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# **EXPLORE NEWS REPORTING OF NORTH ETHIOPIA WAR: THE CASE OF REUTERS**

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

Addis Ababa University

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May, 2022

## **DECLARATIONS**

I Haileyesus Mekonnen, do here by declare that this Thesis is my original work and that it has not been submitted partially; or in full, by any other person for an award of a degree in any other university/institution.

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Haileyesus Mekonnen, entitled- explore news reporting in north Ethiopian war : In the case of Reuters submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in journalism and communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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## ABSTRACT

### **EXRLORE NEWS REPORTING OF NORTH ETHIOPIA WAR: THE CASE OF REUTERS.**

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*May 2021*

*This study examined how news report framed in north Ethiopian war in the case of Reuters. The main objective of the present study was, to analyze the war reporting of Reuters in war period of Ethiopia. The study employed both quantitative content analysis and qualitative textual analysis methods to undertake secondary data collected from Reuter's news. A purposive sampling technique was employed to collect news covering after federal government of Ethiopia ceasefire from June 2021 to Dec 2021. Hence, 65 news stories were selected for analysis. Content analysis utilized to collect and analyze data. Among the major findings of the study are: based on news framing analysis Reuters used military conflict war ,violence of war and anti-war frame the most dominant frames Reuters reporting period . This implies the clear interest of western media goals in conflict reporting. They want to heat up war in north part of the country. Because dominantly used destruction of the war news farming methods. The study also indicated that the main Reuters news sources were international organizations and diplomats, which accounted for about 29.23 %of the news stories. The study concluded that Reuters war reporting in after federal government ceasefire news theme and frames reflected mainly the interest of international organization and diplomats. This is an international organization try to interfere Ethiopian peace and security agenda. Therefore, the study concluded that international media outlets impact internal conflicts and over-unity. The age of media war has a clear influence on this country. So the weak performance of the internal media had played its part in the dominance of unverifiable information regarding the country. The researcher also recommends to all media to the governed journalistic profession and its ethics.*

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## **Acronyms**

AAU- Addis Ababa University

AU – African Union

AP- Associated press

BBC- British broadcasting corporation

CNN- Cable News Network

EU – European Union

ICG- International Crisis Group

NGO –Non -governmental organization

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

PM- Prime Minister

TPLF- Tigray Peoples Liberation Front

TDF –TigrayDefence Force

UN- United Nations

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Ethiopia has been in a political transition over the past 4 years. Current Prime minister Abiy Ahmed ascension to power in 2018, the state dominated politics at national level, with the most of Ethiopia's ruling coalition comprised of leaders from the Tigray peoples liberation front (TPLF). Abiy's ascent to power was buttressed by his visions of an ethnically harmonious, unified Ethiopia and initially appeared to be critical change of course from the divisive policies of the TPLF –dominated ruling coalition. However internal political friction between the TPLF and the government intensified during initial tenure, as the internationally lauded liberal reforms enacted by Abiy's government marginalized the TPLF. In September 2020 following multiple delays in parliamentary elections and the extension of Abiy's Prime Minister Term, the Tigray regional elections, in which TPLF candidates won a majority of seats. Federal government condemned the Tigray regional elections, and TPLF attacking north command of military camp and looting federal military assets, and then declared six month state of emergency and swiftly deployed troops to Mekelle in an offensive ostensibly targeting rebel TPLF leaders.

The conflict after the federal authorities' northern command became attacked by TPLF forces. Because of this the Horn of Africa has turned out to be a supply of subject and has attracted worldwide interest in addition to the worldwide media and governments. It has been discovered that a few nations try and use their media, despite the fact that it's political interference.

Researcher discovered the effect of the media at the conflict and the strain it exerts on nations is being visible on this conflict across the world media outlets. The researcher tested information reporting on Reuters.

According to Wikipedia Reuters is a worldwide information business enterprise owned through Thomson Reuters. It employs round 2,500 newshounds and six hundred photojournalists in approximately two hundred places global. Reuters is certainly considered one among the most

important information groups with inside the world. The German-born Paul Reuter installed the business in London in 1851.

A Journalist ought to be aware about the media's position and the obligation that follows with this in instances of war and document conflicts professionally without feeding the flames and gambling a position in supporting events to discover answers to conflicts.

This precise position calls for a further and deeper know-how of the roots of war, and the way war develops and ends.

Andresen, (2016) said that unique and numerous voices are beneficial free of charge speech in democracy and, equally, for a large know-how of focus and independence. The media can also moreover play a position completely in sustaining the peace process, taking into account

Siraj and Durrani (2015) indicated that humans rely upon media businesses for acquaintance approximately varied occurrences to make up one's minds. The media deliver insurance to conflicts differently. Framing has lately been a warm subject matter in journalism. We may deduce that framing is the maximum vital tool in war information.

Scharrer, (2021) defined the information media were obliged to a variety of court cases approximately their political insurance.

Getnet (2019) said the media can play a growing or diminishing position within the escalation of conflicts in a given country.

Therefore, I will analyze content materials on the media reporting regarding the Northern Ethiopia conflict since the evacuation of the National defense force armies in June 2021. It's important to observe how the armed war in Ethiopia, became framed and reported through the worldwide news agency, Reuters.

## 1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Mass media role can take two different and opposed forms while reporting conflicts. The media may take an active part in the conflict and has responsibility for increased violence. Some also stays independent and out of the conflict, thus contributing to the resolution of conflict. (Behailu Negussie , 2021)

Now, with the help of the digital age, the media has been able to influence many parts of the world and challenge the sovereignty of nations. Depending on the accessibility and capacity of the media, they will be the government to establish peace; and for those waging war, some have flexed their muscles to the point of changing governments. We also observe international media engaging and expressing interest in their news, as well as in their proxies and representation.

According to Behailu Negussie, 2021 Ethiopia takes the attention of the superpowers of its geographical location. Influential media over the years have covered their news coverage. Particularly since the start of the war on DEC, 2020, in the northern part of the country, coverage has increased. Reuters, one of the world's leading media outlets, reported on the country's war on several issues.

Fortunato (2005) explored that principally, media organizations operate under broad political, economic, cultural, and social contexts through which media topics unavoidably be shaped. Lee and Maslog (2005) maintained that the news media is often fascinated by exceptional events like conflicts. Conflicts, due to their content not only attract the media but also the audience largely.

It is a concern to learn from the research that conflict reporting is often sensationalized for the sake of attracting huge markets and recordings. The mass media is becoming a target for deceitfulness, misuse, and control by those aiming to profit from the deadly combat, due to newfangled technologies and a larger reach. (Lee and Maslog, 2005)

This research covered specifically after unilateral ceasefire by the federal government and news coverage of two side war and their impacts.

Their influence and content will be explored by the selected news stories. The balance and assessing news coverage of the Reuters analyzed framing approach. The pressure on the international media will be explored in-depth in terms of the number and shape of the newscasts in principle. As a result, evaluating how the Reuters covered and used farming methods. What was the interest in the region and its impacts?

I choose Reuters for this study because I believed the coverage was significant and would be sufficient to reflect the Western media's approach and focus, as well as its goals and objectives. Of course, similar studies have been done; According to (Behailu Negussie, 2021) Western Media Rhetoric on the Armed Conflict News coverage in Tigray region, Ethiopia: The BBC, AP, and Reuters, the media focused on narratives that endangered people's peaceful relations.

The study analyzed reports from 3 international media outlets on the start of the war. He noted that the Western media had not been able to provide adequate information on the conflict.

Furthermore, Temesgen, (2021) 'Global Media Coverage of the War between Federal Government and Tigray Armed Forces: The Case of BBC and Reuters '. He observed a significant amount of differences in the ways followed by various media outlets in reporting the conflict. How some of the globally renowned media outlets have covered the conflict by taking Reuters and BBC as case studies. He only analyzed their one-month news.

'Conflict reporting in the Ethiopian print media: the case of burayus crisis as reporting by Addis zemen and reporter newspapers' (Eden Amare, 2019) According to the study, private and state-owned media are more pro-government than pro-fact during the conflict. She analyzed local newspapers for news reports. Here's to the domestic conflict.

According to Mulatu (2017), there is a strong link between the media and conflict. This is especially true for those who feel that "if it bleeds, it leads," and hence focus their coverage on the conflict because it sells a lot of newspapers. Treatment of conflicts makes the news media more influential. The study focused on domestic conflict reports.

This study differs from these in that only Reuters selects and analyzes the news reporting after the government's first ceasefire. What makes it special is the fact that it is divided into three phases: the TPLF's re-attack, the crisis in the war, and the news that the federal government will continue to occupy the occupied territories. Reuters reports that the media influence has been evident in the country at the time. The study fills in the gaps in the case.

Interestingly, the researcher has learned that there is no enough recorded research on the news coverage and framing of north Ethiopian war reporting focused on Reuter's media only. As a result, there is a noteworthy gap in the research regarding conflict reporting trends. And also gives a date for further research papers. Hence, analyzing these concerns tried to fill up some of the gaps in the literature focused on the way of framing and news reporting applied by the Western media in the case of Reuters.

### **1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

#### **1.3.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

The general objective of the study is to assess how Reuter's news reported the conflicts between the federal government and TDF forces following the government came to a decision point to make a unilateral ceasefire that later on TDF forces made an offensive on Amhara and Afar region.

#### **1.3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

The specific objectives are:

1. Analyze how Reuter's media outlets used to report the conflicts.
2. Identify the dominant type of news framing used during news covering the armed conflict stories in the sampled period.

3. Find out the factors that might have influenced the coverage and framing
4. What is the impact of news source in reporting?

#### **1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following are the main research questions:

1. How Reuter's media did make news coverage during the war?
2. Which frames were frequently used by the selected media?
3. Where most sources used in reporting? And how was balanced?
4. What were the factors that might have influenced the media in their framing of the armed conflict? Is there a conflict of interest?

#### **1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The news coverage and framing content analysis of Reuters visibly investigated the way the armed conflict is enclosed.

So, editors and journalists of the media outlets and others would benefit from this research on how they should report such conflicts under media ethics to bring peace between parties.

It is also expected to understanding how Reuter's framed the news coverage on north Ethiopian conflicts the study would also motivate scholars for further research in the area.

The study will add the latest knowledge to news coverage and framing research provided that it is all done with international media.

This study could also benefit scholars working on the subject of media studies. The armed conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region drew international attention and was covered extensively by the Western media. The issue deserved to be covered by the media. It was a unique form of

conflict, and it had political ramifications. Above all, the region is volatile because of its location in Africa's horn. Last but not least the study will benefit constitute of the media and invite new experts and job seekers to the area.

## **1.6. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The scope of the study is limited on Reuters. That is why the researcher focuses on this media outlet. And another reason Reuters had better archival resources that could be easily accessed as compared to other media outlets and active participation in news reporting on conflict reporting. It was also a convenient media house for the researcher to save limited cost, time, and energy.

This study focused on the coverage of the Reuters from June 2021 – Dec 2021 G.C. The study typically concentrated on the framing of news stories about conflict issues in northern Ethiopia.

## **1.7 Limitation of the Study**

This study would have limitations. Media outlets were not included which are all western and local Media in this study. This would not be possible due to the study's interests, particularly one international media, as well as the time constraints.

The study is also limited to qualitative study, purposive sampling. It has also a study time limitation; it only covered after unilateral ceasefire' news analysis.

Because of criteria of subscribe When researcher find news from Reuters website obstacles on Google Engine.

## **1.7. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This thesis is organized into five major chapters. Chapter one introduces the study and demonstrates the need and the background contexts of the armed conflict in the country, the statement of the problem of the study, the research questions, objectives of the research, significance of the study, and the scope of the research. Chapter two lays down the literature review and theoretical frameworks. It discussed theories that have strong relationships with the research problem. Chapter three presents the methods used in the study. It mainly focused on defining the tools used for data gathering and analysis and shows the reasoning around why and how they will be employed described the conclusion and recommendation of the study and also reference. Chapter four treats the data presentation and data analysis part of the study. Chapter five presents conclusions and recommendations and also references.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 News Media and Theoretical Frame Works

#### 2.2 News Reporting

“News is not necessarily what happens, but what a news source says has happened” (Harp, Loke, and Bachmann 2010).

