

**The Framing of Interethnic Conflict: the case of the Amhara-  
Kemant Conflict in Amhara and Tigray Regional Television  
Companies**



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**Course Code: 3GJ322**

**July 2020**

## Abstract

Ethiopia is a multi-ethnic country, severely affected by violent interethnic conflicts that have disturbed people's lives and the country's socio-political conditions for the last quarter of a century. This study is intended to evaluate the framing of conflict news coverage by two regionally operated media companies, the Amhara Television (ATV) as a local and Tigray Television (TTV) as an outsider, in relation to the Amhara and Kemant conflict. The dominant framing typologies, the attributed sources, and the role of the two television companies in reference to the peace/war journalism frame are assessed. Both quantitative and qualitative techniques are employed. In the quantitative aspect, the news content is examined to answer frame and source related questions. The study found that ATV primarily applies the attribution of responsibility frame and the conflict frame in second level. Morality, human interest, and economic frames are the rarely used by ATV. TTV on its part was found to focus on conflict frame first and attribution of responsibility frame second. Both stations highlight officials and common people as their source of news over other sources. On ATV, half of the stories used government officials as a source, while common people were the second most attributed source. Opinion leaders, opposition parties, victims, and experts were rarely attributed. TTV, on its side, used common people even more, with government officials ranked second, making up one-fourth of the sources. In relation to war/peace journalism, ATV emphasizes the peace journalism frame, while the majority of TTV's stories was inclined to war journalism. However, the qualitative data give divergent results in the case of TTV news. In relation to the qualitative data, five respondents were interviewed with semi-structured questions; three from ATV and two from TTV. The study reveals that both ATV and TTV were aspiring to resolve the conflict and identify solutions for the observed problems. However, because of the political antagonism and ethnic extremism expressed in the two regional governments, and the unwillingness of the sources to be attributed, professionalism and news framing are challenged. Apart from solving the conflict, the two media companies covered the conflict in a way that is meant to benefit their respective ethnic groups. The two media news reports prove the presence of ideological and proxy war in media messages. While TTV struggles for the implementation of constitutional rights, which shows a support for the Kemant, ATV pretends to reverse anti-Amhara narratives.

## **Acknowledgments**

Though I am the operator of the journey, many of you have contributed a lot for this ending. First, the Alfa and Omega Almighty God thank you for keeping me safe in these turbulent days with your mercy. My supervisor, Terje Skjerdal, an Associate Prof. at NLA University College, Gimlekollen, you have invested a lot throughout my stay. Without your continuous and unreserved guidance, this master's thesis would not have been completed. It was a luck and privilege for having you as an advisor, sincere thanks. Mari Sagulin, the international relation expert of the NLA University College, who facilitated my stay, deserves thanks. I would also like to extend my gratefulness to the coder who has devotedly made the coding of the downloaded and transcribed news items of the two television companies. My brother Mulugeta Mekonnen, you were the key! Thank you for your encouragements. My friends, Solomon Mulu, Tadale Mognihodie, Muluken Geremew, Sileshie Semahagne and others who have been studying Global Journalism at NLA University College in 2018, 2019 and 2020, you were my energizers, please accept my heartfelt gratitude. I am also thankful to the NORPART (Norwegian Partnership Programme for Global Academic Cooperation) project and Bahir Dar University for facilitating the student exchange program. My last heartfelt gratitude goes to all the informants of ATV and TTV for the data that you provided within a short period of time.

## **Note on citation and reference**

*The citation and referencing style of this research follows the American Psychology Association (APA) sixth edition, however, because of cultural differences; you may find Ethiopian names with their given name and a calendar with seven/eight years back difference followed by an acronym Ethiopian Calendar (E.C). Other foreign authors are referred based on the APA style.*

## Acronyms

ADP.....	Amhara Democratic Party
AMMA.....	Amhara Mass Media Agency
ANDM.....	Amhara National Democratic Movement
ATV.....	Amhara Television
DW.....	Dimitse Weyanie
E.C.....	Ethiopian Calendar
EPRDF.....	Ethiopian People’s Revolution Democratic Front
FDRE.....	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
OMN.....	Oromia Media Network
PJ.....	Peace Journalism
TMMA.....	Tigrai Mass Media Agency
TPLF.....	Tigrai People Liberation Front
TTV.....	Tigrai Television
WJ.....	War Journalism

## **Operational definition of terms**

*Ethnic conflict:* a dispute between two or more ethnic groups caused by the politicization of tribal identity by self-seeking individuals, politicians or any force.

*The Amhara-Kemant conflict:* the dispute occurred from September 2019 -November 2019 between the Kemant and Amhara groups.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

This introductory section discusses the blueprint of the study, such as the background of the research, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, scope, significance, and limitations of the study.

## 1.1. Background of the study

Within a multicultural society like Ethiopia, which has a population of more than 114 million<sup>1</sup>, 76 ethnic groups (House of Federation, 2020), 10<sup>2</sup> regional states and two city administrations, diversity of religion, and 62 national and ethnic based political parties (National Election Board of Ethiopia, 2020), conflict is expected. Considering the heterogeneity of ethnic groups, the Ethiopian government follows a federalism system of administration; an ideology used to rule diversified groups with unity giving some authority for each division (Alemu, 2015; Watts, 2008). Ethnicity remains the main component of Ethiopian power decentralization and boundary demarcation strategy (Abbink, 2011). Many have argued that ethnic based power division, which is currently applied in Ethiopia, has adopted Stalin's ideology of nationalism that hierarchically divides entities to define their boundaries (Bekalu, 2017; Alemu, 2015; Abbink, 2006).

