

**ANALYSIS OF FRAMES IN GROUP CHIEF  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER MESSAGES OF ETHIOPIAN  
AIRLINES SELAMTA MAGAZINE**

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SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**

**ANALYSIS OF FRAMES IN GROUP CHIEF  
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JUNE, 2018**

## **DECLARATION**

I, Solomon Gebremedhin, hereby declare that the work in this research study entitled “ANALYSIS OF FRAMES IN GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER MESSAGES OF ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES SELAMTA MAGAZINE” is my own original work and all the sources of materials used for this study have been identified and duly acknowledged. This research study has not been previously submitted in full or partial fulfillment for any degree in this university or any other recognized education institution. This research study is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for Master of Arts Degree in Journalism and Communication.

By: Solomon Gebremedhin (GSE/1203/08)

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that SOLOMON GEBREMEDHIN has carried out his thesis on the topic entitled “*ANALYSIS OF FRAMES IN GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER MESSAGES OF ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES SELAMTA MAGAZINE*”

This work is his original work and it is suitable for submission for the award of Master’s Degree Journalism and Communication.

Dr. Getachew Dinku  
Thesis Advisor

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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## **Abbreviation**

GCEO Group Chief Executive Officer

GPS- Global Positioning System

ADS-B- Automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast

ACARS- Aircraft Communications Addressing and Reporting System

SATCOM- satellite communications

4G- high-speed fourth generation

LTE- Long Term Evolution

## **Acronyms**

FGD Focus Group Discussion

MFA Market Feedback Analysis

SOP Standard Operating Procedure

VP Vice President



## **ABSTRACT**

ANALYSIS OF FRAMES IN GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER MESSAGES OF  
ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES SELAMTA MAGAZINE

SOLOMON GEBREMEDHIN

ADDIS ABABA UNIVESITY, JUNE 2018

*This study did analysis of frames in messages from the Group CEO of Ethiopian Airlines. To gain better understanding of the frames and get the views of the message crafters, a qualitative research approach had been employed.*

*More specifically, content analysis, focus group discussion, and in-depth interview were integrated. The data then were thematically analyzed.*

*The results, therefore, have revealed that the Corporate Communication Department of Ethiopian Airline utilizes overarching frames such as: ‘The Leading Airline Frame’, ‘The Pan African Frame’, ‘The Fast, Profitable Growth Frame’, ‘Customer First/Hospitality Frame’, and the ‘Multiple Hub Strategy Frame’. It was also found out that the department has never approached the frequent travelers for whom the magazine and the message are meant to for their feedback. Similarly, the readability rate of the Group CEO messages, compared to other segments of the magazine, was found to be minimal.*

*To better communicate with the readers of the magazine, the department needs to utilize the market feedback analysis technique, a technique used by other departments of the airline for feedback gathering function, so as to genuinely hear the voice of the travellers and to tailor the message as per their desire. This, for an airline that pledges to respect the customers’ interest, is a vital action to take. Equally, aggressively benchmarking the global practices in designing messages must be made regularly as the industry is dynamic.*



# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic of the study. Hence, it establishes background of the study, statement of the problem, and research questions of the study. It also deals with the objectives, significance, scope and limitations of the study.

### 1.1. Background of the study

Communication for organizations is as core as what they produce or the service they offer. Unless they adequately communicate their products and services, it is less likely that they will remain profitable. Supporting this idea, Dolphin (2000) quoted Winner (1993) for stating “communication takes the most important constituent of organizations’ activities. Corporate communications is no longer an amateur game but has evolved into a key management function. In his thesis, Fikru (2014) stated that assessing organization’s communication satisfaction provides the organization with valuable information about its communicative strengths and weaknesses.

As part of organizational communication, airlines communicate to their audiences, customers in particular, via different communication channels. Thanks to the technology, organizations, airlines included, have plenty of options and varieties of communication systems, even to say, with the type of channel each and every customer prefers. In this regard, Downing (2016) wrote, “Today’s complex air traffic control system depends on a wide range of communications technologies to ensure safe, accurate, timely, and efficient operations of our global commercial aerospace systems.” Similarly, being one of the largest and the most technologically advanced firms across the globe, communication takes one of the major activities of the airlines in the aviation industry. They also require very dynamic, modern and quality means of communication tools. These communications technologies range from human/voice radio transmissions to transponders, GPS, ADS-B, ACARS, SATCOM, and 4G LTE, Ibid. Print, online, broadcast among others are some of the major communication tools that can be cited here. The choice of the communication channel depends on the nature, the size, timeliness and other characteristics of the message needed to communicate.

While communicating, organizations wish to shade on the light of their messages onto the receivers. To do so, hence, they frame messages to the effect they wish to see. Chong and Druckman (2007) wrote that public opinion often depends on how elites choose to frame issues.

It seems that airlines are cognizant that their customers need not only to fly from point A to point B; they also want the flight to be pleasurable and fatigue free. Air travel is not always glamorous, and certainly not always fun. Hence, they have installed various in-flight entertainment (IFE) options in the aircraft so that passengers can enjoy their travels including the old, but adorable in-flight magazines; over the past decade, in-flight entertainment has evolved thanks to new technology. In this regard, avionics (2001) stated:

*Until the past decade, IFE had not changed significantly, apart from the addition of new projection technologies and distributed audio entertainment. However, the distribution of video to the seat and the introduction of in-cabin commercial telephone service have boosted the industry. In addition, the term "in-flight entertainment" today encompasses more than just aircraft cabin electronic systems that "entertain," to in-seat power supply for laptop computers and other personal electronic devices (PEDs) and in-flight telecommunications.*

This indicates that to tail off the fatigue on flights, among other efforts, the in-flight magazines are also common almost to all airlines as Forbes.com (2017) ascribed: the inflight magazine has become an essential part of the flying experience for millions of passengers.

As one of the veteran with more than seven decades of commendable services, Ethiopian Airlines is one of the carriers communicating its travelers and clients via various channels including using the famous in-flight magazine: ‘*Selamta*’. *Selamta* is an Amharic term to mean ‘Greetings’. The *Selamta* has been in service for the past many decades. The Camerapix Magazines Limited has published *Selamta* for Ethiopian Airlines from 1984 for 30 years according to the company’s website.

The researcher selected the ‘*Selamta Magazine*’ primarily because it is one of the most famous magazines closely associated with the airline.

*Selamta*, the in-flight magazine of Ethiopian Airlines, is a world-class publication providing an array of coverage as diverse as the airline and the regions it serves. Its pages feature everything from travel and culture to business and technology, celebrating Africa ascendant.

To be considered as the major component of the magazine, it contains the message of the Group Chief Executive Officer (GCEO). In Ethiopian case, the message, self-explanatory by itself, carries the message of the airline which needs to be communicated to its stakeholders, passengers in particular through the GCEO. Though available in both English and Amharic languages, the message carries similar thoughts and information meant to reach travelers of these two language speakers.

In light of this background, the current study aims to investigate the way Ethiopian Airlines frames its messages to the clients by looking into the GCEO's messages published in selected issues of *Selamta*, the in-flight magazine of the national flag carrier.

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

Communicating one's services and products of organizations, airlines included, is a vital component of the business recipe for they have to update same to their customers on whom their business depends. In this regards, Riel (1995) was quoted in Bertrand and Guillaume (2002) for writing:

*Corporate Communication is an instrument of management by means of which all consciously used forms of internal and external communication are harmonised as effectively and efficiently as possible, so as to create a favourable basis for relationships with groups upon which the company is dependent.*

Similarly, as leading aviation technology firms, in order to convey various messages to their customer, airlines need to communicate with their customers who are very needy and dynamic, where they are increasingly becoming more demanding, according to Tracey (2014). Hence airlines need to reach out to their clients by all means of communication to address variety of issues that the aviation industry must address in order to ensure brand recognition and customer loyalty.

Airlines use various channels of communication. Today's global airliners use a wide array of communication types to ensure safe and efficient, use of controlled airspace for flight operations, Downing (2016). These communication channels can also be print, broadcast, online and/or other means. As part of a print media, it is customary for airlines to place in-flight magazines at back seat pockets facing the traveler with much more production quality aiming at winning their attention.

Among the widely and largely used print communication channels of the airline, *Selamta* is the most notable In-flight Magazine. *Selamta* has been on the hands of Ethiopian travelers, usually frequent travellers. The focus of this study being on the content of the GCEO messages, the magazine mainly contains Panorama, Spotlight, Fly Ethiopian and Entertainment where under each various topics treated including news, advertisements, route maps, fleet information, among others.

While considering such messages, needless to say, companies will try to impact the information recipients by framing the messages persuade the target audience. In this regard, Goffman (1974) explained framing as the way a communication source defines and constructs any piece of communicated information. Framing is an unavoidable part of human communication – we all bring our own frames to our communications.

Group CEOs messages being the central element of the magazine, the student believes that investigating the framing strategies employed by the developing team of the Ethiopian Airlines would help understand what the airlines is up to. The study would attempt to unveil what effect the frames have on the audience with the objective of achieving maximum impact and ultimately increasing customer satisfaction and revenue. However, the researcher feels that there is lack of adequate study on how the messages are framed; and whether or not the messages appeal to the reader. Besides, to the best knowledge of this researcher, who was staff of the team for two years, there has hardly been a study on whether feedback from the readers about the messages of the GCEOs on the magazine have been gathered; and whether the messages are read and rendered the deserved attention and, therefore, brought the desired behavioral change.

Moreover, the study attempts to see whether or not the messages, on the selected *Selamta* editions, have been framed to the desire of the readers that will eventually prompt them for

further action like purchasing ticket to fly again; whether the messages were crafted as per the clients' desire. Rayudu (1994) mentions tailoring the given information on the basis of the recipient's perception skills, transmitting information in small units, providing an opportunity for feedback, and for participation as some of the techniques of communications.