The media play a key role in shaping the public perception of issues “through collecting, framing, and distributing” information and, in war situations, state authorities know how important positive media coverage is for winning the public’s support for their efforts. Thus, politicians and military sources do whatever they can to influence news and have some control over the coverage.

However, experienced reporters may not use these terms but instead may offer working definitions, such as “news is what I say it is” “news is what is reported in the papers,” and “news is something that you know today and that you didn’t know yesterday.” Strentz (1989)

Concerning the way the ordinary people get news coverage, Fowler (1991) cited in Fourie (2001) indicates, “When ordinary people do enter the news arena, they enter it by some other door, for example when they happen to witness an accident or are involved in a court case.” media mainly focus on the activities of the known in their news programs. The news coverage they give to the unknowns, who constitute the majority of the nation’s population, is so insignificant and indirect. The reason for the existence of such coverage, Gans (2004) says, “The point is obvious, for it is built in the definition.”

### **2.3. MEDIA AND CONFLICT REPORTING**

Conflict is a concept that arises in many fields, most of which are beyond the scope of this research. The current literature review specifically looks at conflict within the field of media coverage.

A conflict typically “consists of two or more opposing accounts of what is going on. These accounts are more or less shared... and influence how the situation is acted out or enacted” (Brummans, Putnam, Gray, Hanke, Lewicki&Wiethoff, 2008).

Conflict is often used to pit two sides or perspectives against each other, and within the media is considered “a staple of the news” (Price, Tewksbury & Powers, 1997).

Pruitt and Kim (2009) define conflict as that which arises from the faith that the real or perceived interests and aspirations of the parties cannot be attained simultaneously. The focus is on the divergence of interests and aspirations of the parties. Interests can generally be understood in terms of the needs, desires, and concerns of the parties, while aspirations can generally be seen as the highest manifestation of these interests. Interests are often distinguished from positions, which can generally be seen as the concrete articulation of the amalgamation of one’s interests.

Friedrich Naumann( 2017 ) argues conflict occurs when two or more parties (individuals or groups) believe that their interests, goals, or ambitions are incompatible and express hostile attitudes. Actions taken by the either side would damage other parties’ ability to pursue their interests.

If the involved parties manage their disagreement or their conflict peacefully and constructively, conflict can be a positive process. Under the condition that conflicts are executed without the use of destructive force, they are considered an essential component of social life and can stimulate positive development. (Friedrich Naumann, 2017)

However, when parties no longer seek to attain their goals peacefully but resort instead to violence in one form or another, conflict becomes violent. So the aim of conflict prevention is not to avoid conflict, but to avoid its violent escalation. (Galtung&Ruge, 1965 in Mulatu 2017) also affirmed that conflicts naturally attract journalists as well as readers. Conflict, as one of the negative events, gets better attention from journalists while they select issues to cover in newspapers.

Media have a strong tendency toward dramatizing news, emphasizing crisis and conflict in stories, rather than continuity or harmony. Rather than just reporting conflict as the original tone of the incident journalists may shape political discourse into conflict frames (Bartholomé et al., 2015). However, the journalistic production process is at the very least shortens the statements of issues and therefore selects some aspects of reality and makes them more salient for the audience.

Puddephatt (2006) elaborated that the media, whether not native or international, can forever face a substantial challenge in attempting to hide conflict. There will inevitably be business pressure to specialize in the immediate, most violent, or dramatic incidents, at the expense of explaining the background and problems which will underpin the conflict. The role that the media plays during a conflict, as well as in the phases before and after, is determined by some factors, including the media's interaction with conflict actors and its independence from dominant groups in society.

According to Galtung (2002), the war journalism has four main qualities as literature revealed it: it's directed to violence and war, is very prejudiced by information, it emphasizes on the opinion of the elites and it focuses on the game, that is, one half wins all and therefore the different half loses all.

Hoge (1994) as cited by (Balabanova, 2007) argued that bad events are predominant in news coverage: disagreement is documented, but peace is not. According to this logic, modern forms of large-scale conflict are a striking subject for an increasingly global media. Usually, the media

give much air to conflicts, which regrettably, is followed by mass havoc. That is what one can detect in the international media daily.

This can disguise the political nature of conflict and conflict resolution or can lead to analysis that is biased, inaccurate, or does not resonate with local understandings (Mac Ginty, 2013). Yet the toolkit approach is important in consolidating a large amount of information into a succinct and accessible report. An 'ongoing tension' divides the policy community among those arguing for particularity and those arguing for policy-relevant generalizations (Woodward, 2007).

Conflict analysis by international actors can be futile to local communities. The drive to measure, monitor, and compare peace and conflict across countries and cultures has led to the development of indicators and databases that some argue are not relevant to, or representative of, local views (Mac Ginty, 2013).

It was a frightening example of how a society can disintegrate, and how far can be exploited by the power of the media in the hands of those unscrupulous enough to wield it as a weapon. War was neither unavoidable nor the solitary means of resolving the conflicts that lay behind the break-up of Yugoslavia, and the local media played an important role in preparing the ground for war, by ensuring public opinion was mobilized behind the different participants. Media campaigns between rival media outlets suggested the war itself. As regional communist leaderships mutated into nationalists they saw, true to their communist heritage, the various media as important instruments of policy and were prepared to use them.

The intervention of the western media simply offered another arena for the conflict to be enacted. With coverage guaranteed the so-called war (in reality usually waged by attacks upon unarmed civilians) was conducted with an eye permanently upon how it was portrayed in the media. All the participants in the struggle became adept at using the media to generate the political conditions for victory (Puddephatt, 2006).

According to the above scholar's defined news from their perspectives, we can also deduce from the definitions that news is not a plain fact in which it is presented as it is. This is because mass

media are not just vessels in which information is released without the addition of interpretation of different newsmakers like sources, journalists, and editors. Thus, in terms of interpretation and newsworthiness, the news is what the above-listed newsmakers say it is.

#### **2.4. ROLES OF MEDIA DURING CONFLICT**

The media are by far the most important source of information about politics. While reporting conflicts, media has a considerable influence over citizens' perceptions, opinions, and behavior. They strongly influence the dynamics and outcomes of conflicts, and thus also shape the prospects of success of conflict parties through by representing conflicts they report on in special ways. ( Kristin Skare Orgeret , 2016)

That is why participants in conflicts – including state officials, armed rebels and other warring sides, political parties, social movements, workers on strike, and pro-democracy activists in authoritarian states – aim to exploit the media to foster their goals by adapting their activities to the logic of media operation.

Kristin SkareOrgeret (2016) claims diverse, multiple voices are important for free speech in democracy and, equally, for a broad understanding of knowledge and autonomy. The media also be instrumental in supporting the peace process, allowing for participation, dialogue, and reconciliation, and strengthening civil society. Therefore, the classical roles of media are seen as important in supporting the shift to a stable and democratic society.

It is sometimes said that the journalist acts as a vehicle, which conveys the different views, outlooks, and perspectives experienced in society. In this capacity, there is fierce resistance to any attempt to encroach on the independence of the journalist carrying out this function, or any attempt to impose an ideological purpose upon them, however worthy. The media understood in this way is a structure that carries the debates of a society ( Puddephatt, 2006).

Hieber (2001) explained that regardless of the hypothetical delineation of the media's role in conflict, the media should take it as its moral responsibility to support peace-building during a

crisis. By the same token, if the media have played an important role in the propagation crisis, the outcome will be clear that it is against peace. In different words, if the media area unit is typically found to support forces that cause violent conflict, they must even have the ability to support the forces of peace.

As to Puddephatt (2006) media have the potential to increase or decrease the impact of harmful symbols in adjusting community relationships. “The three pillars of journalism (accuracy, fairness, and impartiality) are among the most important ethical considerations for journalists. Accuracy implies writing and reporting most objectively and fairly possible, regardless of personal feelings, beliefs, or attitudes toward the subject.” (White, 2010)

The key question for policymakers and media alike is how to create a media framework and practice that can sustain such a public sphere in a conflict area. Over time the public sphere has been constituted through a range of institutions that changed through time. The media may serve as a podium where both the victims and perpetrators of human rights violations can share their experiences to get a clearer picture of the past to facilitate honest healing and reconciliation. The role of visual images is important as they may help us to remember as well as to forget the conflicts or wars afterward. ( Puddephatt , 2006 )

Laplante and Phenicie (2009) post-conflict and conflicts may be attributed in part to the media’s failure to sufficiently mediate conflicting views of a country’s history. Internal conflicts do not occur spontaneously but tend to have a history. Not only can the media influence society before the conflict by recognizing and properly addressing the issues at stake, but they can also have an influence afterward.

Simultaneously media have the potential to advance or minimize the impact of harmful symbols in adjusting social relationships. This leaning creates an inherent conflict in the media’s ability to help achieve peaceful goals. Thus the media’s representations of identity, of history, the narratives of the society itself, become critical in shaping the extent to which stability, reconciliation, new nation-building, and community can be sustained. The media can be a

medium where identity issues play out, and they can also provide the space for encouraging acceptance of certain narratives that are part of transitional efforts. (Kristin SkareOrgeret, 2016)

Literature shows how the media play a negative and positive role in contemporary society. (Puddephatt, 2006) stated that basically, the media role can take two different and opposed forms. Both the media takes an active part in the conflict and has responsibility for increased violence, or staying independent and out of the conflict; thereby contributing to an effective media is an essential part of preventing violent conflict from breaking out, as well as being an important element in its resolution.

But, mass media often plays a key role in today's conflict. Research findings also underline the active role journalists play in the emergence and prevalence of conflict frames in the news media (Bartholomé et al., 2015).

Based on this north Ethiopian war news reporting ways it was a clear impact on the society. An international media outlet covers every momentum of conflicts. So this research focused on Reuter's news framing method.

## **2.5. THE IMPACT OF NEWS COVERAGE ON CONFLICT**

Three disciplinary streams attest to its significance for domestic and international conflict. From a political theory perspective, conflict is inevitable, both domestically and internationally. For democracies and democratizing nations, the conflict lies at their political core. Indeed, the classic pluralist theory holds that democracy may in part be defined in terms of the clash of interests within society, each competing for its share of the good life (Richard Reuben, 2009).

Between nations, conflict is inescapable because of social, political, and economic differences. Conflict theory confirms the ubiquity of conflict as a clash of interests and further tells us that conflict can lead to outcomes that are either constructive or destructive. Conflict outcomes are constructive when their effect is ultimately to bring disputing parties together through the

effective reconciliation of their differences. Whereas, its outcomes are destructive when they leave ruined relationships, devastation, and more conflict in their wake.

Mass communications research has repeatedly documented the significant impact that the media can have in shaping the public's attitudes about a given issue, such as conflict. (Richard Reuben, 2009) .The media often helps determine what the public perceives the issue to be about, its causes and consequences, whether it is important, and how to think about it. The confluence of these propositions has significant implications for the news media when it covers domestic and international conflicts.

In particular, it suggests that news coverage of conflict may contribute to constructive or destructive outcomes of those disputes. The potential personal, economic, and social costs of conflict are substantial. Hence, the community whether local, national, or international is better served by constructive conflict coverage which leads to the effective resolution of conflict with a minimum of negative costs than by destructive coverage. (Richard Reuben, 2009)

For democratic societies, the civilized consideration and resolution of conflict is an essential function of democratic governance, and the news media plays a vital role in facilitating this process of societal conflict management.

Across the globe, the resolution of such questions can contribute to the difference between world stability and volatility. The news media, for example, played a key role in fueling the fires of hatred that led to the mass killing of Jews during the Holocaust and Tutsis during the Rwandan genocide. Contrarily, the media was paramount in helping to secure peace in Northern Ireland.

## 2.6. THE NEWS MEDIA'S CAPACITY TO ESCALATE CONFLICT

The news media serves as a moderator of disputes, stoking escalation that may be more constructive or destructive; depending upon what is reported.