Philosophically, the ethnic federalism structure gives each group "the right for self-administration" and "self-determination, including the right to secession" (Article 39 of Ethiopian Constitution; FDRE, 1995). There are two groups that appreciate and criticize the ideology of ethnic based politics, which have been practiced since 1991. Kidane (2001) states that ethnic federalism was assumed to give the right of self-administration and enrichment of the different people's group identity with their own political and economic autonomy, not create divisions. Ethnic federalism has

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<sup>1</sup> World population review (2020). Retrieved from <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/ethiopia-population/>

<sup>2</sup> Sidama Regional State; the 10<sup>th</sup> regional state that singled out itself from the Southern Nation Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia Regional State by a referendum made in Sidama Zone November 2019 in addition to Tigray, Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Benshangul Gumuz, Gambela, Harari and Somali (National Election board of Ethiopia, Nov. 2019).

stabilized the ambition for secession, which eliminates ethnic oppression of (using language, enrichment of culture and societal values) “through its cultural and political autonomy policies, ethnic federalism has contributed to state maintenance” (Alemu, 2015, p. 28). Recognizing Ethiopia as people’s museum, ethnic diversity with unity was the source of national pride, of which the Battle of Adwa in 1896 could serve as a case, a symbol of black victory over the white aggressors (Weldegebrel, 2004; Scott, 1978). However, some criticize this notion with reference to the past quarter of a century. Though the Ethiopian constitution of 1995 guarantees a variety of culture, ethnicity, and beliefs, due to the absence of unity between ethnic groups, diversity is transformed to a means of division and cause of provincial conflict with an ethnic federalism narrative that saw the country as a loose collection of people, nations, and nationalities (Abbink, 2006). Dereje (2018) has viewed the ideology of ethnic federalism as less workable.

The experiment of ethnic federalism was completely failed, especially as a means of quelling of ethnic-based conflicts and cheering democracy to the people. Rather the curse of ethnic federalism with its implementation failure drove the country to the mid of the ocean without a tideland (Dereje, 2018, p. 5).

Bekalu (2017) argues that ethnic based politics “politicizes tribal identity” and entails conflict between various groups, which is challenging to be practiced in a multi-cultural and multi-lingual society that has been integrated for several thousand years (p. 59).

Parallel with diversity, the power imbalance between different regional ruling parties in the EPRDF<sup>3</sup> coalition and the uneven distribution of the country's resource have become means of ethno-political conflicts, violence, and clashes between members of ethnic groups, tribes and the government (Bekalu, 2017; Mulatu, 2017). Administrative boundaries, self-governance, and identity take a leading role in the occurrence of ethnic-based conflicts in the Amhara, Tigray, Oromia and Somali regions. The need for self-administration was a cause for the conflict observed in the Amhara region between the peoples living in North Gondar: the Amhara and

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<sup>3</sup> EPRDF, the government coalition party, formed from the four political fronts, mutated in 2019 into a single unified party called the Prosperity Party, after excluding TPLF in October 2019.

Kemant (Birhanu, 2019). A land claim of Welkait between the Amhara and Tigrai, the self-administrative issues of Kemant people in Gondar, the identity-related questions of Raya people in Tigrai, and other crisis have been the agenda of the two regional governments, which could be assumed as a proxy war. Other conflicts have taken place in the Oromia Special Zone, and there have been student clashes in public universities of Amhara and Tigrai regions, such as in Adigrat, Aksum, Debre Markos, Debre Tabor and Woldia universities in 2018 (Azizachew, 2019).

The Amhara Democratic Party (ADP) and Tigrai Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF) have blamed each other for the tensions (*Addis Fortune*, 13 July 2019). While ADP accuses TPLF for the instabilities and conflicts in Ethiopia and Amhara in particular, TPLF on the other hand says it is the ADP's alleged failure to create job opportunities for the youth that disrupts the regional activities. ADP and TPLF have been struggling for political power dominancy, which is a root cause for the ethnic based confrontations. It has resulted in displacement of people, devastation of resources, and deaths (Azizachew, 2019).

These ethno-political conflicts are among the news beats the media report that challenge the journalist's professional detachment. Admittedly, Ethiopian journalism has been criticized for its high political affiliation and polarized stance of reporting (Menychle, 2017), low professionalization of the practitioners, and limited media freedom (Nutman, 2019; Skjerdal; 2013). In the country, there are about 110 broadcasting media; 41 of which are owned privately, 19 are government/public broadcasters, and 50 are community-based radio stations (Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority, 2020). While 76 of the media are radio stations, thirty- four of the media institutions are television media; nine of which are government owned and 25 are commercial media (Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority, 2020). Similar to the federalism structure of the country, the media are highly ethnocentric. Compared with for example Nigeria and South Africa (Bekalu, 2017), regional media are ethnic-based, and the target audiences of those media are people of that region. However, there are exceptions for the media in the capital, Addis Ababa.