Not only does this study enquire if the messages have been designed matching the airline's services and products and to the level/test of its global passengers, it also sees on what major themes the messages have focused on; what writing style have the messages been following; among others were analyzed by looking into the contents.

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

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

The general objective of this study is to understand the frames Ethiopian Airlines employed in the Group CEOs Messages in the *Selamta* In-Flight magazine.

#### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives**

- To assess whether the GCEO's messages were framed in a particular way so as to influence the readers in a systematic way;
- To find out if the GCEO messages on the *Selamta*, In-flight magazine were received by the travellers as expected;
- To examine if the messages have been framed/crafted considering the needs and desires of the travellers ;
- To state if readers were invited for feedback on the style and content of the message;
- To list what part of the magazine/s is/are more appealing to readers, and why?

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

This study attempted to find out answers to the following research questions:

- How were the messages framed?
- How timely were the issues entertained?

- How successful were the messages in promoting upcoming events?
- How successful were the messages in getting attention from the travellers /readers?
- Were readers approached from the company to share their thoughts on the content and style of the messages?
- Whether or not interview with the GCEO could be tried as a different version of the message than the usual one, or if any other approach is suggested? Have this been tried and have readers commented on? Whether the airline let the *Selamta* in-flight magazine appear as online version?

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

The study output is expected to unveil the overarching message frames used by the airline in the *Selamta* in-flight magazine.

Besides the study output will serve as a spring board for other researchers in the area for better understanding of the impact of the GCEO messages towards their readers, mostly the frequent travellers of the airline.

In addition, the researcher would also believe that this study would be a good addition to the existing literatures in the area of organizational communication and the publicities that they effectuate for companies, Ethiopian Airlines Group in particular.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on the analysis of frames in group chief executive officer messages of Ethiopian airlines *Selamta* magazine. The study does not look into the overall content of the magazine. Besides, the study focuses on analyzing the messages frames of *Selamta* magazines that ran from March/April 2016 to May/June 2018. Hence, it should be noted that the study does not analyze editions of the magazine that ran before and after the period mentioned. The study also attempts to examine the feedback of the frequent travellers on the message, not on the entire magazine.

## **1.7 Limitation of the Study**

Time shortage was one of the major limitations the researcher faced while working on this study. Besides, as this is a new study, there was challenge in accessing adequate researches conducted on this topic to substantiate the study. However, overcoming the barriers, the student has come up with this study which he believes meets its objectives.

## **1.8 Organization of the Study**

The study has been organized in five chapters. Chapter one of this study attempts to introduce the lineup of customary procedures which include study background, statement of the problem and other justifications expected in the framing of the research. Chapter two discusses review of literature. Chapter three describes methods employed among others. Chapter four of the study deals with data presentation and analysis of the findings. Chapter five presents the conclusion and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2. Review of Literature**

The aim of this chapter is to provide a literature review which may function as a relevant framework for the current research project. This chapter is organized into several sections: the first section presents selected literature on corporate communication; the following section discusses corporate message framing, while section three deals with airlines communication, followed by the section of the media's role in relation to corporate message framing; while the next section discusses the media framing theory followed by the Effect of Frames on Audience and the final one is about Ethiopian Airlines.

In each of these sections, the relation between the current research and available literature is discussed.

#### **2.1 Mass Communication**

Mass communication, as self-descriptive of itself, is about the sharing of information to the large audience, perhaps, not bound in a certain geographical location. Mass communication has been defined by many in various ways. Chalchisa (2012) refers to the field of inquiry of various means by which individuals and entities disseminate information through mass media to a large and diversified communities at the same time.

Defining mass communication with integration to the utilization of technology and reaching the mass, McQuail, (2005) said that mass communication occurs when an individual or institution uses technology to send a message to a large, mixed audience, most of whose members are not known to the sender. Here the author harmonizes mass communication with the utilization of technology. Not only that, McQuail's definition can also be taken as the potential recipient of the message are the heterogeneity who may interpret it according to her/his background.

As per the class room lectures, Noelle-Neumann was quoted for stating three characteristics of mass communication-its cumulation, ubiquity, and consonance.

- ✓ **Cumulation**- the buildup of certain themes or messages over time
- ✓ **Ubiquity**- the widespread of presence of the mass media
- ✓ **Consonance**- the unified picture of an event or issue that can develop and is often shared by different newspapers, magazines, TV networks, and other media.

Mass media is the tool that is utilized for the dissemination of message to the mass. In regards to their relation, Roger & Joseph (2010) define mass media as: any form of communication that simultaneously reaches a large number of people, including but not limited to radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, billboards, films, recordings, books, and the Internet.

Communication further is considered as unique phenomena that gives man different characteristics from the rest of the creatures. “It might even be said that communication is what distinguished man from the rest of creation,” Balan & Rayudu (1994).

Mass media being summed up as reaching the mass, no question would arise on its relevance for an organization to impart its services and products to the mass and particularly to its customers; hence communicating corporate wise serves the purpose. In corporate/organizational communication, entities communicate their services, products and updates with the purpose of sharing information to their customers and to others, including to those customers to be, but mainly to grasp the recipients’ attention and urging them to act or react in a certain way- to buy and use the company’s services and products.

However, the heterogeneity nature of the mass urges the communicators of the organization to be vigilant in ensuring that a particular message addresses all. With regards to the organizational communication, and the need to understand the various nature of the audience, Pittman and Fortin (2004) underlined that both the size and diversity of our consumer audiences present exciting challenges to public relations and communications professionals.

## **2.2 What is Corporate Communication?**

Today’s growing digital economy has impacted every aspect of our activities to the point where it takes a blink of an eye for information to flow from one corner of the world to the other with

tremendous attention and feedback. For this to come true, the mass media, that is fast expanding and growing in technology and type, has played significant role. What happens in the other side of the planet today, for instance, is simultaneously discussed all over the world thanks to these means of technologies that boost the characteristics and the type of the mass media.

Considering the corporate message as corporate communication, Riel (1995: 26) as quoted by Bertrand and Guillaume (2002) said, corporate communication is an instrument of management by means of which all consciously used forms of internal and external communication are harmonized as effectively and efficiently as possible so as to create a favorable basis for relationships with groups upon which the company is dependent. Here it is underlined that the role of corporate communication is vital as what it does is directly related to the stakeholders that can impact the company's existence.

Further on this, Theaker (2004) stated that an organizational communication is a general term that covers public relations, public affairs, investor relations, internal communication and corporate advertising. These major activities falling within the remit of the corporate communications department, one can imagine how important the communication would be that emanate from such department.

### **2.3 Written Communication**

Writing being one of the most challenging skills of imparting information, as means of communication, it requires a great deal of attention and accuracy while doing it for mass communication. Communicating effectively in writing requires attention to all aspects of the product: content, organization, tone, and appearance, (Green Bay). Further on this regard, Samuel Johnson was quoted by Nikitina (2012) for saying, "What is written without effort is in general read without pleasure." It is not only content and accuracy here discussed for being relevant for written message; it is rather for the beauty and attractiveness of the message that emphasis has been placed.

The Group CEO's messages aiming to reach travelers who are thought to be able read and understand both English and Amharic languages on the *Selamta* magazine being presented in written format, this study if thought to be well crafted in line with the parameters set above.

Above all, as an element of an in-flight entertainment element, though presented in a magazine format, it has the responsibility of pleasing its readers.

## **2.4 Airlines Communication**

One of the fastest growing businesses around the world is the airline industry, Narudol & Wannana (2017). In spite of the growth rate differences from one corner of the world to the other, airlines are, in deed growing as the need for air transportation increases from time to time and from places to places. It is not uncommon to observe, these days in particular, parents paying for air transportation for their children while they travel to and from universities found in several regions of the country. This being one of the instances for the growth of domestic airline business and a contributing factor to the growth of air transportation, Ethiopian Airlines claims to be the fastest growing African airline (Ethiopian Airlines 2018). It can be estimated that this growth to consider the domestic services.

Messages of the GCEO, in the airlines, represent the entire company. In line to this, Oliver (2000), quoted in Narudol & Wannana (Ibid) stated that as the highest authority in an airline company, CEOs and their messages speak to multinational customers on behalf of the whole company. Adding on this, the author said the message from the CEO appearing at the front part of business companies' annual reports is an important corporate communication strategy and is also perceived as a way for the organization to personify its culture and personality.

Hence, at least to maintain the growth, or to enjoy more successes, the airline is using several means of communication, one being *Selamta*, In-Flight Magazine. Of the contents included in the magazine, the Group GCEO's Message is one and the most important part. The message usually appears together with the picture of the GCEO and his signature (this researcher has not encountered a female GCEO of the airline in its more than seven decades). Through this message, the airline informs readers of the magazine about the airline in general including but not limited to the news, the projects, the developments, the plans whether or not business is expanding among other aviation related issues. Above all the message aims to enhance business.

For this communication to meet the target, enhancing business, scholars suggest several techniques. Erica and Bruce (2001) underlined the need to test the messages. They recommend

that communicators must make sure that messages are clear, accurate, and relevant. Elaborating further why clarity of the message is required, the authors remarked, “Clarity means checking whether the target public might interpret a message in a way other than, especially opposite to, what was intended.”

As part of a written communication, the message is expected to be accurate in addressing what is needed and this responsibility falls on the writer, i.e., source of the information. In this regard, University of Minnesota (2015: 98), stated, “A written communication is only as accurate as the writer’s knowledge of the subject and audience, and understanding depends on how well the writer captures the reader’s attention.”

