



Addis Ababa University

School of Journalism and Communication

**The Practice of Message Development for Political Campaign: The
2010 Ethiopian Parliamentary Election in Focus**

Solomon Tesfaye

Addis Ababa University

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2010 Ethiopian Parliamentary Election in Focus**

Solomon Tesfaye

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Solomon Tesfaye, entitled *The Practice of Message Development for Political Campaign: The 2010 Ethiopian Parliamentary Election in Focus* and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

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Abstract

The Practice of Message Development for Political Campaign: The 2010 Ethiopian Parliamentary Election in Focus

Solomon Tesfaye

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This research work took the 2010 Ethiopian Parliamentary Election as its context to examine the process of message development during the election campaign. In this study the practice of message development for TV by the contending political parties was investigated. Also the powers of election messages to motivate, inform, and persuade their audiences and the messages key contents were issues focused on. Related literature was thoroughly revised and social judgment, persuasion and social influence theories were used as a theoretical framework. ‘Election campaign communications strategy’ was adapted from political communication and campaigning theories and practices. This was used as conceptual frame work for the study. Seven parties were selected using purposive sampling technique out of the 23 parties contended during the 2010 national election for both primary and secondary sources of data in the study. In the study content analysis is used (in conjunction with in-depth interviews). There were 7 interview questions designed in a way they can help to understand the process of message development and use. They were employed to collect information about the process of message development for election and the data was analyzed thematically. Moreover, the messages broadcasted by these same parties during 2010 election were accessed from EBC archive and content analyzed. The result showed that campaign messages transmitted via TV tend to be presented in many paragraphs of long narratives bogged with party policies and programs. Those who prepared the messages also were unable to cater with policy, image, and negatives in writing their scripts. All these attributes made them longer, less attractive, and not appealing to the audience. This also showed that their power to persuade, motivate and inform the voters was minimal. Gaps were observed in applying modern political communication and campaign theories and practices in the process of election message development such as campaign communications strategy.

List of Acronyms

ADs: Advertisement

AEUP: All Ethiopians Unity Party

CSA: Central Statistical Authority

CUDP: Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party

EBA: Ethiopian Broadcast Authority

EBC: Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation

ECHR: European Convention on Human Right

EDP: Ethiopian Democratic Party

EFDUF: Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum

EJDFF: Ethiopian Justice and Democratic Forces Front

EPRDF: Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front

ETV: Ethiopian Television

ICT: Information Communication Technology

NEBE: National Electoral Board of Ethiopia

ONC: Oromo National Congress

PEB: Party Election Broadcast

PPB: Party Political Broadcast

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Right

UNICCPR: United Nation International Convent on Civil and Political Right

US: United States

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CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Foster (2010) ‘political communication’, - how politicians seek to communicate their political messages) – is a more complex and expansive concept. It encapsulates a subject which addresses the way in which politicians attempt to communicate their messages to an increasingly skeptical and disengaged electorate. It also entails the implication that give communication content has for a wide range of associated issues such as politicians’ relations with journalists, our understanding of media bias and effects, government policy on media ownership and content, and so on. Political communication is understood as the transmission of message intended to contribute to political functioning (Political Science Dictionary, 1973). Communication has a central role in mediating the input and outputs of the political system. As MacNair (2003) asserts political communication in particular contains in it any verbal, written, or paralinguistic communication about politics. Media as a mediator helps political actors to communicate their message to the citizens (audience); citizens also transmit their message to the political leader’s via media.

In such modern times nations have a number of political parties that can play crucial role to build vibrant democracy where all citizenship of the country shall have room to utter their feelings and political ideologies. The presence of competing political parties in any country is indispensable. Without their open competition, democracy will never grow at a higher level. Countries that have competent political parties not high in magnitude some but competitive once are seen contributing their share to the democratization process progress. Most countries has created multiparty system to give equal level playing fields to all and that parties will sell themselves and came to power if they get elected. One of the central activities that plays fundamental role for parties to come to power is political campaign where parties sell their alternative programs, policies, system of government, reform areas and so on. Based on such and other similar political activities the contending political forces will either get support or punished by voters during elections. The message parties prepare and the way they deliver using various methods including mass communication is instrumental to win the elections.

Political campaigns have existed ever since the need has arisen for citizens to make informed political choice. The phenomenon of political campaigns is tightly tied to the emergence of lobby groups and political parties. American election campaign in the 19th Century created the first mass-base political parties and invented many of the techniques of mass campaigning (Boundless, 2015).

A political campaign is an organized effort which seeks to influence the decision making process within a specific group. In democracies, political campaigns often refer to electoral campaigns, where representatives are chosen or referendums are decided (Enli and Skogerbo, 2013). In any electoral politics, one of the most fundamental concerns of focus would be the political environment within which the mass media operate. An enlightened, prepared, and committed local media can turn on democratization process. Well-informed and responsible media in political campaigns can help citizens to choose or support their candidate. In democracies, the government is also supposed to serve its people and is expected to carry out what is the common good for citizens at the time of election campaigns staged by political parties. In the process, both the ruling party and the opposition are expected to be ready to effectively discharge their responsibilities for meaningfully competitive elections to take place. Huber and Arceneaux (2007) cited in Mosier (2013) have contended, political campaigns effectively mobilize voters and disseminate information that allows for voters to make more enlightened choices. Voters encounter candidate messages via print, television, radio, and online (Mosier, 2013).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Media plays a vital role in the election process and the building of democracy. Wilbur Schramm, 1964 (in Hyden and Leslie, 2002) stated that communication has great potential to make a difference in the development arena in general, and in the political sphere in particular. Mass communication is one of the inevitable allies of political parties in their endeavors to sell their ideologies to the public. Many political parties and leaders have won office or seats in the government with the help of effective media and communication strategies historically; such parties initially used oral communication like public speech, radio and textual communication via newspapers, pamphlets, posters, etc. and then came television and other state-of-the-art information and communication technologies (ICT) (Arulchelvan, 2014). They are changing

their communication vehicles from time to time on the basis of the availability, convenience and reach of the mass.

The role of election campaign broadcasting may be divided into three broad categories. The first encompasses political party and candidate access to the people through direct communications, sometimes referred to as political advertising. The second category includes the manner in which the broadcast media cover candidates, parties, and issues of importance to the election in news and special information programming. The third category concerns voter-education information regarding the voting process, voter participation and related civic issues.

Direct access communications may take the form of candidates or party representatives presenting their political programs to the voters. Such communications may be aired either as free public service programs or as advertisements. Needless to say that democracy cannot function without political parties. If well organized, they are expected to reflect the concerns of citizens, aggregate and mediate diverse interests, project a vision of a society and develop policy options accordingly. They are supposed to inspire and attract supporters to their cause, and broaden party membership which is very important for their claim to represent citizens. In practice, it is very likely that political parties may not live up to expectations regarding their services to citizens or provision of quality of leadership. They nevertheless continue to be entrusted with what is perhaps the most strategic responsibility of modern democracy – to allow them to prepare and select candidates for parliamentary and presidential elections and then to support them into positions of leadership and government. Communicating an effective message to the people you want to reach, directly or through the media, is an essential part of any campaign. Not every campaign will incorporate a media component, but getting your messages out through print, broadcast and the internet are among the best ways to reach a large audience, or even a targeted one.

For many people, an election is a crucial decision about the future. If the election goes well, the country can continue towards democracy and peace. But if the election campaign and the message go badly, it can undermine democracy and turn the country back towards conflict. In this modern age, the media is one of the most powerful influences on how an election runs inside the country, and how it is perceived from outside.

But for an election to be democrat, and to represent the true wishes of the people, it must meet democratic representation can be assured if informed citizens freely elect their leaders, and those leaders stand for reelection at some regular interval. And it works if the citizens, voting for leaders who best represent their views, and holding those leaders (or their political parties) accountable for their performance in office (Lau and Redlawsk, 2006).

According to McDonald and Budge (2005) the electoral process, if it functions properly in democratic terms, creates the ‘necessary correspondence’ required by normative democratic theory ‘between acts of governance and the equally weighted felt interests of citizens with respect to these acts. It does this in both a cognitive and empowerment sense. But in many ways the informative and communicative element comes first.

It was attempted to explore research works done in relation to election campaigns in the country. Most of the studies revised focused on the coverage given to election by the print media. With the exception of the work of Elizabeth (2010) entitled “Alternative Media Political Messages in Addis Ababa (2005-2010): Content Analysis”. She has mentioned that her research attempted to analyze the contents of alternative small media political messages that have been communicated in Addis Ababa since 2005, which address local political issues. Elisabeth found that the most discussed political topics in the alternative media sphere of Addis Ababa since 2005 were elections and governance, human rights, mainstream media and political parties. Her analysis showed the stories which addressed elections criticize the 2005 and 2010 elections for lack of rationality and picture them as not fair or free.

This study entitled, “The Practice of Message Development for Political Campaign: The 2010 Ethiopian Parliamentary Election in Focus” concentrated on the practice of message development for political campaign especially, for TV. Therefore, this makes the study unique and shows the presence of a huge gap that needs to be dealt with in this area.

Television is not an age- old tool for election message development and transmission in Ethiopia. Though it is a young means, its practice, however, needs to be assessed. Television message development for election campaign has certain principles that govern the whole practice. This research attempted to explore whether the election campaign messages broadcasted through TV

in Ethiopia were developed in line with the practices and theories that television campaigning presumes.

This research work is done on the 2010 parliamentary election as its context to examine the practice of message development during the election campaign. Elections were first held in Ethiopia under the provisions of the current constitution. In June 1994 election was taken place to elect only the membership of local governments, general elections had been held in 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2015.

Since I have been working at EBC on a closely related position to TV election campaigns I know some people who commented some of the election messages transmitted for not to be at the level of their expectations and I myself feel the presence of certain gaps within the messages that could influence their attractiveness at large. Campaign strategies should help political parties to identify their typical supporters while at the same time they should enable them to get the right message across to reinforce voters' support. These techniques are often combined into a formal strategy known as the campaign communications strategic plan. The plan takes account of a campaign's goal, message, target audience, and resources available. This research was therefore, aimed to examine the practice of election campaign message development for TV. It was an attempt to explore how the political parties identify issues deemed important for their targeted voters and also how they develop strategic campaign plan in relation to their media utilization.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to examine the practice of election campaign message development for Television in focus.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- Identify the political parties overall understanding on how to develop election messages
- Indicate how they develop strategic campaign plan in relation to their media utilization
- Explore how the political parties identify issues deemed important for their targeted voters

- Indicate the key contents of election campaign messages
- Identify the informative, motivational, and persuasive capacity of the election campaign messages based on modern campaign communications strategies theories and practices.

1.4 Research Questions

- What is the political parties' overall understanding on how to develop election messages?
- How the political parties identify issues deemed important for their targeted voters?
- Who are the primary targets assumed in the campaign messages?
- What are the major thematic areas of the campaign messages?
- What is the informative, motivational, and persuasive capacity of the election campaign messages like?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Primarily, this study could contribute to enhancing an academic understanding on campaign messaging practices of political parties in Ethiopia. The result of the study may play a supportive role for other researchers that are interested to conduct further investigation on the issue of effectiveness of election campaign message development for television. Since this area is not yet explored, this study should serve as a preliminary research for others and it will also help or provides some knowledge for political parties on how to formulate effective election campaign message. The study may, also be indirectly significant for the Ethiopian public if political parties are able to improve their message development practices based on findings and recommendations in this research.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study assessed election campaign messages of selected political parties run on Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) (formerly ETV) the official campaign period began nearly 3 months before Election Day, on February 9, 2010 and concluded on May 20, 2010 (two days before the Election Day). A parliamentary election took place on May 23, 2010. It also reflected on how these election campaign messages have been developed by taking into account all the election campaigns that aired on TV by the contending political parties.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

This study does not include election campaign messages developed in Somali, Oromiffa, Afar and Tigrigna languages. It has only focused on those developed in Amharic. In the interview (14) participants were designed to be included from different parties to have a broader perception of them however, due to various reasons only 7 people were included i.e. one from each of them. The transmitted election campaign materials accessed from ETV/EBC's archive for quantitative content analysis included audiovisual documentaries, and different texts sent by the parties as scripts to be broadcasted. Were the audiovisuals included it would be good for the completeness of the study, however due to bulk of information to be dealt and the specializations needed in evaluating audiovisuals they were not considered. Among the texts only those provided in paragraphs were considered for sake of convenience of measurement. Therefore, few which were provided entirely in an outline format were omitted. It was difficult to establish the repetition rate of messages. Some of the campaigning parties' were sending a cover letter alone requesting to rerun a message transmitted at a certain particular date without its attachment to EBC. When I asked for the attachment it could not be located and its whereabouts cannot be established. It would have been misleading if the rates of repetition of messages had been established while couples of messages were absent among what was provided to me for this investigation.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. Introduction

According to Israeal Scheffler (2009) of all the social systems humanity experienced, the democratic ideal alone needs a learned citizenry who reached at the analytical level of thinking as a prerequisite. Ethiopia as an old nation and a late adopter of the democratic system has around over 59% of its population under illiteracy (CSA, 2008). This shows the discrepancy between the actualities on the ground and the prerequisites for democracies in general. However, democracy is chosen by the people to be exercised and as it is mentioned earlier elections are being held in the country. Of course, as experts in social communication theory like Simon (2004) put it, the tipping point for any change to occur in any society requires a critical mass, a significant number of mass, in this case a significant number of well educated people in a country.