When journalists are from conflicting parties and work for ethnic-based regional media, there is a possibility of membership bias towards their group. According to Zandberg and Neiger (2005), journalists' professionalism and ethno-nationalism compute each other and threaten the notion of expertise, objectivity, neutrality, and autonomy.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

The journalistic profession with the dichotomy of subjectivity and objectivity, emotion, and rationality (Peters, 2001) needs a professional act and objectivity ideals. The journalism profession strives for factuality, objectivity, and balance. The ethno-political context, to the contrary, calls the journalist and media to construct one-sided and biased stories. Arguably, regional media journalists are more vulnerable to conflicts of interest in which one may favor the home nation/ethnic group (Terzis, 2002).

Journalistic bias is especially rife when reporting politics, war, violence, and race (Vu, 2012). Similarly, biases have been observed in Ethiopian media when covering the ethno-political conflicts with different frames and different amounts of coverage. Due to an enigmatic and insistent political culture (Bekalu, 2017), and the fact that the majority of Ethiopian media companies are under government control (the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Ethiopian News Agency and Ethiopian Press Agency as well as the regional mass media agencies), there has been a lack of interest in covering interethnic conflict stories (Mulatu, 2017; Skjerdal, 2013). Instead, the national media have promoted the officials and the ruling party' interests. One could safely say that the media are biased and have worried more about the government officials' image than the public's right to know by neglecting the other side of reality that may result in distortion of facts.

Media could represent or distort reality in two main ways: either when reporters misrepresent reality and present false information, or when they favor a particular group (DiMaggio, 2017). In the case of the current study, they may emphasize the conflicting parties, the two regional government politicians, and their own ethnic group or otherwise be involved in selection and exclusion of reality according to

what the journalist weigh as more salient over the other. Studies indicate that politics is an influential factor in journalists' professionalism when it comes to shaping the news content and determining the journalists' role (Smialowski, 2019). Beyond the nationality differences and socio-economic contexts, the journalists' political orientation affects the professional role and their ability of decision-making (Donsbach, 2004). Consequently, journalists identify relevant issues and mediate information to the public that influences audiences' decision-making. By selecting or excluding some sort of an event but not the other, and by representing a reality in a particular way, "the media strongly influence the dynamics and outcomes of conflicts, and thus also shape the prospects of success of conflict parties" (Vladisavljević, 2015, p. 2).

In journalism sociology, there are about five levels of influences in micro (individual) and macro (societal) levels, which affect the news-making process and media message. The nature of the media organization, the personal characteristics of journalists, work routines, institutional orientations, and social systems determine media content (Reese & Shoemaker, 2016). The degree of influence each factor has on the media system critically depends on the political, economic, cultural, and societal conditions of a society (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). By contrast, the media could affect the political, economic, and societal trends (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Breed (1955) argues that organizations are more potent in shaping the media message than individual journalists; however, one's influence may not be easily distinguishable from the other. For example, social and institutional factors may influence an individual. Hanitzsch et al. (2010), in a study conducted within 17 countries, identified six dimensions of professional influences: "political, economic, organizational, professional, and procedural influences, as well as reference groups" (Hanitzsch et al., 2010, p. 7). Shoemaker and Reese (2014) demonstrate that these factors highly affect the journalists' objectivity.

Although there is abundant research on ethnicity and conflict in Ethiopia, studies associated with media and conflict are few in number. "*Why Silence? Reporting Internal Conflict in Ethiopian Newspapers,*" a Ph.D. dissertation by Mulatu (2017),

assessed the coverage, the framing, and the hindrances of conflict reporting. The study concluded that the selected newspapers silenced the issues but there was little coverage because of fear and organizational influence. Additionally, Addisu (2019) assessed the coverage and framing of the news in an MA thesis entitled, "*the coverage of the internal conflict between Oromia and Somali regional states on Ethiopian media: comparative study of OBN and SRTV*". Minimal coverage, inappropriate source usage, sensationalism and vague cause-effects reporting were among the findings.

Moreover, Endalkachew (2018) examined "*the polarization of state-owned and private media in Ethiopia: the case of EBC and OMN's reporting on the current political crisis in the Oromia region.*" He addressed the coverage, the framing, and political polarization of the selected media outlets. The result shows that both EBC and OMN reported in a polarized way towards the government and the opposition. The stability frame was found to be the dominant frame of EBC and rally frame for OMN's broadcasts. To summarize, the above-cited studies evaluated the conflict news framing and media parallelism.

The current study will add to the existing research by examining the framing of the Amhara and Kemant interethnic political conflict by two ethnic-based regional media organizations. The situation is that Amhara and Tigray regional state officials, activists, and individuals had been blaming each other, fuelled by political antagonism. Thus, I am inspired to see how journalists from the two media organizations frame the conflict, seeing it from the perspective of the ATV as the local media and the TTV as an outsider. Additionally, I will examine news items to determine how the selected television stations frame the conflict from peace/war journalism reporting principles, which will enable the researcher to identify what kind of role the two media channels played in the course of the conflict. Furthermore, the study will assess the most frequently attributed news sources.

### **1.3. The objective of the study**

This study aims to compare the framing of interethnic conflict between the Kemant and Amhara people by two regional Ethiopian television broadcasters.

#### **1.3.1. Specific objectives of the study**

1. To assess the dominant frames employed in the coverage of the Amhara-Kemant interethnic conflict by ATV and TTV.
2. To identify the sources used by the two television channels in reporting the Amhara-Kemant ethnic conflict.
3. To examine the role of the two television stations in escalating or deescalating the conflict from a war/peace frame perspective.