PRUITT and KIM, (2009) Introducing the dimensions of expansion as measures of constructive or destructive escalation raises interesting questions. When does news coverage encourage parties to use problem-solving rather than contentious tactics? When does the adding of issues by the news media facilitate negotiated settlement rather than additional problems and complexity? Under what conditions does news coverage spur greater resolve for resolution rather than harm to the other party? Mass communications researchers have not yet focused on such questions.

However, there has been some research that, when interpreted from a conflict theory perspective, provides insight into the news media's potential impact on conflict escalation. Constructive Escalation Recall that constructive escalation is promoted by problem-solving tactics, such as skillful questioning and listening, rather than contentious tactics. These problem-solving tactics may generally be thought of as efforts to enhance the communication of the parties. The news media can participate in problem-solving tactics to foster constructive escalation (PRUITT & KIM, 2009).

As it disseminates information about the conflict, news media coverage can amplify these conflict dynamics by framing the issues of conflict, the identities and relationships between the parties in conflict, and the interactive process of conflict. While mass communications research has not focused on the impact of news frames on conflict escalation. ( Entman, 2001).

Viewed from a conflict perspective, does identify ways that news media framing can lead to the destructive escalation of conflict, for example, fostering a zero-sum mindset, polarizing the parties, and marginalizing parties. Fostering a Zero-Sum Mindset Conflict theory suggests that conflict escalates destructively when one or both of the parties view the conflict or a dispute as necessarily something that is won by one party and lost by the other—that the dispute is zero-sum. ( Entman, 2001).

News media coverage can perpetrate such an understanding of conflict or a dispute. News stories about conflict frequently follow a structural paradigm that is sometimes called issue dualism, in which the news media reduces complex issues to two competing sides that are articulated by familiar, predictable sources and that get roughly equal weight in their coverage. Polarizing the Parties Conflict research demonstrates that parties become more distant as conflict escalates destructively, a phenomenon known as autistic hostility. ( Entman, 2001).

The media coverage of conflict can spur such polarization. This perhaps can be seen most vividly in international coverage of ethnic conflict, where news coverage tends to be ethnocentric as journalists strive to fit news into (INT'L J. PRESS/POL. 2008). Conflict theory suggests that such modes of coverage can contribute to destructive conflict escalation by reinforcing negative attitudes toward the conflict and encouraging destructive behaviors in furtherance of the conflict.

Wolfsfeld, ( 2007 ) found strong evidence of these reporting modes in a content analysis of Israeli and Palestinian television coverage of two events: a Palestinian suicide bombing that killed 19 Israelis and the Israeli killing of a Hamas leader that also left 16 Palestinians dead. When covering the Palestinian suicide bombing, the Israeli television station reported a high level of emotionalism and cultural context, consistent with the Victims Mode. On the other hand, the Palestinian station demonstrated a Defensive Mode of reporting by covering the attack with a low level of emotionalism and a cultural context placing the attack in the overall context of the Israeli–Palestinian struggle.

Theoretically, the protest paradigm posits that the more protest groups threaten the status quo by attempting to change current conditions, norms, and policies, the more negatively they will be treated by the news media (Anastasio, 2003).

The researcher defines escalation as the expansion of conflict along with at least five different dimensions of tactics, issues, participants, resources, and goals and recognized that escalation, like the conflict itself, can be both constructive and destructive. Further research can seek to ascertain the degree to which news media coverage of a conflict or a dispute intensifies or abates

each of these psychological processes. Other research questions flow from the bottom up, from the assessment of news media practices from the perspective of conflict theory

## **2.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**

### **BACKGROUND ON FRAMING**

#### **2.7.1 THE CONCEPT OF FRAMING**

Framing is can simply be described as the angle or perspective from which a news story is told .while news is often thought to be objective and value free this is rarely if ever the case . In fact most news stories are value laden in both their production and content. News is not an exact representation of reality but rather reconstruction from various angles of small section of reality. This is not to say journalists necessarily lie or consciously distort the truth, but that journalists by covering particular stories, using particular sources from particular news angle are constructing reality through selective process. (Wikipedia)

Framing research has been relatively neglected at least in comparison with other framing research, such as frame analysis and frame set in individuals ( Frida V Rodelo's, 2019). In this area of framing research, many relevant influential factors on news frames can be considered.The first category of framing research is called frame building.

Hänggli (2012) defines frame building as the study of the flow of frames from political actors to journalists, in which frames in mediated communication (i.e. frames in news content) are the dependent variable.

##### **2.7.1.2 What Are News Frames?**

A news frame is a central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events, weaving a connection among them. “The frame suggests what the debate is about, the essence of the issue” (Gamson& Modigliani, 1987). In short, a news frame can affect an

individual by stressing certain aspects of reality and pushing others into the background: The news frame has a selective function. In this way, certain issue attributes, judgments, and decisions are suggested (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Therefore, most news framing studies have focused on emphasis frames. De Vreese (2005) further suggested a general distinction concerning the nature and content of a news frame.

Certain frames are pertinent only to specific issues or events. Such frames News framing effects theory may be labeled issue-specific frames. Research that tries to detect news frames in texts, such as political news, often relies on an inductive approach and refrains from analyzing news stories with Priori-defined news frames. Frames emerge from the material during the course of analysis. An inductive approach produces rich knowledge about the framing of the issue at hand but makes it hard to extrapolate and replicate the findings.

News framing helps to realize dynamic processes that involve frame building (how frames emerge), the presence and development of frames in the media, and frame setting (the interplay between frames and citizens). Entman (1993) noted that frames have several locations, including the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the surrounding culture.

Communicators like political elites, social movements, lobbyists, or activists develop their frames about an issue to try to establish these in the public discourse and the news media. (Matthes, 2010).

Frames in the news may affect learning, interpretation, evaluation of issues and events, and so on. This part of the framing process has been investigated most elaborately, often to explore the extent to which, and under what circumstances, audiences reflect and mirror frames that are made available to them in the news, among others. The effects of framing can be conceived on the individual and the societal level. An individual-level consequence may be altered attitudes about an issue based on exposure to certain frames. On the societal level, frames may contribute to shaping social-level processes, such as political socialization, decision-making, and collective actions.

As Kinder and Sanders (1996) explain, “Frames lead a double life ... frames are interpretative structures embedded in political discourse. In this context frames are rhetorical weapons ... At the same time, frames also live inside the mind; they are cognitive structures that help individual citizens make sense of the issues.” When a frame in communication affects an individual’s frame of thought, it is called a framing effect. News frames have been shown to affect how citizens make sense of various political issues.

### **2.7.1.1 FRAMING THEORY**

Framing is a complex process that is subject to different definitions and theoretical approaches. (Barbara Gray, 2015 ) framing when it selects some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.

Researchers mostly understand framing as a “salience” of certain ideas or aspects of the topic (Entman, 2007; De Vreese, 2012). Chong and Druckman (2007) also claims the major premise of framing theory is that a certain issue may be perceived from various perspectives and may also be “constructed as having implications for multiple values or considerations”. Thus, individuals may develop a certain conceptualization of an issue or may change their ideas of an issue due to the framing process. It is assumed by most framing studies that communicators are elite actors, such as media, political actors, and experts, and that the audience consists of the general public. ( Dinerstein , 2015)

However, it is unlikely that there is exclusively one-way influence from the frames used and offered (Chong & Druckman, 2007). There are two types of frames ( i.e“generic frames” and “issue-specific frames”). According to De Vreese (2012), issue-specific frames are related to specific news events or topics, while generic frames may be found in broad topics, which may persist over time and relate to multiple countries and cultures. Two concepts of framing should be specified: media frames and audience frames (Scheufele, 2009).

According to Gamson & Modigliani (1987), media frames refer to “a central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events... The frame suggests what the controversy is about, the essence of the issue”.

Scheufele (2009) also mentions that “media or news frames serve as working routines for journalists, allowing them to quickly identify and classify information and to package it for efficient relay to their audiences”.

### **2.7.1.3 News framing as a process: an integrative view**

The research on journalistic news frames is contextualized by long research traditions in neighboring disciplines. For communication science, the potential of the framing concept lies in its integrative nature (Reese, 2007). To realize this potential, it is important to stress that news framing is a process (de Vreese, 2005; Matthes, 2012; Scheufele, 1999).

However, most studies tend to focus either on the analysis and presence of frames or on the effects of framing. In the expanding literature on how News framing effects theory different issues are framed, there seems to be no limit to the number of operationalizations of frames (Hertog & McLeod, 2001) nor to the issues that are analyzed.

News framing helps to understand dynamic processes that involve frame building (how frames emerge), the presence and development of frames in the media, and frame setting (the interplay between frames and citizens). Entman (1993) noted that frames have several locations, including the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the surrounding culture.

Communicators like political elites, social movements, lobbyists, or activists develop their own frames about an issue to try to establish these in the public discourse and in the news media. (Matthes, 2010).

He denotes to journalistic framing (i.e., journalists’ frames) to describe a “schema or heuristic, a knowledge structure that is activated by some stimulus and is then employed by a journalist

throughout the story construction” (Dunwoody, 1992). Journalists incline to use information that is consistent with their frames and pay little attention to other information.

Matthes (2010) thirdly identifies frames in media content, which is a field characterized by “a proliferation of empirical findings and heterogeneity of conflicting conceptual and methodological ideas.”

Frames in the news may affect learning, interpretation, evaluation of issues and events. This part of the framing process has been investigated most elaborately, often with the goal of exploring the extent to which, and under what circumstances, audiences reflect and mirror frames that are made available to them in the news, among others.

The consequences of framing can be conceived on the individual and the societal level. An individual-level consequence may be altered attitudes about an issue based on exposure to certain frames. On the societal level, frames may contribute to shaping social-level processes, such as political socialization, decision-making, and collective actions.

As Kinder and Sanders (1996) explain, “Frames lead a double life ... frames are interpretative structures embedded in political discourse. In this use, frames are rhetorical weapons ... At the same time, frames also live inside the mind; they are cognitive structures that help individual citizens make sense of the issues.” When a frame in communication affects an individual’s frame in thought, it is called a framing effect. News frames have been shown to affect how citizens make sense of various political issues.

### **2.7.2 War Specific Framing Theory**

As indicated on Hailesilasse (2013) cited by Temesgen Endale “framing is a result of the media’s continued dominion in constructing reality for people who live far apart from one another”. With the rise of mass media in the USA as a powerful influencing device framing becomes emerged as a media theory during the 1970s (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009).

According to Baran& Davis (2012) “the roots of framing theory can be traced to symbolic interaction a theory that attributes individual interaction in the creation of reality and social constructions a theory that treats reality as a social construct”.

In order to frame news reports framing devices are vital to condense and categorize information into a centralizing theme. “framing devices that condense information and offer a media package of an issue (Gamson and Lasch, 1983). These rhetorical framing devices are metaphors, exemplars, catch-phrases, depictions, and visual images”.

Tankard (2001) suggests the following technical framing devices which are instrumental in identifying and measuring news frames, these are “headlines; subheadings; photo captions; leads; source selection; quote selection; and concluding statements and paragraphs”.

For Entman (2007) framing is “the process of culling a couple of elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to market a specific interpretation” (as cited in Groshek, 2008). Accordingly it is about shading emphasis on what the media believed is the appropriate representation of a situation. Influenced by the media house rules, owners or subscribers, practitioners pick and emphasize on certain aspects of issues by repeatedly mentioning and incorporating it in their coverage. They make issues as important and appropriate as deemed necessary. By framing certain aspects of issues prominently, media elicit the kind of interpretation they seek in their audience thus bringing about the desired feedback.

The function of such a subjective “selection” and “salience” is to define a specific problem, understand and pass an ethical judgment which will help add up of the events taking place: frames. Define problems determine what cause is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values; diagnose causes identify the forces creating the problem; making moral judgments evaluate causal agents and their effect; and suggest remedies offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects (Entman, 1993).

