pandemic the 2020 election was postponed after scholars debated for several days, resulting in a decision that was approved by Ethiopian lawmakers extending Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed’s mandate for up to a year, depending on Ethiopia’s ability to contain the worsening pandemic COVID-19 (Zecharias, 2020).

The Tigray regional officials were very unhappy and decided to proceed with their own election in Tigray. In June 2020, they formed an electoral commission to direct the organization process of their own election (Neamin, 2020). In contrary, the House of Federation (HOF) called on TPLF to immediately stop the electoral process (Neamin, 2020). Finally, the TPLF stated that it had won 98.5% of the seat for the Tigray Regional council and the rest shared to amongst opposition parties (Samuel, 2020). However, before the election, the Federal government announced that will not accept at all the Tigray region election and if it would be fulfilled, it is out of the law, “null” and “void” (ENA, 2020).

After October 10, 2020 the parties were threatening each other and the House of Federation decided that the federal government should dissolve any relationship with Tigray regional administration body and cut federal budget subsidy for the region’s council deeming its establishment illegal (Geeska,2020). However, the decision did not amount to a complete

separation. According to the statement the federal government will work with the local administrations (Aljazeera, 2020). The latest decision was harsh and received a furious reaction from the Deputy President of Tigray region, Dr. Abreham Tekeste brought to furious. He said that the decision is an extension of illegal measures taken by the House against the Tigray region and it is pushing to region to secede from the federal government (Ezega, 2020).

The region was developing a well-armed regional paramilitary force led by former national army generals (International Crisis group, 2020). Thus, TPLF leaders were expressing that many officers in the units of Northern Command, while patrolling the Eritrea border would not be likely to support the federal government (International Crisis group, 2020). They were telling officially that Tigray had 250,000 soldiers and militia serve under regional commanders, of these, there are some 30,000-60,000 effective fighters and also had several S-75 and S-125 surface-to-air missile systems (Aljazeera, 2020).

The former United States of America (USA) ambassador David Shenn expressed that the proximate causes that led to war were Tigray was starting to move away from the central government, expressing more desire for autonomy and in the region, by doing its own election in September of 2020, that the central government opposed and attacked the northern command (ESAT, 2020).

Meanwhile, as Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced that on November 4, 2020, the Tigray region military forces had attacked the base of northern command located in the region and attempted to rob the northern command of artillery and military equipment (PMO, 2020). The statement added that the Ethiopian National defense Forces, under the direction of a Command post, have been ordered to carry out their mission to save the country and the region from spiraling into instability (PMO, 2020).

However, the Tigray region president Dr. Debretsion Gebremichael opposed the PM's statement and argued that the northern command was supporting the Tigray region and the military command's artillery and military equipment was under the control of Tigray region administration and there was no attack on the base of Northern command (TTV Amharic news, 2020). Opposing Debretsion's position, one of the top officials of TPLF, Sekutire Getachew,

confirmed that TPLF forces sparked the conflict by attacking a military base (ENA, 2020). Further he elaborated that it was imperative to take a thunder-like strike and if not, there would be number of casualties in the region (ENA, 2020). In the second day of the attack, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) confirmed that the base of the Northern Command head quarter in Mekelle was under the control of the Tigray regional forces (BBC, 2020). Finally, the war brought many casualties in the area and the federal government controlled the region for more than six months. Later, in June 28, 2021, the federal forces left the area when the federal government declared a unilateral cease fire (News wires, 2021).

In this study the researcher is focusing and analyzing how the state television ETV 57 and Tigray Tv evening Amharic news programs reported the pre and ongoing conflict and their role when the conflict was taking place from September – November, 2020.

2.1.6. What is News?

Many people have attempted to define news. Hough (2004) says that the 19th century Publisher of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and the *New York World*, Joseph Pulitzer's definition of news is original, distinctive, romantic, thrilling, unique, curious, quaint, humorous, odd and apt-to-be talked about. The editor of the *New York Sun* who lived from 1819-1897, Charles A. Dana, defined news as "anything that will make people talk" (Hough, 2004:2).

Sharma (2017) noted that news is a timely report of events, facts, opinions and interests affecting a significant number of people. In addition, Harcup (2014) defined news as information about recent events deemed to be interesting, important, or unusual enough to be newsworthy (fresh information about less recent events) that is gathered, verified, and structured in accordance with journalistic norms before being published or broadcast. It is a concept that can shape the interest of human being (Sharma, 2017).

Mass media are nothing without news and to understand news, it is new, interesting and true (Mc Leish and Link, 2016). Because of its inherent and presenting of the truth, it is attractive and easily catchy. News has its own purpose to inform about what we know, need to know and should know (Linström and Marais 2012). Furthermore, it is a true reflection of society (Linström and Marais 2012). People always need information and the Journalist's first

obligation is to the truth (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2007) and the need for information more increases in times of conflict. In war, the power of news is high. Nohrstedt (2009) remarked that wars are not only fighting by military means. Alongside fighting on the ground, at sea, and air, a media war takes place in public opinion and mind. To accomplish this serious fighting and achieve the goal, the role of media is high.

As McLeish and Link (2016) alluded, the broad areas of interest of news are conflict – war, strikes, political argument, disaster – tragedy or epidemic, development, crime, money, sex, famous people and sport. Meanwhile, there are two main types of news. It is Hard news and soft news. Hard news focusses on serious news such as politics, economics, crime, war and disasters as considered serious topic and is timely (Sharma, 2017). In contrary, Soft-news is sometimes referred to in a derogatory fashion as infotainment and includes arts, sports, life styles, human interest and celebrities (Sharma, 2017).

2.1.7. Media and Conflict News

Conflict is “a disagreement, or dispute, row or fight” (Harcup, 2014:64). As Gilboa (2009) stated that conflicts today are, in many cases, more complex and multidimensional than ever before. Although it is complex in its nature, there are different stages by its nature. Such as “pre-occurrence, occurrence and post-occurrence stages” (Melkamu, 2020:12). In each stage, media potentially forge conflict to the worst condition or propose a solution. (Melkamu, 2020). As Blonder (2003) remarked that the reasons behind a conflict always lie in a complex combination of root and direct causes. The root causes are related to long term cause and direct cause related with a sudden change in policy, an economic down turn or a symbolic threat (Blonder, 2003).

Similarly, “the media is a multi-dimensional tool that can serve both governments and citizens alike” (Betz, 2018, para. 1). In this the age of Information, media has an inevitable influence on society and government. Betz (2018) said as the media role is great and the media space can improve government, make public administration more transparent and accountable, and enable, citizens to become active stakeholders who understand policies and use information to exercise their human rights. Similarly, Blonder (2003) remarked that a vibrant media gives

people free flowing access to information, enable dialogue, encourages to express their views, promotes greater political participation and encourage as accountability.

Semir (2019), in his study notes that Ethiopia has witnessed a surge in violent conflicts for much of the past two years. Even though, the political reform has been taking place, in contrary, the country has nevertheless experienced large-scale displacements, killings and destruction of property (Semir, 2019). The long term and deep causes of this have several factors which are inflaming harsh conflicts throughout the country.

Despite the impact of media having increased enormously in the last decades, the level of contribution to escalate and deescalate conflicts in many areas is innumerable. Puddephatt (2006) elaborated that the media played a destructive role directly inciting genocide in the case of some Rwandan media and by mentioned the dangerous nationalism in former Yugoslavia. Therefore, media have the potential to advance or to minimize the impact of harmful symbols in adjusting social relationships. As Orgerete and Tayeebwa (2016) also expressed that the tendency that creates an inherent conflict in the media's ability to help achieve or hinder peaceful goals. Moreover, Chebii, (2015) stated in his context analysis of Kenya election coverage and post-election conflict of 2007/08 revealed that media have a double-edge role in electoral conflict situation. As he further added that media have conflict escalation and de-escalation roles (Chebii, 2015). Correspondently, the Danish cartoon controversy demonstrates that the media can even cause a violent conflict (Stremlau & Gagliardone, 2015). Particularly, one of the Danish newspapers '*Jyllands posten*' published twelve cartoons and three of them depicted Prophet Mohammed as a suicide bomber, but the Prime Minister of Denmark answered for Muslim countries ambassadors questions regarding on the cartoon, he said that it is a product of the freedom of speech (Akbulut, 2014). Likewise, here in Ethiopia, in 1980s' the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and in Uganda, the Ugandan former rebellious group, National Resistance Movement (NRM) was escalating the war by capturing people mind by using media (Chebii , 2015).

On the other hand, media can de-escalate conflict in several ways, for instance by avoiding sensational language, by carefully taking with the use of adjectives with balancing opinions

and views of leaders of all parties to conflict, aspiring to verify the accuracy of its sources during conflicts (Gwaza, 2015).

In general, conflict can be taking place with the two parties' disagreement or extraneous ideologies and the media role might be to escalate or deescalate the conflict in one society or nation.

2.1.8. Media and “Law Enforcement”

Various scholars stated that law enforcement contains basic responsibilities like maintenance of public order and security, prevention and detection of crime and to reach victims by aid and assistance in emergencies (Rover, 1998).

Though, the literature on law enforcement defines the phrase by relating to police task, several scholars gave various definitions. Security Sector Integrity (2017) defined the term such that law enforcement has the task of ensuring the provision of security for citizens going about their daily lives by appropriate interventions to stop violations of the law (Para, 1). Similarly, it added that it is carried out mainly by police, which it defines as a civil force responsible for prevention and detection of crime, and specific services that exercise police powers (Security Sector Integrity, 2017).

Correspondingly, the mission of law enforcement involves police performing five distinct responsibilities: preserving the peace, protecting people and property, investigating and preventing crimes, arresting offenders, and enforcing laws (Franklin, et al., 2019). In fact, security has always been the primary function of government (Sullivan and Rosen, 2005). Throughout the history, governments of all types have relied on either public police agency or informal means to effect conformity to social norms, standards, and laws (Sullivan and Rosen, 2005).

Undoubtedly, media have a great contribution when law enforcement taking place by government. Kuusik, (2010) noted that media has two folds in process of contributing to the government, on one side, the media report and reflect on pressing issues and it can help to

establish concepts and ideas. On other hand, governments can use for propaganda purposes (Kuusik, 2010).

In spite of the federal government of Ethiopia describing the conflict in the Tigray region as taking measures to bring law enforcement in the region (PMO, 2020), the Tigray regional government was calling it an invasion or “an act of war” (Marishet, 2020). According to the FDRE Prime Minister Office statement, the FDRE government intended to take law enforcement measure in Tigray region: the measurement had the following task.

It disarms any security force of the Regional State and to maintain the peace and security of the civilian population; to Impose restrictions on mode of transportation, to impose curfew, to detain those it suspects taking part in illegal activities that endanger the constitutional order, to use proportionate force to restore law and order, and to take measures necessary in furtherance of the objectives of the State of Emergency (PMO, 2020, para 1).

2.2. Theoretical Framework

2.2.1. Framing

Many scholars studied the concept of framing and they gave their findings. Mainly, it is a theory of mass communication and indicates to how the media packages and presents information to the public (Communication Studies, 2012, Para. 2). As Sterling (2009) stated that the media frame in the news concentrates on certain elements but ignores others. In addition, Entman (1993:52) explains framing as "schemas for interpreting events". Actually, it is impossible to cover every aspect of every news event at once. Moreover, Entman (1993) elaborated that to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text. It also highlights certain aspects of issues and presents them significantly (Sterling, 2009). McQuail (2005), also said that it is news content which is shaped and contextualized by journalists. In fact, journalists have the right to choose which events to cover and which ones ignore (McQuail, 2005). Framing happens in the media mostly due to time and resource limitations on what can be reported (Communication Studies, 2012). Moreover, Carter (2013) stated that a frame is a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration.

On other hand, framing is “scattered conceptualization” (Entman,1993:51), which means that different scholars have different concepts and definitions. Although, Scheufele (1999) argued that framing is not a clearly explained generally applicable concept, other researchers, Rodelo and Mùniz (2019), disagreed suggesting that framing building has been described as the flow of frames from political actors to journalists and to news articles.