### **1.4. Research questions**

1. What are the dominant news frames employed by ATV and TTV in the coverage of the Amhara-Kemant interethnic conflict?
2. Which sources do the two television channels employ when covering the conflict?
3. What is the role of the two television stations in escalating or deescalating the conflict from a war/peace frame perspective?

### **1.5. The significance of the study**

This research will have different significances. Above all, because it is an academic research, it will fill knowledge gaps in the area of interethnic conflict and the influence of ethnicity in media framings, particularly in the selected study area. Additionally, it will indicate gaps in the media coverage and journalistic reporting by pointing out strengths and weakness so that the media may take measures for their future performance. Furthermore, future researchers who have a desire to conduct further studies in the area may utilize this study as a stepping-stone.



## 1.6. Scope of the study

Having in mind that Amhara and Tigray regional governments had been under a conflicting situation, the scope of the study was delimited primarily to the news items broadcasted in the Amhara and Tigray television companies from 8 September 2019 to 10 November 2019 (third *Pagume*<sup>4</sup> 2011 to 30<sup>th</sup> *Tikimit* 2012 E.C). The two television stations were selected because Tigray and Amhara regional states are neighbors, but the regional governments were in an antagonistic relationship, each one blaming the other for any clash that happens in the Amhara region. Moreover, while ATV is located in the conflict area, TTV is an outsider, which was a condition in examining their practice. Furthermore, the political relationship of the two regional states was under consideration, which may had an effect on the media agencies' professionalism. Regarding the content, feature stories, talk shows, documentaries, commentaries, studio-interviews, and other television programs, which are not related to the hard news genre, these were not included in the study due to their expected slanted views that allow high degrees of subjectivity of writers.

The study mainly concentrated on the news items broadcasted in the Amharic language. For the purpose of achieving the objectives, the researcher collected stories about the Amhara-Kemant conflict from the news reports of the ATV and TTVs from 8 September to 10 November 2019 because the conflict calmed down in the end of *Tikimit* 2012 E.C., i.e. around 10 November 2019 with a negotiation undertaken by the federal and the regional governments. The period of the study is demarcated because the particular conflict broke out in September and became tranquil by the beginning of November 2019. All news items dealing with the conflict were sampled. To do this I had used their YouTube channels and downloaded 64 news packages in the specified time frame.

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<sup>4</sup> The thirteenth Ethiopian month with five days and 6 days on a leap year

## **1.7. Limitations of the Study**

The study is not free of limitations. It would have been an advantage if a broader sample of television programs, documentaries, and Tigrigna language news items in addition to the Amharic language were included, to identify the general trends of the selected media institutions. Additionally, it could be intriguing if the study embraced all the media in the country, but due to the two regions' political tensions, it focuses on only two companies. In addition, limitation of resources was an issue. Nevertheless, due to lack of language competence, news stories reported in the Tigrigna language was not studied.

Furthermore, the study employed interviews as a data collection tool, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews done with the TTV journalists were over telephone, which could cause confidence issues with the respondents. Despite these limitations, the research design is assumed to answer the listed research questions in satisfactory manner.

## **1.8. Organization of the study**

This research report (thesis) contains five chapters. Chapter 1 covers the background of the study, problem statement, objectives, research questions, scope, significance, and limitations of the research. This chapter serves as an appetizer for the coming chapters. Chapter 2 contains a review of literature that serves as a baseline to analyze the collected data. Chapter 3 explains what research methodology will be employed, and the justifications will be reasoned out for why the researcher uses these approaches. Chapter 4 contains data presentation and analysis, and chapter 5 presents summery and conclusions. The appendix in the end gives an overview of the analyzed data.

## Chapter 2: Review of related literature

This chapter will discuss relevant literature concerning the media and ethnic dispute; the role of the media during a conflict; the framing of conflict news; and the theoretical frameworks that will enable the researcher to analyze the current practices of the selected two regional television stations.

### 2.1. Ethnicity and conflict

'Belonging' is considered to be at the root of ethnicity. Belonging, which has been part of the ethnicity concept for long, gained public attention after the colonization era ended in the 1960s. The concept of ethnicity can be traced back to the anti-colonization movement and anti-racist thoughts (Guibernau & Rex, 1997). One of the founding fathers of sociology, Max Weber, postulates that ethnicity constitutes biologically inherited and socially accustomed identities; and can incorporate several identities of religion, culture, nationality and other sub cultures. Weber (1968; 1997[1911]) argues that race and ethnicity are "presumed identities" of subjective beliefs of common decent that are entertained in human groups because of certain similarities. "Ethnicity refers to relationships between groups whose members consider themselves as distinctive, and these groups may be ranked hierarchically within a society" (Eriksen, 1997, p. 35-36). Ethnic identity shares meanings with nationalism, social class, race, tribe, language and gender. Eriksen (1997) defines ethnicity as an identity given to a group or society that makes them distinguishable from other groups to whom they have relationships. The relationship may be on country, regional, or community level. Ethnicity could be seen as a sub-categorization of the human population based on different social characteristics. Brown (1997) has brought six criteria to define an ethnic group:

"the group should be named, the people in the group should believe as they have a common ancestor, share historical memories, shared culture, have a demarcated territory of land, and the people in that group should think themselves as they belong to that specific group" (Brown, 1997, p. 81-82).