Entman puts these four functions of framing in perspective of the “cold war” frame which was a common news frame in the international news items of US media until recently. Accordingly, for example, the media dealt with issues of civil war (the problem), caused by communist rebels (the cause) that is believed to be an “atheistic aggression” (the moral judgment) which will be averted by U.S. support to the anti-thesis (the remedy). Another

communication scholar Griffin (2012) defines framing as “the selection of a restricted number of thematically related attributes for inclusion on the media agenda when a specific object or issue is discussed.”. In this definition Griffin capitalizes on making a consistent appeal to a certain aspect of an issue in every viable and related discourse in order to acquire the kind of feedback solicited from the audience.

There are various kinds of news framing techniques implemented on the Mass-Medias while organizing and presenting their news concerned about a given scenario. Explaining the meaning of framing citing Broadly, Daniela V. Dimitrova and JesperStromback (2005) stated that “framing refers to the ways in which mass media organize and present issues and events”. In differentiating the types of news frames as part of the study of media coverage, Daniela V. Dimitrova and JesperStromback (2005) mentioning Sceufele (1999) explained the most comprehensive typologies of framing into four categories of framing research as follows:

- 1) Independent variables (2) dependent variables and studying (3) individual frames. Individual frames are sometimes described as mental schemas, heuristics or scripts. They help and individual perceive, interpret and discuss public events. Media frames, on the other hand, are contained in journalistic stories across different Medias (e.g. print, television, or internet).

In this study, the researcher is concerned in investigating the media frames that are employed by Reuters in conducting their news reports about the war between the Federal Government of Ethiopia and the TPLF armed forces.

Therefore, among the types of media framing techniques this study has employed the one that have a particular focus and interests on the area of war news coverage known by a name “war-specific frame”. According to Daniela V. Dimitrova and JesperStromback (2005) war-specific frame is a method used to develop several specific frames with regard to the coverage of the news story tone that are included within the specific coding categories of central organizing theme.

Accordingly, war specific framing theory is employed to undertake this study to develop different frames that helps the data analysis process by coding the research data under the eight

central organizing themes. Moreover, the framing and coding process is briefly discussed in chapter three.

## **2.8. Related Local Studies**

News coverage can foster destructive escalation by promoting the denigration of one of the disputants, such as by marginalization or demonization. This is well illustrated by what researchers have called the protest paradigm, a set of journalistic practices that typifies mainstream coverage of social protests.

According to ( Behailu, 2021) Western Media Rhetoric on the Armed Conflict News coverage in Tigray region, Ethiopia: The BBC, AP, and Reuters, the media focused on narratives that endangered people's peaceful relations. While documenting and reporting the armed conflict, some western media failed to adhere to journalistic principles and ethics. It was a lot of skewed, uneven, and unsubstantiated information. They expressed sympathy for the TPLF while overlooking reality on the ground. The finding also revealed the government's inability to provide the proper information to the right media outlets at the appropriate time. The government was also not aggressive in effectively and efficiently dealing with the truth.

According to Mulatu (2017), cited by Behailu , 2021 there is a strong link between the media and conflict. This is especially true for those who feel that "if it bleeds, it leads," and hence focus their coverage on the conflict because it sells a lot of newspapers. Treatment of conflicts makes the news media more influential.

'Conflict reporting in the Ethiopian print media: the case of burayus crisis as reporting by Addis zemen and reporter newspapers' (Eden , 2019 )

Based on her findings, Ethiopian media, both the private and state-owned, are not in a position to reveal the truth about conflict and they are serving as an additional wing of the government to restore peace to the spot. Thus, it is recommended that both the media practitioners should not limit themselves in the spheres of the government structure to access information and they have

to think out of the box whereas, the government should try to make them free to investigate the case from the scene that potentially help the government to make the right decision.

Moreover, some studies mainly concentrated on examining the political, cultural, and economic influences of western media. For example, Sleshe (2014). ‘A study on media reports of Ethiopia politics: the case of selected western media’ and Martha’s, ‘Global media in local context: the effect of BBC and CNN news on cultural belongings of viewers’ (2007), explored the effects of western media reporting.

Furthermore, Temesgen (2021), He observed a significant amount of differences in the ways followed by various media outlets in reporting the conflict. How some of the globally renowned media outlets have covered the conflict by taking Reuters and BBC as case studies.

Hence, to the knowledge of the researcher, there is no research on the News Coverage of the War between the Federal Government and Tigray Armed Force in the case of Reuter’s international media only specifically 6 month time period. This research can fill the gap. Therefore, this study examined how Reuters reported and assessed their framing variation comparatively.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3. Introduction**

The main intent of this study is to explore news reporting on the war between the Ethiopian federal government and the Tigray armed forces by taking Reuters as a study case in 2021. More specifically, it assesses how Reuter's media outlets have framed the conflict in their daily news coverage in 6 months specifically.

Researchers use a range of methodologies when it comes to frame analysis. Framing is generally conceived of as a theory as well as a strategy. It not only explains how frames are altered in a text to provide a specific interpretation, but it also explains how to examine and extract those frames. This study was conducted to explore how Reuters news reporting of the north Ethiopian war after the first federal government ceasefire by using qualitative content analysis and purposive sampling technique. This Chapter discusses basic methods such as selected media outlets, research method and approach, Data sources, media selection, data analysis tools, and sampling techniques and procedures.

#### **3.1 Research Design and Method**

William (2010) Frame is a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue. In noting that facts remain neutral until framed the content takes on their meaning by being embedded in a frame or storyline that organizes them and gives them coherence selecting certain ones to emphasize while ignoring others.

A rhetorical version of framing analysis is one tool that allows us to detect how this process of telling us how to think works. Framing involves how the press organizes the context through which the public views its news. At its heart, this rhetorical process and this is why I believe

framing theory can be especially fruitful when adapted to a rhetorical perspective. (Kuypers, 2009)

As this study most importantly demanded context to be interpreted, the researcher decided to use a qualitative method in analyzing the media conflict framing. (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003) indicated over the course of the twentieth century, qualitative research has evolved and many different schools' have formed.

Behalilu cited Azpíroz (2014) argued that when it comes to framing a study, using a qualitative method has a lot of advantages. Azpiroz pointed out that qualitative farming methods (for example, discourse analysis, focus groups, or interviews) have a more realistic and contextualized interpretive look, so they don't overlook the presence of elements with high symbolic content or cultural resonance, or what is evoked without being explicit, or the omissions. Content analysis is a widely used qualitative research technique. Rather than being a single method, current applications of content analysis show three distinct approaches: conventional, directed, or summative. All three approaches are used to interpret meaning from the content of text data and, hence, adhere to the naturalistic paradigm.

The major differences among the approaches are coding schemes, origins of codes, and threats to trustworthiness. In conventional content analysis, coding categories are derived directly from the text data. With a directed approach, the analysis starts with a theory or relevant research findings as guidance for initial codes. Summative content analysis involves counting and comparisons, usually of keywords or content, followed by the interpretation of the underlying context. (Hsiu-Fang Hsieh, Sarah E. Shannon, 2005)

This current chapter looked at the methodology informing how the textual content analysis was conducted for this study. The methodology will attempt to justify how the research questions are relevant to the articulated framing theory. Many academics prefer to investigate framing through qualitative content analysis, which is a more satisfying type of media frame analysis.

Qualitative content analysis is one of the numerous research methods used to analyze text data. Other methods include ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, and historical research.

Text data might be in verbal, print, or electronic form and might have been obtained from narrative responses, open-ended survey questions, interviews, focus groups, observations, or print media such as articles, books, or manuals (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002).

The qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words to examining language intensely to classify large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings (Weber, 1990). These categories can represent either explicit communication or inferred communication. The goal of content analysis is “to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992).

Desalegn (2014) noted that qualitative content analysis is one of the numerous research methods used to analyze text data through careful reading of documents of various kinds, including media texts. This is because, in mass communication research, qualitative methods rely heavily on researcher readings and interpretation of media texts and are often employed to answer the whys and how's of human behavior, opinion, and experience information that is difficult to obtain through quantitatively oriented methods of data collection.

Kuypers (2009) emphasized the importance of qualitative research for media framing because the quantitative approach does not integrate the context" into the existing text, which he believes is essential for determining a frame. Kothari (2004) stated that qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with qualitative circumstance, which incorporates quality or type.

### 3.2 Research Approach

Content analysis has a long history in research, dating back to the 18th century in Scandinavia (Rosengren, 1981).

Later, content analysis was used primarily as a quantitative research method, with text data coded into explicit categories and then described using statistics. This approach is sometimes referred to as quantitative analysis of qualitative data (Morgan, 1993) and is primary focus in this research. More recently, the potential of content analysis as a method of qualitative analysis for health researchers has been recognized, leading to its increased application and popularity (Nandy&Sarvela, 1997). Qualitative research in particular deals with gathering and interpretation of non-numerical data to understand the human and social environment ( Olasile, 2020)

Hallin& Mancini (2004) expressed that comparative media content research does not have to be solely quantitative. Very often, qualitative, interpretive analyses carried out system can be of great value, for example, to show differences in characteristic genres of news presentation.

Hijams (1996) discussed that in some news media framing studies, the qualitative research technique has certain advantages which can increase a researcher's depth of understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Text analysis, narrative analysis, rhetorical analysis, discourse analysis, interpretative analysis, and semiotic analysis are some of the qualitative message analysis approaches applicable to media content analysis, as are some of the techniques used in literary studies such as critical analysis.

Qualitative methodology approaches research flexibly and self-generated, without preconceived assumptions. However, though subjectivity is not eliminated, in the approach to the object of study personal prejudices and beliefs must be put aside (Azpíroz, 2014)

### **3.3 Media Selection**

The first step in a qualitative content analysis is the researcher select mainstream media. So the researcher has selected Reuters. This is the most well-known news agency internationally. The following is a discussion of why these media channels were chosen. The first reason was Reuters was a huge worldwide audience and impact on targets. And also English versions, which were free of ambiguity during translation. Third, the researcher selected the media outlet because covered the armed conflict frequently compared to other media international and national other media.

The time frame is also the other determinant factor in framing analysis. The time frame of this study is from June 2021 to Dec 31, 2021. During this time, Ethiopia has been in armed conflict. The researcher wanted to study in the above-mentioned study period because the armed conflict was complicated and a crisis in the country and region. For this research, quantitative content analysis is used to investigate the frames used to represent the war reporting in Reuters.

### **3.4 Sampling method**

Patton, (2001) Sampling strategies for quantitative methods used in mixed methods designs in research are generally well-established and based on probability theory. In contrast, sampling strategies for qualitative methods in implementation studies are less explicit and often less evident.

Although the samples for qualitative inquiry are generally assumed to be selected purposefully to yield cases that are “information-rich” (Patton, 2001), there are no clear guidelines for conducting purposeful sampling in mixed methods implementation studies, particularly when studies have more than one specific objective. Moreover, it is not entirely clear what forms of purposeful sampling are most appropriate for the challenges of using both quantitative and qualitative methods in the mixed methods designs used in implementation research.

According to Lind et al. (2006) sample is a portion of the respondents drawn from the population of interest, and in any case, sampling is more feasible than studying the entire population. Although no sample can be guaranteed to be fully representative, it serves the purpose of obtaining a result that is representative of the whole population being sampled without going to the trouble of asking everyone. (Fisher et al., 2010)

This research has taken samples of the news stories that covered the armed conflict from June, 2021 - to Dec 31, 2021.

This particular period was the time that the conflict started and reached its peak and the media made a news analysis. To examine how the media outlet framed the armed conflict in the Tigray region, Ethiopia. There were sample 65 news stories from Reuters. The researcher use three phases to select news items.

### **3.5 Sampling Technique**

Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002). To choose media channels for this study, non-probability sampling approaches were used. Purposive sampling was employed for the study. Purposive sampling's primary premise is that researchers can strategically select adequate instances for an investigation using reasonable judgment about the objective of the inquiry. (Deribsa, 2018).

For this study individual stories were selected manually by searching for specific words containing north Ethiopian war, TPLF attacks, Tigray, law enforcement, Ethiopian National Defense Force, TPLF, etc. By using this mechanism, a total of 300 news stories were purposively collected from Reuter's websites. The news stories were collected selectively to address the research questions well.