Therefore, theoretically, it defines and provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events (Scheufele, 1999) and turn meaningless and non-recoverable happenings into a discernible event (Scheufele, 1999). Hence, frames are purposeful. It implies specific interpretations, evaluations, or courses of action, so that different frames highlighting different aspects of the same reality lead to different conclusion (Baden, 2015). Reese (2007) described that framing as a process of giving meaning that can be embedded across stories, media, and time.

Lewis and Reese (2009) stated that frames define the terms of debate, shape public opinion through the persuasive use of symbols, and when it is effective, it can even lead to public policy change. As evidence, they further describe how the Bush administration effectively framed the march toward in Iraq as an extension of the ‘War on Terror’, allowing the Iraq war to achieve levels of public support that were nearly as high as those for the war in Afghanistan (Lewis and Reese, 2009).

Similarly, McQuail (2005) notes that the Middle East crises are regularly framed as an aspect of the “War against Terror”, or “Muslim Fundamentalism” (p. 379). These expressions could catch the mind of media consumers of the globe and direct them to accept the war of westerners as a holy war. A further example was the misleading public relations campaign designed to gain American public support for action to liberate Kuwait in 1990 and 1991 (McQuail, 2005). Along with this during the 1999 Kosovo war the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) released propaganda aimed to frame the war and attack on Yugoslavia as a necessary and humanitarian war against genocide (McQuail, 2005).

Meanwhile, Entman (1993) said that a news frame serves to define problems, identify causes of the problem or provide causal interpretation, evaluate morality of the causal relationship, and provide recommendations for the problems.

Consequently, several researchers argued that news coverage by national media is generally framed by various categories, particularly politics, economy, foreign affairs, domestic affairs, and sport (Chandler and Munday, 2011). Similarly, Melkamu (2020) in his research explained as external sources such as political parties, interest groups, and social norms, as well as the media institution's, organizational routines, codes, rules, regulations and self-censorship, are some of the variables that influence media framing. Ultimately, whatever definitions of framing are used, it is clear that this term has become much more common in communication research articles in the past decade than either agenda setting or priming (Weaver, 2007).

In war or conflict news reporting, framing the news and setting the agenda of rival parties play a vital role to catch the audience mind and journalists also use as a prominent force in the process of shaping public discourse on conflict - related issues (Golčevski, et al. 2013). Particularly, Frame is a cognitive device for ordinary citizens to organize and express their thoughts and it helps targeted audience to shape their focus on conflict time (Ahmed, et al, 2018). Similarly, "frames are organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world" (Carter, 2013:4; Reese, 200:11).

2.2.2. Types of Frames

There are components in news stories which constitutes a frame. Entman (1993) stated that frames are used to make moral judgments, identify the root of the problem, discern societal difficulties and to obtain solutions. Moreover, Vreese (2005) suggests,

Frames in the news can be examined and identified by the presence of absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments (p.54).

Therefore, frames have a great contribution in this study to identify the role of media by analyzing in various types dominant variables. Neuman et. al (1992:74) identified five common frames utilized by the media.

They are human impact, powerlessness, economics, moral values, and conflict. The human impact frame focuses on descriptions of individuals and groups affected by an issue, the powerlessness frame refers to the dominance of forces over weak individuals or groups, the economics frame reflects the preoccupation with profit and loss, the moral values frame refers to morality and social prescriptions, and the conflict frame deals with the news media's game interpretation of the political world as an on-going series of contests, each with a new set of winners and losers.

Along with this, some other scholars have found several types of news frames.

2.2.2.1. Episodic Frames and Thematic Frames

An episodic frame focuses on a single event and private realm; a thematic frame focuses on trends over time and on the public, i.e., the surrounding environment and public institutions. (Framework institute, 2017). Moreover, Iyengar (1991) cited in Cosand (2014) suggests that thematic framing emphasizes the general basis and effects of contemporary events, while episodic framing focuses on recent and exotic news events. Likewise, "thematic framing refers to presenting issues through information about their systematic causes, trends and consequences" (Zhang and Jin, 2017:93).

2.2.2.2. Media Frames

McQuail (2005) says that audiences engage with two types of frames; media frames and individual frames, which might be independent or reliant on one another. Thus, a media frame is defined as a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning of unfolding strips of events (Gaske, 2009). Moreover, he expresses that within a frame, individuals, topics, objects or groups can cast in a negative or positive light (Geske, 2009). In addition to that, Charles (2018) says that media framing is a reporters tendency to inform readers or audiences how to believe and even think about an issue is known as media framing. It is clear that journalists and media reporters also decide the tone, words, and facts to include, and how to interpret issues in news stories (Charles, 2018). Theories of framing suggest that news coverage can nurture changes in public opinion by promoting particular definitions and interpretations

of political issues (Shah, et al., 2002; Price, et al. 1997). Relatedly, it has been referred to as a conceptual tool which the media and journalists use to cover, interpret and evaluate information whereby the media set the parameters in which citizens discuss public events (Charles, 2018). This perspective assumes that media and practitioners (journalists, reporters) have an impact to define the news and bring influence on audience. Thus, in particular,

...governments have to justify involvement in wars and get popular support, and thus put a lot of effort into shaping public opinion through the news media (Vladislavjević, 2015:7).

2.2.2.3. Issue Specific and Generic news Frames

De Vresse, et al. (2001) focuses more generally on issue-specific and generic frames. The Issue-specific news frames reflect the chronology of the development of the issue in the news (De Vresse, 2005). Issue-specific frames involve specific topics or news events that lead to specific and detailed news stories. For example, Entman (1991) cited in Cosand, (2014) describes how, by using an example of researched television news coverage of two airline accidents, it is possible to find frames related to technical problems and moral outrage. By using Entman's (1993) definition, it is possible to identify Issue-specific frame groups with the existence of four core elements: problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation.

Nevertheless, generic frames are applicable to a wider range of news topics, and can be used over time and in different cultural contexts. Examples of generic frames include the conflict, economic consequence, and human-interest frames (Entman, 1993). In addition, De Vreese (2005) cited in Rinke, et. al, (2013) notes that generic news frames transcend thematic limitations and can be identified in relation to different topics, some even over time and its different cultural contexts. Using generic framing themes, Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) measure five frames which have been powerful in literature: conflict, attribution of responsibility, economic, human interest, and morality.

According to their definition, a *Human-Interest frame* “brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue or problem” (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000, p.95). That means, it describes audiences who are likely affected by the issue. A *Conflict frame*

reflects the conflict or disagreement of individuals, groups or organizations (An and Gower, 2009). It is also the disagreement and tension between different sides, incompatibility between viewpoints and politicians attacking each other in the media (Bartholomè, et al. 2018). A *Morality frame* represents religious leaders, community elders, and their moral judgments and values which are accepted by the society which is commonly used by journalists through quotations or indirect inference (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000). An *Economic frame* presents an event, problem or issue in terms of the economic consequences (Valkenburg, et. al., 1999). On the other hand, it is the media reporting frame how the conflict affects the economy of the society. An *Attribution of Responsibility frame* presents the problem or an issue to attribute or relate responsibility to individuals or a group (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1. Research Methodology

Research methodology is the approach that handles research and “a way to solve scientifically a research problem” (Kothari 2004, p. 8). The methodology is the theoretical framework to support the methods chosen (Study Smarter, Para. 4). Therefore, the objective of this study is to analyze the news content of ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news program on the conflict of FDRE and Tigray Regional State during the period from September 1st - November 30th, 2020 and to explore the role of the two television institutions portrayal of conflict news, the tone of their conflict news, to find the dominant news frame of both media, and to explore the two media news sources before and when the conflict was taking place. It is also intended to discover which television news program was more inclined to agitate the audience in intensifying the conflict by using various themes. In order to solve the research problem, this chapter will review the research method, research design, study area description, methods of data collection, data analysis techniques, data validation mechanism, and ethical considerations.

3.2. Research method

In this study, content analysis is the method used to collect and analyze the data of the research. The researcher is going to examine the content of the broadcasts by counting words used to describe the conflict and categorize the date in order to build a picture of the approaches used by the two television stations. Kothari (2004) undertook library research in order to analyze historical records, recording noted, content analysis, tape, film listening and analysis. Thus, the study is also qualitative analysis to find out the result from in depth interview. The research method of this study focused to study the content of news that was broadcast from September 1 – November 30, 2020, in ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news program.

This study takes the data in the form of numbers (quantitative) and words (qualitative) in order to answer the research questions. The researcher collected the original data from the media institutions YouTube sites.

The source of news is the program that was uploaded to YouTube by the two institutions on the mentioned dates. The researcher tried to download every evening news after the news posted on the institutions' official YouTube pages. Likewise, quantitative analysis statistically measuring the coverage of the situation in Ethiopia by the news broadcasters. The researcher took two media houses as a case study. The selected two media ETV 57 and TTV Amharic evening news programs conflict news content and data were analyzed by using quantitative measurements, the frames and dominant sources of the news which used in two media institutions in the specific time frame were quantified. The qualitative content analysis also looked into the speech and expressions used by the source of the stories, in-depth interview of journalists who were working in two institutions, ETV and TTV.

3.3. Research Design

The research design follows the approach of Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) cited in Tesfaye (2018) for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies. “The design of the research topic uses approaches such as experiment, survey, correlation, semi-experiment and review and is also sub-type experimental design, research problem, descriptive case study” (Bhat, 2021, para.2). In addition, as Kothari (2004) stated that the benefit of research design as an arrangement of conditions for data collection and analysis that tries to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. On other hand, “research designs are plans and procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis” (Creswell, 2009, p. 9). Similarly, the goals and objectives of the research design are providing for doing so by selecting specific data collection methods and techniques (Given, 2008). Over all, the research design is a means of outline and guidance for data collection and data analyzing in terms of managing research and organizing in order to explore findings.

As it is already noted, the primary approach to this study is the use of content analysis to assess ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news programs roles and contributions in conflict of FDRE and Tigray Regional government along with when the federal government was taking law enforcement action. The study employs quantitative and qualitative methodology research design. In quantitative research the collected data (news of two media) will be analyzed in order to answer the research questions, like distribution of the news, tone of the news, dominant frames of the news, theme of the news, sources of the news and duration of the news. In qualitative research the collected in-depth interview data will be translated to English language and analyzed and categorized by dominant news frame, tone of the news, theme of the news, sources of the news and duration of the news.

3.4. Content Analysis

Content analysis is “a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variable” (Desalegn, 2014:36, Wilmmmer & Domnikc, 2011:156). It is a method of determining the existence of specific words or concepts in texts or groups of texts (Busch, et, al., 1994-2012). It is a technique that makes credible and accurate inferences from texts to the contexts of their use (Krippendorff, 2004). Likewise, content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the content of communication (Perry, 2002). It is not only the approach of the quantitative method, but it also gives both qualitative and quantitative results and the study will use both methods with the concept mapping being used in particular to analyze the role of media in times of conflict (Steele, 2004). Content analysis consists of analyzing the contents of documentary materials such as books, magazines, newspapers and the contents of all other verbal materials which can be either spoken or printed (Kothari, 2004). In general, it is a technique of analyzing and measuring the way in a qualitative and quantitative method that measured the context in which the messages are created or presented. Kothari, further notes,

Content-analysis prior to 1940's was mostly quantitative analysis of documentary concerning certain characteristics that can be identified and counted. But since 1950's content analysis is mostly qualitative analysis concerning the general import or message of the existing documents. ‘The difference is somewhat like that between a casual interview and depth interviewing.’ ‘Content- analysis is measurement through

proportion.... content analysis measures pervasiveness and that is sometime an index of the intensity of the force (Kothari, 2004:110).

There are two main types of content analysis: conceptual and relational content analysis. “Conceptual analysis determines the existence and frequency of concepts in a text” (Public Health, n.d. Para. 4). Relational analysis “develops the conceptual analysis further by examining the relationships among concepts in a text” (Public Health, n.d. Para. 4).

Conceptual Content Analysis – Text material is studied for the presence, frequency and prominence of concepts in conceptual content analysis along with words, sentences, and more complicated terms can all be represented by such designs (Indulska, et al. 2012).

Relational Content Analysis – it shapes not only the frequency of concepts in the body of text, but it focuses and examines how concepts are related to each other in the documents (Indulska, et al. 2012). It is also “the act of identifying concepts present in a given text or set of texts” (Public Health, n.d. Para. 5).