The ethnicity concept is often associated with collective groups, where individuals are connected with their common ancestors, shared history and culture accustomed

to a representative symbol. That symbol may include similarity in religious affiliation, local dialects, tribal affiliation, and aesthetic appearance (Schermerhorn, 1970). The modern world where individualism has an upper hand over collectivism with low personal contact and limited interaction with the help of diversified folkloric affiliation may challenge the definition given by the above-mentioned scholars and create vagueness in relation to the concept.

In Ethiopia, where the country could be said to be a people's museum, it is problematic to understand and differentiate societies based on ethnicity. The fact is that people within different societies are 'amalgamated' and 'assimilated'. Examples are easily visible in the cities where people from diverse ethnic groups get married and give birth, and the child will have a mixed identity, though the child may prefer the mother or father's identity. Ratcliffe's (2014) approach to ethnic identity presumes a choice of belonging to one division of collective cultural and societal memberships made by an individual in whom one can describe himself/herself as a member of that group. In this line of thought, ethnicity is a socially constructed concept. Therefore, despite ethnicity often being assigned for a group, each member decides their belonging by themselves.

Ethnic friction could be any dispute/violence between two and more ethnic groups because of political, economic, cultural, or territorial issues (Arcan, 2014). Ethnic disputes and civil wars have been visible in developing states but are not limited to these countries. The former Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Congo, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, and Liberia are all examples of hostile zones. The 9/11 attack in the US and terrorist attacks in Spain, Turkey and the Arab uprising in Tunisia and Egypt elaborate the universality of conflict (Gilbao, 2009; Ellis, 2015; Mulatu, 2017; Endalkachew, 2018). However, each conflict has different causes: some are religious, some are ideological and some are ethnically motivated (Gilboa, 2009). The dispute in Somalia since 1991 may not be an ethnic-based violence; rather it is a clash between powerful clan leaders, warlords, or rival gangs because Somalia is an ethnically homogeneous country (Brown, 1997).

Ethnic conflicts could be violent when groups take physical action, which result in devastation of resources and loss of life against others who are not their factions commonly motivated by ethnic hate, prejudice, and stereotype or competition of power and resource. On the other hand, non-violent disagreements are psychological, political, and cultural disagreements arranged to take advantages without the use of weapons. The U.S. Department of Defense (1990, cited in Gilbao 2009) sees disputes in two groups: the first is high-intensity conflict (HIC), usually occurring within states that invite and use trained armed forces causing high destruction of resources. The second is low-intensity conflicts (LIC) that usually happen within local groups by means of armed forces, untrained freedom fighters, and irregular guerilla forces representing two or more ethnic groups for political gain. In this regard, the conflict which occurred between the Kemant and Amhara people has a political goal rather than military (Yirga, 2016), which by definition could make it a low-intensity conflict.

Conflict by its nature has different stages, such as pre-occurrence, occurrence and post-occurrence stages. On each stage, media potentially forge a conflict to the worst condition or propose a solution. Considering the harmfulness of conflict, Gilbao (2009) mentions four stages of conflict resolution that media could be involved in; “onset-prevention”, “escalation-management”, “de-escalation-resolution”, and “termination reconciliation” (Gilbao, 2009, p. 93). The prevention stage serves to anticipate, detect, and identify warning signs of conflict. In the escalation management phase, an action is required to minimize the risk. The third stage is the de-escalation resolution, which occurs when the conflict has stopped but the relationships between the conflicting bodies remain inactive. Lastly, the reconciliation stage denotes the post conflict stage that invites the disagreed parties for renewed relationships and strengthened diplomacy (Gilbao, 2009). Among the three stages, the reconciliation process aims to create a sense of stability and psychological relief within the society that could change the attitude, belief, and feelings for future harmony (Gilbao, 2009). Ultimately, the media could carry out these functions in transforming the attitudes of the society, or they may propagate the conflict and cause unresolved battle. On this basis, the current study will assess

and examine the role of the media in covering the Kemant-Amhara conflict within distinct stages of the conflict using a framing approach.

## **2.2. The media's role in covering ethnic conflict**

One of the prioritized news values is conflict (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Tony & O'Neill, 2001). Whether the theme of the conflict is political, social, cultural, or economic, the motive of the conflicting parties would be to take advantage of the resources, the hegemony of power or to seek autonomy and freedom from others; colonials, dictators, or ill administration. Understandably, the media have a keen desire to cover these conflicts, often outshining the role of being a voice of the oppressed, neglected, victims and disadvantaged.

Often described as a profession of detachment (Peters, 2001), journalism is guided by the objectivity principle. The journalists' basic role is to provide information for the public, support citizens, and serve the audience instead of supporting a political, business or any interest group. The role of the journalist could be seen from at least two angles: as a change facilitator through active involvement, interpretation, and analysis of issues, and secondly, as a disseminator of information, communicating objectively and neutrally without prejudice (Giuliana, 2016). However, media sometimes take sides. Ethiopian university teachers and media professionals frequently use the Rwanda case to demonstrate the negative consequence of biased and partisan journalism. On the other hand, the "CNN Effect" suggests that the media have other roles to play in a local or international conflict. According to Robinson (2002), the concept of the CNN effect has been associated with humanitarian intervention in Iraq and Somalia in the 1990s; additionally, it signifies the role that the media can play for the needy societies. However, the CNN effect has also been criticized for the violation of the country's sovereignty (Robinson, 2002). Harris (2004) summarizes the role that media could have in a conflict zone and news framing as one of either good or evil.