### **3.6 Data Source**

The researcher used secondary data sources. Secondary data sources used by the researcher included news stories, books, journals, articles, newspapers, and magazines, and expert analysis of published and unpublished materials related to the topic of study.

### **3.7 Procedure and Method of Data Analysis**

Quantitative Data is information gathered in a numeric form. The basic instrument for collecting quantitative data is statistical analysis. Many steps are involved in analyzing quantitative data. These include data cleaning, data coding, data presentation, and data interpretation and discussion.

Data analysis is a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming, and modeling data to underline essential information, suggesting conclusions, and support decision making (Ader, 2008).

As Creswell, during the process of research, the investigator may collect qualitative documents that may be public (e.g., newspapers, articles, official reports) (Creswell, 2014). At the time of this research, media news obtained from websites was used.

#### **3.7.1 Data Coding**

Coding refers to the process of assigning numerals or other symbols to answers so that responses can be put into a limited number of categories (Connelly, 2000). Coding is a vital step where the collected data is translated into values suitable for computer entry and statistical analysis. Variables are created from data to simplify the analysis.

Coding helps engage in data reduction and simplification. In this study, variables are news headings/topics, wordage, tone, source selection, quote selection, and news frames.

### **3.7.2 Unit of analysis**

Here, what is being studied as well as what aspects are being studied is treated. The news stories, Headlines, sub headlines are taken as a unit of analysis.

The unit of analysis refers to the basic unit of text to be classified during content analysis. Messages have to be unitized before they can be coded, and differences in the unit definition can affect coding decisions as well as the comparability of outcomes with other similar studies (De Wever et al., 2006). Therefore, defining the coding unit is one of your most fundamental and important decisions (Weber, 1990).

Qualitative content analysis usually uses individual themes as the unit for analysis, rather than the physical linguistic units (e.g., word, sentence, or paragraph) most often used in quantitative content analysis. An instance of a theme might be expressed in a single word, a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, or an entire document. When using a theme as the coding unit, you are primarily looking for the expressions of an idea (Minichiello et al., 1990).

### **3.7.3 Framing and Coding Techniques**

There are various kinds of news framing techniques implemented in the Mass-Media while organizing and presenting their news concerned about a given scenario.

Explaining the meaning of framing citing Broadly, Dimitrova, and Stromback (2005) stated that “framing refers to how mass media organize and present issues and events”. In differentiating the types of news frames as part of the study of media coverage, mentioning Sceufele (1999) explained the most comprehensive typologies of framing into four categories of framing research as follows:

- (1) Independent variables
  - (2) dependent variables and studying
  - (3) individual frames.
- Individual frames are sometimes described as mental schemas, heuristics, or scripts. They help individuals perceive, interpret and discuss public events. Media frames, on the other

hand, are contained in journalistic stories across different media (e.g. print, television, or internet).

Therefore, among the types of media framing techniques, this study has employed the one that has a particular focus and interest in the area of war news coverage known by the name “war-specific frame”.

According to Dimitrova and Stromback (2005) war-specific frame is a method used to develop several specific frames about the coverage of the news story tone that are included within the specific coding categories of a central organizing theme. Different war-specific frames are developed and coded under the following eight central organizing themes:

**Human Interest Frame:** - This emphasis on the human participants and involved parties in the course of events from both opposed parts.

**Responsibility Frame:** - emphasis on the parties and individuals who are considered responsible for a given scenario, issue, or event of war.

**The violence of War Frame:** - focuses on various destructions caused by the war.

**Anti-War Protest Frame:** - emphasizes opposition against the war that condemns one or both parts that can take a form of a demonstration by the protesters against the war.

**Military Conflict Frame:** - focusing on the military conflicts, troops, equipment, and the like.

**Advance Frame:** - emphasis on the progress and advancement of the war, captured places by the combatant parts, and the outcome of the war.

**Profile Frame:** - emphasis on the profiles of the two opponent parts, their officials as well as supporters.

**Civil War Frame:** - interprets the war as a regional conflict.

During the development of these war-specific frames as well as in the coding process of the individual news stories, the researcher of this study has selected two individuals who have accumulated previous professional experiences in framing and coding the research data during their academic courses.

Moreover, the researcher will also employ several variables which were used in previous studies to prepare the code sheet and the codebook. The coding scheme for this analysis follows prior studies (Iyengar (1991), and Entman (1993) which identify salient elements in news reporting.

#### **3.7.4 Textual Analysis**

Qualitative content analysis is not a method that is always applied in the same way regardless of the data or research questions at hand. Although it is a systematic procedure, it nonetheless offers flexibility that allows you to adapt it to the respective requirements of a project. There are other analytical possibilities in this regard, which were not mentioned in the above description. Among these, two should be highlighted in particular, namely, the possibility of paraphrasing text passages and the possibility of creating thematic summaries.

Paraphrasing passages of text can be understood in its everyday sense, namely, that researchers reformulate these text passages in their own words. This can be a very useful tool for category development. This technique is especially recommended for beginners, as it forces them to read the text line by line, interpret it to gain a thorough understanding, and then record it in their own words.

It is certainly too time-consuming in most cases to edit all texts in this way but paraphrasing a selected subset of texts can sharpen your analytical view and be a valuable intermediate step in the development of a meaningful category system. Moreover, these paraphrases can then be sorted, particularly significant paraphrases can be combined and gradually more abstract and theoretically rich categories can be formed.

### 3.7.5 Ethical Considerations

There are several procedures to be followed and measures to be taken before, during, and after the research will over. The following points are discussing the procedures. Ethical approval of the research was obtained from the ethical review of the College of Humanity Language Studies, Addis Ababa University.

Ethical consideration is thought to be greater for those conducting qualitative research, given the direct contact researchers have with people (Griex, 2004). According to Wimmer and Dominick (2010), some common areas where researchers might face ethical dilemmas include; willing involvement with informed accordance, disablements, cons, and also protection of participant's incognito.

Although the uses the secondary data sources, this researcher has given his consideration into account while conducting his study to minimize bias through giving an extended careful time with the research data analysis and utilizing the direct quotation technique. Throughout the process of making this research output, the researcher gave attention to respecting basic ethical values, so that it would keep its academic form and essence. ( Behailu , 2021)

Among the ethical considerations, the student-researcher keeps an eye on the following listed ethical values. Plagiarism, healthy communication with the research advisor, fair treatment of the research subject, harmless, etc... basically, by respecting these values, this researcher seeks to put himself as an individual who tried to contribute something to the research society. (Wimmer and Dominick, 2010)

### 3.7.6 Overview of the Reuters

Thomson Reuters, originally Reuters, Canadian information Services Company. Founded as the Reuters news agency in Great Britain in 1851, it became one of the leading newswire services in the world. Its headquarters are in Toronto. The agency was established by Paul Julius Reuter, a former bank clerk who in 1847 became a partner in Reuter and Stargardt, a Berlin book-publishing firm. The firm distributed radical pamphlets at the beginning of the Revolutions of 1848, which may have brought official scrutiny on Reuter. Later that year he left for Paris, where he worked for a short time as a translator. In 1849 he initiated a prototype news service, using electric telegraphy as well as carrier pigeons in his network. Upon moving to England, he launched Reuter's Telegram Company two years later. The company was concerned with commercial news service at its inception and had headquarters in London serving banks, brokerage houses, and leading business firms.

The agency expanded steadily, and in 1858 its first newspaper client, the London *Morning Advertiser*, subscribed. Newspapers bulked ever larger in the Reuters clientele thereafter. The value of Reuters to newspapers lay not only in the financial news it provided but in its ability to be the first to report on stories of international importance, as in 1865 when the service broke the news of the assassination of U.S. Pres. Abraham Lincoln hours before its competitors.

Reuter saw the possibilities of the telegraph for news reporting and built up an organization that maintained correspondents throughout the world. The Press Association (PA), an organization representing the provincial press of Great Britain, acquired a majority interest in Reuters in 1925 and full ownership some years later. In 1941 the PA sold half of Reuters to the Newspaper Proprietors' Association, representing Britain's national press, and in 1947 co-ownership was extended to associations representing the daily newspapers of Australia and New Zealand. Reuters had become one of the world's major news agencies, supplying text and images to newspapers, other news agencies, and radio and television broadcasters. Directly or through national news agencies, it provided service to most countries, reaching virtually all the world's leading newspapers and many thousands of smaller ones. (Encyclopedia Britannica)

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS**

This chapter focused on the presentation and discussions of data obtained from the following media outlet: Reuters. The information gathered from the websites is presented and examined in light of the research questions. The media's coverage of the armed conflict, the sorts of framing used, and their motivations were all examined. The findings were reviewed in light of the theoretical frameworks chosen for this study as well as the research objectives and questions.

#### **4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis**

##### **4.1.1 Dominant Frame**

In this study, which focused on the war in northern Ethiopia, analyze how Reuters, the international media, covered news coverage.

The content of the news presented during this period will be examined in the balance of news framing, which is a global principle and professional standard. Which of the following news stories from June to December alone is the most dominant frame? Conflict reporting focuses on which frames. The media examines the process by analyzing and highlighting the differences in the headline and main theme of the news coverage as to why the news selection differs in its directions. The study also covered the news coverage with the help of statistics, providing a wide range of news selection features. The researcher believes that news selection and angle will have their impact during conflict reporting.

According to Entman (1993), the popular definition of the frame means to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in communicating text in the case of war can focus on victory and successful military strategy. In contrast, journalists can cover the same event by focusing on war victims, destruction, and violence.

This was indeed true for the war coverage by media outlets. Framing of an event is achieved by choosing what is present in media coverage. Other ways in which news framing can occur in addition to selection and exclusion, are through emphasis and elaboration. It is argued that the news reporting process is not immaculate in framing due to the chain of sources being used in news. The use of sources makes it impossible to let the information be untainted by human speculations and superimpositions of frames ( D'Angelo, 2010).

Wicks (2005), states that there is little chance of the existence of objective messages in media. He calls the messages produced by media mere interpretations of reality created by the writer. Thus, frames in media particularly news could impact public discourse creating or distorting different versions of reality.

Brüggemann (2014) seems to agree with this and states that one should expect to find “framed-frames” in a journalist’s work because their interpretation of reality is also influenced by individual, cultural, societal, and organizational perceptions. In the news selection process, we will look at the eight areas that are mentioned and put forward by scholars.

Eytan Gilboa (2009) practitioners have identified life cycles of conflicts and analyzed them in chronological terms. Many scholars and practitioners have distinguished three basic phases: pre-conflict, conflict, and post-conflict, or pre-violence, violence, and post-violence.

This research data analysis will have 3 parts for the news selection period. During the six months from June to December, at least 10 news items were selected each month. Reports have been circulating since the federal government declared a ceasefire in Mekele and since the day the TPLF reopened.

The first phase lasted from June to the end of August when TPLF forces waged a fierce war in the Amhara and Afar regions and the federal government chose to flee. In the second month of September-October, the TPLF intensified international pressure on the federal government and the international media and Western governments chose to remain silent about the war.

In November and December, the third phase of the study found that the war intensified and the two forces fought a fierce battle.

We will look at the process by which Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed spearheaded the war and returned TPLF to its former position. In light of these different aspects of the war, we can see the difference between the introduction and the focus of the news. Reuters has been reporting on Ethiopia for a long time and has shared the news of the war with the international community in its direction. In addition to the 65 news items we have selected, this study covered 300 News in 3 phases.

<b>Frames</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Human interest	6	9.23
Responsibility frame	6	9.23
Violence of war frame	11	16.92
Anti-war frame	10	15.38
Military conflict frame	19	29.23
Advance frame	9	13.84
Profile frame	3	4.61
Civil frame	1	1.53
<b>Total</b>	65	100.0

**Table 4.1 News Frame Sub-categories in Reuters**

The finding showed that the dominant frame used in Reuters was **the military conflict frame**, Violence of war and anti-war frames were also the dominant frames used in new coverage.