## **2.5 Framing**

A message shared from one part to the other is with some way of interest. For this interest to fulfill or for the receiver to comply to the message one way or on the other, the sender of the message shapes and makes her/his message appealing to the receiver; or in another word, the source of the information will try to frame the message so as to achieve the desired outcome from the message- which is customer satisfaction and business enhancement. Although framing can take place in various sectors, as some scholars say, it can be customized and be applicable to organization level. This is to mean that organization frame their communications so that they make their customers receive the meaning of the message with the help of the frame. In support of this idea, Goffman (1974) wrote that the basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning. Framing is an important topic since it can have a big influence and therefore the concept of framing expanded to organizations as well.

## **2.6 What is Framing?**

The popularity of framing techniques in mass communication has emanated from its dominating nature onto the receivers either positively or otherwise. In this regard, Abera (2017) said, “One reason why framing research became popular in mass communication is due to its ability to affect audience, the readers in his case, resulting in negative or positive consequences.

Framing involves placing an imaginary set of boundaries, much like a frame around a picture or a window, around a story, of what is included and omitted, influencing the story itself. To add through framing the content of the message, the source of the information attempts to present the information to shape the attitudes and behavior of the receivers. One can deduce here that the information generator shapes and reshapes the message so as to make it appealing and, therefore, place an imaginary set of boundaries onto the receivers; upon which the latter will act or react accordingly.

As cited by Bruktawit (2008) Entman (2007) defined framing as follow, “Framing is to select 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.”

This idea clears that framing is not denying reality; it is rather magnifying part of the reality and highlighting same to make the point gain much more attention.

Further on this Bradley (2010) strengthens this idea saying that, “A credible presentation will lead to the expectation effect in about 30% of any audience; frame you create needs to be credible. It needs to be based on reality. You can’t make up a story that isn’t true and expect it to stick. “According to Bradley (Ibid) framing is manipulating the presentation of information so that the receiver will be impacted for the decision s/he makes based on the information presented.

The credibility of the information being crucial to influence audience as business runner; it is also vital to be persuasive. In this aspect, relevance- a website, defined framing as a proven tactic for engaging and influencing audiences with messaging.

As part of effectiveness in business communication, where Ethiopian is engaged, relevance (Ibid) put three core elements of message framing (placement, approach, and word choice). Placement is measured by communicating the right message with the right people and with the right time; while approach refers to the presentation of information in terms of either the gain or loss, depending on the information provider’s bias and intention regarding impact; and the word approach has to do with selecting the right words for the right message delivery.

In similar discussion, Fairhurst & Sarr (1996) stated that framing consists of three elements: language, thought and forethought. Explaining the relation further, they discussed saying that language helps us to remember information and acts to transform the way in which people view situations. To use language, people must have thought and reflected on their own interpretive frameworks and those of others. Hence, they strongly recommend leaders to learn to frame spontaneously in certain circumstances. Being able to do so, they noted, had to do with having the forethought to predict framing opportunities.

## **2.7 What is corporate message framing?**

Communication, needless to say, is pivotal for any organization to impart the services and products that it offers to its customers. While communication is about seeking understandability, organizations care about the kind of message they want to share to their audience and, hence, grant the deserving attention to their communication. This might imply the organizations' effort of tailoring the message to the test, size and desire of their recipients so that the latter will act accordingly. If one succeeds in this regards, the anticipated change will come out as for the United Airlines as discussed by Narudol & Wannana (2017). According to Arbitron Inc. (2006), seventy percent of the subjects who are in-flight magazine readers have acted upon information they read in the United Airlines and US airways airlines' magazines." This shows that inflight magazines have strong impact towards passengers who are customers as well as message receivers; therefore, content in in-flight magazines is important in representing and selling airlines' image and products, they added.

As time goes by and with the severe business competition, communicating to the mass with the status quo will not succeed a certain organization to enjoy the anticipated result. In other words, forcing the organization to accept what the organization has may not suit to the audience for whom there are plenty of alternatives out there. The flooding of information at a time forces communicators to get away from the usual system of communication. In support of this idea, Larry (2004) say, "As communicators, we have not succeeded in shaping our communications into information the target public wants or needs. We typically organize our information into an understandable and (what we believe to be) creative format and then blurt it out in the public arena and hope for the best. That rarely works." Therefore, if communication is meant to bring about the desired behavioral change, Kerry & Larry, Ibid, set out the following four questions for

an effective framework to apply in evaluating communications against behavioral principles. One of the questions is asking if the communication raises public concern or interest; and the second one refers to examining whether there are clearly and credibly packaged desire of behaviors to meet the need, resolve the concern, or satisfy the interest. The third one is related to the vivid presentation of the benefits of action and the consequences of inaction; whereas, the final one concerns with asking how supportive the communication to the receiver is so as to mentally rehearse the issue.

More on to it, Singleton (2014) strengthened the idea by saying, “Good media relations is like that two-way friendship. The effective PR [Corporate Communication] person is always thinking: what is in the interests of the journalist? [Customer in Ethiopian case] The ineffective PR person only asks: what message does my employer want me to drum repeatedly?” Analyzing this issue further, we can infer that how important it is to understand our information receivers instead of loading and crowding them with more information only because the communicator is delighted about it.

In an airline industry where the competition is severe, a very accurately and tactically designed message brings about the desired changes. Hence, to ensure that these desired changes surface, framing the communication will do the purpose. Being one of the fastest growing business sectors, airline industry is no exception in its utilization of framing while communicating. While devising the communication means, the ultimate goal, if not the only one, is to make sure that this particular message indeed is the one that really matters to the audience. “What you say in a user experience matters. How you say it matters equally. The way you frame communication, or how you say something, could be extremely effective at persuading people to start using your product (or to use it more),” as stated by Victor (2014).

While underlining the need to prepare messages using framing, Kirk Hallahan, noted that framing is a potentially useful paradigm for examining the strategic creation of public relations messages and audience responses.

Effective communication among a large audience can be done with well-organized framing of meanings and issues, Stephanie Hernandez (2015). Framing is the way a communication source defines and constructs any piece of communicated information; and framing is used to represent

the communication aspect which leads to the people's preference by consenting one meaning to another, Ibid. Framing can regulate the audience's perception and the acceptance of a particular meaning of a message.

While framing the message, communicators or those developing the communication materials aspire to win the attention of the audience and influencing their behavior so that the latter would comply with the message or regard the message positively.

## **2.8 The Effects of Frames on Audience**

It is more convincing for a certain communicator to expect constructive feedback from the audience only when the communication is crafted and shared with well substantiated information addressing the need and the desire of the audience it is meant to. In the case of this study, the developer of the message, i.e. the staff of the Corporate Communications Department need to craft a valid message with encompassing the needed information the carrier has to impart. Although the message is shared by the name of the GCEO, the role the staff in the department play is valuable. In similar topic, Clarke (2004) mentioned:

The ability of the PR profession [Corporate Communications Department, in this particular research case] to meet this management challenge will depend heavily on the success with which public relations counselors can perform a crucial function: advising senior executives in protecting, managing, and marketing an organization's single most important asset, its reputation.

Framing effects rests on behavioral change onto the individuals so that they act in the expected manner of the information source. In this vein, Busby, Flyn and Druckman were quoted by Abera (Ibid) for saying, "A frame in thought, in contrast, refer to how individuals perceive a situation to make certain points more relevant than others." Abera went on further underscoring that the framing effect occurs when a frame in communication influences individual's frames in thought, leading to a change in attitude.

With the notion of customers as the back bone of an organization, Lisa Cmbell (2004) stated: "An organization may have a product or service, a method of distribution, and an internal support structure, but if it doesn't have a consumer, it cannot exist or sustain its life." With this

the author emphasizes the need to value customers irrespective of the varied nature of the services and products of the given organization. Lisa, therefore, remarked that it is very much necessary to consider the diversified need of the customers and tailor the communication strategy accordingly. In line to this, the author said that the needs which prompted the customers their desire for that product or service may differ widely; as may the benefits they derive from it.

Bradley (2010) said the framing effect brings decision making judgment when quoted for saying, “the framing effect is the idea that manipulating the way information is presented can influence and alter decision making and judgment about that information.” Bradley (Ibid) further strengthened the issue saying that framing is putting the information in a context where people reach conclusion based on the framework within which a situation is presented. Bradley said that the context in which information is delivered shapes assumptions and perceptions about that information. Information taken out of context is often meaningless. Information within a context, within a frame is altered by that context.

The effect of framing influences people reach conclusions based on the framework within which a situation is presented. In this light, Bradley (Ibid) stated that positive frames tend to elicit positive feelings and result in risk taking and proactive behavior. Negative frames, on the other hand, tend to elicit negative feelings and result in risk aversion and reactive behavior.

For effective communication to take place and for the audience to be impacted, Balan & Rayudu (1994) noted that it is necessary that the language and the medium of the message should be capable of being understood by the person who receives the message. For the better outcome of the industry, the authors attribute on the need of effective communication: “The difference between a well-managed industry and a badly managed turn out to be a reflection of the sort of communications system operating in them.” Hence, they recommend that every organization needs to examine carefully whether the system of communication that prevails within is the best suited for its requirements.

Scholars also comment that people associate a message offered from their experiences. Further to strengthen this concept, Alan, Sylvia and Michael (2006) stated people interpret the messages they receive and evaluate what is true based on their belief system. This means we are set up to believe something, based on past experience or trusted sources. Alan et al, added that it is human

nature to compare something new with what is already known-When something comes up, we naturally compare it, consciously or unconsciously, with what we have already experienced before.

However, the effect of the media on the audience can be affected by many factors. And some of the major factors affecting media the perceived authority, legitimacy and credibility of the source, the consistency of content of media messages, the attachment and loyalty to sources, the motives for attention to media, the congruence of content with existing opinion or belief and the amount and quality of attention paid; moreover, the skill and appeal of message and presentation and the support from personal contacts and the environment.