2.2. The Development of Election Campaign Messages

2.2.1. What is an Election Campaign?

An election campaign is a political message placed in the media by political parties to inform the masses about who is standing and what they are offering the citizenry in policy terms. The placement can be on the basis of payment or free allocation of air time depending on the system followed by the nation.

Advertising is the 'paid placement of organizational messages in the media' (Bolland, 1989 cited in McNair, 2003). For McNair political advertising therefore, in its strict sense, refers to the purchase and use of advertising space, paid for at commercial rates, in order to transmit political messages to a mass audience. The media used for this purpose may include cinema, billboards, the press, radio, and television. In the US, television ads are known as 'spots', and their cost in the world's richest media market largely accounts for the extraordinary expense of US political campaigning. In some countries, however, paid political advertising on television and radio is restricted by law. In Britain, while paid advertising can be bought in newspapers, cinemas and

billboards, parties are prohibited from buying broadcast airtime. Instead, they are allocated free airtime in which to transmit party political broadcasts (PPBs) and party election broadcasts (PEBs). The allocation of airtime is based on the number of candidates which a party stands at a general election (McNair, 2003).

While PPBs and PEBs (and their equivalents in other countries) are not ‘paid for’ advertisements in the American sense, they are produced using the same techniques and with the same budgets as commercial advertisers. PPBs are included alongside American ‘spots’ in the discussion of political advertising, both forms having in common the fact that the politicians (or the creative staff to whom they delegate the work) have complete artistic and editorial control over them (McNair, 2003) and (Fostr,2010).

According to Lange (1999) paid political advertising in the print media is generally allowed, contrary to paid advertising on the broadcast media. There may not be a substantive reason why this distinction between press and broadcasting should be made, yet made it is. He listed possible various reasons as: (1) the press has generally been less regulated than broadcast media; (2) television advertising may have been considered more influential, and (3) there may have been fear that the substantial financial resources needed for television advertising could create inequality of opportunity.

In Ethiopia, according to EBC (2002 E.C) report in Amharic, free airtime for party election broadcast is arranged by the government based on the considerations of the principles of equity and equality. The allocation of airtime is based on three criteria such as the number of seats which a party possesses in the house of assembly and regional assemblies, the number of candidates which a party stands at a general election, and devoting a segment of the allotted time distributing it equally to newly registered parties in maintaining the principle of equity.

2.2.2. Effects of TV on Election Campaigns

According Bagchi (2013) electoral contests, taking place under the umbrella of the rules and the procedures that are characteristic of the democracy in question, are marked by campaigns of different contestants. Campaigns are typically manifested as rallies, posters, speeches, televised debates, and other related activities engaged in by contestants and their supporters.

Researches carried over in relation to the election campaign coverage in Ethiopia depicted its different aspects. Some of them which deal with the message aspect with better detail are selected and reviewed as follow since they are more related to this study.

Yosef (2005) in his paper entitled “Press and Election in Ethiopia: An Analysis of the Extent and Bias of the Press on the Coverage of the 2005 Ethiopian Election” gathered primary data of 796 titles and content analyzed from seven selected Amharic newspapers published in the final four weeks of election campaign in the country; and finds of out wide, and often partisan, coverage of the May 2005 general election by these newspapers.

Hailemarkos (2006) conduct a survey on news bias in the Ethiopian press during the 2005 national election with the objective of detecting news bias and identifying its forms and both groups of the newspapers, private and state-owned, were found to be biased in terms of covering and allocating proportional space to the contending political parties.

Markos (2006) in his content analysis study of fairness and balance in election stories, in two newspapers’ (Addis Zemen and the Reporter) coverage of the May 2005 election in Ethiopia found that they were considerably unfair and imbalanced in the space, prominence and visibility given to candidates and political parties running for seat in the government.

Ashenafi (2012) examined how the Ethiopian print media framed the political parties of the country during the 2010 Parliamentary Election. He included in the study three newspapers namely *Addis Zemen*, *Reporter* and *Awramba Times* which were with a relatively high coverage of domestic politics and larger circulation, and two contending parties-the EPRDF and Medrek- which had seats in the parliament and surveyed newspapers published within the period of January 15 to May 15, 2010. Results of the study revealed that there was biased view in the newspapers which could lead to less informed and more polarized electorate.

All of the works to which I come across; examine the election coverage through the print media with exception of Elizabeth which looks into political messages transmitted using small media. All of them used their own methods emphasizing the aspects they believed needed their scrutiny in order to make the papers and the practice of journalism more effective and recommended for strengthening the story coverage of the papers in one way or the other.

This rudimentary review showed the study of contents of televised election campaigns is the first of its kind and it is believed that studying it would have its worth.

The phenomenon of television in political debates and advertisements is new even for the developed world. According to McNair (2003) TV political debates and advertisements has been employed in the early 1950s in the US and in the mid 1950 in Britain.

There are many researches done on the topic in these countries and all of them do not have questions on its effects but the controversies are on the magnitude of the political campaigns/advertisements effect on the electorate. Thousands of democratic elections were the subjects of election since 1940 (Semetko, 2001, cited in McNair, 2003). The latter contended that election campaign is the most studied form of communication.

For instance, McQuail (2010) stated that there were changes in political communication following the arrival of television and further changes as a result of newer communication media. Some research has been concerned with the specific effects of different media (McNair, 2003). He mentioned Scott Keeter (1987) stating that he found that of all voters, those who watched television were the most likely to be influenced by the candidate's 'image'. Keeter accepted, however, that this may not be 'a reaction to the particular stimuli of televised politics – although such a direct effect is plausible – as a more general increase in the importance of candidate factors resulting from various political changes in which television has played a role'.

It is argued that the effects of election campaigns on the voters' decision are minimal regardless of their aesthetic qualities. We find Cundy quoted in McNair (2003: 37).

Cundy discusses research suggesting that the effects of political advertising are in inverse proportion to the audience's knowledge of the party or candidate being advertised, and that 'once a candidate's image has been developed, new information is unlikely to generate any appreciable change' (Cundy (1986, p. 232).

As a general rule, the effects of political communications of whatever kind are determined not by the content of the message alone, or even primarily, but by the historical context in which they appear, and especially the political environment prevailing at any given time. The 'quality' of a message, the skill and sophistication of its construction, count for nothing if the audience is not

receptive. McNair (2003) cited Dick Morris, who was President Clinton's media adviser in the 1996 re-election campaign as saying that 'if the public won't buy your basic premise, it does not matter how much you spend or how well your ads are produced; they won't work'. The aforementioned are conceptual difficulties, arising from the complexity of the communication process itself. Successful communication of a message (political or otherwise) cannot be taken for granted, but must be worked for by the sender (McNair, 2003:32).

On the power of television broadcasts Foster (2010) said the theoretical advantage of party broadcasts in particular should not be underestimated. And he cited Butler and Kavanagh, 2006, to assert that party broadcasts crucially, remain 'the one occasion when the parties address voters with no external intervention'. Further advantages include: the capacity to help bring coherence to the communication strategy; the opportunity to deal with specific issues; and the unique marketing value they offer the minor parties, who rarely receive promotional opportunities of a comparable nature (Foster, 2010).

The merit of studying the contents of televised election campaign messages is to put them in a better shape, the following excerpt quoted justifies their effects and in the meanwhile the reasons these studies are taking place:

The precise nature of its effects – behavioral or attitudinal, short-, medium- or long-term, direct or indirect, social or psychological – may still elude social scientists and observers of the political scene, but political actors themselves – those who are striving to influence society in directions consistent with the furthering of their interests – acting on the assumption that there are effects sufficient to justify substantial expenditure on time and resources... One cannot deny that people throughout the world of politics consider the media important and behave accordingly. This importance is reflected in efforts by governments everywhere, in authoritarian as well as democratic regimes, to control the flow of information produced by the media lest it subvert the prevailing political system. Those who manage presidential campaigns uniformly in the US believe that interpretations placed upon campaign events are frequently more important than the events themselves. In other words, the political content is shaped primarily by the perceptual environment within which campaigns operate. It was also posed that the media are often perceived by various political actors to be critical towards public attitude and to policy. It is never know if an advertisement or opinion poll has had a real influence on individual or collective will, but it will be never know

either what would have happened if there had been no opinion poll or advertisement (McNair, 2003: 46).

Thus, the effects of televised election messages on the electorate are justified. This in turn shows studying them with the intention to contribute for their betterment is a worthy of endeavor.

2.2.3. Motivational, Persuasive, and Informative Capacity of Election Campaign Messages

A. Motivational Capacity of Election Campaign Messages

According to McQuail (2010) election campaigns attract widely varying degrees and kinds of motivated audience attention (and much inattention) and the effects they do have depend more on the dispositions and motives of voters than on the intentions of campaigners.

An election message should be emotionally appealing by making use of surfacing the widespread anxiety of the people: the best political commercials are not those which tell the viewer anything but those that surface his feelings and provide a context for him to express those feelings. McNair (2003) cited Diamond and Bates (1984) for saying commercials that attempt to tell the listener something are inherently not as effective as those that attach to something that is already in him'. McNair concluded that from this perspective, the political advertiser should not seek to win a presidential vote by packing a spot with rational information about policy rather, the fears, anxieties and deep-rooted desires of a culture should be uncovered and tapped into, and then associated with a particular candidate.

B. Persuasive Capacity of Election Campaign Messages

Simon (2004) cited Petty and Cacioppo (1986) to put general definition of persuasion by psychologists as any message-induced change in attitudes or beliefs. According to Simon, thus, in common usage, all campaign activities are persuasive. Finding out something new about a candidate, for instance, can be called persuasion if the new information changes vote intentions. (Intentions are what vote choice is called in the context of survey research, as in: Who do you intend to vote for in the upcoming election?) A narrower conception of persuasion distinguishes it from other effects, especially learning and priming. When used here, direct persuasion refers to the power of campaign messages to alter voters' ideal points. In the aggregate, direct persuasion

refers to the ability of the campaign to move the position of the median voter relative to those of the candidates.

The roles played by televised political messages have embraced the effects to inform, persuade or influence as mainstream advertisements do always. Campaigns unlike advertisements in the world of commerce do not only inform but also they play a persuasive role. On this McNair (2003) has said, as in the world of commerce, the advertisement does not merely inform individuals in society about the choices available to them as political consumers. They are also designed to persuade. And in persuasion, as well as information dissemination, the campaign has clear advantages for the politician.

C. Informative Capacity of Election Campaign Messages

Advertising has two functions in the process of exchange between a producer (of goods, services, or political programs) and the consumer. First, it informs (McNair, 2003). The political process is supposed to involve rational choices by voters, which must be based on information. Journalism represents one important source of such information, advertising another. So, just as early product advertisements were little more than simple messages about the availability of a brand, its price and function (use), so contemporary political advertising can be seen as an important means of informing citizens about who is standing and what they are offering the citizenry in policy terms. But advertising, also seeks to persuade. Pierre Martineau mentioned in McNair (2003) to observe, in writing of the role of advertising in American consumer capitalism in the 1950s, that in their competitive system, few products are able to maintain any technical superiority for long. They must be invested with overtones to individualize them; they must be endowed with richness of association and imagery; they must have many levels of meanings, if we expect them to be top sellers, if we hope that they will achieve the emotional attachment which shows up as brand loyalty.

According to Simon (2004) the effect of advertising seems to be limited to priming particular concerns and to informing voters as to where the candidates stand. Exposure does not seem to change the perception of where the candidates stand on particular issues, nor does it have a significant impact on the positions voters take for themselves. Over the course of a campaign, many ads on the same subject may move the median-voter's position; however, it seems safe to

conclude that only the effects of priming and learning in the form of opinionation need to be taken into account by a model of campaigns (Simon, 2004).

2.2.4. Campaign Strategies

There are many scripts prepared on how to strategizing campaigns and some of the principles from these literatures can be used to evaluate contents of election campaign materials. It is known that candidates must be prepared and have strategies to come out victoriously from their campaigns.

What are the characteristic of a winning campaign? The prevalent discourse regarding campaigns, specifically in media, is seemingly bereft of any robust explanation which would offer a candidate rudimentary signposts on how to go about planning his/her campaign (Bagchi, 2013).

It is good if we are reminded here it was concluded earlier studying the contents of televised campaigns transmitted for election would have its worth for future improvements to be achieved in this sphere. In order to accomplish this purpose it is mandatory to have a certain criteria for weighing and to appreciate or criticize such materials appropriately. Therefore, the following concepts which included under the topics of use of research in political advertising, elements of scripts for election campaign messages, key contents and the genre of election messages, election, candidacy and related practices, and the national electoral code of ethics that was signed by most of the contestant parties were adapted from different models, theories and developed for this purpose. Although the focus of this study is merely the content the theoretical aspects considered are deliberately made to be broader. It was used in comparing contents of the different televised national election campaign materials of 2010 as a conceptual frame work.

According to Foster (2010), the first task of the strategist is to devise the campaign ‘messages’ on which the rest of the strategy will be based. As he simply stated it, a communications strategy denotes how parties organize and mobilize their communication resources in support of their wider political goals. Foster on his discussion of the importance of communications strategy and why it was considered so important mentioned Kavanagh (1995) to state that ‘the reality can be stated simply: ‘no major British party would now dream of entering an election campaign without a communications strategy.’