In this study, the researcher will use content analysis approaches to determine the presence of certain words, sayings and themes within news program of two media outlets. Along with this, the researcher uses content analysis to find out the purpose of the content, the aim of the message and the role of the news in conflict (Luo, 2019). Thus, the researcher will be analyzing and measure the collected data from the news programs to categories the content of ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news data in order to find the role and contribution of these media in the conflict of FDRE and Tigray regional state. Moreover, the researcher mainly focuses on the content of the news, words, sentences and terms that two media used in sampled period of time. So that it is related with the conceptual content analysis. Each content of news analyzed by its concept and text.

3.4.1. Qualitative Content Analysis

Qualitative methods are concerned with qualitative phenomena and aim to discover the underlying motives and desires, using in depth interviews for the purpose (Kothari, 2004). On other hand, it is attitude and opinion research and finds out how people feel or what they think

about a particular subject or institution (Kothari, 2004). Mytton (2007) notes that qualitative approaches try to describe or understand human attributes, attitudes or behavior in a more exploratory or interpretive way. Qualitative research requires a lot of well-informed thinking (List, 2006). Therefore, this research project employed the qualitative content analysis with intention of analyzing news content of two media institutions by searching the attitudes of journalists in their day-to-day task and what they were encountering while they were reporting conflict news. The researcher tried to discover this through 17 open ended questions to six journalists from two media firms in order to get their answer by email and phone communication.

3.4.2. Quantitative Content Analysis

Quantitative research is based on the measurement of data (Kothari, 2004). Like wise, quantitative content analysis is the systematic and repeatable analysis of symbols of communication according to using reliable measurement standards to define communication, draw suggestions about its meaning and elaborate the communication to its contexts (Riffe et al. 2005). It is the systematic assignment of communication content which helps to categorize according to criteria and the study of relationships by using statistical methods (Riffe et al. 2019). Moreover, Desalegn (2014) expressed that quantitative content analysis is based on the measurement of quantity or amount that is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quality. Therefore, quantitative content analysis is a means for testing objective theories by testing the relationship of variables (Desalegn, 2014; Creswell, 2009).

Hence, the main objective of this study is to analyze the news content of ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news program on Tigray conflict during the period from September 1st - November 30th, 2020. For this reason, the researcher analyzed the frequency of coverage, the tone of news program, themes of news, dominant news frames, news source and duration of time in numerical ways.

3.5. Research material time horizon

The research material time contains the news which broadcasted from September 1 – November 30, 2020 in Amharic language aired on ETV and TTV evening time. In particular, it was preferred by the researcher in case of the time is prime time and ETV 57 news program was broadcasting at 7:00pm and 8:00pm, similarly TTV Amharic news program was broadcasting at 8:00pm.

3.6. Sampling, Sample size and Sample frame

The availability of rich, appropriate, and well-saturated data shows the trustworthiness of content analysis and the data collection, analysis and related reporting go hand in hand (Elo, et. al., 2014). Sampling is one of the ways which helps the researcher “to distinguish between description, transcription, recording, or coding” (Ward, 2019, p. 10; Krippendorf, 2004). There are different types of sampling methods as part of a quantitative content analysis – “random, systematic stratified, varying, probability, cluster, snowball relevance, census, and convenience” (Ward, 2019, p. 11; Krippendorf, 2004). Similarly, sampling techniques can be divided into Probability or Random Sampling and Non-Probability or Non-Random Sampling (Taherdoost, 2016). From this type of sampling, purposive is the most common and useful method in several studies (Elo et, al, 2014). Purposive sampling or judgmental sampling is an approach in which particular settings, persons or events selected to provide important information (Taherdoost, 2016) and it is the sampling strategy chosen for this study.

The researcher selected ETV 57 and TTV Amharic evening news programs because of the following main points. Firstly, the two media institutions are led by the federal government and regional government. To get the conflict news of two parties studying the role of these media are important and the researcher study to find out which media had the role to escalate the conflict between two sides. Second, the researcher is speaker of Amharic language and he can easily understand and analyze what the news media is saying in that language which is widely understood in Ethiopia. Third, ETV is one of the state media to broadcast the federal government’s day to day activities and TTV has a similar role in Tigray and other places of the country. Fourth, the time is prime time when people prefer to listen or watch news programs.

Fifth, the time frame is selected by researcher purposely to reveal the escalating conflict between the two forces which reached the highest level in these months and the outbreak of war between the federal government and the Tigray regional administration began at the mid of selected month.

After selection of the conflict news of ETV 57 and TTV Amharic evening programs by using purposive sampling methods and selected news items were transcribed and numbered. The researcher used the selected three days of a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening) news items to find FDRE government and Tigray region administration conflict related news. So that the total of 290 news items (105 from ETV and 185 from TTV) in order to achieve the study to save time and redundancy. By considering the content of sample size and considering the news content in the collected data the manageability of sample size has been engaged purposive or judgmental sample technique.

3.7. Data collection Procedures

In this study, the researcher used quantitative and qualitative content analysis data (Mixed) procedures. The researcher employed news content analysis and in-depth interview. The respondents were from both ETV 57 and TTV whom has been working in it. The tools helped the researcher to gather information from the news content and journalists' answers. The sampled data which were collected from evening Amharic news of ETV 57 and TTV Amharic official YouTube pages was analyzed in detail. The analyzed data found from the news which were broadcast from September 1 - November, 2020. The researcher downloaded almost all news programs of the two television broadcasters from their official YouTube pages and the researcher organized it in accordance with each date sequence.

To fulfill the in-depth interview the researcher communicated with five ETV news reporters and three of them were willing to answer prepared structured questions. On the TTV Amharic side the researcher met three news reporters of TTV and all were available to give their answer to the structured questions. The interviews were conducted in the Amharic language and all data was recorded and selected data translated to English language by the researcher. The

structured interview was conducted through phone and email due to the researcher to protect himself from COVID-19 and due to security reasons in Tigray region.

3.8. Data Analysis

Data for this study was collected from trusted local institutions news sites. Similarly, respondents were selected through purposive sampling and they were working in this media. In addition, the researcher collected data from the official You Tube pages of the sampled media institutions according to their broadcast date. All news content was transmitted by mentioned media and it was analyzed by the researcher. Microsoft Excel was used for quantitative content data analysis and all data were analyzed in descriptive way. The coding of data conducted by the researcher.

3.9. Definition of Variables and Terms

3.9.1. Dominant frames

A. Conflict frame – emphasizes of the disagreement, dispute or fight and conflict between FDRE and TRA (Barthlomè et. al., 2017).

B. Human interest frame – An emotional activity or presentation of the event (Semetko and Valeknburg, 2000).

C. Morality Frame – Religious issue programs or moral aspect of events, religious festivals, holidays and religious leaders' perspectives (Semetko and Valeknburg, 2000).

D. Economic frame – Presents the news, issue or event in terms of the economic and business-related moments (Valkenburg et al. 1999).

E. Attribution of Responsibility – Presents related responsibility to individual or groups (Valkenburg et al. 1999).

3.9.2. Tone of the News

Tone – refers to have stories emphasizing on issues or events. Regarding on tones of the news, the researcher used three main types.

A. Positive Tone – it is considering the positive aspects of news. There is no hate speech but giving or showing a solution to the problem.

- B. **Negative Tone** – it displays hate speech, encouraging conflict between two parties, destructing the opposite side and showing the other side as demonic nature.
- C. **Neutral Tone** – it is not showing the good or bad, pros or cons of both sides and playing the impartial role in broadcasting the news.

3.9.3. Sources of the News

The following variables of the sources of news found from the materials found from the official pages of two television channels news and the researcher classified it.

- A. **Government** – Government officials from local up to federal level government offices, Regional government offices, and communication bureau.
- B. **Staff Reporters** – ETV 57 or TTV Amharic news reporters.
- C. **Local media** – local news wires, newspapers, radio and television broadcasts along with local online news outlets (like, twitter, face book and YouTube).
- D. **International media** – international news broadcasters, like Aljazeera, BBC, CNN and others.
- E. **Other media** – the media which is owning unknown owners which is based in abroad and opposing the government or ruling party.
- F. **Victims** – people who were affected by natural or man-made casualties.
- G. **People opinion** – people feedback and contribution by phone call, skype, or other electronic media.
- H. **Experts** – the invited professionals to elaborate the issues.
- I. **Local NGOs'** – the non-governmental organizations which are working in local base.
- J. **International organizations** – various international humanitarian and human right organizations.
- K. **Political party** – ruling and opposition parties which are based in Addis Ababa and Mekelle.

3.10. In-depth Interview

“The interview is a strategy of collecting primary data in which the interviewee gives the required data verbally in a face-to-face or non-face-to-face condition” (Yadesa, 2020, p. 36).

Kothari says that it involves collecting data, presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses (Kothari, 2004). In-depth interviews could be taken place in one-on-one, telephone, or focus group interview (Creswell, 1998). For this study the researcher used email and telephone interview to gather responses. Questionnaires were given to respondents to provide their answers. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews to achieve the anticipated objectives. From ETV 57 side five journalists requested to participate in interview session and three of them were willing to give their answer for a questionnaire that was prepared by the researcher. Similarly, from TTV Amharic the researcher found three journalists to participate in interview session. Thus, the researcher used availability technique to do the research.

Participants were encouraged to talk in-depth about the topic in semi-structured, unstructured or a mix of any two or all the three ways. The telephone conversation occurred in an unstructured way with specific questions to get the answer from the interviewee. The researcher prepared the questions on paper and asking when he was interviewing through telephone. In addition, the email respondents got the questions at their addresses and sent back each question answer to interviewer.

3.11. Ethical Consideration

This research was conducted with the involvement of several participants. Thus, the fundamental ethical consideration is the safeguarding of those participants. Although the researcher personally knew some of participants, because of their request, he tried to keep secret their name as much as possible. When the research conducted the basic ethical values into consideration and the researcher tried to fulfill it. The researcher respected the privacy of participants. Confidentiality of the research data ensured and it was kept by the researcher as the secret. In data analysis and reporting, the participants emotional speech, any intention and opinion which might be harming the other parties had been avoided from reporting to others. According to the basic principles of ethical consideration in the research, the researcher avoided any intention and opinion to harm others. Likewise, the researcher avoided any deception or exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter of the study presents the quantitative and qualitative data findings of the ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news from September to November 2020 during the conflict period between the FDRE and Tigray regional governments. The quantitative data findings are shown in the following diagrams.

4.2. Data Findings from ETV 57 and TTV Amharic in Numbers

4.2.1. Distribution of News Items of both media

Tv Stations	September	October	November	Total
ETV 57	3 (2.9%)	5 (5%)	97 (92.4%)	105 (100%)
TTV	45 (24.3%)	65 (35.1%)	75 (40.5%)	185 (100%)

Table 1. Distribution of news items

The above table shows in specified three months the total of 290 selected news item of ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news program which are related to the conflict. 105 news items were selected from ETV 57 news and 185 items from TTV news. Comparing both programs ETV 57 devoted 36.2% of its content to news of the conflict and TTV Amharic news devoted 63.8% items reporting on the conflict.

From 105 stories broadcast in ETV 57 news, 3 (2.9%) focused on conflict news in September. Similarly, ETV 57 broadcast 5 news items (5% of the total) in October. In November, ETV 57 was highly focused on the FDRE and TRA conflict devoting 92.4% (97) of the total news stories covered.

From the total of 185 news stories in September, TTV broadcast 45 (24.3%) of news stories to the conflict and in October 65 (35.1%) of news stories covered by TTV focused on the conflict. In November, 75 (40.5%) of the news items covered by TTV Amharic were devoted to the conflict.

In general, TTV Amharic news appeared to be more focused on the FDRE and TRA conflict in September and October. However, in November ETV 57 appeared to have more conflict news broadcast than TTV Amharic.

4.2.2. Tone of the news of both media

Tone	ETV 57	%	TTV Amharic	%
Positive	4	4	6	3.2
Negative	89	85	171	92.4
Neutral	12	11.4	8	4.3
Total	105	100	185	100

Table 2. Tone of the news

The above table shows the tone of the news carried by ETV 57 and TTV Amharic news from September – November, 2020. According to the table TTV Amharic evening news focused on negative news 92.4% and ETV 57 news broadcast 85% of negative tone news items. Similarly, TTV Amharic news focused on positive tone news 3.2% and ETV 57 broadcast 4% of positive tone news. In addition, ETV 57 broadcast 11.4% neutral tone news items and TTV Amharic broadcast 4.3% of neutral tones in the sampled period. In reporting the news, TTV Amharic used various types of words and phrases to describe the conflict in its news. TTV Amharic, for instance, the news reported on October 30, 2020 in the following way.