## **2.9 Organizational Overview**

### **Ethiopian Airlines Group**

According to the company's website, Ethiopian Airlines (Ethiopian) is the flag carrier of Ethiopia. The carrier declares that the national flag carrier, for the past seventy plus years, has become one of the continent's leading carriers, unrivalled in Africa for efficiency and operational success, turning profits for almost all the years of its existence.

The first scheduled flight took place to Cairo via Asmara in Douglas C-47 Skytrain on 8 April, 1946. The national airline had been set up a few months earlier as Ethiopian Air Lines Inc., a joint venture with American airline, TWA (Trans World Airlines). Five US Government surplus C-47 aircraft were purchased for venture, the website added.

Operating at the forefront of technology, the airline has also become one of Ethiopia's major industries and a veritable institution in Africa. It commands a lion's share of the pan African network including the daily and double daily east-west flight across the continent. Ethiopian currently serves 100 international and 21 domestic destinations operating the newest and youngest fleet.

Going forward, according to official documents of the airline, Ethiopian aspires to become the leading aviation group in the continent. In this regards, the airline has aspired to generate USD 10 billion revenue, enjoy USD 1 billion profit, fly to more than 140 fleet, and to more than 140 destinations, carry 820,000 tons of cargo, and employ 17,000 by 2025.

In 2017, Ethiopian announced that it became an aviation holding group, dubbed Ethiopian Airlines Group following the merger of the Ethiopian Airports Enterprises by the decision of the government.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. Research Methodology

The previous chapter discussed theories and fundamental notions that are related to the paper in one way or another. Hence, points identified with the research design and their procedures are explained in detail. This chapter will discuss on the methodology and the different techniques that are believed to serve the researcher to best investigate the principles of framing of the GCEO message on *Selamta*, the In-Flight Magazine of Ethiopian Airlines Group.

#### 3.1 Study Methods

The intent of the study is to examine the practices of message framing while developing the GCEO messages for *Selamta* In-Flight Magazine of the Ethiopian Airlines Group.

The reason to investigate the message framing practices emerges from the appeal to identify the messages contribution in assisting the airline in attaining its goals in communicating to readers of the in-flight magazine mostly the frequent travellers. Communication plays an immense role in shaping people's attitudes towards the choices and decisions they make. When it comes to the airline industry where Ethiopian is facing severe competition from the Gulf carriers in particular, the role of communication obtains significant level.

Hence, considering the nature of the study and the finding sought after to uncover, the principal research method employed in this study is qualitative because the data mainly fall on qualitative nature rather than quantitative.

The study has also opted for research approach primarily based on Focus Group Discussion (FGD) supplemented by in-depth interviews as well as content analysis of the selected editions of the magazine. For the latter purpose, the researcher has reviewed *Selamta* magazine editions from March 2016- June 2018.

As far as the relevance of qualitative research for studies such this one, scholars suggest subject research kinds of this type, that attempt to enquire quality, not quantity better be addressed by means of the qualitative research methodology. In this regard, Creswell (1997) pointed out the

below highlighting how relevant the qualitative research methodology is as far as dealing subject research topics.

*... qualitative researchers seek to understand the context or setting of the participants through visiting this context and gathering information personally. They also make an interpretation of what they find, an interpretation shaped by the researchers' own experiences and backgrounds. The basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community. The process of qualitative research is largely inductive, with the inquirer generating meaning from the data collected in the field.*

Therefore, to investigate the framing practices and the development of the GCEO message of the Ethiopian Airlines In-flight Magazine dubbed *Selamta*, focus group discussion, in-depth interviews and content analysis have been found to be the appropriate methods compared to some other types of qualitative research methods. The researcher opted for this qualitative research method type to gather first-hand information from the real participants- or the experts who develop the GCEO message.

However, since the finding from the focus group needed supplement from the other data collection methodology, the researcher has also used in-depth interviews to get the feedback of the sample population who are at the moment not in the corporate department, but have been serving including being as a manager. Hence, it can be deduced that the researcher has utilized the focus group, the in-depth interview and content analysis. The combination of these tools helped to get better and deeper understanding on how messages were framed at Ethiopian while preparing the in-flight magazine-*Selamta*.

### **3.2 Sampling**

Due to the nature of the study which is qualitative, the researcher has employed a purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling helps to select subjects having adequate knowledge and proximity to the issue.

The need to sample in such a way is to get a valid data from the experts for they are the ones preparing the message. Not only this, in order to assess how the corporate communications department of the airline interact with *Selamta* readers, who are mostly frequent travellers , the student has also approached frequent travellers so as to see whether the messages addressed their needs or not. The researcher found the frequent travellers with the help of the airline. From the lists of the frequent flyers received from the airline, ten most frequent travellers were chosen for the interview based on their walks of life- they were comprised of journalist, diplomat, NGO employees and others.

Milles and Haberman (1994) say purposive sampling technique permits the selection of interviews whose qualities or experiences allow them to understand the question and give accurate response.

The current Ethiopian Corporate Communications Department is established with 10 staff categorized under two team leaders, the media relations and Event Organization reporting to the manager. As per the establishment, the media relations team is the responsible team to handle the preparation of the GCEO message of the magazine from drafting to gathering themes and producing to the final draft of the message and then onto translating the final English version into Amharic. The manager, the team leader, and three of the senior staff took part in the focus group discussion. Besides, the researcher has made two in-depth interviews with two former staffs. One of them was the former manager of the department while the other served as a Senior Corporate Communications Officer. The researcher, being a former senior staff of the department himself, has also entertained his own observation and experiences. Besides, content analysis of the selected magazines was handled; where the researcher selected the March 2016-June 2018 editions of the magazine. This period was taken for two reasons: one by taking the two years consecutive editions the researcher believes that it can be reached at some conclusion and secondly the magazines are believed to represent the general practice of the message development.

### **3.3 Informants**

Informants were carefully selected using purposive sampling techniques. The sample encompasses two types of participants- those working at the Corporate Communications

Department of Ethiopian on the one hand and those who have moved to other department or left the company on the other. The sample, for the focus group discussion, includes the manager of the corporate communications department and three senior experts in the department including one team leader. Similarly, in-depth interview was also administered to two former colleagues and workers of the department who had been key participants of the development of the message.

The rationale for including the two groups of staff- those who took part in the FGD and those in the in-depth interview was to examine the practices of message development by the department now and before. Both the former manager and the senior corporate communication officer have 20 years of working experience in the airline; while the current staff has experience range of 2-6 years. In general, the informants' experience in the aviation industry ranges from 2- 20 years. Of the current five staffs, four of them are BA Degree holders in Foreign Languages and Literature while one has a BA in Journalism and Communication.

Besides, the researcher also approached frequent travellers for their feedback on the so as to examine if they were ever approached from the department for their feedback and if they found the message informative and appealing.

### **3.4 Setting of Interview**

The interviews were made separately from 15-18 May, 2018. Interviews were conducted at the airline's headquarters. Privacy was granted and confidence was established. All the interviews were guaranteed anonymity to draw them out and at least not to mention them by name.

### **3.5 Data Recording**

Since narration was the main method of analyzing data generated from the informants, all the verbal message statements, opinions and arguments in the conversations were carefully recorded for later use. The informants were aware that they were on records. The interviews were conducted in English because the message is published in English.

## **3.6 Data Collection Tools**

### **3.6.1. Focus Group Discussion**

The researcher has employed focus group discussion research tool to get the general picture of the team's unification and selection/framing of the themes for the preparation of the message.

While trying to find out how the group develops the GCEO message and how it does organize themes; and how it works to make sure that the ideas raised are of the interest of the readers, mostly the frequent travellers among others, the researcher uses the focus group discussion, as part of a qualitative research methodology.

According to Roger and Joseph (2011), the focus group discussion method is a research strategy for understanding people's attitudes and behavior. This enables the researcher to identify what the groups' mission behind developing the message was and how issues of the airline were addressed against the mission set. In doing so, using the focus group is believed to have the below merits as scholars highlight.

#### **Merits and Characteristics of Focus Group**

Roger and Joseph (Ibid) share the following points as major advantage of the focus group method of data gathering:

- ✓ Focus groups allow researchers to collect preliminary information about a topic or a phenomenon.
- ✓ Focus groups can be conducted quickly. Most of the time is spent recruiting [engaging] the respondents.
- ✓ Researchers also like focus groups because of the flexibility in question design and follow-up. In conventional surveys, interviewers work from a rigid series of questions and are instructed to follow explicit directions in asking the questions. A moderator in a focus group, however, works from a list of broad questions as well as more refined probe questions; hence, it is easy to follow up on important points raised by participants in the group.
- ✓ The ability to clear up confusing responses from subjects makes focus groups valuable in the research process.

- ✓ Finally, focus group responses are often more complete and less inhibited than those from individual interviews. One respondent's remarks tend to stimulate others to pursue lines of thinking that might not have been elicited in a situation involving just one individual. With a competent moderator, the discussion can have a beneficial snowball effect, as one respondent comment on the views of another. A skilled moderator also can detect the opinions and attitudes of those who are less articulate by noting facial expressions and other nonverbal behavior while others are speaking.
- ✓ Most professional focus group moderators use a procedure known as an extended focus group, in which respondents are required to complete a written questionnaire before the group session begins. The pre-group questionnaire, which covers the material that will be discussed during the group session, forces respondents to "commit" to a particular answer or position before entering the group. This commitment eliminates one potential problem created by group dynamics—namely, the person who does not wish to offer an opinion because he or she is in a minority.