On the same issue Bagchi (2013) said, contenders in order to attain their envisioned goals should constantly engage themselves in applying strategic scripts prepared by them. The strategic scripts need to be holistic, be subject to some sets of rules, and should have certain prerequisites. These prerequisites and rules would have to be explored and developed, to the extent possible, before the script can be actualized so that one understands what action choices may be adopted, the boundaries of the different possible action choices, the discourses that may be engaged in and abstained from, the associations that may be encouraged and the entities with whom the existing bridges have to be demolished or replaced, and so on.

2.2.5. Use of Research in Political Advertising

It seems the need to use research verified information is ever growing in the election campaign strategy. There are terms coined like ‘spine doctors’ to people who specialize in advising how to effectively carryout election campaigns and there are others like ‘opinion pollster’ and ‘opinion researches’ these are terms used to know the audiences desires and tendencies in polls. These people use research to understand the ground realities that worries the electorate and hot issues circulating around the campaign in order to equip contesting parties and candidates with a timely relevant targeted campaign messages and to enable them to respond accordingly to opponents.

In this regard Foster (2010) in his discussion of ‘opinion research and political marketing’ simply put it as, parties basing their communications on marketing never attempt to create demand for their product. Instead, they use opinion research to ascertain precisely what it is voters want and design their product accordingly. It follows that voters will always ‘buy’ what is on offer, since the latter will have been carefully structured around their stated preferences. He also mentioned a techniques deployed by spin doctors called ‘spinning’ news stories, according to Franklin (2004) cited by Foster, its approach has been summarized as the three ‘Rs’: rhetoric, repetition and rebuttal. The first demands absolute consistency in the delivery of key messages; the second, constant repetition; and the third, immediate and robust responses to hostile stories.

On this same issue Lange (1999) said, parties and candidates running for office consider television their favorite campaigning vehicle. They stage events specifically to get air time: photo opportunities, walk-about, press conferences and election rallies. Politicians increasingly use sound bites suitable for the evening news, and devote more and more time and resources to audience research, marketing techniques, presentation and television training (Lange, 1999).

According to Cushman (2012) in order to develop a strategy appropriate to a candidate, region and campaign cycle one need to spend some time assessing the landscape. It is as if someone were getting ready to climb a steep mountain. Before you start climbing, you would want to have a very good sense of your own resources, the resources he could pick up along the way, his weaknesses, the opportunities he would have to get extra leverage, and the threats that lie in his path. The campaign landscape will be assessed first by getting a really clear picture of the terrain—the race, the opposition, and the candidate. This includes an internal assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and a thorough interview with the candidate. It is also necessary to do outward looking research on the candidate, supporters and opposition. In assessing the landscape among other things Cushman (2012) recommends, self research, opposition research, and policy research to be conducted.

2.2.6. Elements of Scripts for Election Campaign Messages

2.2.6.1. Vision

Vision represents the dream world that is woven by the party policy discourse and actions, with distinct possibilities of betterment for the population. The more all encompassing those ideas are, the more powerful would the vision be (Bagchi, 2013, p.85-86). He said

The hallmark of a great campaign can truly be identified by the gleam brought on in the eyes of the voters about a world where they see themselves better off and where his or her vote becoming a ticket to that world. A powerful vision generates a wave that can sweep the opponents to the side-lines, often incapable of responding to the frenzy and enthusiasm created in the minds of the population arising due to the wave. The more all encompassing those ideas are the more powerful would the vision be. Such powerful visions do not emerge in a vacuum, and often requires a sensitive understanding of the ground level socio-political realities, buffeted by demonstrated extensive knowledge of means that can convince the population of the candidate's capability to lead them to realize the dream. Vision may be positively articulated, directed towards the better world, or may be directed towards the current regime creating an 'enemy', or towards imposition of a perceived unfair policy or a combination of all.

Accordingly, leaders have to play a role of raising people's aspirations for what they can become and to release their energies so they will try to get there. Leadership's commitment to stand behind the vision implies that all individuals associated with the campaign, and their activities,

words and associations are subordinated to the vision. Not doing so, would create impressions of superficiality and enacted drama for the sole purpose of gaining power in the minds of the voters.

The readiness with which parties accuse each other of not having vision, or caricaturing their vision in the debate between them is probably a reflection of the understanding of importance of vision among the political leaders.

The beginning of an aspirants' journey starts with the dissatisfaction with the status-quo and with the imagination of alternate possibility. Vision is a powerful tool in the hands of the strategist. Propagation of the vision requires the spread of message through multiple means, out of which the rallies by the parties have ended up as a significant activity.

It is also important to reinforce the vision of a political party and to get it repeated by others instead of the contestants themselves alone. For Bagchi (2013) while the spoken word has its power, the power needs to be used judiciously. Words spoken in haste and without thought often has the habit of turning back on the speaker. It is the power of an all-encompassing vision along with moral legitimacy and leadership equity that have the potential of turning upside down the commonplace rules of the game, typically based on funds, manpower resources and stage-managed rallies. He listed the different ways a challenger can confront the established regime as given below but they are not limited to them:

- Envisioning a new world – e.g., one can say that the stage was readied by less-than-perfect governance of the previous regime,
- Debunking old policies, beliefs and power structure – the case in which one can campaign for voice and respectability to the downtrodden, and
- Maintaining a constant presence with consistency of purpose, along with taking contentious issues of abuse of power.

2.2.6.2. Image

The image of candidates before public eye or the image to be portrayed by the candidate before the public has a paramount importance for the outcome to be generated out of the campaign. Clarity with respect to the desired image would, however, emerge from clarity of the vision, and extent to which the vision is internalized in the belief system of the candidates. The image

presented by the candidates to the population at large would be an outcome of a combined impact of the physical presence, the discourse one is part of, the actions one engages in, and the results one achieves. All these would go to build an image in the collective mind, which would be reside there, irrespective of the physical presence of the candidate.

This shows image consists of many aspects and it is necessary to see them starting from framing the term in this context: Image-the style a candidate sticks to portray himself as a personal identity also has invaluable significance since it has both clear and hidden meanings attached to it beyond the surface. For instance attaching individuals with a certain kind of costume has its own significance since it helps candidates to communicate certain messages with the population: being a hero, or down to earth, or being a person of the masses and so on.

Although the extent of its effect can be an issue the power of the dress will be there as communities continue defending for cultural identities. In relation to this Bagchi (2013) has to say what is forgotten with the infatuation with the physical image by the contestants is that the mental image of contestants in the collective mind takes birth much earlier than the physical sight of the contestants. The mental imagery that is built up is more powerful than the dress and the conduct in public during the pre-election period, where the collective mind is increasingly sensitive to the stage-managed acts.

Not only the dressing style followed by the contestant is considered for evaluation during campaigns but the knowledge and understanding he has as inferred from his discourse, his diction and the power of words used, his ability in solving issues thought to be burning, his ability to reinforce the vision, and his ability to interact with others matter a lot in the eyes of the public.

According to McNair (2003), when all the empirical evidence is taken into account (and there is not so much of it as one might expect, given the extent to which image-management has become a central feature of political campaigning) we can conclude that there do appear to be ways in which a political message can be constructed so as to produce a favorable response in the audience. The cut of a suit, a hairstyle, a camera angle or the color of a stage-set, are examples of formal aspects of the message which might, all other things being equal, positively influence audience perceptions of the communicator and his or her message. In other words, there are

‘good’ and ‘bad’ influences in shaping behavior. Such evidence is, however, conspicuously lacking.

According to Foster (2010), media management has had important consequences for the use (and abuse) of personal image. This was so as early as the 1920s when the advent of the newsreel first compelled politicians to consider how their physical appearances might play before cinema audiences. Image management, where media managers now aim to construct complete public personas for their clients in ways calculated to maximize their political appeal. They tell us that, whilst a politician’s beliefs and conduct are important, image- making is also shaped by a range of factors which have little obvious connection with politics. Indeed, this type of image management stems from the fact that few voters ever meet politicians. Consequently, media representations of them play the dominant role in shaping public perceptions. Television images are particularly important because human beings tend automatically to associate appearance with personality. We are all vulnerable to powerful cultural stereotypes (Foster, 2010).

In image management, not personal image alone matters but Political images also has a paramount significance. In a related topic (Foster, 2010) has discussed, the most interesting aspect of image management is its impact on the ways in which parties conduct their internal business. This is an umbrella term that covers policy- making, internal elections and candidate selection. For media managers, each of these is a political ‘minefield’, essentially because the media are naturally drawn to any signs of internal dissent and challenges to the leader’s authority. No party is immune and such is the near- obsession with projecting a collective image of unity under the party leadership that spin doctors invariably react with increasing hostility to the first sign of disloyalty, even when the latter results from accident rather than design.

Parry-Giles (2010 quoted in Mosier, 2013) has to say typically, ads aim to provide vague imagery that suggests character and leadership in the candidate, without any specifics related to policies. The candidate is asking voters to approve of his values and accept him as being worthy of ascending to office because “they possess the virtue and the character to succeed”.

2.2.6.3. Word Power

Words are very powerful instruments with unbelievable power for candidates both for their becoming profitable or losers in situations like campaigns. Skills in oration like diction, manner and style of podium management contribute a great deal to steal the attention of audiences which

will have a paramount significance for palatability of messages delivered. Candidates should emphasize the care they give in preparing their scripts and must be watchful in their speech deliveries since errors in such occasions are irreplaceable and so costly to maintain in some situations.

Words are the means through which the vision is conveyed to the world at large. The discourse one engages in is not only the initial germ for the vision, but also the factor that maintains the vision. Ability to communicate to the electorate on critical junctures about one's position and how the status-quo maintained by the existing regime is at fault would provide sustenance to the vision. That such discourse has to be reinforced by supporting initiatives goes without saying. Vision is not just the slogans, but also the support from the routine talk and ideas which reflect the leadership's commitment towards the espoused vision. The choice of words reflects one's philosophy, the one that one lives one's life with, as compared to the one espoused. The injury caused by words may be towards the opponent or in certain cases may boomerang on oneself (Bagchi, 2013: 91).

This shows the importance of words as vehicles of vision and the candidate should be careful not only on his formal speech deliveries but also he must do this in his everyday communications.

2.2.7. Key Contents and the Genre of Election Messages

According to Cushman (2012), a narrative is a five to seven-paragraph statement offering a complete, coherent rationale for the candidacy, which links the candidate's personal story to the hopes and concerns of voters. A message is a succinct statement about the candidate, an issue, the opponent, or any other aspect of the narrative that is persuasive to voters. Any single message you communicate should always fit within the broader narrative of the campaign. Across cultures, narrative is the most powerful form of communication. A well-told story communicates much more than facts: It connects what the narrator is saying to stories people already know, which gives the story meaning and makes it memorable. It creates an emotional reaction, which makes people care, and it teaches a moral, which speaks to people's values. An effective Engagement Campaign uses the power of narrative to motivate people. Narrative needs to be inspirational. The highest level on which you can appeal to people is the "inspirational" level—the level at which they see their own values and hopes reflected in the campaign. People are most motivated to vote for and support candidates they see as representing their own hopes and values,

those they see leading the community in the direction they themselves hope to go. Your campaign narrative will need to engage people at an inspirational level to motivate the public to turn out and get involved. Voters need to see themselves reflected in the people behind the campaign. Volunteers are also looking for a meaningful social experience – spending time with people who share their values and interests. You obviously need to draw a clear contrast with your opponent. But the comparative aspect of the campaign should go beyond positions on the issues. Your candidate’s biography, the message about your campaign – even the look and feel of your website, ads and events – should set you apart from others. People do need to know where the candidate stands on key issues – and the candidate’s positions can also tell people something about his or her values and beliefs. Beyond that, however, people don’t need to know every detail of the candidate’s policies and programs. Too many campaigns get bogged down in trying to interest voters and the media in policy. It’s definitely part of the picture – and can occasionally be critical when an event or crisis focuses public attention on the candidate’s response. Yet for motivating people, remember that this is the very bottom of the hierarchy. Also, the reality is that any candidate can only generate policy in the context of governing and negotiating with others. What is most important is the candidate’s core values, which will shape policy negotiation down the road.

This shows a campaign message should be short, truthful and credible, persuasive and important to voters, show the contrast between a candidate and his opponent, clear and speaking to the heart, and directed to the target audience. In addition to content the message’s quality is also an area of consideration that needs getting attention preparation campaign messages.

Legitimacy: the language and logic of democratic theory are applied to discuss the messages sent in political campaigns relying on broadly applicable notions, such as legitimacy and the proper conduct of public discourse (Simon, 2004). Page (1996) cited by (Simon, 2004) defined deliberation as a goal-oriented discursive process, involving reasoning and discussion over the merits of public policy. For the later the legitimacy of democratic government depends on public deliberation. Simon also cited Rawls (1997), for saying “when citizens deliberate they exchange views and debate their supporting reasons concerning public political questions” (Rawls 1997, p. 771 in Simon, 2004:11). Legitimate governance requires a series of deliberative majorities each having reached a consensus with respect to a particular decision and context. Keeping in mind the number of decisions government makes, not all are worthy of the full deliberative process.

However, the legitimacy of any single choice is ultimately tied, albeit indirectly, to the amount of considered public support it possesses. Most important, the quest for legitimacy is a dynamic ongoing process that depends on the quality of public discourse (Simon, 2004:18).