ህገ ወጡ አቢይ፣ የኢሳያስን መንገድ በመከተል በሀገሪቱ ግለሰባዊ ሥርዓት ለመፍጠር እያደረገ ያለው ጉዞ ሀገሪቱን ወደለየለት ፖለቲካዊ ቀውስ ያስገባት መሆኑ ተገለጸ። /ጥቅምት 20 ቀን 2013 ዓ.ም፡ ትግራይ ቴሌቪዥን የአጣርኛ ምሽት 2 ሰዓት ዜና/

Translation:

The illegal Abiy; His journey to create one-man leadership in the country following Isaiah’s path has plunged the country into a political crises /October 30, 2020, TTV Amharic 8:00pm./

The above sampled news shows how TTV Amharic used a negative tone to call the Prime Minister of the country in negative manner. The news used the word “the illegal” in the news. This is one of the examples that TTV Amharic uses the negative tone in its news. ETV 57 was also broadcast the following negative tone news on Nov 13, 2020.

ለዓለም አቀፉ ማህበረሰብ ራሳቸውን ተበዳይ አድርገው ለማቅረብ እየሰሩ ያሉት የህወሃት ጁንታ ቡድን፣ የሰሩትን ግፍ በማጋለጥ በኩል ምሁራን ሊሰሩ እንደሚገባ በጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር ጽህፈት ቤት የዲሞክራሲ ሥርዓት ግንባታ ሚኒስትሩ ዛጲግ አብርሃ ተናገሩ። /ኢ.ቲ.ቪ 57 ምሽት 2 ሰዓት ዜና፣ ኅዳር 4 ቀን 2013 ዓ.ም/

Translation:

Scholars should work to expose the atrocities of TPLF Junta which is working to present itself to the International Community as a burdened, said Zadig Abraha, Minister of Democracy Building in Prime Minister’s office. /News from ETV 57, November 13, 2020 at 8:00p.m./

Here, ETV 57 used the term “the atrocities” and “Junta” to define the governing party of TRA. This is one of indication that a negative tone used by ETV 57 in its news.

4.2.3. Types of Dominant news frame of both media

Dominant frame type	ETV 57	%	TTV Amharic	%
Conflict frame	81	77	162	87.6
Attribution of responsibility	14	13.3	6	3.2
Economic Consequence	5	5	16	8.6
Human Interest frame	1	1	n/a	n/a
Morality frame	4	4	n/a	n/a
Total	105	100%	185	100%

Table 3. Dominant Types of frames

The above table shows that the Conflict frame has the highest number of news items which were reported by the TTV Amharic evening program with 162 news stories (87.6%). The second is the Economic Consequence frame with 16 news stories (8.6%). The third dominant

frame from TTV news stories was the Attribution of Responsibility frame with a share of 6 (3.2%). For TTV, the Conflict frame was found the most dominant frame that the media institution was using to escalate conflict between the Tigray region and the federal government.

On the other hand, the Conflict frame also has the highest number of news items with 81 (77%) of all news stories on ETV 57. Attribution of Responsibility was the second dominant frame with 14 (13.3%) news stories. Economic Consequence is the third dominant frame on ETV 57 with 5 (5%) of news stories. Meanwhile, the table shows the Morality frame is the fourth dominant frame with 4 (4%) of news stories and Human-interest frame is the fifth dominant frame in 1(1%) of the ETV 57 news stories. This shows TTV evening Amharic news is more focused on the Conflict news frame than ETV 57 news during FDRE and Tigray Region State (TRS) conflict from September – November 2020,

To show one example from ETV 57 conflict framed news,

**የትህንግ ሰው በላ ቡድን፣ በማይካድራ በንጹሃን ሰዎች ላይ ጭፍጨፋ መፈጸሙ ተገለጸ።
/ኢ.ቲ.ቪ. 57፣ የኅዳር 2 ቀን 2013 ዓ.ም ዜና/**

Translation:

It is reported that the man-eater, TPLF group massacred innocent people in Maikadra¹.
/ETV 57 news, November 11, 2020/.

This news is entirely related with conflict. It is showing what happened in Maikadra, the opening word that the media used, “Man-eater”, is evidence of which dominant frame the ETV 57 used. Similarly, TTV Amharic used Conflict framed news. For instance,

ሥልጣኑ ያበቃውና በህዝብ ያልተመረጡ አባላትን የያዘው ህገወጡ የህዝብ ተወካዮች ምክር ቤት አሁንም ህገወጥ ስብሰባዎችን በመጥራት፣ ተቀባይነት የሌላቸውን ውሳኔዎች ማሳለፉን ቀጥሎበታል።/ትግራይ ቴሌቪዥን የአማርኛ ዜና፣ ጥቅምት 11 ቀን 2013 ዓ.ም/

Translation:

¹ The place where the atrocities were taken place.
38

The outlawed, House of Representatives which ended in power and no elected representatives continues to convene illegal meetings and pass unacceptable decisions. /TTV Amharic News, October 21, 2020/

TTV Amharic reported conflict news which was criticizing the federal institution by using the “outlawed” (ህገወጥ), ended in power (ሥልጣኑ ያበቃው), and no elected representatives (በህዝብ ያልተመረጡ አባላት).

4.2.4. Themes of the news story of both media

Themes of the story	ETV 57	%	Tigray TV	%
Election	2	2	16	9
Federal Constitution	5	5	19	10.3
Economic	4	4	12	7
Conflict	44	42	59	32
Fake news	5	5	0	0
Foreign Relation	8	8	16	9
Support to FDRE/TRS	20	19	21	11.4
TPLF Attack	16	15.2	0	0
Locust	0	0	6	3.2
ENDF contribution	0	0	5	3
Clash in regional states	0	0	12	7
Other	1	1	19	10.3
Total	105	100	185	100

Table 4. Themes of the news story

The study sought to find out which dominant themes were present in the coverage of ETV 57 and TTV Amharic news. According to the above data the selected media institutions focused on different themes in their coverage of the FDRE and Tigray regional state conflict in the sampled period. In the base of distribution of the total 105 (100%) news stories of ETV 57 the election news was 2 stories, representing 2%, whereas TTV Amharic news indicated 16 news stories representing 9%. ETV 57 gave 5 news stories (5%) in terms of federal constitution, in

contrast the TTV covered 19 news stories, 10.3%, about the federal constitution. On the other hand, ETV 57 reported the conflict of FDRE and TRS by using economic news as the dominant news content. The results show that 4 (4%) news stories used the economic dominant theme and in TTV Amharic 12 (7%) news stories focused on this theme. The state television news program, ETV 57, covered conflict news stories and the theme of the news was directly covered by conflict. The results indicate that 44 (42%) news stories are mainly focused on conflict. Similarly, the table shows that TTV Amharic news 59 (32%) of news stories are focused on conflict.

Table 3 shows ETV 57 news gave coverage about fake news t 5 (5%). However, TTV Amharic did not give coverage in the sample period to fake news. Correspondingly, ETV 57 news covered foreign relation news themes by 8(8%) and TTV Amharic news also covered the same news theme in 16 (9%) reports. Moreover, the table indicates ETV 57 news covered the theme of people support to FDRE in 20 (19%), whilst TTV Amharic covered the news theme that shows the support of Tigray region people to TRA in 21(11.4%).

Furthermore, the table shows ETV 57 covered the conflict news by theme of the TPLF attack representing 16 reports (15.2%). However, the TTV Amharic news did not cover this type of theme in the sample period. Similarly, TTV Amharic covered the theme of a locust news story by representing 6 reports (3.2%), The ENDF (Ethiopian National Defense Force) contribution in Tigray region appeared in 5 reports (3%), and the clash in regional states of the country were represented 12 times (7%). But the ETV 57 did not cover these themes in sampled period.

The state media, ETV 57, and the regional media, TTV Amharic news, also covered other conflict related topics which represented various stories that were not repeated more than one time, like negotiation, immigrants, peace, political parties, holydays and similar stories. The table shows TTV Amharic news 19(10.3%) other themes of news stories in sampled period and ETV 57 covered 1(1%) of the same theme.

The findings reveal that for both broadcasters (ETV 57 and TTV Amharic news), conflict is the most common theme of their news stories. Nevertheless, ETV 57 Amharic covered conflict news themes (42%) in its reporting more than TTV Amharic (32%) in the period. Likewise,

the news theme that showed the public support to the FDRE government from different regions of the country (except Tigray region), and the support of Tigray people to TRA was the second common theme of their news stories.

From various types of themes ETV used the following theme in its news. For example,

የህግ የበላይነትን ለማስከበር እና የሀገሪቱን ሰላም ለማስቀጠል፣ በመላው ሀገሪቱ ባሉት የታጠቁ ኃይሎችና ኢመደቦች አደረጃጀቶች ላይ በ2013 ዓ.ም በትኩረት እንደሚሰራ ፕሬዚዳንት ሳህለወርቅ ዘውዴ እስታወቁ። /የኢ.ቲ.ቪ. 57፣ የመስከረም 25 ቀን 2013 ዓ.ም የምሽት 2፡00 ሰዓት ዜና/

Translation:

In order to uphold the rule of law and maintain peace in the country, President Sahlework Zewede described that the government will focus on armed forces and informally organized groups throughout the country in 2013 E.C. /ETV 57, October 5, 2020, 8:00 pm news/.

The theme of this news is the meeting of the parliament. When the meeting had taken place, the President spoke about the rule of the law which will be enforced in mentioned year by the armed forces. The detailed news was talking about the parliamentary meeting, but internal idea is conflict. So that, ETV 57 was using this similar theme in its news stories. Correspondingly, TTV Amharic used different types of themes. For instance,

የትግራይ ህዝብ የበረሃ አንበጣን የመመከት ሥራዎቹን አጠናክሮ በመቀጠል በአንድነቱ ህልውናውንና ዋስትናውን ያረጋግጣል ሲሉ ዶ/ር ደብረጽዮን ገብረሚካኤል ተናገሩ። ህገወጡ የአቢይ ቡድን፣ የአንበጣ መንጋ መከላከያ መሳሪያዎችን በማገት ህዝቡን ለማንበርከክ ቢታክትም ፈጽሞ የማይሳካለት መሆኑን ገልጸዋል። አያይዘውም ህገወጡ የብልጽግና ቡድን ቢቻለው አንበጣ አባዝቶ የትግራይ ህዝብን ለማንበርከክ ወደ ኋላ አይልም ብለዋል። /ትግራይ ቴሌቪዥን፣ የጥቅምት 2 ቀን 2013 የምሽት 2 ሰዓት የአማርኛ ዜና/

Translation:

Dr. Deberetsion Gebermichael said that the people of Tigray will continue to intensify their efforts to combat desert locusts by ensuring their existence and security. As he added that though the illegal Abiy team by holding anti-locust equipment and trying to crackdown the people of Tigray, he will not succeed. He also added that the outlawed prosperity party group will not hesitate to multiply locusts and bring Tigray to their knees. /TTV Amharic news, October 12, 2020/.

This news is also talking about the desert locust which was seen in month of October in Tigray region. However, the news is related with the conflict of the region with the federal government.