Mentioning Krueger and Casey (2000), Roger & Joseph (2003), Ibid, listed four defining characteristics technique of the focus group.

- ✓ Focus groups involve people (participants).
- ✓ The people possess certain characteristics and are recruited to share a quality or characteristic of interest to the researcher.
- ✓ Focus groups usually provide qualitative data. Data from focus groups are used to enhance understanding and to reveal a wide range of opinions, some of which the researcher might not expect.
- ✓ As the name implies, focus groups have a focused discussion. Most of the questions to be asked are predetermined, the sequence of questions is established, and the questions are structured to further the goal of the research. However, the moderator is free to depart from the structure if the participants present relevant information.

### **3.6.2. In-depth Interview**

In-depth interviews were conducted to get the deep perspectives of the corporate communication experts in the airline who were directly involved in the development of the GCEO messages of the airline on the *Selamta* In-Flight magazine. The interview with these experts was a key step

for the study. Small the size of the interviewees at the Corporate Communications Department was though, which is unavoidable as a result of the nature of the work, the researcher has found the in-depth interview practical for the research. Backing this thought, Roger and Joseph (Ibid) said that an in-depth interview is used to gather detailed information from a small sample. Interview was also conducted with the frequent travellers for the researcher to assess if the framing practices of the message encompassed the interest of the travelers.

This method, i.e. the in-depth interview, is critically vital so as to assist in the elaboration of data concerning respondents' opinions, values, experiences, and feelings. Qualitative interview provides opportunities for both interviewer and interviewees to discuss some topics in detail. Lesley Jolly defines qualitative research interviews as "attempts to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations. "The method enables the researcher to engage in dialogue, with the interviewee as the measuring instrument," (1996:21). It is not easy to conduct good qualitative research interviews. The researcher preferred open-ended questions to get the real views without any limitations.

Further on the intensive interviews, Roger and Joseph said, "Intensive interview is an extension of the one-on-one personal interview in which in-depth information is obtained."

Qualitative interview is flexible, dynamic non-directive, unstructured, non-standardized and open-ended. Taylor and Bogadan (1984:77) see the qualitative interview as "repeated face-to-face encounters between the researcher and informants perspectives on their lives, experiences, or situations as expressed in their own words." Qualitative interviews are particularly suitable for studying individuals' understanding of their world, for describing their experiences and self-understanding, and for clarifying and elaborating their perspective of their world (Seidman, 1998:3-4). In light of this, this research attempts to explore how the communication experts design/frame the GCEO message on *Selamta* in-flight magazine of the Ethiopian Airlines.

### **3.6.3 Content Analysis**

#### **What is content analysis?**

In order for the research to be comprehensive and give a clear picture whether the framing practices are available by the corporate communication department of the airline while developing the GCEO message on *Selamta* magazine, the researcher has reviewed selected editions of *Selamta* magazines that ran from March 2016-June 2018.

Content analysis, according to Terry College, is a research technique used to make replicable and valid inferences by interpreting and coding textual material. Accordingly, content analysis can be made in two ways: conceptual and relational. With the former the researcher's interest is on the frequency of concepts – most often represented by words or phrases – in a text; while with the latter goes one step further by examining the relationships among concepts in a text.

The student has employed both while analyzing the message especially while doing the analysis of the messages on the selected editions.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. Data Presentation and Analysis

This chapter examines how the GCEO messages of the national flag carrier on the selected *Selamta*-inflight magazines were framed. The researcher has selected two years of publications that ran from March 2016- May 2018. The chapter has been divided into different sections to lend a better clarity.

First, the chapter presents the analysis of all selected messages and how they were framed. For the sake of clarity, the researcher has identified the following frames utilized in the message crafting. These Overarching or dominant frames include 'Leading Airline Frame', 'Fast, Profitable Growth', 'Pan-African Frame', 'Customer First/Hospitality Frame' and 'Multiple Hub Strategy Frame'. The researcher believes that the analysis of these frames had to answer the research questions 'How were the messages framed?' and 'How timely were the issues entertained?'

#### 4.1 Content Analysis

As mentioned above, the researcher has identified several frames that the Corporate Communications Department gave due attention while crafting the GCEO message on *Selamta*-Ethiopian in-flight magazine. The selected messages, therefore, were analyzed below against the identified frames.

##### The Leading Airline Frame

In various parts of the messages, the student observed the airline mentioning that it is the leading airline in the continent of Africa. For instance, (*Selamta* May-June 2016) presents such story using 'Leading airline frame' as in the following excerpt of the news/feature article. "Ethiopian Airlines brought the jet-age to Africa, and its history boasts of many firsts on the continent. Our roadmap for the decade ahead, called Vision 2025, aims for Ethiopian to Africa's leading airline by 2025."

The technique of the framing on the above message under the 'Leading Airline Framing' category went on to give emphasis to the pioneering of the airline despite the challenging situations. This is to mean that the airline continues to grow despite the global economic

slowdown as it is mentioned in (November- December 2016) publication of the airlines magazine. The above story seems to couple with the vision of the airline to become one of the best global airlines in 2025, as stated below.

*Despite the recent forecast that global economic growth will remain subdued, we plan to continue to build on the foundations of 2016 by strengthening our already-robust market position with an eye on our 'Vision 2025' - "to become the most competitive and leading aviation group in Africa.*

In spite of setting to become the leading airline in the continent by 2025, the airline frames the issue by pushing it further saying that it has achieved many of the goals ahead of the schedule. “Only five years into the program [Vision 2025], we are proud to declare that we have already completed that goal-10 years ahead of schedule.”

Framing the issue of the Leading Airline continues as can be read from the November-December 2017 edition of the magazine with a recurring tone of pioneering position of the airline. ‘We are now the leading aviation group in Africa, eight years ahead of our strategic growth roadmap, Vision 2025.

According to the researchers understanding the Leading Africa Frame is presented positively by the airline. In support of this idea, Bradley (Ibid) stated, “A common sales technique is to present your product in a positive frame, presenting your competitors product in a negative frame, and presenting the customer with a time sensitive offer requiring a quick decision.” And that is why, as to the researcher’s thought, the airline frames the messages positively to appeal to the customers with a time sensitive approach.

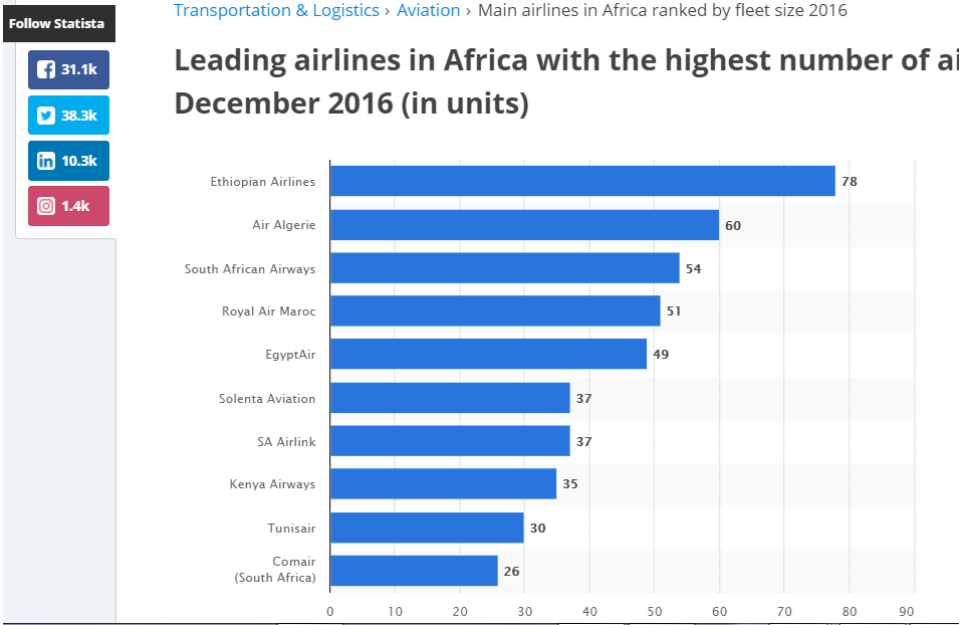
The message often attributes the pioneering position of the airline to technology that include the operation of state owned aircraft and the modern facilities it is investing heavily on. In this vein, the (January-February 2018) edition reads: “We have phased in Africa's first Boeing B787-9 Dreamliner, a bigger version of our existing B787-8 fleet, and our sixth Airbus A3S.” The framing goes to portraying Ethiopian as a leader in bringing aircraft ahead of other African carriers. In one of the messages, it is placed as follow: “In May, we celebrated the entry into service of our 100<sup>th</sup> aircraft- a milestone for Ethiopian and a first for an African airline,” (May-June 2018).

It was also noted on the message that Ethiopian being framed as an aviation technology pioneer. “Before inaugurating that (London), the A350 XWB made maiden flights to many of our African destinations, heralding our pioneering role in African aviation.”

While summarizing the ‘Leading Airline Frame’, the below excerpt indicates how the message was framed to place Ethiopian ahead of other African carriers in multi-faceted sectors:

*Ethiopian was able to transform itself from a humble airline to the largest in Africa boasting the continent's largest aviation academy and catering facility, and from a small cargo carrier limited to the belly hold of a passenger aircraft to the largest cargo airline in Africa,” (January-February 2017).*

In this regards, the Leading Frame seems to get the attention of international institutions including from The Statistics Portal (2016):



**Figure one:** The Statistics Portal

With the help of the chart, one can easily deduce that Ethiopian’s being placed atop with the largest difference between the next position and the fact that some Ethiopian rivalry carriers including Kenya Airways being ranked lower imply that the airline’s “leading carrier frame’ has

ground.