#### **4.1.2 News Story sources**

As the Northern Ethiopian War drew international attention, a series of headlines were reported by Reuters. Unlike in recent years, Western nations have been trying to play a role in each other's wars. Given that Reuters is based in these countries, the pressure on government policies cannot be undone. Therefore, the study explores the origins of the news source made. In the case of war reports, the source is fundamental.

Eytan Gilboa (2009) one important framing mechanism is the use of a source in news reporting. News media generally rely on official sources and are especially dependent on information from government and military sources during wartime. Brown (2003) argues that a high level of interdependence exists between the governments, the military establishment, and the media during times of war.

In this regard, the researcher examined Sources classified into 7 sections: these are Ethiopian government officials, TPLF officials, International organizations and Diplomats, NGOs, Anonymous sources, experts, and others. Other sources included residents and media organizations.

As a revision the chart below simply modify about the dominate news source of Reuters media outlets.

News Sources	Frequency	Percent
Ethiopian government	18	27.69
TPLF officials	11	16.92
NGOs	6	9.23
Experts	0	0
Others	10	15.38
Anonymous	1	1.53
International Organizations and Diplomats	19	29.23
<b>Total</b>	65	100.0

**Table 4.2 News Sources Sub-categories in Reuters**

As indicated in above table the dominant news source of Reuters was international organizations and diplomats, which account for 29.23 percent, followed by Ethiopian government officials 27.69 % and TPLF officials 16 .92 percent. The remaining news sources were others 15.3 %, NGOs 9.23 %, anonymous 1.53 %, and expert’s 0 % each respectively.

#### **4.2Discussion of Findings**

In the discussion part of the study, findings were discussed in terms of frames and news sources used while reporting the war in north Ethiopia. This part discusses the outcomes presented in the finding section by correlating the findings with the theoretical frameworks of the study.

##### **4.2.1 Dominant Frames**

This study aims to evaluate the dominant frames that emerged in the news coverage of the north Ethiopian war as well as the tones used by the international news sources in the coverage of the war.

Empirical evidence reveals that the military conflict frames, the violence of war frame, and the anti-war frame are the major frames that emerged from the international news sources. Reuters used a military frame frequency the finding showed. Many of the news stories were framed in various ways. Therefore, the researcher further extracts subordinate news frames. Among them, politics, Law and order, Security and defense, Fairness and equality, and Public opinion frames are worth mentioning.

### **Reuter's dominant frame**

#### **4.2.1.1 MILITARY CONFLICT FRAME**

This frame emphasizes military action, and military confrontations focusing on the troops, combat descriptions of the weaponry and technological capability, and prisoners of war. Based on this theory Reuters dominantly used military news frames. The research finding shows most of the news reporting on Reuter news agency focused military activity of the two sides. As result, Out of 65 Reuters news reports used military conflict frames about 19 (29 .23%). News stories that used the military conflict frame were published under such media website heads as;

**“Headline - Ethiopian attack in two northern regions intensifies, Tigrayan forces say.”**

*Oct 13 (Reuters) - An air and ground offensive by Ethiopian troops  
And their allies against rebellious forces from the northern Tigray region is  
Intensifying, a spokesperson for the Tigrayan forces said on Wednesday,  
claiming "Staggering" casualties.*

This news after TDF offensive attack on Amahra and Afar region Federal Government takes responses by air and ground military confrontations. Reuters makes this news story frames the

side of TPLF forces. October is the 2nd phase of the conflict. This was TPLF advancement on all war fronts.

On October 21 published this news story

**Headline –“Ethiopia hits Tigray region in the third day of airstrikes – government”**

In this news story, Reuter’s reports to federal government airstrikes attacks continue in the Tigray region.

*“Ethiopia carried out an airstrike on the city of Mekelle for the third day this week, a government spokesperson said, in a campaign to weaken rebellious Tigrayan forces they have been fighting for nearly a year.”*

The source of this report is Government Communication Spokesperson Legesse Tulu Mentions. Spokesperson says the airstrike hit a military training center being used by the Tigrayan forces. He said the center was a former base, known as the Northern Command, for the Ethiopian military in the area. The airstrikes came amid intensified fighting in the neighboring northern region of Amhara, where the government launched a ground offensive last week and is trying to recover territory it lost to the TPLF several months ago.

Reuters in this news story tries to balance from TPLF officials. It includes TPLF spokesperson GetachewReda.

*TPLF spokesperson GetachewReda told Reuters that a fighter jet had been over the city of Mekelle on Thursday afternoon and had made several sorties, but to his knowledge, the plane had not hit any targets.*

Reuters technically includes the inability to verify the facts from an independent party.

*Reuters was unable to independently confirm either the government statement or that from the TPLF.*

#### 4.2.1.2. Violence of war frame

The finding showed news frame of Reuters used frequently violence in war frame. Conflict is also a type of media framing that is employed in the production of news.

Framing refers to the ways that newsmakers cast stories, highlight what is figure and ground, and impute meaning and motives. "Figure" is what takes center stage in how one sees a situation, while elements that form "ground" fall to the background or the periphery of a situation. Aspects of a story that become a figure often influence how newsmakers cast the definition of an issue, problem, or event. Framing a situation as a conflict highlights incompatibilities, disagreements, or oppositional tensions between individuals, groups, and institutions. (Linda L. Putnam and Martha Shoemaker, 2009)

This frame focuses on various destructions caused by the war. According to reports, TPLF forces carried out a series of attacks during the period from June to the end of July, referred to as the first phase of the study.

The United Nations said in a statement that the fighting had intensified in parts of the Amhara and Afar regions, resulting in deaths, displacement, and rape, but that humanitarian aid had not reached the Tigray region due to the fighting. We see that international organizations and even Western countries have issued frequent statements.

On July 2 2021 Reuters reported about the United Nations' warns of the violence of war in Tigray.

*The United Nations said on Friday conflict could rapidly flare again in Ethiopia's Tigray and that famine was worsening in the region, where local fighters declared victory this week after an eight-month war with central government and allied forces.*

And also observe the situations from the spot. It includes on news body.

*“Reuters sees aid trucks waiting four days before unloading “*

Another violence of war frame news story was published on August 2, 2021.

**Headline -At least 30 bodies float down river between Ethiopia’s Tigray and Sudan**

*“At least 30 corpses have washed up on the Sudanese banks of a river that abuts Ethiopia's northern region of Tigray, according to two Ethiopian refugees and four Sudanese witnesses who told Reuters on Monday they had retrieved the bodies,”*

Reuters emphasize the impacts of the war on civilians. The figure shows from 65 news stories Violence of war frame 11 (16.92 %).

**4.2.1.3 Anti-war frame**

The anti-war frame emphasizes opposition against the war that condemns one or both parts which can take the form of a demonstration by the protesters against the war.

This news frames pro-peace activity of and two sides resolve conflicts by Dialogue. After the destruction of the war, every participant was open for a table. The researcher analyzed 3 stages of the conflict. During 3rd phase of conflicts, Reuters reports anti-war frame news. After 6 months of heavy battlefield casualties. December 23, 2021, Reuters Ethiopian troops will stay in two liberated regions and not cross into the war-ravaged northern region of Tigray reports.

**Headline- Ethiopia government says military won't cross into Tigray for now.**

The news source is from Ethiopian government spokesperson Legesse Tulu.

*"As per our current assessment, the enemy has been heavily hit and is no longer capable of executing its wishes," said Legesse.*

The headline news includes the government's weakening of the Tigrayan forces, but it also seeks to analyze the humanitarian crisis in the Tigray region.

Reuters described the war as a crisis between the two sides. An unnamed individual and regional television source cited the power supply situation and the human corridor concern. This introductory news is anti-war, but inside it analyzes the humanitarian crisis in the Tigray region.

Furthermore, Reuters covers international organizations and diplomats' calls for peace agreements.

Nov 4 2021 **Headline “Calls for a ceasefire in Ethiopia grow amid deepening conflict”**

*African and Western nations called for an immediate ceasefire in Ethiopia on Thursday after Tigrayan forces from the country's North said they made advances towards the capital this week.*

Nov 23, 2021 – headline “Military moves in Ethiopia risk undermining progress toward peace talks -U.S. envoy”

*The U.S. Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa said on Tuesday that "nascent progress" toward getting all parties to Ethiopia's conflict into negotiations on a ceasefire risks being outpaced by an "alarming" increase in military operations.*

In the research period, the anti-war frame was used in number 10 (15.38 %) news items.

#### **4.2.1.4 Advance frame**

Advance frame emphasis on the progress and advancement of the war, captured places by the combatant parts, and the outcome of the war.

The following news stories framed TPLF force advancement to the capital city. Two sides' war intensifies and TPLF captured a strategic town. All sampled advancement framed news sources from TPLF officials, eyewitnesses, and regional officials. Published on July 12, July 19, August 5, and October 30, 2021.

#### **Headlines – “Forces from Ethiopia's Tigray region say they are pushing south”**

*Forces from Ethiopia's northern region of Tigray said on Monday they were pushing south and had recaptured a town from government forces, underscoring their determination to keep fighting until the region's pre-war borders are restored.*

#### **Headlines –“Tigrayan forces take control of Ethiopia's Lalibela, a UN World Heritage Site – eyewitnesses”**

*Forces from Ethiopia's Tigray region have taken control of the town of Lalibela, whose famed rock-hewn churches are a United Nations World Heritage Site, and residents were fleeing, two eyewitnesses told Reuters on Thursday.*

#### **Headlines-“Ethiopia’s strategic town of Dessie ‘captured’ by rebel forces”**

*Tigrayan forces said they captured the strategic town of Dessie in Amhara region that borders Tigray, according to a rebel spokesman and residents.*

#### **Headlines - Ethiopia's Tigray forces enter neighboring Afar region, Afar says**

The researcher understands that these reports indicate that the Tigrayan forces have achieved a number of victories and are also close to capturing the country's capital by influencing the international community. Reuters exaggerates TPLF military victories to the extent that it pretends to serve the interests of Western nations.

Reuters did not, however, comment on the government's allegations. Did not report the current humanitarian crisis as the war intensified. The researcher understands that the daily Reuters news item on the bill has put a strain on the overall picture of the war. With the proliferation of military news outlets and the proximity of the war to the capital, the media has come to understand Western media. To reinforce the content of the news, he provided an organized report, citing residents in all areas where the group allegedly controlled. In his absence, he used the international media as a source.

#### **4.2.1.5 Human interest frame**

This frame emphasizes the human participants and involved parties in the course of events from both opposed parts. The war in northern Ethiopia has led to a devastating humanitarian crisis. The finding shows that the international community has not adequately covered the news. It covers 6 (9.23%) of 65 news items based on Reuters, which claims to impose sanctions and military action if countries do not comply.

Here On October 18 2021 published on Reuter's website.

#### **Headline – “Ethiopian families fleeing fighting describe hunger, rape in Amhara “**

*Oct 18 (Reuters) - The pictures on her phone are all that Ethiopian mother HabtamAkele has left of her three-year-old daughter Saba. The girl died of malnutrition last month before the family was able to flee south, deeper into Ethiopia's Amhara region.*

Reuters reported that children were dying and at risk of malnutrition as a result of the war. Reuters, which has dealt with similar humanitarian crises, also reported on the rape of women. Two news frames reported that citizens were frightened and Tigrayans were being detained as Tigray forces approached Addis Ababa. Two issues have been raised in this news. One is that the forces of Tigray are approaching. The second is that racial segregation is a threat to humanity.

### **Headline – “Residents patrol Ethiopian capital after Tigrayan forces' advance “**

*Nov 24 (Reuters) - Every afternoon, Getachew Megersa searches the Ethiopian capital for undercover agents. The 55-year-old construction worker says it's not the first time he's defended his country against rebellious Tigrayan forces.*

Framing news in human interest terms is one way to achieve this. Such a frame refers to an effort to personalize the news, dramatize or “emotionalize” the news, in order to capture and retain audience interest. (Semetko and Patti M. Valkenbur, 2000) `

#### **4.2.1.6 Responsibility frame**

Linda L. Putnam and Martha Shoemaker (2009) a responsibility frame focus on what or who was responsible for the problem, which should alleviate it, and what type of action is needed to address it Media framing is a complex and multifaceted area of research.