It is believed that impartial and truthful media enhance the advancement of a nation and the attainment of peace. However, media may escalate violence and conflict

unless well-stated principles are in place and responsible practitioners follow them. The 1994 Tutsi and Hutus ethnic-based conflict in Rwanda and the experience of the former Yugoslavia demonstrate how local media can be engaged in destruction rather than creating peace and reconciliation (Puddephatt, 2006). Journalists report a conflict and dramatize the story so that the media will manufacture conflict frames and can catch the attention of the audience beyond other influential factors (Bartholome et al., 2015). Besides, media enter into a dilemma when trying to uncover the issue of conflict between professional news values and their assumed role as a peace-building agent. Conflict news reporting contradicts the nature of the peace process, which competes with the news values conflict has and likely, media may often play a destructive role to make peace (Wolfsfeld, 2004).

Acknowledging the optimistic role of media in establishing public opinion and narrowing divisions between the conflicting parties in Colombia, media are found to polarize conflict instead of convincing people to take part in dialogue (Prager & Hameleers, 2018). To utilize a constructivist media, the issue of freedom with professional autonomy remains an appreciated concept. A free flow of information may encourage the conflicting groups to resolve their clashes openly through dialogue and negotiation. According to Kabi (2012), the absence of information or miscommunication about the conflict will adversely affect the understanding of the audience about the issue. Therefore, the media are required to clarify the reality that enables people to identify fact from propaganda like liberal and democratic media are supposed to do; give feedback on harmful practices, investigate hidden agendas and wrongdoings of officials, filter-out the most critical information, and entertain alternative views on a conflicting social problem.

Beyond this, Bratic and Schirch (2007) have equally described the role of media in creating diplomacy, promoting peace, and building bridges between racial and ethnic groups against fuelling hate, division, and discrimination. The Ethiopian media, particularly community radio, have carried out a productive role in ending conflicts between ethnic groups using peace discourses and showing solutions (Mulatu, 2018). Even though Ethiopia is on the way to democracy, the media have

been marked by low levels of professionalism, limited level of expertise, and strong government intervention. Being a vehicle for the government the media could electrify national development projects by portraying the government positively, as well as promoting tolerance and cultural diversity (Skjerdal, 2017). Additionally, Negeri (2013) states that the private media monitor the corrupt officials; as a result, the government has scarcely a positive attitude for the private journalists. Negeri adds that since the journalists from the government media represent a larger number of the journalist population, the audience does not rely on what they report. Indeed, journalists' perception and attitude towards an issue influence their contribution to the peace-building process.

### **2.3. Theoretical framework**

The objective of this study is to compare ATV and TTV's interethnic political conflict news framing between September 2019 and November 2019. To achieve this, the study relies on framing theory and peace/war journalism theory. This enables me to answer the research questions stated in the introductory chapter subtopic 1.4.

### **2.4. Framing theory**

In media and communications disciplines, many theoretical guidelines help researchers to study how media messages are shaped and how media process meaning making and guide people to act and react within the social environment. People communicate to achieve their predetermined goal through the construction of meanings using their subjective interpretation and understanding from the outreach reality, out of sight and out of mind.

The sociologist Goffman, who proposed that people understand their environment based on their subjective interpretation through their cognitive skill, developed a theory of communication called "framing" (Gofman, 1974). Later on, many researchers have been modifying and clarifying the concept of framing from numerous disciplines such as politics, religion, and communication. Overlooking the framing concept inside other disciplines, the communication scholar Entman (1993)



describes framing as the process of presenting an important truth to the readers, viewers, and listeners of a medium over other realities by assigning discourses.

Framing involves selecting significant topics to make people more concerned about a little portion of objective reality and making the problems, issues, topics, or situations more valuable for the audiences through the help of media. Scheufele (1999) describes framing as a process and principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation of the practical reality that suits the mental development, socio-cultural and political contexts of society about what exists, what happens, and what matters. It is equally recognized as the second level of agenda-setting, where the salience issue focuses on the way journalists construct a story; the tone and color they employ; how and what type of visuals are used; what intended meaning it has; and “how the media consumer should think about” a given phenomenon or event (McCombs, Shaw, & Weaver, 1997).

Considering the scarcity of resources, journalists use frames to present a certain reality with a concentration on a specific topic. When news media contemplate an event as newsworthy, they could give high attention to the issue and people may give weight to what has been covered in the media channel over other phenomena in their surroundings so that they will take action (Tuchman, 1978). Reese (2007) describes framing as the process of associating and generating a particular meaning for an event, and linking it with the socio-cultural discourse and time. Journalists do not necessarily report news straightforwardly; instead, they shape and give meaning to it based on media principles, their belongingness, and other influential factors (Entman, 1993). Entman also clarifies that framing is done in the individuals’ psychological makeup, both by journalists and receivers of the message.

The media frame is often differentiated in forms of “emphasis” or “salience,” and framing of communicators or framing from thought (Druckman, 2001). While the media frame includes any message designed by the scholars, political communicators, and the media professionals that contains “political discourses”, the framing of thought is mainly associated with state of understanding that is done on the individual audience mind (Entman, 2004). Therefore, framing implies the process

of selecting, and putting things in a context where the media identify the most important items or issues. At the same time, it eliminates other stories considering the socio-political and cultural significance within a given context.