### **Fast, Profitable Growth Frame**

The other overarching frame technique employed in the message is the airline's fast, profitable and sustainable growth frame. The framing of the messages in this aspect, according to the researcher, is to assure customers that the airline is sustainably growing hence their choice to get services and products from the airline is indeed right. "Customers who had the best past experiences spend 140% more compared to those who had the poorest past experiences," Medium (2017). As stated here, the airline attempts to win the loyalty of its customers by highlighting its fast, continuous and sustainable growth in the message of the GCEO.

In one of the editions, the message is framed in a way that the airline's growth is compared to the global aviation boom. The (January-February 2017) edition reads as: "Similar to the global aviation industry's fast growth, we at Ethiopian Airlines have been contributing our fair share to the Africa's aviation development."

Another message of the (November- December 2016) reads:

*It truly has been a year of remarkable growth and transition: We celebrated our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary; carried 7.6 million passengers, a new record; added four new exciting destinations (Hawassa, Moroni, New York and Windhoek); inaugurated the larger aviation academy in Africa, and welcomed eight new aircraft to our fleet including Africa's first A350.*

More on this, yet another messages was framed so as to indicate that the airline had grown threefold. "Our phenomenal growth over the last seven years- where we tripled the size of our airline in revenue, passenger number and fleet- could not have been achieved without your patronage," (May- June 2018).

Moreover, the airline presents its commitment to grow fast as it did so as to offer better services to its customers. "Moving forward, we will continue to pursue our fast, profitable and sustainable growth strategy, with a firm belief in continuous improvement in customer services."

## **Pan African Frame**

The other frame, yet one of the most overarching one, used by the corporate communications department to craft the message of the GCEO for *Selamta* magazine is identifying the airline as a Pan-African carrier.

The (March-April 2018) edition of the magazine reads: “Pan Africanism is in our corporate DNA, and for over seven decades we have been doing our part to integrate Africa.” “For us Africa is the first world’ while others referred to it as a ‘third world’,” (January-February 2017). Here the message attempts to give a picture particularly to Africans that Ethiopian is the promoter of Pan- Africanism and as a result it prioritizes Africa for its services and products.

The message, in its (March-April 2017) edition, tries to highlight that Ethiopian managed to soar higher on skies while the rest of Africa was under the shackle of colonization: “And when Ethiopian flew its first flight to Cairo 50 years later, (after the victory of Adwa- in 1896) on April, 1946, we heralded a new era of growth in a continent that was often racked with economic strife.”

Moreover, the framing of the messages also stressed the role of Ethiopian to connect Africa with the rest of the world. “Flying and living the ‘The New Spirit of Africa,’ we are committed to linking Africa to the world, and we pledge to make ever-more connections available,” (March-April 2017). At times, the message is framed so as to show the alignment of the carriers growth with that of the continent, “Today, Africa is rising, and we are betting big on its success with our Vision 2025 strategic growth plan,” (March- April 2018).

The researcher strongly believes the airlines framing the messages in this regard must have played significantly for the airline to operate the vastest network in the continent and possess the largest air transportation market share in the continent with increased revenue and profit; as witnessed by Business African (2017) where it stated that Ethiopian made a record net profit of \$273m in the 2015–16 fiscal year ending June 2016.

## **Hospitality Frame**

With the Hospitality Frame, the study tried to look into the frames that are related to phrases and sentences the airline used to show how it values the customer. Hence, this frame also encompasses customer first or customer value notions.

Seldom, the messages were framed with the effort of appealing to the customers indicating that they are contributors for the overall achievements registered. In this regard, the November-December 2017 edition reads, “I attribute these achievements to the interplay of massive investment in technology people and systems, customer-centric business strategy, and above all, your unreserved feedback,”; also one can refer to the following statement where the message extends thanks to its customers: “We truly value you, our customers, and thank you for making Ethiopian the largest and best in Africa,” as some to mention from the (May- June 2016) edition. The fact that the usage of the first person ‘I’ and ‘we’ implies the degree of intimacy desired to create with the customers as part of Customer First framing.

Furthermore, the messages framed the investment of the airline in several areas as effort to make sure customers are satisfied with the services and products of the airline. The September-October 2017 issue clarifies this: “We have continued our journey toward becoming a world-class airline with a major focus on customer service, flavored with our unique, warm Ethiopian hospitality.” The edition continues to persuade that all its investment on technology is to the best comfort of the customers, while it is indicated as below:

*Recognizing and rewarding our valued customers represents a vital part of the recipe for our continued pursuit of customer retention. Toward that end, we have introduced a Platinum tier to our loyalty program and renovated our ShebaMiles webpage to improve customers’ online experience. The new online Entry Visa Application and Issuance (E-Visa) has redefined our travelers’ experience, enabling you to issue your visa at your fingertips and then book, pay and check in, all online.*

In one of the messages, which the researcher found different in its format, as it is presented in Question and Answer style, the GCEO was quoted to for saying: “we adhere all circumstances to a customer-first mentality.”

“As a customer-focused and market-driven airline, at our core, in whatever we do, we have you and your comfort, convenience, safety and expectations in mind.” The frame presented above from the (May- June 2017) edition entails that the airline takes into consideration the customers and all what is needed to them with each and every activity it carries out.

## **Multiple Hub Frame**

Ethiopian Airlines effort to expand Africa's air transportation sector is getting media attention including the CNN in its May report where it wrote what is next: "The airline has ambitious plans; Ethiopia is working with the Zambian government to relaunch their national carrier with a 45% stake, it also plans to establish a wholly-owned airline in Mozambique and has signed a contract to start an airline in Guinea. Ethiopian has also taken stakes in a Chadian airline. "Typically, they're taking a minority stake or around 50%. They tend to go into these joint ventures with local partners," said Oliver Clark, senior reporter at FlightGlobal.

In line to this, the student has the below from the messages framed as per the above point discussed by the media.

*We are also keenly aware of the need to partner with other African airlines to ensure the survival of the African airline industry and we are working with many African countries to launch their national carriers. We recently agreed to re-launch Zambian Airways in partnership with the Zambian government. In January 2018, we agreed to partner in Guinea Airlines together with our strategic partner, ASKY Airlines, based in Togo. We are already partnering with the Malawian government for Malawian Airlines. More such partnership initiatives are in the pipeline.*

The above excerpt seals the airlines' effort in expanding across the continent. It also shows how the message is crafted centering on the issue of multiple hub tone.

The below tables, own source, present the overarching frames analyzed in a very summarized manner:

***Table A: The Leading Airline Frame***

No	Phrase/sentence	Frequency	Edition
1.	“becoming a world class airline”	1	Sep/Oct 2017
2.	The largest and most modern cargo	1	Sep/Oct 2017
3.	4-Star SKYTRAX airline award makes us one among a few airlines in the world...	1	Jan/Feb 2017
4.	We have phased in Africa’s first B787-9....	1	Jan/Feb 2017
5.	.. the largest Chinese restaurant in Africa...	1	July/August 2016
6.	...the largest and most modern cargo phrase/sentence in Africa, ...	1	July/August 2016
7.	We have flown to many African countries since they gained independence in the 1960s, availing connectivity when no other foreign carrier was operating.	1	March/April 2018
8.	...making us the continent’s largest aviation group.	1	March/April 2018
9.	...boasts of may firsts on the continent;...Ethiopian to be Africa’s leading airline by 2025.	2	May/June 2016
10.	...as we introduce the new Airbus A350 XWB- Africa’s first –in June.	1	May/June 2016
11.	...enabling us to become one of the very few airlines in the industry with such a young fleet.	1	May/June 2016

12	Ethiopian Inflight Catering , the largest catering unit in Africa, ...	1	May/June 2016
13	Leading the way again’ denoting our long history of being at the forefront of African aviation.	1	July/August 2016
14	..Africa’s first A350..	1	November/December 2016
15	...to become the most competitive and leading aviation group in Africa.	1	November/December 2016
16	SKYTRAX bestowed upon us the crown of the ‘Best Airline in Africa’ and ranked us among top 50 global airlines.	1	November/December 2016
17	We are now the largest aviation group in Africa, eight years ahead of our strategic growth roadmap, Vision 2025.	1	November/December 2016
18	...heralding out pioneering role in African aviation.	1	September/October 2016

As stipulated in the table, the ‘Leading Airline’ frame has been emphasized in many of the edition. As can be deduced from the table above, the frame appears 12 times only in 2016 editions with the highest frequency. However, the frame has also been discussed on the following editions as well across the periods mentioned.

**Table B: *The Pan African Frame***

1.	‘The New Spirit of Africa’	1	July/August 2016
2.	‘Pan Africanism is our corporate DNA’	1	March/April 2018

The ‘The Pan African Frame’, as can be learnt from the above table, also appeared in both the 2016 and the 2018 editions. Despite the frequency seems minimal in the table, one may look up in the previous sections for the better understanding of the recurrent usage of the frame by the airline in the GCEO’s messages.

**Table C: *The Fast, Profitable Growth Frame***

1.	...where we tripled the size of our airline in revenue, passenger number and fleet- could not have ..	1	May/June 2018
2.	We have exceeded our own expectations by expanding our network of connectivity.	1	May/June 2016
3	Similarly to the global aviation industry’s fast growth, we at Ethiopian Airlines have been contributing our fair share to Africa’s aviation development.	1	Jan/Feb 2017

The fast profitable growth frame is also one of the overarching frames used by the airline to be incorporated in the message to build trust among the customers creating the profitability image.