International organizations and governments have shown their support for the war, using the Human Interest Framework 6 (9 .23 %). Reuter reports that the international community, which has been embroiled in an information war, has reportedly sent sanctions to the federal government and demanded that it take responsibility for the war. To illustrate Sept 17/ 2021 and august 5 2021 published on the website:

**Headline – “U.S. paves way for more sanctions over Ethiopia's Tigray conflict”**

*The United States on Friday paved the way for further sanctions to be imposed on parties to the conflict in northern Ethiopia, where thousands have been killed and millions are in need of humanitarian assistance.*

**Headline - U.S. calls for Tigrayan forces to respect Lalibela cultural heritage**

*The United States on Thursday called for combatants to respect the cultural heritage in Lalibela, whose famed rock-hewn churches are a United Nations World Heritage Site after forces from Ethiopia's Tigray region took control of the town.*

Western governments have blamed the federal government for all human rights abuses during the war. As the group neared the capital, Addis Ababa, issues related to human rights abuses and sanctions were covered by Reuters. It also covers reports of damage to historic sites

**4.2.1.7 Profile frame**

Emphasis on the profiles of the two opponent parts, their officials as well as supporters. The study shows that the war intensified during the first three months of the year. To this end, the war has reached the point where the participation of individuals. Olympic gold medalist Haile Gebrselassie has released a report in which he claims to be in a war.

**Headline – “Ethiopian Olympic gold medallist Haile Gebrselassie to join the war, ready to pay 'ultimate price'”**

*Nov 24 (Reuters) - Ethiopian Olympic gold medallist and national hero Haile Gebrselassie pledged on Wednesday to join the fight against rebellious forces in his country after the prime minister said he had gone to direct the war from the front lines.*

It has been reported that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed is leading the fight, just days after the athlete was reportedly involved in the war.

**Headline – “Ethiopia PM at the frontline with an army in Afar region - state-affiliated TV”**

*Nov 26 (Reuters) - Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed is on the frontline with the army fighting rebellious Tigrayan forces in the northeastern Afar region, state-affiliated Fana Broadcasting reported on Friday.*

**4.2.1.8 Civil frame**

The civil frame interprets the war as a regional conflict. In a follow-up report, Reuters shared the US government's decision, citing regional media coverage of the war. It urges American citizens to leave Addis Ababa.

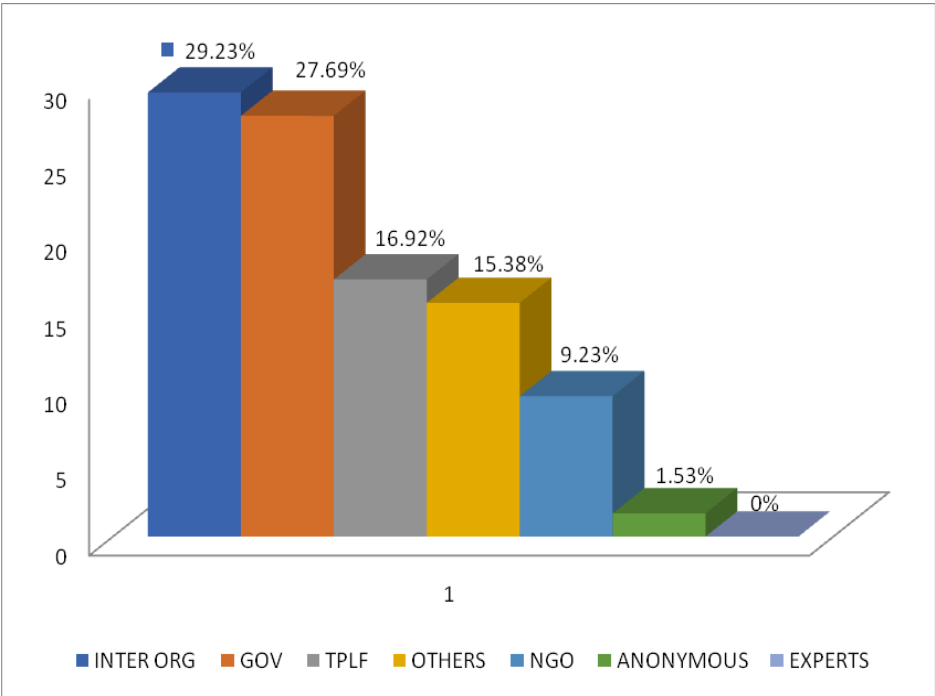
**Headline – “U.S. orders non-emergency government employees in Ethiopia to leave “**

*Nov 6 (Reuters) - The United States has ordered non-emergency U.S. government employees in Ethiopia to leave because of armed conflict and civil unrest, its embassy in Addis Ababa said on Saturday.*

**4.2.2 News Story Sources**

There is heavy reliance or over-reliance on official government and military sources and the media agenda is often set by government officials rather than by journalists or editors (Bennett, 2003).

In this regard, the researcher examined Sources classified into 7 sections: these are Ethiopian government officials, TPLF officials, International organizations and Diplomats, NGOs, Anonymous sources, experts, and others. Other sources included residents and media organizations. The dominant news source of Reuters was international organizations and diplomats, which account for 29.23 percent, followed by Ethiopian government officials 27.69 % and Tplf officials 16.92 percent. The remaining news sources were others 15.38 %, NGOs 9.23 %, anonymous 1.53 %, and expert’s 0 % each respectively.



**Figure 4.1: Percentage of news story sources used in Reuters.**

Reuters used dominantly International organizations and diplomats, which account for 29.23 percent. Reuters, an international media outlet, used these organizations as a source in its research reports. Unlike other news sources, Reuters has repeatedly quoted them as the source and reinforced the war report, shared the views of Western governments on human rights abuses and attacks during the conflict.

From the outside conflict area The International Community In a growing number of conflicts in recent years the international community which in this case means states acting in concert through the United Nations or regional bodies such as NATO, the European Union, or the African Union, or informal coalitions has, at some point decided to intervene in a country or countries marked by conflict. (Puddephatt, 2006)

According to this my study, Reuter's media uses International organizations and diplomats, as a source mainly for influence on federal government purposes and to put on their interest in the region. For instance, the following news headline is unexampled on September 2, 2021:

**“U.N. warns catastrophe looms in Ethiopia's north urges government to end de facto aid blockade”**

*A de facto blockade on aid to the Tigray region in Ethiopia's north is bringing millions of people to the brink of famine, the United Nations humanitarian agency said on Thursday, warning of "looming catastrophe".*

This news includes the government body's impact on aid supplies to the Tigray region. The agency called on the Ethiopian government, in particular, to allow aid supplies and personnel to move into and within the country by "lifting bureaucratic impediments" and clearing other hurdles to aid getting through. Reuters used this source to reflect concerns.

According to Anderson and McLellan (2002), to get government officials, politicians try to create a perception of crises that require government action, and the news media can magnify that perception to increase their audience. The second most important source of information is the top government officials. During the six-month news coverage, most of Reuter's reports quoted government communications officials as the main source.

### **Headline - Ethiopia hits Tigray region on the third day of airstrikes - government**

In this news, Reuters cites government officials as sources but has taken confirmation of the attack from the Tigray forces and used military leaders and government officials to verify military victories in connection with military action. Reuters reports that it has not been able to verify the source of the information, which was used by both sources.

We will see this in this news.

*“TPLF spokesperson Getachew Reda told Reuters that a fighter jet had been over the city of Mekelle on Thursday afternoon and had made several sorties, but to his knowledge, the plane had not hit any targets.*

According to my study, Reuters using government officials as a source is not only a balancing purpose. My study result shows this media uses government officials and military officers to magnify the war between two opposing forces.

Journalists choose not only what types of sources to use but also what questions to ask these sources, and which sources will ultimately be printed or broadcasted. This can have a profound impact on how issues are framed and perceived by audiences since a story dominated by scientists, economists, or political elites gives cues to readers as to what kind of issue is being debated (Bennett, 1996). As mentioned previously 16.92 percent of the media news sources were TPLF officials. Reuters used higher officials of TPLF to cover the progress of the war and to balance the advancement and accusation of the federal government. This, in turn, helped the group to motivate the fighting and put pressure on the federal government.

Among the group sources, the spokesperson of TPLF, Getachew Reda was dominant. Yet, news balance is central to journalistic ethics, and confirming the authenticity of the source is very critical.

In this regard, Reuters had given a huge emphasis to incorporate the comments of the group’s authorities. It also underlined the hardship of verifying the claim and allegations of the federal government. The telephone and internet blackout and the bar on media to cover the war were frequently mentioned while underscoring ‘unable to verify the government side of victory claim’

independently. However, since covering the advancement claim of the group the media gave a deaf ear to asking the federal government or ignore the issue of news balance.

On July 6, 2021:

*Tigray rebel chief calls for a political solution to the conflict in Ethiopia.*

On the other hand, using multiple sources sometimes means that media are providing checks on what is said, bringing more variety and balance to the views presented. Different sources also often indicate a more active news media orientation as they seek out information themselves rather than trusting limited, lucky sources or reproducing media releases.

Former Ethiopian diplomats and TPLF's higher officials had been also mentioned in various stories. Such sources were used to tell the political background and current position of the group. Furthermore, it was instrumental to politicize each move of the federal government.

The tweeter page of Getachew Reda who is a spokesperson of TPLF was also another news source used by Reuters. The daily or weekly press release of the regional government was referenced while covering the Tigray war.

On October 11 2021 published:

*“Ethiopian army starts a ground attack on rebellious Tigray forces - regional party spokesman”*

Here Getachew Reda was a source of the news.

*Ethiopia's national army launched a ground offensive against forces from the northern region of Tigray on Monday, the region's ruling Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) said.*

Thus, all TPLF news sources employed by the media helped to propagate everyone should know and join the ‘the federal government war against Tigrians’ and to let know the international community the crisis unfolding.

According to Ross Howard (2004), reliable and diverse media must be independent. The media must be free of government or powerful interference that blocks the reporting of other voices and other interests. An independent media must be supported by laws and courts and independent regulators, who protect the media from interference. An independent media must also discipline itself, and submit to laws and regulators which are honest and non-partisan.

Avoid always focusing on the suffering and fear of only one side. Treat all sides' suffering as equally newsworthy. Avoid words like devastated, tragedy, and terrorized to describe what has been done to one group. These kinds of words put the reporter on one side. Do not use them yourself. Only quote someone else who uses these words.

In different cases, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have become increasingly evident in media discourses on armed conflict and related issues. Reuters used NGOs as a news source accounted for 9.23 %percent. Yet, large international NGOs such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch had dominantly mentioned as news sources for Reuters.

As a principle during the wartime, the actual advantage NGOs can bring is a degree of independence from the donor/peacekeepers or international agency. Inevitably these bodies are afflicted by the political interests of the dominant governments, which can be fickle and self-interested (USAID makes it clear in dealings with them that their job is to further the US national interest). ( Puddephatt, 2006)

Independence allows NGOs to shape and develop programs that genuinely reflect local needs and local conditions. On other hand, this means avoiding donor-driven imperatives although it would be naïve to think they can be wholly avoided. Accordingly, during the six months of, north Ethiopian war Reuters uses NGOs as a news source, especially on human rights and aid-related issues.

In addition, we have looked at other sources of information, such as eyewitness accounts, in the report. 15 .38% of all military activities during the war were reported through this. News of the devastation, as well as human rights abuses and military victories between the two forces, has been leaked to the media.

Reuters used anonymous diplomats and humanitarian workers in its stories, accounted for 1.53 percent of the analyzed stories. The causality on civilians, the refugee crisis, and other consequences of the war was also told by such sources. Journalists have obligations to the people they report about, and to the society to whom they report the news. Journalists have a responsibility to protect their sources. Many people will not tell journalist's important news if they fear it will be revealed. Good journalists also use only honest methods to obtain the news, which means they do not break the law. Finally experts 0 percent of news sources for Reuters in the research phase.

The impartiality and credibility of news sources of both media were questionable. Traditionally, the concept of "objectivity" emerged to describe a quasi-scientific practice through which the journalist distanced him or herself from the story and its sources, to provide an independent account of events (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2014).