Rationality: Habermas (1984) cited in Simon, 2004 to say most theory relevant to discourse ethics subscribes to the belief that the force of the better argument will prevail, by definition, in rational discourses. There are some notable differences between campaign discourse and other kinds of civil discourse, which would-be reformers must take into account. Two points need to be addressed: candidates are not fully rational in Habermas's communicative sense and elections do not resemble the ideal speech situation or other meditational settings. Therefore, communicative rationality entails a principled responsiveness to arguments, a willingness to be criticized, assent to better arguments, and correct mistakes (Chambers, 1996). While candidates may often agree with their opponents, seldom are they expected to change a publicized position, especially in response to an opponent's argument when a candidate does change positions, he or she is usually penalized for flip-flopping or being indecisive – attributes long considered to be flaws in those who seek elective office. Thus, candidates are necessarily zealots; they rigorously advocate their positions and never recognize the superiority of other views. On the positive side, we do expect candidates, in their role as propagandists, to present viable reasons for taking the positions they publicize. In fact, as zealots, candidates could be performing a public service by providing information in the conduct of their debate.

The point is that the benefits of engaging in communicatively rational behavior tend not to accrue directly to the candidates. Candidates, as they stand, appear to have little incentive to be communicatively rational; rather, it is more reasonable to expect that the interactions between candidates aspire to this ideal. In addition, the candidate is a unique type of participant in the public sphere. In response to critics, discourse theorists have made the equitable distribution of communication resources and opportunities a necessary condition for rational discourse.

2.3. Election Candidacy and Related Practices

2.3.1. Selection of Individuals

The selection of candidates would be reflective of the party leaders' vision. The candidates should either contribute by their individual power projection, or moral authority, or, in the best

case scenario, both. Failure of the candidates to attract the voter is reflected in the election participation rates – when the debates/ campaigns converge to polemics with hardly any difference between different candidates, and the electorate finds the outcome inconsequential. The results in the following elections then should not be surprising, if other things remaining equal, the opposition has a set of cleaner candidates and is able to attract the faith, and therefore, the vote of the population. Pre-election rebellions and infightings create doubts about the party leadership power to rein his/her own members, also indicating that the political party is not in a position to present a united presence during the contest (Bagchi, 2013).

2.3.2. Pitfall of Golden Silence

Candidates should refrain only from making unnecessary or negative remarks especially mistakenly those that create their demise. But this does not mean they should keep silent for everything that they think it provokes groups or a portion of the community. As long as there are unfairness and irregularities sensed by the electorate failure of candidates to openly mention them may lead to loss of the confidence bestowed up on them.

As Bagchi (2013) speech is silver but silence is golden - this is how the famous saying goes. An analysis of the same would indicate the absurdity of observing this maxim in all situations consistently. Silence would lead an aspirant nowhere. Voicing one's thoughts would imply, in certain cases, engaging in plain talk and calling a spade a spade, and making enemies. Such a situation would be preferable as publicly making one's stand clear has the chance of winning. Every opportunity lost when issues are being discussed, or which can showcase his knowledge or opinion on certain subjects indicates a lack of intellect, or apathy or both in the candidate. Or it might be interpreted that the aspirant has a vision that comes to light only when the elections are due, and in normal circumstances the aspirant would be far less bothered.

2.3.3. Tackling Burning Issues

Another important point that matters to be considered in election campaigns is the focus the electorate have on issues considered burning in the eyes of the public and need to be tackled and for candidates showing courage and commitment in dealing with such issues has positive impacts on what they fetch from their campaigns while not doing so has its drawbacks. Issues

which are hot during the election period can be related to responses given by the incumbent government to violations of the wellbeing of citizens living abroad by elements considered enemies; resolutions given to disputes arise from matters of national interest; or the protection of sovereignty of one's country. According to Bagchi (2013) shying away from discussing burning issues would have the effect of pulling down one's campaign if the topics are brought up by the opposing candidates, and one is later forced to enter in the debate.

2.3.4. Interactions

The changing electoral landscape might necessitate an aspirant to go beyond the leader-follower polarity in formulating and implementing a strategy. Interactions allow a direct contact-and-communicate approach that allows the candidate to form relationship with the members of the electorate. Reasons for planning interaction with the people ought to be part of the strategy. Each of the possible strategic options has to be thought through in its entirety, regarding the implementation of an option and the likely countermoves by opponents and other contestants in the competition (Bagchi, 2013). He declared that any strategic option would have different components of which he discussed the essential ones in the following sections:

- Platform for relationship building,
- Identifying problems and issues first hand
- An opportunity to understand the collective mind, or,
- An opportunity to mould the collective mind.

Blending with the electorate with its diverse sections, some of which may praise, some irritate and some probe, will require leaders to cultivate a combination of patience, tact and poise. Failures to manage interactions would be broadcast by an increasingly keen media looking for the story-of-the-day. Interactions made by creating occasions like visits made to institutions by contestants allow a leader to articulate his/ her vision and can be showcases for the success using mundane examples.

According to Bagchi (2013) candidates' sensitivity in answering questions about one's shortcomings or past failures seems to be common among public figures. Candidates who plan for public interactions need to understand their ideology and vision which will allow them to answer tough questions asked by the audience. If a candidate is able to display wit and eloquence on such occasions can be looked at as an example of presence of mind and poise in tackling a difficult question. Such episodes either expose the ill-preparedness of the candidate in taking difficult questions. Or one may argue, exposes the organization's lack of foresight in appreciating the possibility of difficult questions and making preparations when such situations are actualized. When such episodes are engaged by the leader, then it would be difficult to distinguish such episodes failures, or intentional, i.e., as part of their strategy. Similar instances of failures occur during the rule of a political party when the leaders visit the people who get affected by calamities. Faced with anger of the disaster affected people who, after witnessing the failures of the administration, look forward to speedy resolution of their troubles, leaders have buckled under the intense pressure.

2.3.5. Mastery of Subjects

Nelson Mandela is quoted by Bagchi, (2013) for saying “a good leader can engage in a debate frankly and thoroughly, knowing that at the end he and the other side must be closer, and thus emerge stronger. You don't have that idea when you are arrogant, superficial, and uninformed.” For Bagchi knowledge is an outcome of mastery over subjects, wisdom one would call it ability to see through multiple layers and come to the heart of the matter, and the ability to think, I would term it, is to know when does one have knowledge, when does one have wisdom, and when it is better to ally with someone better than oneself, as one has neither knowledge nor wisdom. Contestants have to demonstrate an ability to get into the depths of subjects that are related to governance and public life, especially during interactions with the electorate. Demonstrating such mastery, or demonstrating that one has advisors who are experts, would be influential in adding to his/her moral authority. Therefore, at no time, can a candidate be caught in a situation where there are doubts expressed about his knowledge, wisdom or ability to think. The mastery of different subjects, either by the candidates or their strategic advisors allows them to respond quickly and powerfully to different challenges brought by either opponents, or the media. The ability to put a spin to the tale where one would use the accusations and hurl them back to the opponent would be essential part of communication strategy.

2.3.6. Conduct

While expounding one's vision, and exposing flaws in opponent's vision and/or achievements, as the case may be, an aspirant should build the themes that show him as a gallant in conduct. No matter the temptations, an aspirant should think very carefully of getting involved in discourse that can potentially paint him or her as base or undignified. Apart from that the rebuttals on more nobler grounds, like that of patriotism, cannot be easily counter-challenged, giving freedom to opponents to take the high moral ground. Evidently the conduct of rulers matter more than that of challengers as those in power and endowed with authority by people's verdict are held to stricter standards than those without (Bagchi, 2013).

2.3.7. Negative Campaigning

Going negative seems a trend followed by political campaigners because it is serving the immediate purpose of wining. However, it seems something not favored by some scholars and the public. McQuail (2010), discussing on communication strategy options can be taken by campaigning parties and candidates said they can attack an opponent on whatever ground of weakness presents itself, although negativity can demotivate voters generally.

In explaining what he calls 'negatives' in the context of US election campaigns, McNair, (2003:196) wrote:

Another controversial or 'attack' trend in US political advertising has been towards the 'negative' spot, i.e. advertisements which focus on the alleged weaknesses of an opponent rather than on the positive attributes of the candidate him or herself. In the context of American television, negative advertising has played a part in campaigning from the outset, taking on a more important role from the 1964 presidential election onwards. ... [The] perception of most observers has been that negatives have become more prevalent with the growing centrality of television in campaigning.... We might just as reasonably argue, however, not least on the evidence of two Clinton election victories, won against ferocious negative advertising from his opponents, that the effects of such messages are heavily qualified by other features of the political environment and by the voters' readiness to discount them if they do not resonate.

For Lange (1999), negative campaigning seems to be a spreading disease for which there is no legal medicine as yet. There are numerous well-documented examples of candidates discrediting their opponents, qualifying them as incompetent or unreliable (“they did not keep their promise”) or linking them with gloomy memories or fears about the future. It should be noted that, on the whole, negative campaigning is more prevalent in a two-party winner-takes-all system, than in a proportional representation system, where the opponent of today may be the government partner of tomorrow. In this sense, a proportional representation system has an alleviating effect. Although scholars, politicians and legislators have regularly explored the possibilities of curtailing negative electioneering, there does not seem to be an easy answer. No member state of the Council of Europe has adopted legislation specifically aimed at limiting the practice of, as spin-doctors call it, ‘going negative’. Negative campaigning is difficult to define and impalpable. Overly strict rules could breach freedom of speech and as such would be unconstitutional; lenient rules would be largely ineffective.

2.3.8. Electoral Code of Conduct

According to Lange (1999) the basic ‘freedoms’ apply to the press, the freedom of speech is contained in domestic constitutions and international covenants (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, European Convention on Human Rights or ECHR). The freedom of the press is usually contained in the domestic press law. Freedom of information allows information to be distributed, but also implies that citizens have the right to be informed. Some countries have a law on information, and on access to information. These rights are not unlimited. All countries have legislation to protect the rights of the individual and to prevent the abuse of freedom of speech. These restrictions typically include libel, invasion of privacy, racial discrimination, national security, etc. Relevant clauses are either contained in the press law, in special laws on libel and privacy, or ensured by other laws, e.g. criminal and civil codes. The international covenants also place restrictions on the freedom of speech. Lange (1999) quoted, as an instance, The ECHR that states the freedom of expression: “... may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for

preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.”

The following points which are relevant to be considered in comparing contents of televised campaign materials are taken from “Electoral Code of Conduct for Political Parties” in Ethiopia provided based on Proclamation No. 662/2009.

From the section ‘Principles’: ‘section 2’– ‘provisions of electoral code of conduct under its number 5 principles no.1 which state ‘The legitimacy of a government elected through a democratic multiparty election shall be founded on the following principles’ has embrace the following point under its sub division (a) ‘Ability of voters to make an informed decision based on the information they obtain during the electoral campaign regarding the policies of political parties and character of candidates.’ The same section under its number 8 ‘Campaign management’ in its sub point (a) and (b) includes the following points, ‘Every political party shall respect the right and freedom of all other parties to campaign, and to disseminate their political ideas and principles without fear’ and ‘Every political party shall conduct itself in a manner that respects the right of all other parties, and respect the rights of voters and other members of the community, respectively.

Section 2 – also, under its number 11 ‘content of language used in election campaign,’; at its no. 1 says every political party shall: a) ‘organize and conduct its election campaign in a manner that contributes toward a congenial and peaceful atmosphere during the campaign, polling, counting, and post-election period and b) ‘act with a sense of responsibility and dignity befitting its status’; at its no. 2 every speaker at political rallies shall refrain from: a) ‘making inflammatory, or defamatory statements’ ;b) threatening or inciting violence in any form against any person or groups; and at its no.3 a political party may not issue or distribute either officially or anonymously, pamphlets, newsletters or posters containing language or material that threatens or incites violence.

‘Every political party shall accept that intimidation, or harassment in any form is unacceptable’, is included at no 1 Section 2 -provisions of electoral code of conduct under its number 13.

2.4. Theoretical Framework

To develop the theoretical framework, the following theoretical assumptions presented by Seiter and Gass (2014) have been considered. This section will elaborate further on the use of theory in message design as a strategy to improve the potential impact of campaign messages. Campaign messages need to be memorable, of high quality, and communicated via a channel appropriate to the audience. While creative messages are essential for society's savvy information consumers, so is the theoretical contribution to message development, because theory provides campaigners with information regarding message structure, argument type, selection of appeals, repetition, as well as source and channel choices.

2.4.1. Social Judgment Theory

Social Judgment Theory is very useful when dealing with persuasion (Seiter and Gass, 2014). This theory suggests that understanding a person's attitude or point of view will help you to determine how they will feel and act in a circumstance where they are being persuaded. Understanding the person's attitude consists of knowing what their preference is on the subject, knowing what things they may accept, and having an idea of what things they would reject on the subject. Social Judgment helps us to better approach those we are trying to influence, convince or persuade. By remembering we must have an idea of their attitude and where they stand, along with what things they may accept and what things they may reject. Also it teaches us some factors that could make it easier or harder to persuade the target.

You may understand that a person either has a good or bad attitude toward something, but to what extent is that attitude? Are they going to be lenient with that attitude? Will the attitude be hard to change? Should we even try to change the attitude? There are different types of attitudes persuade may have.

People will always have their *Anchor Point* (the person's most preferred position). This is their preferred stance on the specific topic. The anchor point is where the person is most satisfied at. From the anchor point, their attitude can then be placed into three areas (Seiter and Gass, 2014). These authors identified three areas of attitude presented as follows:

Latitude of Acceptance - this is a range of ideas that a person finds acceptable.

Latitude of Non commitment - *this* is the range of ideas for which you have no opinion on. The ideas that you don't care for are in the latitude of non-commitment.