**Table D: *Hospitality Frame***

No	Phrase/sentence	Frequency	Edition
1)	Warm Ethiopian Hospitality	1	Sep/Oct 2017
2)	‘For us Africa is the first world’ while others referred to it as a ‘third world’	1	Jan/Feb 2017

3)	‘We truly value you, our customers,’	1	May/June 2016
4)	As a customer-focused and market-driven airline,...	1	May/June 2016
5)	‘Our most important achievement, however, is your vote of confidence in us.	1	November/December 2016
6)	In whatever we do, we have you, our valued customer, in mind.	1	November/December 2016

As can be seen from the above table, the ‘Hospitality’ frame is another overarching frame dominantly reflected in the GCEO’s messages of the airline. The hospitality frame has to do with depicting the activities the airline embarks on and will embark on so as to ensure ultimate customer satisfaction. The table highlighted some of the frames on the topic. Only in the 2016/17 budget year, the hospitality frame appears in four of the editions.

**Table E: Multiple Hub Strategy Frame**

No	Phrase/sentence	Frequency	Edition
1	More such partnership initiatives are in the pipeline.	1	March/April 2018
2	In short, everything is getting bigger and better at Ethiopian, including our network.	1	May/June 2016
3	With the phase in of brand-new Boeing 73-Max..	1	May/June 2018

The other predominant frame employed in the message is the 'multiple hub strategy frame'. The frame mainly appears, in the two years edition i.e. the 2016 & 2018.

## **4.2 Analysis of the findings of the data from the frequent travellers**

The below is the data analysis of the frequent travellers. For the sake of clarity and brevity, the student presented the analysis with core ideas and he believes the findings had to answer the research questions- 'How successful were the messages in getting attention from the travellers /readers? And 'Were readers approached from the company to share their thoughts on the content and style of the messages?'

### **Attention grasping section of the magazine**

As far as selection of the elements in the magazine is concerned, a great deal of the interviewee was found to give attention to the other parts of the magazine rather than the GCEO message. The reasons stated for this by the respondents are that they, i.e. the rest of the pages and their contents are more attractive. The respondents told the researcher that these pages offer entertaining information like the movie summaries, the hotel and cultural explanations among others. One of the frequent travellers responded saying, "It depends on the content of the flight. If I am on the international flight, I am more interested on the movie summary to guide me on movie selection. Otherwise, I need the experience of other countries."

The researcher has found out that the aforesaid idea was supported by most of the frequent travellers who took part in the interview.

However, there are also informants who found reading the message as equally important as reading the entire magazine. One of them said, "I read all because each part has a good message to give. The entire thing has message; the articles are interesting; they give us information about tourism, recommend about the hotels, special places, restaurants, places to visit etc."

This implies that the message has not received special attention compared to the rest as the respondent did not show greater interest to the message than the rest part of the magazine. And this has taught the researcher that the appealing power of the message is lower than the rest of the contents.

With whatever level they read the message, most of the informants agree that they have found the message informative. The following is a reply that can represent the rest: “The message is insightful. It informs passengers what the airline is doing to excel.” This is a reply that the researcher has found to be the agreeable one by many. And they agree that the message is of their interest and have the information they want to know.

### **Feedback from the frequent travellers**

One of the major findings of this study is related to the effort of the Corporate Communications Department in getting the feedback of the frequent travellers for whom the message is meant for.

One of the questions on which all the respondents agree on is this one and they all say ‘No’. The researcher being a former staff of the department fully takes in the reply of the frequent travellers as he has never seen the department doing same in his more than two years of service as a senior corporate communications officer in the department. A respondent assured the researcher saying: “I have never been approached by the department for their feedback on either the content or the presentation of the GCEO message.” Another respondent, in support of the previous one, said: “One informant told the researcher saying, “Never have I been asked of feedback on this regard; but on the general progress of airline.” This has, in fact, been admitted by the department as the discussants, those who develop the message, agree that they have never done so but take the fast growth of the airline for granted.

The researcher, moreover, has noted that the frequent travellers were asked to compare the GCEO Message of Ethiopian in-flight magazine *Selamta*, with that of other giant airlines’ and most of them had nothing to say, except one whose response was: “It is better to compare Ethiopian in the context of an African airline.”

### **Does the message carry the information you need?**

Most of the informants have agreed here that they have found the message to carry the information needed. One of them said, “Yes, the message carries the information I want. It has good information. It is to my interest. And in general, the magazine is completely an interesting one. For me the company’s goal is met with the message.”

Although the student learnt that the airline has not approached the travellers for their feedback on the message in particular- and also same is discussed in the coming sections, the above question resulted in a response that the effort of the airline in sharing the information to its travellers can be taken as a success.

### **Style change**

Regarding style preference, almost all are fine with it except one who suggested parts of the message to be scattered all over the pages in the magazine so as to attract readers. This, as far as the researcher's knowledge goes, require two things: one the readiness of the department for style change seems unlikely as discussed below in the FGD and in-depth interview with the two former staffs; and secondly doing so urges the skill of harmonizing parts of the message with the idea and content of the page the message parts to appear.

### **4.3 Analysis of the Findings of the Focus Group Discussion**

In order to assess the GCEO message framing techniques of the airline in the Selamta in-flight magazine, the researcher held Focus Group Discussion with the Media Relations team staffs of the Corporate Communications Department of the airline including the manager. The team is the responsible unit in crafting the message and finally translating the final English version to Amharic. While discussing the analysis with the below highlighted segments, the researcher believes the analysis had to answer the research questions: what framing techniques were used? What role staffs had? What factors prompted staff for the selection of the themes in the message and did the department seek for feedback from the frequent travellers?

#### **Role the discussants take**

The researcher has learnt that everyone in the team takes part in the preparation of the message. Indeed, it is expected for all to take part for two reasons- one for the sampling being purposive and secondly for they all are under the Media Relations team.

It seems that all share similar assignment such as taking part in the brainstorming session and taking assignment on the given themes. However, the role of the manager is different. The manager said:

*I discuss with either the Group Chief Executive Officer (GGCEO's) office or the Vice President (VP) on the themes to be incorporated in the message and for further guidance. This does not happen always- as we sometimes develop the draft after we, under the team of the Media Relations select themes; in that case, it is going to be for approval that I approach either the e GGCEO's office or that of the VP's. Then I also comment on the draft from the team before taking it to the higher management for feedback and/or approval.*

The staffs' role, the researcher learnt, was usually to take assignment and develop the draft, contacting units for input where necessary. One of the staffs in the team said, "My role is to suggest themes to be incorporated and then take assignments for which I might use the data I have or approach the units for enrichment."

On turn basis, the staffs take additional assignment of gathering parts of the message from their colleagues and come up with the finalized message. One participant said, "In addition to discharging my responsibility of developing part of the message based on the theme I receive, I also take the role of facilitator where I gather sections or themes of the message from my colleagues and work on the final draft."

### **Factors prompting discussants for theme selection**

What factors do really prompt the team in the selection of the themes for the preparation of the message? In this regards, the finding of the FDG has been analyzed as below:

One senior participant of the FDG said, "We have brainstorming session prior the message preparation and that session is dedicated for the staff to share themes in par with the present and upcoming events in the airline and beyond." The researcher believes that such session is vital as it will help the staff take time to discuss on the selection of issues that are appealing to the customers to whom they are writing the message for.

Another senior staff responded saying: we refer the corporate plan and strategy to align our themes with the overall direction of the airline." The manager and the rest share the same thought of focusing on the upcoming events where the edition of the magazine falls and forecast milestones to take place during the publication of that particular edition. Besides, the latter group

said that the team also takes into consideration the economic atmosphere of the country and the world in general.

As per the understanding from the findings, the researcher learnt that seasonal happenings both in the airline and beyond that can be economical and the airline's corporate plan are the underlying prompting factors for the selection of the themes to be entertained in the message. The team's effort in striving in this fashion emanates from the desire to ensure the message is appealing enough to the readers- who are mostly the frequent travellers to inform the latter the overall progress of the airline.

### **Readability assessment by the department and does the message communicate the airline's activities?**

The airline's commendable feedback gathering technique widely used across the departments is never used here by the Corporate Communications Department to get feedback from the frequent travellers concerning the GCEO message on *Selamta* magazine.

All the FDG participants replied saying no- that the department has never done feedback analysis. The researcher understanding, from experience as well, here is that the fact the airline's growth and advancement has made the team and other concerned parts-including the publication team to remain satisfactory taking for the carrier's boom for granted.

Getting feedback for one's writing does not only improve the writing, but is also help a company suit services as per the demand of the customers. In this vein, Startquestion (2016), put as: "Their [customers] opinion about experience they have with your brand is helpful information that you can use to adjust your business to fit their needs more accurately."

The team, according to the FGD finding, believes that the fact the messages got consent of the higher management including the GCEO implies that the team has designed a good message that communicates the airline's activities adequately.

The researcher, being the former colleague of the team, clearly recalls that there has never been any Market Feedback Analysis /MFA- which the company uses for other services, to measure whether the message delivers as intended. The fact that the team's dependent on the general

success of the airline as a replica for the readability of the message is a misleading one, according to the understanding of this researcher.

### **Effort of the team to get feedback for the message**

Similarly, the researcher learnt that the team has never done any attempt of getting feedback for the message it has shared through the magazine. The team considers the overall progress of the national flag carrier as the sum total of the team's effort; which has given the team the sense of pride to consider that it is doing right. Indeed, as far as the researcher's knowledge goes, there has never been any negative feedback on the message; however, this does not imply that what has been shared has gained 100% acceptance. With the genuine feedback request, some more constructive ideas would emerge for better production.

### **Framing techniques employed by the theme**

The researcher learnt that the team understood the framing techniques with that of the theme selection, which was discussed previously. However, it came to the researcher's knowledge that the team was using the overarching frames discussed in the 'Content Analysis' section very dominantly.

### **Changing message presentation style**

The team has assured the researcher that there is no room for style change and same is believed to be true by the higher managements too. In fact, the researcher has posed this question if the team has the courage to think and act out of the box.