4.2.5. Sources of the news story of both media

Source of News story	Media Channels			
	ETV 57	%	TTV	%
Staff reporters	39	37.1	54	29.1
Government/Federal/Regional	49	47	51	27.5
Local media	5	5	n/a	n/a
International Media	4	4	25	13.5
Other Media	n/a	n/a	18	10
Victims	2	2	4	2.2
People Opinion	2	2	11	6
Experts	1	1	13	7
Local NGO	1	1	n/a	n/a
International organizations	1	1	5	3
Political Party	1	1	4	2.2
Total	105	100	185	100

Table 5. News Sources of two television channels

As Table 4 shows, the two media institutions have a range of news sources. ETV 57 used government news sources as the main source with 49 (47%). Next to government offices, staff reporters were the sources for ETV 57 with 39 (37.1%). Local media, like Ethiopia News Agency (ENA) and similar other local media were a source for ETV 57 with 5 (5%). Similarly, ETV 57 used victims and public opinion in phone calls and vox pops as news sources with 2 (2%). Finally, ETV 57 used experts, local NGOs', International organization along with different political parties as news source with 1 (1%) as well. Thus, government sources are the main source of news for ETV 57. Rather, TTV used its staff reporters as the main source of news with 54 (29.1%). Most of the reporters in TTV Amharic staff were mainly reporting

on the peaceful demonstration of different zones in support of the regional government of Tigray and opposing the federal government. Government offices were also sources of TTV evening Amharic news with 51 (27.5%). International media were used by TTV Amharic evening news with 25 (31%) along with other media with 18 (10%). TTV Amharic used experts who were living in Tigray with the number of 13 (7%). TTV Amharic used people opinion regarding on the conflict during three months news stories with 11 (6%). International organizations were other news sources in TTV Amharic from September – November, 2020 news with 5(3%). TTV Amharic used political parties which were actively involved in Tigray election as the news source with 4 (2.2%).

Along with this the researcher needs to show an example about the source of ETV 57.

የሀገራችንን ሉዓላዊነት ከማስከበር አልፎ ህዝባችን ድጋፍ በፈለገበት መስክ ሁሉ በመሰማራት የቁርጥ ቀን ልጅ የሆነውን የመከላከያ ሠራዊታችንን መተናኮስ የኢትዮጵያ ህዝቦች ሊታገሱት የማይችሉት እኩይ ተግባር ነው ሲል የህዝብ ተወካዮች ምክር ቤት ገለጸ። /ኢ.ቲ.ቪ. 57፣ የጥቅምት 25 ቀን 2013 ዓ.ም፣ የምሽት 2 ሰዓት ዜና/

Translation:

In addition to upholding the sovereignty of our country, our people are engaged in all areas where support is needed; upsetting our defense force is an unbearable act of the Ethiopian people, said the House of Peoples’ Representatives /ETV 57, November 4, 2020: 8:00 pm. news/.

In the above news the House of Peoples’ Representatives /government office/ is the source of news for ETV 57. As the above table indicates it is the main news source of this media.

Similarly, to show sources of TTV Amharic news, the researcher gives the following example.

የትግራይ ህዝብና መንግስት የአሮሞ ህዝብ ለዘመናት መገለጫው የሆነውን የኢሬቻ በዓል ዘንድ በተለመደው የአከባባር ሥነ ሥርዓት እንዲከበር ከመፈለግ ውጭ ሌላ ዓላማም ሆነ ምኞት እንደሌለው የክልሉ ኮሙኒኬሽን ቢሮ አሳወቀ። /የትግራይ ቴሌቪዥን፣ የመስከረም 22 ቀን 2013 ዓ.ም የአማርኛ የምሽት 2 ሰዓት ዜና/

Translation:

The people and government of Tigray have no intention or desire other than to celebrate the *Ereecha* festival, which has been the symbol of the Oromo people for centuries,

stated the Tigray Region Communication office. /TTV Amharic news; October, 02, 2020: 8:00pm./

As the table 4 indicates one of the sources of news of TTV Amharic is the regional government news service.

4.2.6. Duration of news stories of both media

Duration	ETV 57	%	TTV	%
Less than 2 Minutes	14	13.3	12	6.5
2-3 Minutes	24	23	24	13
Above 3 minutes	67	64	149	80.5
Total	105	100	185	100

Table 6. Duration of news stories

The above table shows that the duration of stories covering news about the conflict on ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news. ETV 57 broadcast 14 (13.3%) of news stories less than 2 minutes. Similarly, 24 (23%) of news stories are 2-3 minutes. Moreover, 67 (64%) news stories are above 3 minutes on ETV 57 from September to November 2020. TTV Amharic broadcast 12 (6.5%) of news stories less than 2 minutes. Likewise, 24 (13%) of news stories were from 2-3 minutes and 149 (80.5%) was above 3 minutes.

4.3. Interview with ETV 57 and TTV Amharic Journalists

This section presents the data collected from the interviews with key informants. Three reporters from ETV and three TTV Amharic program reporters participated in these in-depth interviews. Three participants from TTV were identified and agreed to participate. The interviews took place with two informants (one from ETV 57 and the other one from TTV Amharic) by email and their answer in English language. Similarly, two informants from ETV 57 gave their answer by telephone in Amharic language. In addition, two informants from TTV

Amharic replied by answer through telephone in Amharic. When the interview was taking place all TTV workers were living in Mekelle and Shere towns. They all ETV and TTV informants asked the researcher to be referenced as interviewee and they do not want their name to be mentioned. Thus, the names of them have been mentioned as they wanted. On other hand, in the case of the interview session took place in near to the month of Ethiopian Election 2021, ETV journalists had very tight schedules which made it difficult to discuss or give information in an interview.

The interviewer chooses to present the interview data from the two television station journalists separately for clarity's sake. The answers of similar station informants have been grouped under each question.

4.3.1. Interview about the tone of the news

Interviewee 3 is a journalist in ETV. She described the tone of the news that ETV 57 was using before and when the conflict was taking place. She said she was receiving and organizing news reports which were sent from war front in the office and described how ETV 57 was toning the conflict news.

እንደሚታወቀው ከፍተኛ የሆነ የቃላት ጦርነት በሁለቱም ወገኖች ዘንድ ነበረ። በተለይም አብዛኞቹ በፌዴራልና በትግራይ ክልል ሥር ያሉ ሚዲያዎች ዜናዎቻቸውን ሲሰሩ የሚዲያን ህግ በመከተልና ሚዛናዊነትን በጠበቀ መልኩ መሆን ነበረበት። ጦርነቱ ከመጀመሩ በፊት በነበረው ሁኔታ ይህ ህግን ጠብቆ በእኛም ሆነ በእነርሱ በኩል የመስራቱ ነገር አልነበረም። ጦርነቱ ተጀምሮ እየተካሄደ እያለ እንሰራ የነበረው በተመሳሳይ መንገድ ሲሆን የዜናው ድምጸት (ቶን) ወደ ኔጌቲቭ በጣም ያደለ ነበረ። ሆኖም፣ የተወሰኑ ዜናዎች ገለልተኝነቱን በጠበቀ መንገድ ለመስራት ጥረት ይደረግ ነበረ። የሕወሃትን ቡድን ለመግለጽ አእንደ “ሰግብግብ ጁንታ” የመሳሰሉትን አንዳንድ ቃላቶችን እንድንጠቀም ይነገረን ነበረ። (ከቃለ ምልልስ ተጠያቂ ቁጥር 3 ጋር በግንቦት ወር 2013 ዓ.ም የተደረገ ቃለ ምልልስ)

As it is known, there was a great war of words on both sides. In particular, both the federal and Tigray regional news media, when they make news or programs, they should follow the media law and produced their items in balanced manner. But before the war started that had not been happened in our part or in TTV side. When the war was taking place, we were reporting in the similar course and the tone of the news was very negative. However, there were few news items which we tried to make in neutral way. It was clear that we were told to

use certain words, such as ‘Greedy Junta’ to describe the TPLF group. (Interviewee 3 - phone interview, May, 2021).

Interviewee 2 (reporter), from the same station said that the tone of the news is related to the source of the news. For instance, the news that came from government sources, like Office of the Prime Minister or Ministry of Defense, used the same tone to describe as it was given. But he did not agree that the tone of the news was either negative or positive in the interest of the institution or journalists.

The Interviewee 3 of TTV Amharic explained that how to use the tone of the news in their media. Interviewee 3 explained,

በእርግጥ በተወሰነ መልኩ ኔጌቲቭ ቶን ያለው ዜና ይቀርባል። ይህን አይነትን በአብዛኛው ይቀርብ የነበረው በተመልካች ምልክታ ላይ ተጽዕኖ ለማሳደር በሚል ሀሳብ ነው። በተለይም በሰሚው መረዳት ላይ ተጽዕኖ ለመፍጠር እና የተቃራኒውን ኃይል ድክመት ለማጥፋት እንድንሰራ የሚነገረን ጊዜ አለ። ይህን ለማድረግ እና በተመልካቹ ሥነ ልቦና ተጽዕኖን ለመጽጠር እንዲቻል ከበድ ያሉ እናተጽዕኖ ያላቸውን ቃላቶች የምንጠቀምበት ጊዜ አለ። ኔጌቲቭ ቶኖች በጠንካራ ዘገባዎችና እና በዘጋቢ ዜናዎች ላይ በከፍተኛ ሁኔታ ይታይ ነበረ። በተጨማሪም እንደ ፋሺስት፣ አንባገንን እና አሃዳዊ የመሳሰሉ ቃላቶችን በመጠቀም አድማጩ በዛኛው አካል ላይ ያለውን ጥላቻ እንዲጨምር ይደረግ ነበር። (ተጠያቂ 3፣ ግንቦት 2013 ዓ.ም)

In fact, there were somehow negative tones in our news. These types of tones were often used in an attempt to influence the audience perspective. In particular, there were times when we had been told that we need to increase the tone of the news by putting pressure on the listeners understanding in order to show the weakness of the opposition side. To do it and create impact, we were using powerful or influential words in the news and trying to catch the mind of listeners. Negative tones, in particular, could be high in the feature news and hard news. Moreover, in our reports, we often use words such as fascist, dictator, and unitarian to create hatred in audience mind (Interviewee 3, phone interview, May 2021).

The other Interviewee 2 from TTV Amharic, in a phone interview, said,

አንዳንድ ጋዜጠኝነት ከሁኔታዎች ጋር ይገናኛል። አንድ ጋዜጠኛ ሰላማዊ ሰው ታርጌት ሲደረግ እንዴት አድርጎ መዘገብ አለበት? ቤተሰቦችህ እና ጓደኞችህ ደም አፍሳሽ በሆነ ውጊያ ሲጎዱ ራስህን እንዴት አድርገህ ኔጌቲቭ ከሆነ የዜና ቶን ታርቃለህ? አንተ እንደ ፕሮፌሽናል ጋዜጠኛ የዜናን ሚዛናዊ መሆን የምትጠብቀው ወገኖችህ በደህንነት ሲኖሩ ብቻ ነው። (ተጠያቂ 2 ግንቦት 2013 ዓ.ም በስልክ የተደረገ)

Sometimes journalism relates to the situation. How can someone report while civilians are targeted? How can you keep yourselves from a negative tone when your family and friends are affected by a bloody war? You are serving as a professional journalist and keeping the balance of reporting as long as your people are living in safety (Interviewee 2, phone interview, May 2021).

4.3.2. Interview about dominant news frame

All informants from ETV 57 said that the news program used different types of frames to present the news during the conflict period. When the war began, they were focusing on the attack of TPLF and the main news was framed to show the casualties that came due to the attack of TPLF. And then, after gaining a victory, they were reporting about success news on the war front, and after the federal force controlled Mekelle the reporters were mainly reporting physical and psychological damage which had been caused by the TPLF. Interviewee 2, described the dominant news frame which ETV 57 was using during the conflict time.