Latitude of Rejection - is the attitudes for which you are intolerable about. The ideas which you are against or you disagree with. Attitudes in this range are usually ones that you know the person won't put up with. They are also the hardest to change. There are different factors underneath a person's attitudes. One must look at how ego-involved the person is about the topic. When *ego-involved*, the issue is really important due to some personal significance, having a personal experience related to or in connection with the topic, if the topic is highly tied to one's values and standards. When a person is highly ego-involved, they have a more intense and passionate stance. Being ego-involved will make it harder to adjust how you already feel about the topic; the person will fight harder to defend their point of view. The latitude of rejection will be larger, and the latitude of acceptance will be sharper and more constrained.

We must be careful when making a persuasive approach. If our message falls in the latitude of acceptance, it will obviously be a good thing, if it falls in the latitude of rejection, it may not be such a great thing. The way the person responds may have two different effects. The *contrast effect* (also known as boomerang effect) happens when we hit the message into the latitude of rejection. Since it may be the opposite of where the person's anchor point is, the message will be perceived as even farther away from the latitude of acceptance than it really is. The person will overestimate how far this message is from their stance and in turn, they will disregard the message and will strongly reject it, even more so than they would have if we would have made the message fit into their latitude of non-commitment or latitude of acceptance. The *assimilation effect* is the opposite; if we make a message fall into the person's latitude of acceptance then they may perceive it as closer to their anchor point than it really is. The person minimizes how far their position is from our persuasive message. Therefore they are easier to persuade. If you are persuaded, then the further a message's position is away from your anchor point, the larger your attitude change will be. But remember that it is very unlikely that you will be persuaded out of your Latitude of Rejection. So, once a message enters and moves away from your anchor point, the amount of your attitude change decreases (Sherif and Nebergall, 1965).

In summary, Social Judgment deals with understanding attitudes, different factors that influence the attitudes, what the types of latitudes are, where you may want your message to land, and what effects your persuasive message may have (Seiter and Gass, 2004). This and those presented in the following sections will equip us with a theoretical background that will help us to analyze persuasive election campaign materials.

2.4.2. Persuasion and Social Influence Theories

Persuasion—the activity of creating, reinforcing, or modifying beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors—is a major underlying motivation for human communication and the fountain head of communication studies (Seiter and Gass, 2014). During Greece’s golden age from the 5th through 4th centuries B.C., a group of teachers known as the sophists instructed students in the art of persuasive speaking and penned academic essays examining a wide range of topics related to social influence. More significantly, Aristotle, arguably history’s greatest scholar of social influence, wrote his landmark treatise, *Rhetoric*, wherein he defined rhetoric as the faculty of discovering all the available means of persuasion. For him, such means included appeals based on logic, emotion, and the qualities of the persuader. Although a number of scholars followed the rhetorical tradition through Roman, Renaissance, and later eras, the advent of controlled laboratory experiments on persuasion did not occur until more recently *ibid*.

According to Seiter and Gass (2014), the Yale group focused primarily on examining four sets of factors, including those related to the source of the persuasive message, the message itself, the channel by which the message is transmitted, and the receiver of the message. By way of example, such research indicated that attitude change is more likely when sources are perceived as being credible (i.e., trustworthy experts), likeable, attractive, and similar to their audience. For Seiter and Gass (2014), research in this tradition also suggested that messages tend to be most persuasive when they (a) present two sides of an argument while refuting the opposing side, (b) present stronger arguments first or last and weaker arguments in the middle of the message, and (c) use fear appeals that are moderate in strength.

According to Seiter and Gass (2014) based on their investigations of these and other variables, Hovland’s group reported that, although the variables influence persuasion, their effects are not strong. Consequently, their model—known as the message-learning approach—suggests that persuasion occurs when the information in a message is learned or processed through a series of

steps, with each step less likely to occur. Specifically, the message must gain attention, be comprehended, be accepted, be retained, and be acted upon. Incentives are also important in this process. Specifically, persuasion is more likely when there are incentives for each stage of this process. For example, people pay more attention to trustworthy sources than to untrustworthy ones because they imagine the consequences of doing so will be more rewarding (Seiter and Gass, 2014).

CHAPTER THREE

3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The study employed quantitative content analysis and qualitative research methods. Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The use of these sources exhaustively helped for the purpose of validating the research.

3.2. Quantitative Content Analysis

Jensen (2002) writes that some generalities can be made “by measuring or counting certain textual features” and, precisely, quantitative content analysis is a suitable method often employed to do that. Citing Berelson (1952), Jensen defines content analysis as “a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (ibid: 118).

The quantitative content analysis was used to understand how the 2010 election messages were designed and used. On this method relevance for such a purpose Riffe, Lacy, and Fico, expressed (2005) ... content analysis can be utilized to infer from the message the context of its production or consumption. In the quantitative content analysis the units of analysis will be themes that are defined around variables which are significant to the subject under discussion. These subjects will be used as areas of focus for coding the messages. Also Riffe, Lacy, and Fico, (2005) in their discussion of them units quoted Berelson (1952) to define theme as “an assertion about a subject matter”, whereas they mention Holsti (1969) to view a them as “a single assertion about some subject. To compare the magnitude of information dedicated by the message producer on a certain defined theme either word count or number of paragraphs are used for the sake of comparison. Example, if a message is coded as an ‘image’ it refers to anything that describes the characteristic or conduct of a candidate or party in the 2010 election campaign message articles (sampling units) of each individual party election broadcasts transmitted and to single out the amount dedicated for this particular theme among the contending parties (samples) the number of words, sentences or paragraphs dedicated for ‘image’ will be counted according to convenience based on the nature of the selected theme in the materials. In this study those messages provided in a paragraph form were only considered to make the comparison based on a

uniform format and to simplify the task avoiding two messages scripts presented in the form of an outline.

The use of quantitative content analysis in this research can, therefore, be justified by the fact that the study primarily involves the examination of content of political communication, namely election campaign messages, in the context of the 2010 general elections in Ethiopia.

3.3. Qualitative Research

As a research tradition which involves the process of induction, as opposed to quantification and representativeness, qualitative research views the social world from the actor's perspectives. It is concerned more with the contextual understanding of meanings people make of a certain phenomenon or their own involvement in it (Bryman, 2004).

Among the data collecting techniques within the qualitative research paradigm, this study employs in-depth interview techniques which are “popular in giving a human face to research problems” (Zewge, 2007: 44). If used properly, in-depth interviews can be effective to make people talk about their personal feelings, opinions, and experiences as regards a given situation that we are studying (ibid).

3.4. Sources of Data

3.4.1. Secondary Sources of Data

Desk research was undertaken in order to review existing knowledge about political party's election campaign message development that inform activities and approaches in democratic contexts.

3.4.1.1. Samples selected from the 2010 Election Campaign Messages

The data for the documentation was collected from The Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) where the television messages for the 2010 election have been filed after transmission. According to data taken from EBC (2002 E.C) report in Amharic, there were 50 political parties participated in the 2010 free broadcast of party election campaign messages. Out of them, 23 parties alone run at a national level while the rest were competing for seats that are at regional assemblies. Also in this report, it is mentioned that, out of total time allotted to them, which is 37:22 minutes, they utilized 65.56%. In this election, 30% of the time was allocated to be shared

equally among all parties registered for election, 60% allocated to be divided among parties based on the possession of seats in national and regional houses of assemblies, and 10% left to be shared among parties based on the number of contestants they stand at the general election.

From those included in the report considering the length of time usage recorded on table, the language the messages are presented in and, assuming to include 30% of the samples 7 parties were selected purposively for quantitative content analysis. Therefore, Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), All Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP), Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum (MEDREK), Oromo National Congress (ONC), Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP), Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party (CUDP/Kinijit), and Ethiopian Justice and Democratic Forces Front (EJDFF) which have shown the highest rate of time use are taken in a decreasing order in the sequence they are listed above. These parties transmitted 22:21:36 (71.55%), 4:36:17 (73.68%), 4:11:37 (58.86%), 2:32:10 (92.22%), 2:14:48 (56.17%), 1:43:00 (76.30%), and 1:07:08 (86.07%) hours of election campaign message broadcasts from February, 9 to May 15, 2010 respectively using the same order they are listed. Simple random sampling technique drawing lot method is used to include 7 messages out of the 21 messages by EPRDF and 10 by Medrek in the 2010 election campaign and available sampling to include the rest of the samples in the study.

3.4.2. Primary Sources of Data

Primary data was collected through in-depth interviews with key informants such as political party leaders and candidates in 2010. There were 7 interview questions prepared targeting these informants. They were designed in such a way that they can help to understand the process of message development during the election campaign. From each of the 7 political parties (see their names in 3.4.1.1), 2 people were expected to participate although it was eventually one person from each party that the researcher was able to access. The data obtained through in-depth interviews with these respondents was utilized to supplement content analyzed data of election campaign messages transmitted on TV in the 2010 general elections in Ethiopia. These respondents included party leaders and those who were responsible in campaign management for their respective parties.

3.5. Sampling Techniques

The purposive, simple random, and available sampling techniques were used in the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to include the messages broadcasted in the 2010 election and the party members interviewed in this study. This was due to the amount of the messages produced by other 16 contending parties were insignificant to be considered for comparison. The interview was deliberately made to target those seven parties whose messages were included in the quantitative content analysis. Simple random sampling technique drawing lot method is used to include 7 messages out of the 21 messages aired by EPRDF and 10 by Medrek in the 2010 election campaign and available sampling to include the messages by the rest of the parties included in the study.

3.6. Data Analysis and Management

Data gathered through various techniques were analyzed thematically as well as using content analysis to answer the research questions. In order to identify themes, data obtained through in-depth interviews with political party leaders and members grouped based on their relationship with and relevance to the major research questions. Under each similar information field, thematic issues were identified and analyzed. Moreover, quantitative content analyses employed to interpret data obtained from documents such as archives of election campaign messages.

The thematic areas identified to be explored in the election campaign message articles were ‘level of persuasiveness’, ‘image Vs policy’, and ‘going negative Vs neutral’.

In addition to this the general literary quality of the articles were considered and they are generally reviewed for the presence of; serious violations laws and regulations, flawed and over exaggerated information, and overstretched promises that can be single out and taken to be used in the analysis to show any gap in any one of messages.

Coding Protocols

- Level of persuasiveness: segment of a message is coded as ‘ highly persuasive’ if it (a) presents two sides of an argument while refuting the opposing side, (b) presents stronger arguments first or last and weaker arguments in the middle of the message, and (c) uses fear appeals that are moderate in strength (Seiter and Gass, 2014). An election message

should be emotionally appealing by making use of surfacing the widespread anxiety of the people: - the best political commercials are not those which tell the viewer anything but those that surface his feelings and provide a context for him to express those feelings. McNair (2003) i.e. a spot packed with the fears, anxieties and deep-rooted desires of a culture uncovered and tapped into, and then associated with a particular candidate.

In addition to the researcher, two coders (the two coders were experienced persons qualified at a post graduate level, one is a journalist specialized in journalism and the other is public relation officer specialized in political science) were trained and made to rehearse and internalize this concept and practice it on a different but similar election material before they were exposed to the individual pieces of election messages transmitted in 2010 by the seven parties. The contents' persuasiveness was divided into three categories of less persuasive (1), persuasive (2) and highly persuasive (3). This is so because it is believed every campaign message is persuasive in nature and those messages which meet most of the above mentioned criteria can be easily identified by coders. In the table columns the parties were filled and along the rows the messages were listed in the order they were transmitted on TV. Then, inside each cell the coders filled their rating for each of the messages as 1, 2, or 3 based on their judgments. After this, the average of the three coders' ratings was considered for the final analysis. This as such increases the reliability and validity by minimizing personal biases in rating level of persuasiveness of each message.

- Amount of themes devoted to image of candidate Vs policy: from each pieces of election campaign messages transmitted, the number of paragraphs dedicated for the theme of candidate's 'image' or 'policy' were computed and tabulated to see the magnitude of coverage between the two variables.
 - Segment of a message is coded as an 'image' if it presents the style a candidate sticks to portray himself as a personal identity, imagery that suggests character and leadership in the candidate, or image management efforts related to the ways in which parties conduct their internal business that covers policy- making, internal elections and candidate selection projecting a collective image of unity under the party leadership.

- Segment of a message is coded as a ‘policy’ if it presents the policy options of the party in any of the policy dimensions they think they differ from the others and which give them priority in the eye of the electorate. This may be raised in relation to port, good governance, local administration, foreign policy, infrastructure (housing, transportation, water electricity...), cost of living, etc.
- Strength of negativity: to tell the strength of negativity in the election campaign messages transmitted, they were reviewed for themes that reflect on the negatives of the opponents - ‘going negative’- and themes that do not fall under this category - ‘neutral’- paragraphs computed and tabulated to see the magnitude of coverage between the two variables.
- Segment of a message is coded as ‘going negative’ if it presents election campaign messages either focusing on the alleged weaknesses of an opponent rather or discrediting their opponents, qualifying them as incompetent or unreliable (“they did not keep their promise”) or linking them with gloomy memories or fears about the future.
 - Segment of a message is coded as ‘neutral’ if it presents election campaign messages on the positive attributes of the candidate himself or herself or the party.

Finally, the information refined in the quantitative content analysis was used along with the information collected and analyzed using the qualitative technique for presentation, discussion and analysis of data in the study.

Note: For inter-coder reliability- see- Appendix 3

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this section the information collected through the interview guide and data reduced into a usable form through the quantitative content analysis technique is presented as follows.