#### **4.3 Overview in Reuters news Balance in Reporting**

Balance in journalism is considered one of the most important characteristics of any news piece. Balance means a lack of bias, and it is the ethical imperative of a journalist to transmit the news in an impartial manner. This means that a reporter should, whenever possible, demonstrate the opposing viewpoints at play in a story dynamic; it is important to note that there are often more than two sides to any story.

According to Cross (2022) Source is an individual whom you quote in the news piece. Balanced news story contains quotations from at least two individuals. Talk to the silent majority, or the group of people who may remain silent on an issue. News media often interview people with polar opposite viewpoints politics being a prime example despite the fact that most people hold a view that they might not express publicly. When the vehemently supportive and opposed are the loud minorities, it is the job of the news media to invoke the silent majority. Avoid unnamed sources whenever possible. In extreme cases, journalists may cite an anonymous source. In certain instances in which privacy is of extreme importance this may be acceptable, but reporters should generally avoid calling upon sources that are not under pressure to be accountable for what they say.

To this end the researcher believes Overreliance on balance can itself lead to unwanted bias. Any media concern about balanced fair news reporting method and ethics. News conforms to set news style and pattern which has been developed over a period of years.

### **The major characteristics of news are:**

#### **Accuracy of News**

The accuracy of news is in fact taken for granted by the news consumers. Though it is very difficult to be accurate in news. Readers should have a feeling that whatever they are being presented is the overcome of an honest and dedicated effort of the writer. The readers should never be given an opportunity to say that they never believed what appeared in the papers. All facts given in the news item should be accepted by readers without questions.

#### **News should be balanced**

News is to be balanced though it is not an easy task to write news which is balanced in every respects, a severe effort must be made by a reporter to render the account of any event in the best possible manners. The reporter has to write all the specific facts correctly, fairly and accurately and objectively

#### **Objectives**

News is a factual report of an event as it occurred. It is not the event as a prejudiced eye might see it or as the reporter might wish it to be or have thought it to be on those concerned in the event might like to present it. Facts must be reported impartially as they occurred. Objectivity in the news is one of the most important principles of modern journalism.

#### **News should be concise and clear**

News must follow the news form developed over a period of many years. It must be unite, concise, clear and simple. A story that is diffused, disorganized and ambiguous in meaning does

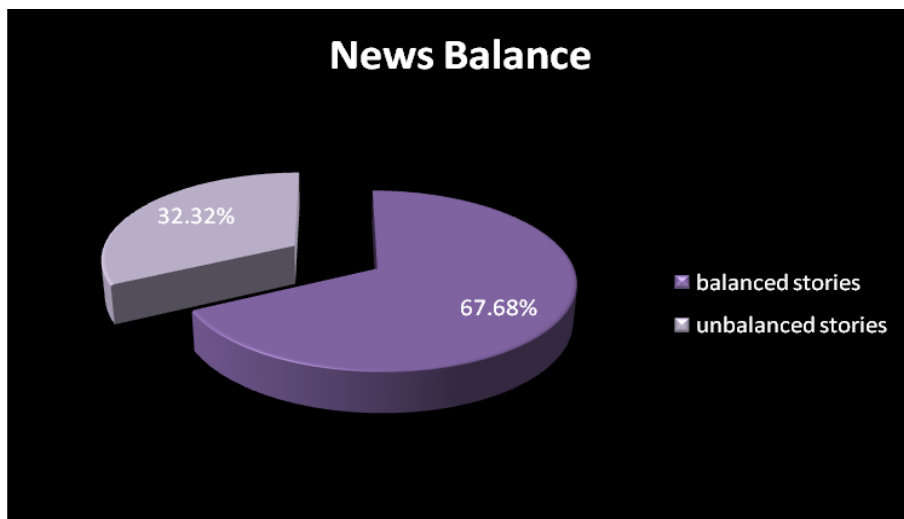
not have the characteristic quality of news. It should be well-paced, unified and abuse all written so clearly that the meaning of the story is also absolutely plain.

### **Current**

The definition of news remains incomplete if element of time is not given major consideration. Time is the essence of the news. Emphasis is on the time element of news story, this is necessary because of the changes which may occur in the transitory period. Based on this news characteristic Reuter's samples 65 news items made during the war are balanced.

We see the difference in pictures and figures. The researcher looked at which sources Reuters took to verify the news and its accuracy.

As the below Figure shows among analyzed stories balances news stories accounted for 67.68%. The rest 32.32 percent news stories were one sided.



**Figure 4.3.1 News balance distribution in general**

As an international news outlet, however, it had to report in a journalistic manner that was balanced and compliant with the country's broadcasting law.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 5.1 Conclusion

This research was conducted to examine how Reuter's news agency covered the war between the government of Ethiopia and the Tigray armed force. Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, the researcher has drawn the following conclusion. The western media have been engaged in disseminating shameful information and fake news against Ethiopia. Reuters one of the western media outlets has intensified false propaganda against Ethiopia over the past 6 months in an attempt to enhance its hidden agenda of destabilizing the country.

In my study understands Reuters are bent on disseminating gloomy picture and false narrative and creating hysteria through their offensive propaganda. Sample news items analysis showed that Reuters shaped and framed Ethiopian issues for depicting the position of the west and their geopolitical goals in the country. Reuters news agency based in western executing the foreign policy of some western countries at the expense of principles of journalism and code of ethics as they consider these important aspects as secondary ones. Based on this research scope the first phase of the war began last June after the government withdrew its forces from Tigray and declared a unilateral ceasefire. Rather than reciprocating, TPLF called it a sick joke and set out several preconditions before it could agree to a ceasefire.

If there was a will to end the conflict and bring much-needed humanitarian assistance to those in dire need in Tigray, it could have brought the issues that it set as preconditions to the negotiation table. But international media Reuters was made instead of anti-war frames it was dominantly used military war frame. This new reporting confused the global community and portrayed the conflict as a full-scale war by taking the testimonies of one side, TPLF.

The main source of news stories was international organizations focus on the Tigray humanitarian corridor than the violence of war in Amhara and the Afar region. Reuters also ignore these issues rather than dominantly propagating the Tigray crisis. It has largely failed to

show the conflict objectively. The media neglected the fact and rather served their country's foreign policy. It impales that some Western countries and international rights groups do not want to stand with the facts on the ground because they have other agendas to weaken Ethiopia.

Reuters follows its mission and away from journalistic objectivity and professional ethics. Almost all the reports did not show professionalism and exhibited unethical performance. The story lacks clear reporting and did not briefly portray the conflict. In this regard, the conflict reporting of the media implies that it lacked ethical and responsible reporting of the situation. The research figure showed the military war frame, violence of war, and anti-war frame respectively dominant frame of Reuters.

According to this study, international media outlets impact internal conflicts and over-unity. The age of media war has a clear influence on this country. So the weak performance of the internal media had played its part in the dominance of unverifiable information regarding the country. Ethiopia's administration failed to communicate effectively with the international community about critical realities in the Tigray area and failed to take aggressive measures.

Similarly, less was done in response to western media and the global community. Web of lies that the news media are unable to tell the public what is true and the government is unable to defend effectively. This would give Ethiopians lots of lessons that must be learned to stand together and show unity.

## **5.2 Recommendation**

This study was made based on an analysis that involved a particular set of website news stories, from June 2021 - to December 2021, assessing news reports of the north Ethiopian war in the case of Reuters. The study only focused on English news stories from Reuters.

There are also documentaries, special programs, interviews with authorities, press briefings, news commentaries, etc. prepared about the Tigray war, which the researcher didn't consider bound by the scope of the study. Consequently, to fill this gap, it would be advisable to further

study. In addition, the study did not consider the images and video footage portrayals of the media while covering the issue. Thus, for the findings to be whole in all aspects, the researcher recommends future studies consider visual framing analysis. Moreover, this study only focuses on one media web home page. But, the televised news should be studied.

According to the issue, more than one global media covered the news. Hence, our study is only focused only one global Media. So, it indicates further study is needed. In the same way, local media news coverage of the issue must be examined. In addition, after content analysis research it is suggested to conduct a media influence study that measures the impact of media framing from the slant of the audience reception.

Furthermore, the media organizations or scholars should study factors affecting journalists in reporting the challenging issue. Headlines, sub-headlines, Quotations, and news sources choice must be surveyed. The researcher also recommends to all media to the governed journalistic profession and its ethics. This research focused only after the first federal government ceasefire phase. Further studies should continue in this manner, exploring whether and how the war coverage continues. As the war in Tigray still develops, alternative frames may be introduced by the international media.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A

### Coding Guide

Name of coder---.....

The coder should write her/his name Media ----- .....

The coder should write name of the media Data of publication---.....

Write the date the story was publishes-month, day and year Headline- .....

Writes the headline and sub-headline if the story has.....

**Type Frames please check if any of the following frames are used in the news and editorial articles which frame is dominant in the story?**

1. Military Conflict Frame: - focusing on the military conflicts, troops, equipment and the like.
2. Civil War Frame: - interprets the war as regional conflict
3. Advance Frame: - emphasis on the progress and advancement of the war, captured places by the combatant parts and the outcome of the war.
4. Responsibility Frame: - emphasis on the parties and individuals who are considered as responsible for a given scenario, issue or event of war.
4. Human Interest Frame: - which emphasis on the human participants and involved parties on the course of events from both opposed parts.
5. Violence of War Frame: - focuses on various destructions caused by the war.
6. Anti-War Protest Frame: - emphasizes on oppositions against the war that condemns one or both parts that can be take a form of demonstration by the protesters against the war.
7. Profile Frame: - emphasis on the profiles of the two opponent parts, their officials as well as supporters.

## **Appendix B**

### **Coding sheet**

Name of coder \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the media \_\_\_\_\_

Date of broadcast \_\_\_\_\_

Headline of the news \_\_\_\_\_

Sources Government officials \_\_\_\_\_

TPLF official's \_\_\_\_\_

Local resident's \_\_\_\_\_

NGOs \_\_\_\_\_

Anonymous sources \_\_\_\_\_

International organizations and Diplomats \_\_\_\_\_

Experts and others \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### Reuters news links

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopia-government-says-military-wont-cross-into-tigray-now-2021-12-23/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/un-warns-catastrophe-looms-ethiopias-north-urges-government-end-de-facto-aid-2021-09-02/>

<https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/ethiopia-restricts-information-sharing-about-war-2021-11-26/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopia-warns-us-against-spreading-false-information-war-2021-11-25/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/climate-security-dominate-us-secretary-states-aid-africa-tour-2021-11-17/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/rally-back-militarys-campaign-ethiopians-denounce-us-2021-11-07/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/us-orders-non-emergency-government-employees-ethiopia-leave-2021-11-06/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/nine-ethiopian-groups-form-anti-government-alliance-2021-11-05/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/us-embassy-ethiopia-allows-voluntary-departure-some-staff-family-2021-11-04/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopia-government-says-tigray-forces-killed-100-youths-kombolcha-2021-11-01/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/rebellious-tigrayan-forces-say-ethiopia-government-carried-out-air-strike-2021-10-22/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopia-hits-tigrayan-forces-third-day-air-strikes-government-2021-10-21/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopian-families-fleeing-fighting-describe-hunger-rape-amhara-2021-10-18/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/us-paves-way-more-sanctions-over-ethiopias-tigray-conflict-2021-09-17/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/tigray-forces-killed-120-civilians-amhara-village-ethiopia-officials-2021-09-08/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/us-says-war-ethiopias-north-could-affect-trade-benefits-2021-08-26/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/ethiopias-tigray-forces-seek-new-military-alliance-2021-08-11/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/tigrayan-forces-take-control-ethiopian-town-lalibela-un-world-heritage-site-2021-08-05/>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/us-calls-tigrayan-forces-respect-lalibela-cultural-heritage-2021-08-03/>

<https://www.reuters.com/article/ethiopia-conflict-famine-report-idUSL5N2NS3NO>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/us-provides-over-181-million-avert-famine-tigray-ethiopia-2021-06-09/>

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