ከመስከረም እስከ ጥቅምት መጨረሻ ባለው ጊዜ አብዛኛው የኢ.ቲ.ቪ ዜና ዘገባ ያተኮረው በልማት ዜናዎች፣ በሰላም እና በመሳሰሉ ለሀገር አንድነት በሚጠቅሙ ዋናዎች ጉዳዮች ላይ ነበረ። ሆኖም ግን በወለጋ እና በመተኮል አካባቢ ስላለው ግጭትም ዘግበናል። ከጥቅምት 24፣ 2013 ዓ.ም ጀምሮ ግን በአብዛኛው፣ ሙሉ ለሙሉ ማለት ይቻላል ሽፋን ስንሰጥ የነበረው በትግራይ ክልል በነበረው ግጭት ላይ ነበረ። ከዛ ቀደም ብሎ ግን የህወሃትን የጦር ዝግጅት በተለያዩ መንገዶች ዘግበናል። በወቅቱ በተለያዩ ቦታዎች በቤኔሻንጉል፣ አማራ፣ ደቡብ እና ኦሮሚያ ክልሎች የተለያዩ ግጭቶች ነበሩ። መንግስት፣ ህወሃት በእያንዳንዱ ግጭትና ብጥብጥ እጁ እንዳለበት ይገልጽ ነበረ። ህወሃት ጦርነት ቀስቃሽ የትግል ዘፈኖችን በመልቀቅ፣ የገዢውን ፓርቲ አመራሮችና የጠቅላይ ሚኒስትሩን ስም በማጥፋት ያሰራጭ ነበረ። ጦርነቱ ከተጀመረ በኋላ፣ እኔ ክጦር ግንባር ነበር እዘግብ የነበረው። (መላሽ 2፣ ኢ.ቲ.ቪ ዘጋቢ፣ ግንቦት 2013 ዓ.ም)

From September to the beginning of November, most of ETV news report focused on development news, peace, and key issues that helps to unite the country. However, conflict reports were reported regarding on Welega and Metekel. Since November 4, 2020, we have been covering the conflict in Tigray almost entirely. Before that, however, we occasionally reported on the TPLF's preparations for war in various ways. There were many battles in various areas, including Benishangul, Amhara, SNNPR, and Oromia regions. The government accused the TPLF was involved, in each conflict and turmoil of the country. TPLF started a war by releasing songs of struggle and defaming the name of the ruling party, PP and the Prime Minister. After the war broke out, I reported from the war front. (Interviewee 2, Phone interview, May 2021).

In Tigray TV Amharic program (TTV), all three informants gave the same answer regarding framing. Interviewee 1 explained,

We were following a dominant conflict framing style that they had been intentionally using in their news. We encouraged the Amharic audience to hate the federal government and the prime minister. The main reason was that the federal government standing against the Tigray people and it was also collaborating with the invaders of Tigray which came from neighboring regions and countries (Interviewee 1, email, May 2021).

In addition to that, Interviewee 3 expressed in phone about the dominant frame,

የትግራይ ቴሌቪዥን የአማርኛው አገልግሎት ለተመልካቾች የፌዴራል መንግስትን ደካማ ጎን ለማሳየት ቀደም ሲል በወላይታ፣ በአማራ፣ በኦሮሚያ እና በቤኒሻንጉል ለነበሩ ግጭቶች በስፋት ሽፋን ይሰጥ ነበረ። ከዚህ ጋር የአማርኛ ቃላት የሆኑትን አንባገን፣ አሃዳዊ፣ ፋሺስት እና ሌሎች ተመሳሳይ ቃላቶችን በመጠቀም የጠቅላይ ሚኒስትሩን ጭካን ለማሳየት እና የፌዴራል መንግስቱ እንዲጠላ የማድረግ ሥራ ጦርነቱ ከመጀመሩ በፊት በስፋት ይሰራ ነበረ። እነዚህ ቃላቶች በዜናው ላይ እንዲገቡ ይደረግ የነበረው በኤዲተሮች እና በሌሎች የሥራ ኃላፊዎች ትዕዛዝ ነበረ። (መላሽ 3፣ ከትግራይ ቴቪ፣ በስልክ የተደረገ ቃለ ምልልስ፣ ግንቦት 2013 ዓ.ም)

TTV Amharic was giving coverage for conflict news which had been taking place in Wolaita, Amhara, Oromia and Benishangul to show to our audience the weakness of the federal government. We were also using Amharic words like, *Anbagenen*, (Dictator), *Ahadawi* (Unitary), *Fascist* and similar other words before the war began, to express the cruelty of the Prime Minister and the media institution was attempting to cause the federal government to be hated by people of Ethiopia. These words were mainly inserted into news by order of editors and other officials of the media (Interviewee 3, Phone interview, May 2021).

4.3.3. Interview about themes of the news

The major themes of the ETV 57 news stories on the conflict of FDRE and TRA were conflict, support to the federal government, economy and the TPLF attack. According to all informants from ETV 57, in two consecutive months (September and October) ETV news themes were more focused on economic and development news. Nevertheless, after the war started in the beginning of November the major theme of the news became conflict and conflict related news stories. Interviewee 3 stated,

የኢ.ቲቪ 57 ዜና የተለያዩ የዜና ጭብጦች ያሉት እና በተለያዩ ጉዳዮች ላይ ያተኮረ ነው። ለምሳሌ፣ የፓርላማ ዜና አንዱ በፓርላማ ስብሰባ እና ህገመንግስትን የተመለከቱ

ጉዳዮች ላይ የተዘገቡ ዘገባዎች ላይ የሚያተኩር የዜና ጭብጥ ነው። የውጭ ጉዳይና የኢኮኖሚ ዜናዎች ደግሞ ኢ.ቲ.ቪ 57 በየዕለቱ የሚያሰራጩት ጉዳዮች ናቸው። እኛ ስለ ትግራይ ምርጫ የዘገብን ቢሆንም ዜናዎቻችን ግን ትኩረት ያደረጉት በምርጫው ህገወጥ መሆን ላይ ነበረ። (መላሽ 3፡ ከኢ.ቲ.ቪ፣ በስልክ የተደረገ ቃለ ምልልስ፣ ግንቦት 2013 ዓ.ም)

The ETV 57 news have different types of news themes and it focused on various issues. For instance, parliament news was one of the news themes that indicated the parliament meeting and constitution issues. Foreign affairs and economic news were other themes which ETV 57 often used to transmit in its daily news. We reported about Tigray election, it was a theme but our news was showing the illegality of Tigray election and the process. (Interviewee 3, from ETV 57, Phone interview).

Interviewee 1 added the following expression,

Before two forces entered into war the federal and regional media, including Tigray media, were broadcasting provocative messages which were pushing people to war. However, in particular in the ETV side, similar news themes were getting coverage after the war started. There was no neutral reporting on all side and every media forgot media law and journalism ethics. In my opinion, this intensified the problem and it caused one of the bloodshed conflicts to take place (Interviewee 1, Informants from ETV 57, Answer by email).

Similarly, all TTV Amharic news respondents said that their station used various types of news themes and it was intentionally reporting to influence the mind of people and to show the weakness of the federal government and the Prime Minister. According to informants from TTV Amharic most of their news themes were related to the conflict. The situation between federal government and Tigray regional administration was tough and they believed that the conflict began through the media before the fighting began on November 4, 2020. In their opinion, the conflict began before the war had been taken place between two parties. Broadcasts were full of conflict speeches and messages spreading from the state media. Therefore, their task was defending themselves from attack and giving feedback to state media, particularly ETV. In general, the conflict was taking place in the media and TTV had been working to bring reconciliation and peace with their neighbors in Amhara and Eritrea. Notwithstanding, their main aim was to get victory and for the federal government. Thus, their media had a role to disseminate news about conflict to catch Amharic language speakers and

to cut the relationship of government and people. Interviewee 2 from Tigray TV explained the issue,

በፌዴራል መንግስት ሥር ባሉ ሚዲያዎች ከጦርነቱ በፊትም ሆነ ጦርነቱ እየተካሄደ እያለ ከትግራይ መንግስት እና ውሳኔ በተቃራኒ የመቆም አቋም ነበራቸው። የትግራይ ቴሌቪዥን በአንጻሩ ይዘግብ የነበረው በትግራይ የተደረገውን ምርጫ ህጋዊነት እና ለህዝቡ ያለውን ጠቀሜታ በመግለጽ ነበር ያተኮረው። በተለይም የሀገሪቱ ጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር በትግራይ ምርጫ ጉዳይ ፣ የትግራይ ክልል አስተዳደር ምርጫ ቢያደረግ የትግራይ ሴቶች እንደሚያለቅሱ፣ ወጣቶች እንደሚሞቱ እና ግንባታዎች እንደሚፈረሱ ስለተናገሩ እና ኢ.ቲ.ቪም ይህን ሲያስጮህ ስለነበረ፣ በእኛ በኩል ባለን የዜና መርሐግብር የጠቅላይ ሚኒስትሩን አስተሳሰብ፣ ፖለቲካቸውንና ውሳኔያቸውን በተደጋጋሚ እንተተኝ ነበረ። (መላሽ 2፣ ትግራይ ቲቪ ጋዜጠኛ፣ ግንቦት 2013 ዓ.ም)

What was being said by the federal media before conflict and when the war was taking place, standing against the Tigray government and its decisions. Tigray TV also reported on the validity of the election and the importance of the election to the people. Especially, the PM of the country spoke and threatened about Tigray election, he said that if the regional administration fulfills the election, women of Tigray will cry, young people will die, and buildings will be demolished, and that threat was echoed by the ETV, and on our part, the PM ideology, politics and every decision was repeatedly criticized in our news (Interviewee 2 TTV main reporter in May, 2021).

Interviewee 1 also expressed that TTV was mainly focused on news of the conflict and the theme of the news was mainly related to conflict. He added that after TTV reporters reported the religious holy day of *Mesqel* and Ereechaa they were told to change the theme of the news to criticize the federal government.

4.3.4. Interview about Sources of the News

According to ETV 57 news reporters most of the news reports, government press releases and other main information related to the conflict were coming from the Prime Minister’s office. ETV journalist, Interviewee 2, stated that they had been mainly reporting the news that they were getting from the government side. The informant stated that when the war was on going, he was sent to the war front and was reporting from Shere, Selekeleka, Axum, Adwa, and Kola Tenben. The news reports were mainly coming from defense officers, which means from government side. He was sending his report to ETV station in Addis Ababa. During the conflict, there was no telecom network and it was a big challenge to send the news report to

reach the station. Thus, he was using military helicopters to send reports to Addis Ababa. As all informants agreed that, during the conflict, the main sources of the news for ETV were government offices, such as federal and regional offices, Ministry of Defense and the new responsible office called the Emergency Information Center.

As a result, reporters were using people's opinions and comments as other news sources. Staff reporters were collecting news from people's reaction by gathering their opinion and visiting the place where they want to gather news. In addition, according to informants, there was no way of verifying the news during the conflict. They were only getting the news from the government, communication offices, and other official sources or the public side. .

TTV journalists answered the researcher's questions regarding the source of the news. Three informants from Tigray media gave their answer regarding their main news source being the Tigray regional government office and TTV reporters. But, after the war began, there was no communication line outside of Tigray and it was difficult to get any information from other sources. Particularly, Interviewee 3 mentioned that they were using TMH /Tigray Media House/, Oromo Media Network, Kello Media and other Satellite TV and online news media sources.

4.3.5. Interview about Duration of the news stories

Regarding the time of the evening news item, all informants stated that ETV 57 has its standards for the length of news. For each news item the time length should be 2:30 minute as a maximum, but some time it allows up to 3:00 minutes depending on the issues. During the war many conflicts focused news items were longer than 3:00 minutes. As all interviewee stated that the reason that the government wanted maximum length of the news item of the issue to give more explanation on issue. On other hand, the reason that media institution was using wide coverage on one topic was to set an agenda for the audience.

Likewise, TTV Amharic news used longer items in its news session. The researcher asked TTV journalists why TTV Amharic was using more than three minutes in one news item. Interviewee 1 of TTV explained,

በአብዛኛው በዜናዎቻችን ላይ በተለያዩ የፖሊሲና የፖለቲካ ጉዳዮች ላይ እንዲናገሩ ተጋባዥ ባለሙያዎች፣ የዩኒቨርሲቲ ምሁራን፣ የፖለቲካ ፓርቲ መሪዎች ይጋበዛሉ። ወቅታዊ ጉዳዮችን በምሁራዊ መንገድ ለማስረዳት ሰፊ ያለ ጊዜን ይፈልጋሉ። በተለይም በማዕከላዊ መንግስትና በክልሉ መንግስት መካከል በተፈጠረው ግጭት መብራራት ያለባቸው ጉዳዮች ሲኖሩ እነኝህን ምሁራን እንጠቀማለን። ስለሆነም ለዚህ ሰፊ ያለ ጊዜን እንወስዳለን። (መላሽ 1፡ የትግራይ ቲቪ አማርኛ ጋዜጠኛ፣ በስልክ የተደረገ ምላሽ፣ ግንቦት፣ 2013 ዓ.ም/

In our news to speak on policy and political issues we invited expertise, scholars from Universities and leaders of political parties. To explain the current situation to define in scholastic way they need additional time. Moreover, because of the conflict between the central government and our regional administration needs more clarification in the issue and we used more witness or clarification from expertise. So that it is important to take additional time (Interview 1: TTV Amharic journalist, Phone interview; May 2021).