Despite the resistant nature of the team for the change, the researcher has observed that one of the editions of *Selamta*, the March/April 2016, does not contain the usual message of the GCEO but his interview on a different page than the customary one. In this edition, unlike the rest, an elaborated interview the GCEO had was presented and the type and the number of pictures used differ from the rest of the editions.

## **Benchmarking**

The team expressed to the researcher that it, not more frequently, but sometimes benchmarks the giant airlines' in-flight magazine experience. To this researcher's memory, in his two years of stay in the department, he recalls doing the benchmarking once and which was fruitful.

Winn (2010) said that benchmarking is used to track the performance of your online business in comparison to your competitors and the industry as a whole. For Ethiopian Airlines, that has severe competition from the non-Africa carriers, what it has exercised with regards to the multiple hub strategy fashion of running the aviation industry is encouraging; and same should be replicated to the Corporate Communications Department as far as developing the message is concerned.

## **4.4 Analysis of the in-depth interview**

Conducted two in-depth interviews, the researcher hereunder presents the analysis of the data found via the in-depth interview based on the issues entertained during the interviews.

### **The role of the interviewees in the preparation of the GCEO message**

Since the responsibility and position of the interviewees differ: one being the manager and the other senior officer, their role was different as well. The role of the former was to supervise the overall message preparation from the draft to the final version and to send same to the GCEO/VP for approval; while the latter was responsible for taking assignment from the former and compile data from concerned units to develop the message. (According to the structural changes, the researcher has witnessed that the Corporate Communications Department was reporting first to the VP, then to the GCEO and then now finally to the VP).

### **Techniques applied while developing the GCEO message**

The in-depth interview has shown that the company follows the set standard of developing the message. The standard being the message beginning with the greetings of the GCEO and updating new developments at the airline in the following parts and closing with inviting the readers to be aboard Ethiopian again. It was also found that seasonal occasions taking role as

means of techniques of message development. That is- with the message prepared a month or ahead of its publication, it talks about what events to take place by the time it is published.

The former senior corporate communications officer said, “There is a fixed framing technique used while preparing the message; framing devise. The CEO starts by greeting the audience at the beginning and continues to list down the points needed to be discussed and parts with a farewell to meet in the next issue.”

The former manager, in this regards said, “The company has a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for all activity so this is also done according to that.”

### **What themes to focus and how to select**

The researcher has learnt that the themes given attention in the message are the performance of the airline, new developments in the airline in general and in the units in particular. The airline was formerly established with seven business units now eight with the merger of Ethiopian Airports Enterprise with Ethiopian Airlines to form the Aviation Group. The themes are hence gathered from the units and customized according to the anticipated need of the readers that are frequent travelers.

### **How are these themes relevant to the customer?**

The interview cleared the researcher that themes are selected not based on the genuine findings of the department as to what the readers want to but as to what the company wants the readers to read. The researcher has found out that the department has never used Market Feedback Analysis (MFA) to the GCEO message but continues developing same with the assumption that it is liked by the readers. It seems that the department is saying so long as there is no bad comment, it is good.

### **Framing principles applied**

The researcher’s effort to identify the framing practice of the company to develop the GCEO message has shown that the department follows the standard set and even is not aware that there are framing techniques, such as that of Fairhurst and Sarr’s (Ibid).

But after the researcher's explanation on these framing techniques, the interviewees cleared that they have been using some such as the Metaphor, Stories (myths, legends)-comparing the carrier with the rest in the industry; Tradition (rituals, ceremonies)-calling for tourists to flood into the country mentioning the country's UNESCO ascribed heritages; Slogan- most of the messages were found to include slogans such as 'The New Spirit of Africa', 'Pan Africa', 'The Leading Carrier' and others.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

#### 5.1 Conclusion

The various data gathering techniques the researcher has employed indicated that the Media Relations team- that is solely responsible for the preparation of the message of the CEO for *Selamta* in-flight magazine of the airline is striving to make sure that the overall activities of the airline is well communicated. The team also practices an encouraging brainstorming session that involves the manager so as to prioritize pertinent and timely issues that will be entertained in the message. The team's effort to align the message as per the corporate plan of the company is commendable.

Moreover, it was learnt that the team shares responsibilities which let each staff exert maximum effort to come up with the best quality of his/her share; this method is also relevant so as to maintain unity and team work not only in the department but also in the company.

The fact the team communicates units for update to be included in the message is an encouraging approach to enrich the data of the department and to establish a smooth relationship among units. The message goes through various managerial levels for enrichment and feedback; and this is not only a laudable procedure, but it also ensures the validity of the message.

The inclusion of major events that already took place and are to take place in the country does not only attract tourism and new customers; it also shows how alert the team is in following up national happenings to incorporate them in the way that they can be of advantage to the carrier. This has contributed for the message to suit to the information need of the readers and for its credibility.

Generally, the Ethiopian In-Flight magazine, *Selamta*, has always been adorable and heavily sought after magazine. It is not only the content of the magazine, the design, and the quality but the message too that all combined become major factors that contribute to its being among the most preferred ones.

However; the researcher also found out the below major setbacks in relation to developing the CEO message.

- The team is not using framing techniques to develop the message rather than following the existing standard.
- However, by the time the researcher explained some overarching framing techniques, the team expressed using them though not aware of them. The messages were dominated by the following frames: ‘the Leading Airline’, ‘the Pan African’, ‘Multiple Hub Strategy’, ‘Hospitality’, ‘The Fast, Profitable Growth’ frames.
- Despite the availability of scientific and applicable feedback gathering mechanism in the airline, the team has never done the Market Feedback Analysis (MFA) to assess what degree the message is appealing and to the interest of the readers.
- Similarly, the frequent travellers have disclosed that they have never been approached by the department for their feedback either on the message or the magazine.
- The frequent travellers, for whom the message and the entire magazine is intended for, are more interested for other parts of the magazine than the message of the CEO.
- Had the team been aware of the techniques mentioned in this research or more others, the message would have appeared more appealing to the readers.
- Taking for granted the speedy growth of the airline may not guarantee that the message is bringing about the anticipated promotional and communication value. The data indicate that the contribution of the message to the growth of the airline has not clearly identified.

## **5.2 Recommendation**

- Based on the data findings and the conclusions made above, the researcher hereunder mentions his recommendations better implemented by the team to make the message more readable and appealing to the frequent travellers who are believed to generate the great deal of the airline’s income and for whom the message is intended for:
- The team must strive and take an immediate step to get the Market Feedback Analysis (MFA) the airline is applying to its other services;
- The team better assesses and find out why the frequent travellers are not suggesting for improvements in the content of the message. Is it really because they like it; or is it because they give less attention to the message;

- The team's effort to make the message appealing to the readers only based on the assumption that the readers would be interested to know the latest developments about Ethiopian should be supported by feedback analysis as unless this way the usual trend would mislead;
- As the airline is facing severe competition from the gulf carriers in particular, it is better the team to periodically benchmark global practices as far as developing CEO message is concerned;
- The team is following the set standard whose degree of flexibility the researcher is not certain. Hence, in today's dynamic world and the aviation industry, it is highly recommendable for the team to go through training that will sharpen the skills of the staff; as many of the staff are of language background, there needs to be marketing knowledge and skills so as to penetrate into the aviation market;
- Readability and deliverability of the message has to be assessed regularly so as to take corrective actions as needed; with a genuine and detail feedback analysis, the department may even come with worse findings than this one;

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[https://www.facebook.com/pg/Selamtamagazine/about/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/Selamtamagazine/about/?ref=page_internal)

<https://www.fipp.com/news/features/why-inflight-magazines-will-continue-to-fly>

## Appendices

### Appendix I

#### Focus Group Discussion points with the Media Relations Team, Corporate Communications Department of Ethiopian Airlines

1. What is your role in the preparation of the Group GCEO's message for *Selamta* in-flight magazine?

My work is to write the message from scratch,

2. How do you select themes to be incorporated in the message?

Take points from corporate plan based on time of execution. Seasons are also included in the message.

3. Is there any rule/system you follow to write the message?

The company has a standard operating procedure for all activity so this is also done according to that.

4. What do you know about framing techniques and what framing techniques do you apply while preparing the message?

There is a fixed framing technique used while preparing the message; framing devise. The GCEO starts by greeting the audience at the beginning and continues to list down the points needed to be discussed and parts with a farewell to meet in the next issue.

5. Who are the message for and have you got any feedback on the published messages?

The message is mainly for customers using the services of the airline, rarely feedback comes through word of mouth, social media and comment cards.

6. Have you ever thought of style change: like question and answer?

Not really. There are other options for questions such as comment cards etc.

7. Do you have anything to add?

## **Appendix II**

### **In-depth interview Questions for the two former staff of the Corporate Communications Department**

1. What is your role in the development of the Group GCEO's message?
2. What techniques do you apply while preparing the Group GCEO's message?
3. What themes you focus on while developing the message and how do you select those messages?
4. How are these themes relevant to the customer?
5. What framing principles do you apply for the preparation of the Group GCEO's message?
6. Do you get feedback to your messages?
7. How sure you are the message has conveyed the themes of the airline?
8. Feedback

## **Appendix III**

### **Interview guide questions for key informants- Frequent Travellers**

1. Do you read *Selamta* magazine?
2. Which part/s of the magazine attracts your attention? And why?
3. Is the message appealing to you?
4. Does the message carry the information you need?
5. Is it of your interest?
6. What is your comment on the content of the message?
7. What is that you want the message to include? It is very nice.
8. How do you state the initiative of the Corporate Communications Department in obtaining feedback from you on the GCEO message?
9. What is your general overview of the message?
10. Please state anything I have missed or you would like to add?