Scheufele (1999) summarizes news framing both as a process and as an end by itself. The process contains frame-building and frame-setting strategies, which includes the elites and individual audiences, who offer the potential of producing the message and structuring it with the appropriate situations. The journalists' knowledge, experience, attitude, the code of ethics, and the ordinary routines determine who should be involved in the story with what effect that significantly affects the message design (D'Angelo, 2017). Thus, the frame-building concept is not restricted to the media or journalists only but also the sources have a potent influence that can structure and determine the story of how a society should think about it. Despite the concept of framing being vague and multi-disciplinary, framing starts from the source who encodes the message to the receiver in a way that the source wants it to be understood by the decoder with the help of personal experiences. Additionally, frame analysis could focus on how the journalists produce the message, in what way the audience accepts the message and how and with what purpose the source frames a given message. For the current study, the analysis will focus only on the message, not the audience.

#### **2.4.1. Frame functions and typologies**

The news media do not frame issues without any function. Frames are used to identify social problems, set moral judgments, find the cause of a problem, and indicate solutions (Entman, 1993; McCombs, 2005; Fong, 2009). Media and communication scholars explore the types of media frames in different ways. Iyengar (1991) identifies issue-specific and generic frames; the former emphasizes a single reality with in-depth coverage and investigation, and the latter, which has two typologies (thematic vs. episodic), contextualizes issues in a more general framework. Episodic frames take a single case or consecutive incidents of an event with tangible public issues, and thematic frames focus on different cases and give a general context (Iyengar, 1991).

Among others, conflict, human impact, economy, morality, and power remain generic kind of frames identified by Neuman et al. (1992). Scheufele (1999) distinguishes the media frame as the elite, politicians, communicators, and journalists frame. On the other hand, people use their cognitive skills of sense making about the complex environment referred to as audience frame (Scheufele, 1999). Additionally, Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) identify five types of frames: attribution of responsibility, conflict, morality, human interest, and economic frames. Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) find conflict framing to be the most applied type of episodic framing, and they contextualize the use of each frame in the news items as follows:

*Conflict frame:* incorporates disagreements that “emphasize conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95). Seow and Maslog (2005) argue that the conflict news frame is grounded in war reporting that is used to increase the rating, subscriptions, and audience attention. Additionally, Galtung’s (1998) war/peace frames are two related frames used to study conflict reporting. It will be discussed in the next section.

*Human-interest frame:* One of the generic frames that are employed in studying various media reporting. Human-interest frame focuses “on describing individuals and groups who are likely to be affected by an issue” (Neuman et al., 1992, p. 69). However, one should know that the human-interest frame may have negative consequences when the media try to dramatize; little antagonisms will grow to unstoppable war/conflicts; the issues of balance remain neglected and the emphasized news item may be polarized (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

*Economic frame:* the media could report a story from the economic perspective to draw a picture of how ethnic conflicts affect the economic situation of a person, an organization, a society, and the global community (Neuman et al., 1992; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). In the case of this study, since the discord is between the Amhara and Kemant ethnic groups, roads were closed and the crop harvesting was

interrupted (Amhara regional police commission, 2019)<sup>5</sup>. From this, media can demonstrate how the conflict disturbs the economic conditions and the business activities of the region and the trans-national investments at large. According to Galtung and Ruge (1965) consequence and impact of an event is an important news value that media consider.

Additionally, morality frames present religious leaders, community representatives or any moral judgments and rationalities that deal with the society's norms and values so that the rest of the audience will be guided for the good (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Neuman et al. (1992) state that morality frames are the less frequently used media frames; they rather arise in the mind of the audience. Moreover, attribution of responsibility frame is used to identify the causes of a conflict and propose recommendations for a solution (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

Despite the existence of various framing typologies, there are no well-defined and identified guidelines on what to analyze and in which typology. However, Entman (1993) indicates some major areas of framing analysis: the headline, keywords of a sentence, the sources of news, the employed visual, and the sentences remain the major factors that indicate the frame of news. Beyond this, because of similarity of the issue that focuses on conflict reporting, but with consideration of socio-political and context difference, the Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) framing typologies will be employed in this study, to analyze the media texts of the two selected television stations regarding interethnic conflict news reporting.

## **2.5. Peace/war journalism**

Among other functions, media work for changing the audience behavioral and attitude. People utilize media to grasp knowledge, experience their environment and gratify their particular needs (Pearce, 2009). A liberal media remain an ideal instrument and signpost of democracy. A healthy media can play a vital role in the presentation of diversified views in a multi-ethnic society, of which Ethiopia is a case.

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<sup>5</sup> Agegnehu Teshager, Security Chief of Amhara Regional State in 29 September 2019, interview with ATV.

A legitimate dialogue can lead to attaining democracy and peace. Though conflict is inevitable throughout the world, there is a potential to minimize its frequency and magnitude. The issue of war, violence, conflict or any dispute between two or more peoples, groups, and states often becomes news since conflict is among the top news values. Using conflict as a news selection criterion is most common in political and third world issue coverage (Neuman, Just & Crigler, 1992). According to Bartholomé, Lecheler and de Vreese (2015), journalists overstress and communicate more values of the conflicting situation, or they silence the war, conflict or dispute between groups so as not to intensify and mobilize people.