Other informants from TTV Amharic explained that the main reason was to set an agenda in people’s minds.

4.4. Discussion and Analysis

The general objective of this study is to analyze the news contents of ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news program on the conflict between the FDRE and Tigray regional state during the period from September – November 30, 2020. A total of 105 news articles were covered by the ETV 57 program and 185 news articles covered by TTV evening Amharic news were selected. Quantitative and Qualitative methods of content analysis were used to accomplish the objective.

4.4.1. Discussion of Distribution of the News

The analyzed data was 36% of the total study sample from ETV 57 and 67% of total study sample from TTV Amharic. The main reason of this number of samples taken is to compare the two media institutions focus on conflict of FDRE and TRA from September - November 2020 news content. There is big difference between two media coverage of news observed and it shows that the range of their tendency to give news coverage on conflict of two parties. ETV 57 covered the total of 36.2% of news focused on the conflict and TTV 63.8% of news focused on conflict. From this distribution of news, in September the ETV 57, 2.9% of the news

broadcast focused on Tigray region. Similarly in October, 5% of news focused on Tigray region and the ruling party of the region, TPLF. In November, ETV 57 was highly focused on Tigray region with 92.4% of news items. The main reason was the war started on November 4, 2020 and ETV 57 fully focused on the conflict of two rivalry groups in this month. TTV Amharic focused its news on criticism of the federal government in September with 24.3% of the news. In October, the 35.1% and in November 50.5% of the news focused on conflict. According to this quantitative data for three consecutive months TTV Amharic was broadcasting about the federal government by transmitting hate speech, criticizing the Prime Minister, and accusing the federal government regarding Tigray election, preventing locusts and extending the term of the parliament. In contrast, ETV 57 was criticizing the Tigray Regional Administration more in November news. As informants of both media mentioned, since these two media are owned by the federal and regional governments, it is difficult to report contrary to the interests of government officials. Therefore, they were focusing on their institution and owning party interest. Puddephatt (2006) notes that the local media played a crucial role in setting the ground for conflict by mobilizing public opinion for two rival groups. These two media mobilized the hostility between the supporters of two groups in Addis Ababa and Mekele.

4.4.2. Discussion of Tone of the News

As the data indicated the tone of the news of ETV 57 and TTV Amharic news from September – November 2020, TTV Amharic focused on negative news with 92.4% of stories broadcast and ETV 57 had 85% of stories with a negative tone news in sampled period of time. Similarly, Interviewee 3, a reporter of TTV Amharic, explained that they were using negative tone for news stories in TTV news and the main reason was to show the weakness of the opposition side (federal government) by using powerful and influential words to change the mind of their listeners. As Charles (2018) explains Journalists and media reporters are deciding what tone, words, and facts to include and how to interpret issues in news stories. This journalistic decision to present the news relates to agenda setting for their audiences. That is the reason McCombs and Valenzuela (2007) stated the content of mass media messages incorporating the tone of the messages impacts the images of the world in their understanding. Shaefer (2007) notes that the media can influence public opinion by emphasizing certain issues over others. Wu and Coleman(2009) state that the tone of substantive attributes can be positive, negative or neutral.

Therefore, according to these scholars TTV Amharic news and ETV 57 using negative tones news in their prime-time news hour is part of their view and agenda setting towards their audiences.

4.4.3. Discussion of Dominant News Frame

The dominant news frames mainly focused on this research are conflict, attribution responsibility, economic consequence, human interest and morality frames. Based on the data, the researcher identified that the FDRE and Tigray Regional government conflict has been covered with different scope and intentions.

Conflict is the core point to politics and conflict frames are also intended to “emphasize conflict between individuals, groups or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest” (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000:95). Conflict is occurring because of disagreements, tensions inharmoniousness of viewpoints between politicians and attacking each other in the media (Bartholome, et al. 2018).

The researcher in his study assessed the dominance of conflict frame in state and regional media during the war between FDRE and TRA. According to the data the conflict frame in ETV 57 news report was seen in 77% of news reports and for TTV Amharic in 87.6% of its news stories. This indicates that TTV Amharic was focusing on conflict reporting rather than other frames. It occurred because of TPLF lost the dominant position in federal government, so that it seems that the former dominant ruler tried to take revenge on the federal government and the present leaders of the country by disseminating accusations through its media. Hence, it may have a political point that aims by using any method to fight the federal government and to back to the previous chair.

As participants from TTV Amharic elaborated, they were fully trying to influence through their news content the Amharic language audiences to hate the federal government and the Prime Minister. As they stated that the main reason was the federal government was standing against the Tigray people and regional government along with collaborating with the invaders of Tigray which came from neighboring regions and countries. To save their people, the media

institution focused on conflict news reporting. They also added that TTV Amharic was giving coverage of conflict news on other regions of the country to show to its audience the weakside of the federal government as well as using offensive and defamatory terms in the news to express the “cruelty” of the Prime Minister and his party. As they added that these words are mainly inserted into news by order of editors and other authorities of the media. These demonizing and harassing language and words were disseminated by TTV Amharic in every news program in the three-month sample period. Similarly, ETV 57 were using demonizing words and adjectives after the war started to describe the TPLF officials.

The state television news broadcast ETV 57 gave the conflict significant news coverage in the month of November. The main reason was the Tigray special forces attack on the FDRE Northern military command. The attack caused many casualties in each division of the command. In September and October, ETV appeared silent regarding on the conflict of Tigray. It was focusing on development and economic news. During the time ETV was not sufficiently focusing the news report of the developing conflict and the news which were taking place in Tigray region. Later, after the incident happened, the station had sent its reporters to the war front and giving full coverage to the issue. ETV 57 informants told the researcher in interview about the situation. So that, it is clear that ETV 57 gave less attention than Tigray TV in September and October 2020 news.

4.4.4. Discussion of Themes of the News

Kalotong (2020:18) explained “theme is the element that starting point of the message guide the address in developing an interpretation of the message”. Thus, theme is McQuail (2005), notes that framing is an approach which is shaped and contextualized by journalists. It is also the right that Journalists can choose which events to cover and which to ignore. Therefore, themes give guidance to the message that is broadcast in news organization. The quantitative data indicate the dominant theme in ETV 57 news during FDRE and TRA conflict from September - November 2020 conflict theme was 44 news stories (42%). Similarly, the data show TTV Amharic had the same dominant theme in the sampled period and with 59 stories (32%). The informants of both media gave their observation in their news reporting. ETV 57 was using various types of themes in its news and mainly in month of September it was showing

the illegality of Tigray election and in other months the role of TPLF in aggravating the conflict in different parts of the country. After the conflict began ETV 57 news fully focused on conflict by using hateful words, adjectives and jargons in the news. Likewise, according to interviewees respond TTV Amharic was also intentionally reporting to divert the mind of people regarding on the Federal government, the Prime Minister and the ruling party in three consecutive months by using hateful words, adjectives and jargons in its news.

4.4.5. Discussion of News Source

The main news source of ETV 57 was federal government office, regional government office, military officials and staff reporters. As the table revealed, government offices taking the ratio of 47% and staff reporters 39% of the news. In Tigray TV, regional government office and staff reporters' ratio is almost equal. Staff reporters as the news source of TTV Amharic in ratio of 29% of the news and government offices are also 28% of the news report. ETV 57, did not use "Other Media" (The oppositions satellite television and online media, which are broadcasting from abroad). But TTV Amharic was using frequently these media as main news source. These other media took the ratio of TTV Amharic news source in 10%. After the sudden murder of Oromo singer Artist Hacchalu Hundessa in June 2020 (Abdu, 2020) and the chaos that followed in the Oromia region and Addis Ababa, the federal government accused and closed the Addis Ababa office of OMN. However, the Tigray TV was using it as one of main news source.

The government officials of federal and the Tigray regional need media to speak loudly and decisively to its audience. Actually, media reporters ought to depend on sources of data and points of view in order to present actualities rather than inclinations of his/her own expressions to give genuine information (Melkamu, 2020). Nevertheless, as informants of ETV 57 reported, they were not allowed to ask Tigray region government officials and they could not get access to serve both sides. Similarly, as informants of TTV Amharic, it was difficult to get an opportunity to get information from the federal government side because of the instructions from the owners of Tigray media. Therefore, both media workers were receiving information from only one side. All expertise, guest interviewees and common people from community

who were invited by ETV or TTV supported the federal or regional government ideology and view rather than standing for the truth and to bring peace in the country.

In general, according to the quantitative data of sample news and the interview informants, TTV Amharic and ETV 57 news program sources were mainly from government and pro-government information sources.

4.4.6. Discussion about Duration of News

As table 5 indicates, 64% of stories about the conflict on ETV 57 were longer than 3 minutes. TTV Amharic news had 80.5% of the news stories longer than 3 minutes. The informants of ETV 57 stated that even though ETV had a standard for the length of each news story from 2-3 minutes, it was broadcasting over three minutes of story length during the sampled period. They added that the reason of the government officials wanted to give wide coverage was to create understanding about the conflict to their audience and to set an agenda.

Interviewee from TTV Amharic explained that the reason they were using longer length reports than other news was the influence of regional government officials to give more explanation from expertise. Like ETV 57, TTV Amharic was also using long time duration as the way of agenda setting which helps to bring impact on audience mind. As Fortner and Fackler (2014) stated, the main stream media create a public agenda by focusing attention on certain issues while ignoring others. In addition, Vladisavljevic (2015) explained as government to get support from people and to justify involvement, it tries to shape public opinion by using news media. Therefore, in order to do that main stream media need long time to shape their listeners opinion.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

In this part of the study the major findings and recommendations of the study is presented.

5.1. Summary

The general objective of the study was to analyze the news contents of ETV 57 and TTV evening Amharic news programs covering the Tigray conflict during the period from September 1st - November 30th, 2020.

The study was specifically initiated to assess conflict reporting practices of ETV 57 (state media) and TTV Amharic news (regional media) by exploring four major specific research questions.

- How did the ETV 57 and TTV Amharic portray the conflict?
- What were the two media news source before and when the war was taking place?
- How was the tone of ETV 57 and TTV Amharic news?
- What were the dominant news frames in the coverage of ETV 57 and TTV Amharic news on Tigray war?

The researcher used framing and agenda setting theory. The main aim of theory is to answer the above questions and to be guideline for the all part of the study.

The research was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative content analysis focused on the detail textual description of the conflict news reporting between two media firms from September – November, 2020.

The data collected through content analysis and interviews were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative data detail analyzed by using tables. It is the total coverage of quantitative data of the study. Under the table each recorded data analyzed in text. The news

distribution, tone of the news, sources of the news, themes of the news and duration of the news were analyzed and discussed. The qualitative data which the researcher collected by email and phone from three informants from ETV and three from TTV the total of six informants replied to 17 main questions. From five journalists of ETV who were asked to respond, three were reporting news from the war front and agreed to give their answer at the beginning. But two of them could not be available due to their business and the researcher interviewed the remaining three of ETV journalists. Because of continuing conflict, it was challenging to engage with Tigray TV journalists. The researcher had not any previous contact with them. Internet and telephone were not working well in most of Tigray region. However, the researcher spoke with three people and all of them gave their answer by phone and email. The in-depth discussion with informants was analyzed.

5.2. Major Findings

The study was based on the news coverage from ETV 57 and TTV Amharic on the conflict of FDRE government and the Tigray regional government in specific months of September up to November 2020. A total of 290 conflict related news stories from two media featured in this study. The researcher focused on the news stories of two media and found the following major findings.

- A. The result of quantitative content analysis shows TTV Amharic news mainly focused on the conflict of two sides in three months of news story, but ETV 57 less focused in September and October.
- B. The two media institutions have more length of time to reports of the conflict compared to other news or normal practice of their news.
- C. ETV 57 news reported on the conflict mainly by sending reporters to the warfront and trying to show tangible reports. However, TTV Amharic focused more on public demonstrations and government officials' discussions in studio and field reports.
- D. TTV Amharic was using languages that demonized the federal government of Ethiopia officials, particularly Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki in three consecutive months. Nevertheless, ETV 57 was demonizing the TPLF party in the news, in November after the war between two parties began.