4.1.1. The Processes of Campaign Message Development in Political Parties

According to information from the interview most of the parties are planning their election campaigns either using departments like mobilization and propaganda; advertisement, press, and information directorate; election tasks steering committee; or using directly the leadership. The mainstream way looks to plan election campaign activities within the budget boundary of the fund released by the election board. These activities include tasks like script preparation around party policy and program, the editing of these texts and carrying out mobilization assignments. Only the representatives of two parties told that there is a continuous organized campaign throughout the year without waiting for the commencement of an upcoming election formal campaigning season.

Findings also revealed that most of the party leaders and public relation officers who were interviewed said they depend on internal expertise in planning and implementing their election campaigns. Two representatives out of the seven parties questioned explained that they used both experts in the party and commissioning other external professionals. They explained that financial constraints deter them from commissioning advertisers in the market to consult them and prepare their party's documentaries.

Although political parties claimed to make use of campaign communication strategies during the 2010 elections, their reflection on what these strategies involved did not suggest the use of any systematically developed strategy as such. The most prevalent trend was using ad hoc committees that are organized to work out quick message development as elections approached. It seems they lack organized and institutionalized approaches that utilize modern theories and techniques with the help of professionals.

There were two approaches for people who meet to decide on the contents of election messages. Either they were prepared by the leadership and given to a committee to be implemented or they

were prepared by the committee and appraised by the leadership for implementation. It is the leadership taking the responsibility for this in the majority of the parties.

The absence of a clearly visible campaign communications strategy opposes the practice adhered by modern parties in developed democracies and with the concepts reflected on it in political communication and campaign theories. This can be compared with what was presented in the literature review section which says, a communications strategy denotes how parties organize and mobilize their communication resources in support of their wider political goals and the first task of the strategist is to devise the campaign ‘messages’ on which the rest of the strategy will be based (Foster, 2010). Foster on his discussion of the importance of communications strategy and why it was considered so important in the modern world said, the reality is that no major party would now dream of entering an election campaign without a communications strategy.

According to the interview respondents, the challenges they faced in preparing communication strategies emanated from three things. The first and the direct problem related to lack of resources, especially of financial nature totally to the oppositions. The second problem mentioned was, overload of tasks especially, for those who were responsible for message and strategy development as election activities are time bound and they had other responsibilities as well. The third problem had to do with the difficulty to maintain balance between the amount of message to be covered in a spot and the allotted broadcasting space, which blamed for often led them to failure to communicate sufficient messages within the time set for the political parties to air their views. However, the EBC report mentioned in chapter 3 of this text showed that all the contending parties of 2010 do not fully use the time allotted for them for PEB. These information calls for another alternative perspective to look in to this matter i.e. it seems by default that the 15 minutes election broadcast allocated by ETV/EBC looks partly contributing for development of longer messages that are stuffed with policy and party programs. This fact can be considered for contributing for the boringness of the messages but this should be further investigated.

4.1.2. Key Messages, Decisions, and Target Audiences of the Election Campaign Messages

Most of the respondents for this research stated that their parties mainly focused on policy alternatives particularly focusing on those that made them different from the incumbent and following the same trend the ruling party used its policies for showing its righteousness and success. Of course, these issues resonated in most of the concerns raised by the parties through election message scripts for TV campaigns. These include issues related to liberal democracy vis-à-vis revolutionary democracy, ethnic federalism, agricultural and land policy, foreign policy, and prevailing economic and social conditions of urban and rural societies especially, those of youth and women. Information sought from these people helped to establish the fact that most of the time party leaders mainly decided on content of election messages although few of them said committees have roles to play in passing decision made on them.

Of all the party officials interviewed, one person alone reported that his party carried out an informal research in preparing its campaign messages using the party's hierarchy to collect information that will be assessed at the center. It seems the use of research in planning and implementing campaign communication strategies seems very rare among the political parties in the country. This practice contravenes with the practice elsewhere in rich democracies. We can see what Foster (2010) said in this regard in his discussion of 'opinion research and political marketing' simply put it as, parties basing their communications on marketing never attempt to create demand for their product. Instead, they use opinion research to ascertain precisely what it is voters want and design their product accordingly. It follows that voters will always 'buy' what is on offer, since the latter will have been carefully structured around their stated preferences.

At the same time it was clear that the masses were the main targets envisaged to be reached through the campaign messages for most of the parties questioned. Their claim is that it is better to have a message that addresses the concerns of the cross section of the society in a balanced manner as a whole rather than targeting messages focusing in line with the interests of a particular group.

Most of the people in the interview agreed that their success in reaching the intended target in 2010 was not as such satisfactory. For majority of the parties the instrument used to measure effectiveness in terms of coverage and impact was amount of vote secured during the ballot day.

Few of them mentioned they use additional indicators like ordinary people's words of encouragements and nods given to them from ruling and other opposition parties. However, one of them mentioned that the survival of the party by itself is their measure of success. All these information synthesized has implication on the perceptions and level of awareness of the political actors on the issues raised. For example failure to use formal evaluation to measure the parties' election activities can be considered as contributing practice for poor message quality across transmitted campaign messages. This showed that a sound concern is not given for effectiveness of TV election messages by contending parties.

4.2. Preferred Styles or Genres of Election Messages

The most utilized way of presenting election messages was found to be what we call narration or prose while documentary was found to be the most preferred and the next widely used form of presenting election messages. They mentioned documentaries proved to them to be the most effective although it was difficult to have as many of them as possible because they are costly. Others like promotions and visuals are mentioned by some of the interviewees to be utilized alternatively. Although the narrative form is used by most of the political parties to present their messages' scripts its application is in perfect disagreement with what is designated for a narrative to look like in the political communications literature. Subsequently, observing from the point of narratives election campaign messages transmitted in the 2010 helped us a lot to understand and take our judgments whether they were produced and utilized professionally and appropriately.

4.2.1. Length of Paragraphs in Election Campaign Messages

Table1. Number of Paragraphs in Messages Transmitted for 2010 Campaign

Message	Party							Remark
	EPRDF	AEUP	EFDUF/ MEDREK	ONC	EDP	CUDP/ Kinijit	EJDFFF	
1	23	37	30	17	17	25	16	
2	18	40	25	16	23	28	22	
3	18	23	20	17	18	22	15	
4	18	18	22	16	14	25	20	
5	22	19	15		18			
6	21	25	10		17			
7	20		19					
ANP	20	27	20.1	16.5	17.8	25	18.25	TANP=20.55

Table one presents the total number of paragraphs in the election campaign messages aired on TV in 2010 by the seven political parties, namely the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), the All Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP), the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum (EFDUF/MEDREK), the Oromo National Congress (ONC), the Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP), the Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party (CUDP/Kinijit), and the Ethiopian Justice and Democratic Forces Front (EJDFFF).

As Table 1 reveals, the average number of paragraphs in messages transmitted for 2010 campaign was approximately 20. Although one can argue this was partly due to the length of time allotted for election broadcasts, which is 15 minutes on average, the presence of individual pieces of messages which double this number shows the concern given to this aspect is minimal. Moreover, when we compare this with the consensual length of the narrative by scholars like Cushman (2012), which says a narrative is a five to seven-paragraph message or succinct statement about the candidate, an issue, the opponent, or any other aspect of the narrative that is persuasive to voters, shows the gap is very wide and needs to get the attention of those who are engaged in the preparation of election messages and political communications.

In the development of a very good narrative that is persuasive enough and attractive for an incumbent or a political party maintaining the balance between the contents within the message by catering among elements in it is an essential component that must get the focus of election message producers.

4.2.2. Image, Policy, and ‘Negatives’ in Campaign Messages

4.2.2.1. The Ratio of Image to Policy in Election Campaign Messages

Table2. Rating of Messages for Image versus Policy

Party								
Message	EPRDF Image vs. policy	AEUP Image vs. policy	EFDUF/ MEDREK Image vs. policy	ONC Image vs. policy	EDP Image vs. policy	CUDP/ Kinijit Image vs. policy	EJDFE Image vs. policy	Rem.
1	10 vs. 13	1 vs. 36	0 vs. 30	1 vs. 16	11 vs. 6	4 vs. 21	1 vs. 15	
2	6 vs. 12	0 vs. 40	1 vs. 24	2 vs. 14	0 vs. 23	0 vs. 28	5 vs. 17	
3	4 vs. 14	7 vs.16	5 vs. 15	1 vs. 16	0 vs. 18	10 vs. 12	1 vs.14	
4	6 vs. 12	10 vs. 8	4 vs. 18	2 vs.14	3 vs. 11	4 vs. 21	8 vs. 12	
5	6 vs. 16	9 vs. 10	0 vs. 15		2 vs. 16			
6	7 vs.14	1 vs. 24	5 vs. 5		11 vs. 6			
7	3 vs.17		0 vs. 19					
Average of Image vs. policy	6 vs.14	4.6 vs. 22.3	2.1 vs.18	1.5 vs. 15	4.5 vs. 13.3	4.5 vs. 20.5	3.7 vs. 14.5	
Total Average of Image vs. policy								3.8 vs. 16.8

EPRDF= Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, AEUP =All Ethiopia Unity Party, EFDUF/MEDREK= Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum), ONC = Oromo National

Congress, EDP= Ethiopian Democratic Party, CUDP/Kinijit = Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party, and EJDFFF Ethiopian Justice and Democratic Forces Front.

The ratio of image to policy as we can observe from table 2 above is approximately 4 into 17. As it can be clearly seen in this same table, 7 out of the 38 paragraphs presented did not have any single paragraph dedicated to image. Almost all of the interviewees said that they did not cater to and maintain the proportion among image of candidate, party policy, and the negatives of their opponents while preparing their election rhetoric. The trend adhered by most of the parties inclines to stick to policy issues and stressing on the negatives of opponents. Some of them attributed these problem to lack of figures who are voluntary to be actively engaged in candidacy among most celebrities or notable individuals in the country due to widespread abhorrence to politics, absence of heritages of achievements that are impressive about any of the opposition parties since they never exercised power (limiting factor to use party images), and fear of raging unnecessary self-embattlements among the opposition with fear of consuming the little time allotted to them for broadcasting.

This trend depicts a practice that employs a reversed approach in the preparation of election campaign narratives i.e. election campaign messages should be made in such a way they make use of the image of the candidate or the party and other relevant issues instead of to be staffed with policy alternative alone. This goes with what McNair (2003) said i.e. the political advertiser should not seek to win a presidential vote by packing a spot with rational information about policy rather, the fears, anxieties and deep-rooted desires of a culture should be uncovered and tapped into, and then associated with a particular candidate. In addition to this it is relevant to mention here what Cushman (2012), said in relation to the election message narrative that is for motivating people, remember that using policy is the very bottom of the hierarchy, the reality is that any candidate can only generate policy in the context of governing and negotiating with others. What are most important are the candidate's core values, which will shape policy negotiation down the road. All of these features that attributed to the messages used in the 2010 election for TV convincingly shade light on their limitations and these facts should not be left to prevail for the future.

For sure the problem mentioned, using the little time allotted unnecessarily due to the ensuing self-embattlement among oppositions, may sound better convincing and is in congruence with

Simon's (2004) conclusion which says, discourse theorists have made the equitable distribution of communication resources and opportunities a necessary condition for rational discourse. Of course, these may call for flexible use of the time allocated for a spot and to have a greater proportion of space for the parties.

4.2.2.2. Negatives in Election Campaign Messages

Table3. Rating of Messages for Negative versus Neutral

Message	Party								Rem.
	EPRDF Neg. vs. Neut.	AEUP Neg. vs. Neut.	EFDUF/ MEDREK Neg. vs. Neut.	ONC Neg. vs. Neut.	EDP Neg. vs. Neut.	CUDP/ Kinijit Neg. vs. Neut.	EJDFF Neg. vs. Neut.		
1	6 vs. 17	28 vs. 9	19 vs. 11	9 vs. 8	2 vs. 15	5 vs. 20	9 vs. 7		
2	5 vs. 13	20 vs. 20	18 vs. 7	6 vs. 10	1 vs. 22	28 vs. 0	2 vs. 20		
3	4 vs. 14	14 vs. 9	6 vs. 14	8 vs. 8	15 vs. 3	14 vs. 8	7 vs.8		
4	5 vs. 13	6 vs. 12	6 vs. 16	9 vs. 7	4 vs. 10	5 vs. 20	2 vs.18		
5	7 vs. 15	3 vs. 16	8 vs. 7		12 vs. 6				
6	8 vs. 13	11vs. 14	4 vs. 6		2 vs. 15				
7	3 vs. 17		14 vs. 5						
Average of Neg. vs. Neut.	5.4 vs. 14.6	13.7 vs. 13.1	10.7 vs. 9.4	8 vs. 8.2	6 vs. 11.8	13 vs. 12	5 vs. 13.2		
Total Average of Negative vs. Neutral								8.8 vs. 11.8	

EPRDF= Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, AEUP =All Ethiopia Unity Party, EFDUF/MEDREK= Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum), ONC = Oromo National Congress, EDP= Ethiopian Democratic Party, CUDP/Kinijit = Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party, and EJDFF Ethiopian Justice and Democratic Forces Front.

Above from table 3, the proportion of paragraphs which are presented with a negative tone in the election messages to those presented in a neutral one was found to be approximately 9 to 12. The practice of describing opponents using harsh words in some of the messages looks persistent by

both the incumbent and the oppositions and there is at times an intense negativity which could have a more polarizing effect but this proportion seems not over exaggerated since the practice elsewhere is witnessing the same development. However, this trend is not something that is to be encouraged since it has the effect of de-motivate the electorate and move away voters in polling day. Therefore, it needs to be curbed not to undermine the development of a healthy democratic culture in the country. In relation to this Lange (1999) said negative campaigning seems to be a spreading disease for which there is no legal medicine as yet. He argues that although scholars, politicians and legislators have regularly explored the possibilities of curtailing negative electioneering, there does not seem to be an easy answer. Negative campaigning is difficult to define and impalpable. Overly strict rules could breach freedom of speech and as such would be unconstitutional; lenient rules would be largely ineffective *ibid*. In relation to this it is appropriate to raise and discuss the political parties' reaction to the election code of ethics.

4.2.2.3. Compliance with Election Code of Ethics

Based on interview information the major mechanisms adopted by the parties to be in line with the election code of ethics provided for in the country specified as; the creation of awareness to members and supporters about the election code of ethics through trainings, designating committees to steer the assignment of validation of campaign messages by checking their conformity with the code and other laws and norms in the country, and the penalization of members who violate the codes based on party rules and regulations.

All though some of them admitted that at times they feel that they have breached these laws through election messages they have reported that they hardly face any adversity in relation to those incidents. Some of them did not refrain from telling they were alarmed by the thoughts of being indicted for what they speak during the contest. Some of the party people interviewed are of the opinion they find these codes limiting freedom of expression in one or another way. Few of them have suggested that the code needs to be revitalized again to meet requirements for democratic rights and freedom of expression and for creating a fair ground for all the contenders. The majority of them agreed that even though some elements of the code have limitations they are not impeding utterly rather problems arise due to miss interpretation by some motivated low enforcing agents.

4.3. General Observations on the 2010 election Messages

General observations of the 2010 election narratives showed a uniform negligence in giving appropriate attention to literary qualities of a text. Most of the texts were not well edited let alone to be prepared by watching out the very basic elements like unity, coherence, diction etc. For example, the coders have spotted up to 6 typographic errors per page in most of those messages archived after transmission. This shows some of the parties were not giving the relevant value to their election communication strategy which is one of the key focus areas in their campaign.

Similarly, one person alone reported that his party used to present its mission and visions in the election messages and the researcher himself tried to trace the inclusion of this issue in all the 2010 transmitted election campaign messages to which he was exposed and could not find any more except the one he come across first.

As vision is at the core of a party's motive for a change in the society and it is the source of the election messages, it must be utilized systematically by the political parties. Bagchi (2013) has said vision is a powerful tool in the hands of the strategist. The more all-encompassing ideas incorporated in a vision are the more powerful would the vision be. Such powerful visions do not emerge in a vacuum, and often requires a sensitive understanding of the ground level socio-political realities, buffeted by demonstrated extensive knowledge of means that can convince the population of the candidate's capability to lead them to realize the dream.

Although, the parties were complaining that the time allotted to them by the broadcasting authority was inadequate, the authority's report shows that each individual party utilized under the allotted time during the 2010 party election broadcast session. Unlike they are cognizant of the time shortage, their advertisements were noticed to be strayed away being stuffed with trivial and obsolete issues. Also there were messages transmitted that could discredit the parties by critical viewers. For example a certain party promised to create one million jobs every year if elected and hold office. Such promises may raise credibility questions and opposes what is recommended to be exercised by candidates in their campaigns. Bagchi, (2013) said that contestants have to demonstrate an ability to get into the depths of subjects that are related to governance and public life, especially during interactions with the electorate. Demonstrating such mastery, or demonstrating that one has advisors who are experts, would be influential in

adding to his/her moral authority. Therefore, at no time, can a candidate be caught in a situation where there are doubts expressed about his knowledge, wisdom or ability to think.

Let alone to be negligent about the sentences and the whole messages party communicators should watch out the words they are using and have to pay a great care for their messages deep meanings. Their word use should be selective because words are powerful instruments in the message development process. According to Bagchi (2013) words are the means through which the vision is conveyed to the world at large. The discourse one engages in is not only the initial germ for the vision, but also the factor that maintains the vision. The choice of words reflects one's philosophy, the one that one lives one's life with, as compared to the one espoused. The injury caused by words may be towards the opponent or in certain cases may boomerang on oneself.

All in all these are, indicative of gaps on the parts of political parties in fielding personnel with the right skills and knowledge of political communication, campaign strategic planning and advertisement techniques, etc.

4.4. Personality of the Message Presenter

All of the interviewee agreed that the person/persons they used to present election messages on TV election broadcasts mattered a lot. The explanation behind this says that the presenter is the one who precedes the messages and personality traits associated to him may influence positively or negatively the viewers from the very beginning in deciding to attend the program being transmitted or to switch to other channels. Moreover, they added that the speech delivery qualities and skills of the person designated to present the messages must be considered. They emphasized issues like natural qualities in voice, being having charisma, having appropriate training, and having a good image in the society.

In the following section the 2010 election messages persuasiveness was presented as rated by coders who were familiarized to purpose of the study and the ideas and issues raised and discussed in the literature review in the effort to understand the way these messages were developed and utilized.

4.5. Persuasiveness of Messages Transmitted

Table4. Rating of Messages for Persuasiveness According to the Requirements Given

Mess age	Party							Rem.
	EPRDF	AEUP	EFDUF/ MEDRE K	ONC	EDP	CUDP/ Kinijit	EJDFF	
1	2(66.6%)	2(66.6%)	2(66.6%)	2(66.6%)	2(66.6%)	1(33.3%)	2(66.6%)	
2	2(66.6%)	1(33.3%)	2(66.6%)	2(66.6%)	1(33.3%)	2(66.6%)	2(66.6%)	
3	3(100%)	2(66.6%)	1(33.3%)	2(66.6%)	1(33.3%)	1(33.3%)	2(66.6%)	
4	2(66.6%)	2(66.6%)	1(33.3%)	2(66.6%)	2(66.6%)	1(33.3%)	1(33.3%)	
5	3(100%)	2(66.6%)	2(66.6%)		2(66.6%)			
6	2(66.6%)	1(33.3%)	3(100%)		3(100%)			
7	1(33.3%)		2(66.6%)					
Aver age	2.14 (70.6%)	1.66 (55.3%)	1.85 (61.7%)	2 (66.6%)	1.83 (60.3%)	1.25 (41.7%)	1.75 (58.3%)	

EPRDF= Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, AEUP =All Ethiopia Unity Party, EFDUF/MEDREK= Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum), ONC = Oromo National Congress, EDP= Ethiopian Democratic Party, CUDP/Kinijit = Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party, and EJDFF Ethiopian Justice and Democratic Forces Front.

As shown above in table 4, EPDRF's average rating of 2.14 (70%) level of persuasiveness confirms the party was elected partly because of its election messages persuasiveness.

The table also shown that the average ratings of messages persuasiveness according to the requirements given fall in the range between 1.25 and 2.14 (41.7% and 70.6%). This shows the 2010 election messages' power to persuade the electorate remains at the 'persuasive' level. The 'Persuasive level' is the second category in this study's classification. The other two are 'less persuasive' and 'highly persuasive'. We can see from table 4, EPRDF's, MEDREK's and EDP's messages were the only instances to be rated as 'highly persuasive' out of the total of 38 transmitted messages included in this study. In addition to this, when we observe the information

in the table 1 and 4 above and compare them roughly, when the number of paragraphs grow above the average (20.22) their persuasiveness rate tend to be lower. (Here we should make clear that the coders were compelled to tolerate the criteria set for the length of a normal narrative because we have worked on very long election messages). This situation coupled with the excessively policy bogged nature of the messages transmitted we could fairly judge the 2010 election messages to be less motivating by nature. This shows the perceived gap that existed among the messages and their real power to inform, persuade, and motivate the electorate is huge. It is important to mention what Cushman (2012) said about a narrative of an election message here i.e. that people don't need to know every detail of the candidate's policies and programs. Too many campaigns get bogged down in trying to interest voters and the media in policy. It's definitely part of the picture – and can occasionally be critical when an event or crisis focuses public attention on the candidate's response. Yet for motivating people, remember that this (policy) is the very bottom of the hierarchy.

Moreover, in most of the 2010 election messages content analyzed the arguments arrangement did not resonate with what it is presumed in the literature i.e. they tend to present only one side of the argument instead of presenting the two sides of it and refuting what they are opposing. In addition, there were no traceable orderings of arguments according to importance or strength in these messages while the literature recommends presenting stronger arguments first or last and weaker arguments in the middle of the message. This can be clearly compared with the definition of 'the most persuasive message' included in the coding protocol to define the concept in the framework of this research, which was taken from Seiter and Gass's (2014) discussion of the topic 'Persuasion and Social Influence Theories.' According to them, the Yale group focused primarily on examining four sets of factors, including those related to the source of the persuasive message, the message itself, the channel by which the message is transmitted, and the receiver of the message. By way of example, such research indicated that attitude change is more likely when sources are perceived as being credible (i.e., trustworthy experts), likeable, attractive, and similar to their audience. Research in this tradition also suggested that messages tend to be most persuasive when they (a) present two sides of an argument while refuting the opposing side, (b) present stronger arguments first or last and weaker arguments in the middle of the message, and (c) use fear appeals that are moderate in strength *ibid*.

If the above claims are accepted as a fact the conclusion reached about the motivating capacity of the 2010 election messages is fair and correct.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Summary

The study was planned to investigate the process of election message development for TV by contending political parties focusing on the 2010 election in Ethiopia. To achieve this end, the following leading questions were raised for investigation:

- What is the political parties' overall understanding on how to develop election messages?
- What modern practices, theories, and techniques in political communication were employed for the message to ensure target audience persuasion?
- How the political parties identify issues deemed important for their targeted voters?
- Who are the primary targets assumed in the campaign messages?
- What are the major thematic areas of the campaign messages?
- What is the informative, motivational, and persuasive capacity of the election campaign messages like?

In the review of literature, attempt was made to treat topics related with election campaign message development for TV. Believing the presence of effect is a necessary factor for our inquiry on the nature of the messages answers were sought for questions like what an election campaign is, and what are the effects of TV on election campaigns. The motivational, persuasive, and informative capacity of election campaign messages were also discussed in brief. To have standards for weighing the messages transmitted during the election, theories and practices that were presented by various authors on different election campaign and political communications books were adapted to serve as conceptual frame work for 'election campaign communication strategies'. These were presented under 'campaign strategies' which comprises making use of research in political advertising and under elements of scripts for election campaign messages which includes concepts like vision, image, and word power. Other vital components to 'election campaign communication strategies' were included under key contents and the genre of election messages and election candidacy and related practices which comprises themes such as

selection of individuals, pitfall of golden silence, tackling burning issues, interactions, mastery of subjects, conduct, and negative campaigning. Moreover, the Electoral Code of Conduct was considered in evaluating the process of message development and use by the contending parties.

In dealing with persuasion the social judgment theory and persuasion and social influence theories were utilized as theoretical frameworks in this study.

To get answers for the leading questions the qualitative and quantitative content analysis technique were utilized. One major challenge faced in this study was inability to carry out audiences' survey due to the mismatch between the academic calendar and the election campaign schedule. Although the actual date of data collection in the study was a little bit delayed, originally it was the period between from January 20 to March 30, 2015 arranged for data collection. The period of election campaign in the country for 2015 was scheduled between February 16 and May 20. This shows the difficulty faced to use the 2015 election messages. Either it was too much worse to choose to use the 2010 messages for this audience survey i.e. difficulty would arise in defending the question how dependable are the responses you get from your TV audience respondents (from memory of the past five years) after all such a time gap? Therefore, using the quantitative content analysis to measure the level of persuasiveness of the message and other content related matters was indispensable. Moreover, doing so has two methodological advantages over using audience research employing quantitative technique with questionnaire, which is its data gathering instrument. Firstly, content analysis helps to have a fresh memory of the messages since they are judged immediately after reading them and secondly, the individuals doing the evaluation could apply common criteria to compare between the messages.

Seven parties were selected using purposive sampling technique out of the 23 parties contended during the 2010 national election for both primary and secondary sources of data in the study. In the qualitative study seven in-depth interview questions were prepared in such a way they can help to understand the process of campaign message development and forwarded to three researchers for validity then translated into Amharic using forward and backward translation from English. It was used to collect information from the party leaders and people who were in charge of campaign activities. For secondary information these same seven parties' election

campaign messages which were transmitted during the 2010 election were acquired from EBC and content analyzed.

From the analyses made, the following major findings were identified:

1. The practice followed in the process of election message development by political parties showed that their overall understanding has limitation in acquainting and utilizing themselves with modern theories and practices that reside in campaigning and political communication. Failure to do so would seriously impede the ability of the actors to ensure target audience persuasion of messages.
2. Political parties were not using campaign communication strategies during the elections which could enable them to use practices, theories, and techniques in modern political communications. The most prevalent trend was using ad hoc committees that are organized to work out quick message development as elections approached. It seems they lack organized and institutionalized approaches that utilize modern theories and techniques with the help of professionals.
3. The political parties identify issues deemed important for their targeted voters mainly by using the assumptions of the leadership and committee members. This is because they were not making use of any form of formal research which is recommended in campaigning and political communication. The practice of passing on the decisions on contents of election messages by the leadership alone by most of the parties in its own give evidence why limitations in the message prepared were inherent.
4. The masses were found to be the main targets envisaged to be reached through the campaign messages by all the contending parties. No party was identified to target its message for a particular group.
5. The Key contents of the election campaign messages mainly focused on policy alternatives particularly focusing on those that differs the oppositions from the incumbent. The major thematic areas identified in the election messages were issues related to liberal democracy versus revolutionary democracy, ethnic federalism, agricultural and land policy, foreign policy, and prevailing economic and social conditions of urban and rural societies especially, those of youth and women. The writers of the messages were identified for not catering among image of candidate, policy,

negatives and important issues in preparing their messages scripts. This factor (relying on policy) contributes for the monotony of the campaign messages since literary quality calls variety as essential ingredient for an article's attractiveness.