- E. TTV Amharic was using OMN and TMH as news sources and getting and presenting news from them. These media are prohibited media organizations by Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority.
- F. TTV Amharic was using frequently repeated video footage and images.
- G. In looking at the source of their news all of them are mainly using federal and regional government sources, like government officials and staff reporters.
- H. News reporting from both stations was unbalanced and one-sided.
- I. TTV Amharic portrayed negative images of the federal government and federal institutions in news and news analysis. Similarly, ETV 57 used similar with TTV Amharic by doing discussions in its programs.
- J. ETV 57 focused on economic (new currency), Covid 19, and four main holy days (Ethiopian New year, Holy Cross, Erreecha, and Id Al-Adha Arafa) as main news in September and October. Similarly, Tigray TV Amharic focused in a similar way but most of the time it was using the events to criticize the federal government through these news themes.

So that, to answer the specific research questions, the researcher found that,

1. Mainly TTV Amharic escalated the conflict in its news story more compared to ETV 57 news reports during the sampled period of time.
2. ETV 57 was getting the news largely from government sources and TTV Amharic was getting mainly from the regional government and staff reporters.
3. The tone of the news of TTV Amharic was more negative tone than ETV 57.
4. The dominant news frame of both media firms was conflict, but TTV Amharic news was using it more than ETV 57.

5.3. Recommendation

This is the overall reflections of the Ethiopian media landscape. The main focus of this study was news programs of ETV 57 and TTV Amharic. Programs had their own difference in objectives, framing, news sources, theme of news and duration of news items. Although they had these differences, they all contributed to escalate the conflict in the country. Although in September and October ETV 57 tried to calm down the conflict by reporting other issues (like

development news) and to build peace and reconciliation in the country, but it seemed that it was giving less attention to what was going on Tigray region during the study period. Nevertheless, the finding shows that in November 2020, ETV 57 entirely focused on conflict news report and intensified the conflict. Rather, the findings show that TTV Amharic was accelerating the disagreement and conflict characteristics in its audience by disseminating hate speech in its programs from September – November 2020. In addition to that, the governing body and the news reporters' personal attitudes and political stand helped to aggravate the conflict and disagreement to spread to the audience of both media. This spread a spirit of hatred all over the country.

According to findings both news media more focused on conflict frame than other dominant frames, thus the news media should focus the other news frames, like economic, moral attribution and humanity in regular basis. News is not the only program format that reporting conflict in more length of time. The news firms should think to manage their news report in specific length of time. It is not important to use news to insult others or to demonize any one name due to his/her political position and activity. News must show the truth of the situation without any additional interest and demonizing word of any individuals or groups. It is important to both media to stop aggravating hostilities among their listeners in case of their political views. News media should respect the country's law and use news sources which are not prohibited in the country. If any media use news mainly from one source, it will be difficult to present balanced report. Therefore, media should work to present balanced report by inviting from two opposite sides and they have to try to play the media role by respecting their audience.

Thus, it is recommended that the media in the country must work seriously in peace building of the nation and reconciliation process. The main stream media must stop aggravating the conflict and show ways to resolve by stopping one-sided propaganda. News should show the truth and a true reflection of reality and should be free from bias and partiality. As Gwaza (2015) stated that media de-escalates the conflict in several ways, by avoiding sensational language, by carefully taking the use of adjectives with balancing opinions and views of leaders of all parties to conflict, aspiring to verify the accuracy of its sources during conflicts.

Moreover, the researcher believes that reconciliation and peace between the two rival bodies is very important to bring peace and development in the country as a whole. To do it, ETV 57 and TTV Amharic can play a great role. Journalists and media practitioners of both sides should talk without political bias and freely to bring better and trusted media environment in the country. They can be a role model to other government and media sectors. Finally, a future study can focus on audience reception of the conflict reporting and the role of media in building process of peace and reconciliation in the region.

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Appendix 1: Coding Categories

A. Coding of Dominant News Frames

1. Conflict Frame

- Blaming others, disagreements, opposing the other side
- Hate speech, demonizing others.
- Using ugly adjectives.

2. Attribution of responsibility Frame

- Story telling the good work of individuals, government offices and officials, various institutions and community.

3. Morality Frame

- Religious holydays, message of faith leaders.
- If the story telling people to behave ethical values and moral standards.

4. Economic consequence Frame

- If story tells about Inflation, price of commodities and life expensiveness.
- New Currency release and the outcome.

5. Human Interest Frame

- What was the result of conflict in life of individuals?
- What was entertaining coverage people in conflict time?

B. Coding of Main News Sources:

1. **Government** – Government officials from local up to federal level government offices,
Regional government offices, and communication bureau.
2. **Staff Reporters** – ETV 57 or TTV Amharic news reporters.
3. **Local media** – local news wires, newspapers, radio and television broadcasts along with local online news outlets (like, twitter, face book and YouTube).
4. **International media** – international news broadcasters, like Aljazeera, BBC, CNN and others.
5. **Other media** – the media which is owning unknown owners which is based in abroad and opposing the government or ruling party.
6. **Victims** – people who were affected by natural or man-made casualties.
7. **People opinion** – people feedback and contribution by phone call, skype, or other electronic media.

8. **Experts** – the invited professionals to elaborate the issues.
9. **Local NGOs'** – the non-governmental organizations which are working in local base.
10. **International organizations** – various international humanitarian and human right organizations.
11. **Political partis** – ruling and opposition parties which are based in Addis Ababa and Mekelle.

C. Coding of Tone of the News:

Regarding on tones of the news, the researcher used three main types.

- A. **Positive Tone** – it is considering the positive aspects of news. There is no hate speech but giving or showing a solution to the problem.
- B. **Negative Tone** – it displays hate speech, encouraging conflict between two parties, destructing the opposite side and showing the other side as demonic nature.
- C. **Neutral Tone** – it is not showing the good or bad, pros or cons of both sides and playing the impartial role in broadcasting the news.

Appendix 2a: Interview Guide for in-depth interview – English

1. In which media institution you were working?
2. How was the situation when you (others) report the conflict of FDRE and Tigray regional state?
3. Have you been in war front?
4. If you were in war front, do you observe any challenge there?
5. Most of the news stories length were more than three minutes in your news program. Why?
6. How were you framing the conflict in your news report?
7. How was the focus of the news theme?
8. How did you see the tone of the news?
9. Did you have any editorial policy which guides you and your colleagues in news reporting?
10. Who were your main news sources?
11. How do you evaluate your freedom in reporting the news?
12. Is there any way to check the reliability of the news source?
13. Most of the news stories image and sound footages repeated in your news broadcast, what was the reason?
14. Was there any party/group which was pushing to incline the story to its interest in certain way? In which way?
15. How do you describe your media's bias during the conflict?
16. What are the reasons that influence the news reporting?
17. How do you evaluate the role of your media in finding solutions for the conflict?

Appendix 2b: Interview guide: for in-depth interview - Amharic

1. እርስዎ ሲሰሩ የነበረው በየትኛው የብዙሃን መገናኛ ነው?
2. በኢ.ፌ.ዲ.ሪና በትግራይ ክልል መስተዳድር መካከል የነበረውን ግጭት ሲዘገቡ የነበረው ሁኔታ እንዴት ነበር?
3. እርስዎ ጦርነቱ በነበረበት ቦታ ነበሩ?
4. ጦርነቱ በነበረበት ቦታ ከነበሩ፣ ያጋጠምዎ ማንኛውም አይነት ተግዳሮት (ጫና) ነበር?
5. በእናንተ ሚዲያ ዘገባ አብዛኛውን ጊዜ የዜናው ርዝመት ከሦስት ደቂቃ ያለፈ እንደሆነ ይታያል። ምንድነው ምክንያቱ?
6. የግጭት ዜናዎችን ስትዘግቡ የዜናው ትኩረት እንዴት ነበር?
7. የዜናው ጭብጥ በአብዛኛው በምን ላይ ያተኮረ ነበር?
8. ዜናው የነበረውን ቶን እንዴት አየኸው/አየኸው?
9. ግጭትን እንዴት መዘገብ እንዳለባችሁ የሚረዳ መመሪያ/ኤዲቶሪያል ፖሊሲ ነበራችሁ?
10. የዜና ዋና ምንጫችሁ ማን ነበረ?
11. ዜናዎችን ስትዘግቡ የነበራችሁን የዜና ዘገባ ነጻነት እንዴት ትገመግማላችሁ?
12. የዜናውን ተዓማኒነት የምታረጋግጡበት መንገድ ነበር?
13. በአብዛኛው የዜና ዘገባዎች የተጠቀሙት ጳጳሮች የምስል እና የድምጽ ምስሎች ድግግሞሽ ሆነው ይታያሉ። ምንድነው ምክንያቱ?
14. የዜና አዘጋገባችሁን በሆነ መንገድ ወደ ራሱ ፍላጎት እንዲያዘነብል ይገፋ የነበረ አካል ነበር? ካለ በምን በምን አይነት መንገድ?
15. የእናንተ ሚዲያ በግጭቱ ጊዜ የነበረውን ወገንተኝነት እንዴት ይገልጻሉ?
16. በዜና ዘገባችሁ ላይ ተጽዕኖ የነበራቸው ምክንያቶች ምን ምን ነበሩ?
17. የእናንተ ሚዲያ ግጭቱን ከመፍታት አኳያ የነበረውን ሚና እንዴት ይገመግማሉ?

Appendix 3: Key Informants

ETV 57		
Interviewee 1	ETV main reporter	Gave interview by email
Interviewee 2	ETV main reporter	Gave interview by phone
Interviewee 3	ETV main reporter	Gave interview by phone
TTV Amharic		
Interviewee 1	TTV News main reporter	Gave answer by email
Interviewee 2	TTV News main reporter	Gave interview by phone
Interviewee 3	TTV News reporter	Gave interview by phone

Appendix 4: List of Tables

Table 1. Distribution of News Items

Tv Stations	September	October	November	Total
ETV 57	3 (2.9%)	5 (5%)	97 (92.4%)	105 (100%)
TTV	45 (24.3%)	65 (35.1%)	75 (40.5%)	185 (100%)

Table 1. Distribution of news items

Table 2. Tone of the News

Tone	ETV 57	%	TTV Amharic	%
Positive	4	4	6	3.2
Negative	89	85	171	92.4
Neutral	12	11.4	8	4.3
Total	105	100	185	100

Table 2: Tone of the News

Table 3. Types of Dominant news frame

Dominant frame type	ETV 57	%	TTV Amharic	%
Conflict frame	81	77	162	87.6
Attribution of responsibility	14	13.3	6	3.2
Economic Consequence	5	5	16	8.6
Human Interest frame	1	1	n/a	n/a
Morality frame	4	4	n/a	n/a
Total	105	100%	185	100%

Table 3. Dominant Types of frames

Table 4. Themes of the news story of both media

Themes of the story	ETV 57	%	Tigray TV	%
Election	2	2	16	9
Federal Constitution	5	5	19	10.3
Economic	4	4	12	7
Conflict	44	42	59	32
Fake news	5	5	0	0
Foreign Relation	8	8	16	9
Support to FDRE/TRS	20	19	21	11.4
TPLF Attack	16	15.2	0	0
Locust	0	0	6	3.2
ENDF contribution	0	0	5	3
Clash in regional states	0	0	12	7
Other	1	1	19	10.3
Total	105	100	185	100

Table 4. Themes of the news story

Table 5. Sources of the news story

Source of News story	Media Channels			
	ETV 57	%	TTV	%
Staff reporters	39	37.1	54	29.1
Government/Federal/Regional	49	47	51	27.5
Local media	5	5	n/a	n/a
International Media	4	4	25	13.5
Other Media	n/a	n/a	18	10
Victims	2	2	4	2.2
People Opinion	2	2	11	6
Experts	1	1	13	7
Local NGO	1	1	n/a	n/a
International organizations	1	1	5	3
Political Party	1	1	4	2.2
Total	105	100	185	100

Table 5. News Sources of two television channels

Table 6. Duration of news stories

Duration	ETV 57	%	TTV	%
Less than 2 Minutes	14	13.3	12	6.5
2-3 Minutes	24	23	24	13
Above 3 minutes	67	64	149	80.5
Total	105	100	185	100

Table 6. Duration of news stories