6. The election messages' power to persuade the electorate remained at the 'persuasive' level with in the scales established from less persuasive, persuasive and highly persuasive in this study. This was due to use of very long election message texts mainly bogged with policy alternatives and party programs. This situation coupled with the expected prevailing monotony of the messages due to inability to cater among image, policy, and negatives by those who were preparing them made the motivational, informative, persuasive capacity of the messages to the audiences limited. These mean voters were denied of any information on individuals within the parties. These were done by all the parties. Even in the messages analyzed only a party was keen to talk about its collective image i.e. about the way it handles its inner activities democratically.

5.2. Conclusions

In this study, 'The Practice of Message Development for Political Campaign: The 2010 Parliamentary Election in Focus,' based on the above important findings the following conclusions were made.

The practice of election campaign message development in Ethiopia showed that the most prevalent trend was using content designed by ad hoc committees that are organized to carry out the task temporarily only during the election season. It seems they lack organized and institutionalized approaches to utilize the expertise of professionals and modern theories and techniques like campaign communication strategy.

There were two approaches followed by people or party officials who meet to decide on the contents of election messages. Either they are prepared by the leadership and given to a committee to be implemented or they are prepared by the committee and appraised by the leadership for implementation. The practice of passing on the decisions on contents of election messages by the leadership in some of the parties should be avoided as it definitely contributes to some of the poor qualities diagnosed in the election messages broadcasted.

The challenges parties face during preparing their communication strategies emanates from three things. The first and the direct problem emanates from lack of resources, especially, financial for oppositions. The second problem mentioned was, overload of tasks especially, for those who deal with the party's campaign responsibility as election activities are time bound and they have other responsibilities as well. The third problem raised by the party people, was related to maintaining the balance between the amount of message to be covered in a spot and the allotted broadcasting space.

The Key contents of the election campaign messages mainly focused on policy alternatives particularly focusing on those that differs the oppositions from the incumbent. The practice elsewhere in the globe shows policy issues are incorporated in campaign messages when presenting them is very crucial to win voter's decisions. At the same time their placement and extent is worked out in a balanced proportion to the whole text.

The masses were the main targets envisaged to be reached through the campaign messages, however, this need not to be considered as the only possible option that works in all the geographical places and every time. Therefore, there must be parties who take risks to experiment whether unusual practices would have better returns in this aspect.

Most of the parties accepted the fact that their success in reaching the intended target in 2010 was not as such satisfactory. Considering other factors being equal to them, this by its own implies that the persuasive, motivational, and informative capacities of the messages have some inherent limitations that contribute to their ineffectiveness.

The practice of not catering and maintaining proportion among image of candidate, party policy and presenting the negatives of opponents while creating election messages seems a widespread activity among the political parties. This tendency coupled with long texts with many paragraphs looks the other erroneous activity contributing to the commonly noticed election campaign messages unattractiveness. This is indicative that the persuasiveness of election campaign messages needs to be more strengthened by making use of state of the art techniques in political communication.

Although acting in line with the election code of ethics provided for in the country was not a problem reported by most of the parties the fact that very few of them have contempt on it is

suggestive of the need to re-examining those points again to increase the acceptance of the code of ethics. Revisiting the election codes of ethics enhance democratic rights and freedom of expression and helps creating a fair ground for all the contenders. Moreover, it will avoid problems arise due to miss interpretations of ambiguous articles in the code.

The preferred styles or genres in presenting election messages was found to be what we call narration or prose while documentary was found to be the most preferred and the next widely used form of presenting election messages. Although it was difficult to have as many documentaries as possible because they are costly they proved to be the most effective ways of election message transmission. Others like promotions and visuals are mentioned by some of the interviewees to be utilized alternatively.

The lack of using mission and visions as components in election messages by most of the contending parties is one predicament that reduces their opportunity for variety in approach. Above all this may be taken by the electorate either the parties are incapable to prepare their vision and mission statement or they are irrationally inquest of power.

It seems the use of research in planning and implementing campaign communication strategies seem very rare among the political parties in the country. This norm should be curved in order to develop the democratic process and to foster a modern political culture in the country.

Negligence in giving appropriate attention to literary qualities of a text, and the trend of providing poorly edited articles, and the transmitting of messages that could discredit the parties by critical viewers shows some of the parties were not giving the relevant value to their election communication activity which is one of the key focus areas in their campaign. This indicates that political parties lack appropriate human resources with the necessary skills and knowledge of political communication and those who are capable of crafting workable strategic plan and employing effective advertising techniques to eventually achieve the necessary look and feel of political campaign, etc.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research undertaking, the following recommendations have been forwarded.

- In order to be able to produce messages which are up to date and to evaluate messages prepared for election and presented for them politicians, especially those who are assigned in areas related with the planning and implementations of campaigns should acquaint themselves with political communication and campaigning theories and practices
- In preparing their election messages parties should follow organized and institutionalized approaches that utilize the expertise of professionals and modern theories and techniques found in campaign communication strategy. This is so because the first thing in a campaign communications strategy is to have the election message.
- Political parties need to promote the application of formal research in identifying issues deemed important for their targeted voters and the use of research based information is also important for other activities in the parties as well,
- To increase the chance of preparing an attractive election message and to increase the amount of information provided to voters parties should diverge their scope of focus from policy alternatives and party programs to others like candidates images and other important issues,
- The election campaign messages transmitted via TV in the country needs to be more attractive and appealing to be able to get the public's attention in this highly competitive world of TV Channels, and
- To be more attractive, persuasive, and memorable the 15 minutes version of party election broadcasts (PEB) needs to be replaced with a better and more flexible program.

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Appendix 1

An In-depth Interview Guide Prepared to Party Leaders and Members:

1. How do you go about planning your election campaign?
 - Using Experts in the Party
 - Commissioning external experts or professionals
2. Did you prepare a campaign plan in 2010? If you have so, did it include campaign communication strategy?
 - What was the communication strategy development process like?
 - Who in the party met to design the communication strategy?
 - What were the challenges?
3. What were the key contents of the election campaign messages?
 - Who mainly decided on content? (Party leaders, committee, votes)
 - Who were your main targets you envisaged to reaching through your campaign messages?
 - How effectively did you reach your intended targets?
 - How did you measure your level of success in terms of coverage and impact?
4. How did you cater to the following issues and maintain proportion among them while preparing your election rhetoric?
 - Image of your candidates
 - Policy issues
 - Weaknesses of opponents

5. What were the major mechanisms you adopted to be in line with the election code of ethics provided for in the country?
 - Did you at times feel that you breached these laws through your messages?
Explain
 - Did you find these codes limiting your freedom of expression in any way?
Explain
6. What styles or genres did you find to have created the greatest impact in your audience?
 - Poetry
 - Prose/Narration
 - Promotions/ Announcements
 - Visuals/Footages
 - Documentaries, etc.
7. Do you think the person/persons you used to present your messages mattered? How?

Appendix 2/ አባሪ 2

ለፓርቲ አመራሮች እና ዓባላት የተዘጋጀ ዝርዝር መጠይቅ፦

1. የምርጫ ዘመቻ እቅዳችሁን የምታዘጋጁት እንዴት ነው?
 - በፓርቲው ባለሙያዎች በመታገዝ
 - ከፓርቲው ውጭ ያሉ የማስታወቂያ ባለሙያዎችን በማሰራት

2. በ2002 ዓ.ም በተካሄደው አጠቃላይ ምርጫ ወቅት የምርጫ ቅስቀሳ እቅድ አዘጋጅታችሁ ነበር? ተዘጋጅቶ ከነበረ እቅዱ የምርጫ ዘመቻ ኮሙኒኬሽን ስትራቴጂን ያካተተ ነበር?
 - የኮሚኒኬሽን ስትራቴጂው የአዘገጃጀት ሂደት ምን ይመስል ነበር?
 - በፓርቲያችሁ ውስጥ የኮሚኒኬሽን ስትራቴጂውን ያዘጋጁት እነ ማን ነበሩ?
 - በኮሙኒኬሽን ስትራቴጂው ዝግጅት ወቅት ያጋጠሙ ተግዳሮቶች ምንምን ነበሩ?

3. የምርጫ ዘመቻው መልእክቶች ዋናዎና ይዘቶች ምንምን ነበሩ?
 - ይዘቶቹን በመምረጥ ረገድ ውሳኔ የመስጠት ሚና የነበራቸው እንምን ነበሩ? (የፓርቲ አመራር፣ ኮሚቴ፣ ቢድምጽ ብልጫ)
 - የምርጫ ዘመቻ መልዕክቶቻችሁ በዋናነት ማንን ታሳቢ ተደራሽ አድርገው የተዘጋጁ ነበሩ?
 - ታሳቢ ያደረጋችኋቸው መራጮች ጋ በመድረሱ ረገድ ምን ያህል ተሳክቶላችኋል?
 - ከተደራሽነትና ተጽዕኖ ከመፍጠር አኳያ ያስመዘገባችሁትን ውጤት በምን መንገድ ትለኩታላችሁ?

4. የምረጫ ጽሁፎችን በምታዘጋጁበት ወቅት የሚከተሉትን ነገሮች በመልእክቶቻችሁ ውስጥ እንዴት ታካትቷቸዋላችሁ? በምን መልኩስ ታመጣጥኗቸዋላችሁ?
 - የተወዳዳሪዎቻችሁን ማንነትና ገጽታ
 - ፖሊሲ ነክ ጉዳዮች
 - የሚቀናቀኗችሁን ፓርቲዎች ደካማ ጎኖች ማሳየት

5. የአገሪቱን የምርጫ ስነምግባር ደምብ አክብራችሁ መልእክቶቻችሁን በማዘጋጀትና በማስተላለፍ ረገድ የምትከተሉት አካሄድ ምን ይመስላል?

- አንዳንዴ የምረጡኝ መልእክቶቻችሁ እነዚህን የስነ ምግባር ሕጎች የጣሱ መስሎ ይሰማችኋል?
ቢያብራሩልን::
- እነዚህ መመሪያዎችና ሕጎች ሀሳብን በነጻነት የመግለጽ መብትን በተወሰነ መልኩ የገደቡ መስለዎ ይሰማዎታል? ቢያብራሩልን::

6. በየትኛው የመልዕክት አቀራረብ ዘዴ የመልዕክታችሁ ተደራሾች ላይ ትልቅ ተጽዕኖ መፍጠር የቻላችሁ ይመስላችኋል?

- ግጥም
- ስድ ንባብ/ ዝርወ
- ማስታወቂያ
- በምስል የተደገፉ የምርጫ መልዕክቶች
- ዘጋቢ ፊልሞች
- ሌሎች

7. በቴሌቪዥን የሚተላለፉ የምርጫ መልዕክቶችን የሚያቀርበው ሰው ማንነት መልዕክቱ ተቀባይነት ከማግኘቱ/አለማግኘቱ ጋር ግንኙነት የሚኖረው ይመስሎታል? እንዴት?

Appendix 3

Table1. Rating of Messages for Persuasiveness According the Requirements Given to the 3 Coders

Party								
Mes sage	EPRDF	AEUP	EFDUF/ MEDREK	ONC	EDP	CUDP/ Kinijit	EJDFE	Remar k
1	2+2+2/3=2	1+1+1/3=1	2+3+1/3=2	3+1+2/3=2	2+1+3/3=2	1+1+1/3=1	2+3+1/3=2	
2	2+1+3/3=2	1+1+1/3=1	2+3+1/3=2	2+2+2/3=2	1+1+1/3=1	2+3+1/3=2	1+3+2/3=2	
3	3+1+2/3=2	2+1+3/3=2	1+1+1/3=1	1+2+3/3=2	1+1+1/3=1	1+1+1/3=1	2+1+3/3=2	
4	1+3+2/3=2	2+3+1/3=2	1+1+1/3=1	2+3+1/3=2	1+2+3/3=2	1+1+1/3=1	1+1+1/3=1	
5	3+3+3/3=3	2+2+2/3=2	2+1+3/3=2		2+2+2/3=2			
6	2+1+3/3=2	1+1+1/3=1	3+3+3/3=3		3+2+1/3=2			
7	1+1+1/3=1		1+2+3/3=2					
Ave rage	2	1.66	1.85	2	1.66	1.25	1.75	

EPRDF= Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, AEUP =All Ethiopia Unity Party, EFDUF/MEDREK= Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum), ONC = Oromo National Congress, EDP= Ethiopian Democratic Party, CUDP/Kinijit = Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party, and EJDFE Ethiopian Justice and Democratic Forces Front.

Inter coder reliability

In order to insure inter-coder reliability a coding protocol was prepared, procedures to be followed in dealing the content were established, after taking training coders also made to familiarize themselves with the content analysis protocol, and they discussed among themselves

on how to deal with problems. They were made to practice it by taking texts from another (2012) election. Then 5 contents were selected using simple random sampling technique out of 38 and coded by the three coders and the result is calculated. In order to check the validity and reliability of indicators for coders' agreement the most acceptable measure of reliability was run. The result was found to be .75 at t value $< .05$ (c.i = 95%). Thus from this one can deduce the coders coding in this research is acceptable and carrying out the research by them was right.