To explore this type of media role, the notion of peace journalism and war journalism is helpful though it is a recent approach compared to classical journalism genres such as liberal journalism and development journalism. The Norwegian peace scholar Galtung (1986) points to the role, which media could play in establishing peace and solving conflict. Galtung is recognized with the notion of peace journalism. He argues that framing the information in certain ways can provide opportunities for nonviolent responses to conflicts. In conflict reporting, both war and peace are common media frames (Galtung, 1998).

The peace journalism framework helps researchers to evaluate media input, the responsibility of journalists, and professional ethics of the media during encounters. Galtung and Ruge (1965) in their work *"The structure of foreign news"* outlined four features of war journalism: war and violence orientation; propagandist way of reporting; elite focused; and zero-sum game. Peace journalism, on its part, is supposed to frame the news constructively by communicating the truth, giving time and space for the voiceless as it facilitates a solution that could benefit both parties (Peleg, 2006). The issue of peace building requires a journalist to be energetic and passionate because peace journalism demands interpretation and emphasis that could initiate people for reconciliation. Peace journalism needs appealing frames and a tone that elude divisions between groups like ethnic and religious factions. Additionally, peace journalism is used to predict and anticipate future conflicts and search for solutions towards reconciliation (Galtung, 1998). It equally allows similar

and balanced attention for all the victims, assesses the cultural and historical background that could help transform the conflicts. Journalists in this framework are supposed to present peace proposals from extraordinary actors and highlight progressive perspectives (Nicolas-Gavilan, 2011).

## **2.6. Types of war/peace frameworks**

Lynch and McGoldric (2005) modify the analytical tools developed by Galtung (1998) into seventeen indicators. Among these eleven indicators were used by Lee and Maslog (2005) based on the presentation of the conflict, the presentation of the involved parties, and the language usage. The categorization will be central to the analysis later in the thesis. To give a basic understanding of Lynch and McGoldric (2005), and Lee and Maslog's (2005) categorization, I will summarize the sub-categories as follows:

### **2.6.1. Presentation of conflict**

1. *Here and now vs. cause and consequence*: War journalism reports the conflict as an instantaneous action without presenting any supportive background (Lynch & McGoldric, 2005; Galtung, 1998). Peace journalism, on the other hand, reports violence with an in-depth approach by investigating its cause and predicting future consequences so that the public, the conflicting parties, the government, or the concerned body will comprehend it and work towards positive reaction (Lee & Maslog, 2005).

2. *Problem vs. solution-oriented*: The war journalism frame causes division and magnifies the difference between the conflicting groups. The peace journalism frame to the contrary brings common characteristics and good memories to the television screen so that the people will overcome their current problem (Lee & Maslog, 2005).

3. *Zero-sum game vs. multiple alternatives*: In reporting conflict, peace journalism presents available alternative mechanisms that can dry the conflict and focus on constructing win-win strategies. On the other hand, the war journalism frame presents one party as the winner and the other as the loser (Galtung, 1998).

4. *Visible vs. invisible effects*: The peace journalism frame tries to hide events related to destruction, death, and casualties and exposes cultural or structural violence (like hate speech, words of war, social injustice) that may have a connection with the norms and cultures of a society (Lee & Maslog, 2005). War journalism, on the contrary, focuses on issues such as the number of deaths and keeps casualties visible (Galtung, 1998; Lee & Maslog, 2005).

### **2.6.2. Presentation of actors involved**

This parameter focuses on the news sources, the voices to be heard and the labeling of the conflicting parties.

5. *Elite vs. people-orientation*: The peace journalism frame gives the chance for ordinary people to speak about the situation, while war journalism involves only the leaders (officials, army chiefs, or experts) (Galtung, 1998).

6. *Two parties vs. multiple parties*: Peace journalism works against what war journalism frame traditionally assumes as the conflict is between two parties and affecting them only (Lynch & McGoldric, 2005). Peace journalism involves many actors who can provide diversified views and speaks the interest of various groups (Galtung, 1998).

7. *Labeling parties as good and bad vs. avoiding labeling*: Representing the conflicting parties as good and bad is a characteristic of war journalism, which may affect the peace and reconciliation process negatively. Peace journalism stands in a neutral position and reports both the negative and positive attributions of both parties (Galtung, 1998; (Lynch & McGoldric, 2005; Lee & Maslog, 2005).

8. *Partisan vs. non-partisan*: While war journalism takes sides and supports one over the other, peace journalism abstains from reporting a biased view (Galtung, 1998).

### **2.6.3. Language usage**

9. *The use of victimizing and non-victimizing language*: The specific language used in the news reports can be analyzed to determine whether a media outlet reports the

conflict in peace or war frames. Peace journalism avoids language that victimizes and replaces it with an empowering tone so that the people who suffer from war/violence may be able to recover promptly (Lee & Maslog, 2005).

10. *The use of demonizing vs. non-demonizing language*: Peace journalism refers to the conflicting groups themselves, while war journalism uses “emotionally charged language” rather than using names of individuals/groups (Lynch & McGoldric, 2005).

11. *Emotional vs. non-emotional language*: The third indicator of the peace/war frame concerning language usage is emotional vs. non-emotional word usage. The war frame employs words, which can aggravate the emotions of the people, sensationalize, and dramatize the issue (Galtung, 1998; Lee & Maslog, 2005; Mulatu, 2017). Conversely, the peace frame avoids provocative and sensational language. Instead, the peace journalism frame uses neutral language (Lynch & McGoldric, 2005; Galtung, 1998). However, the peace frame may employ emotional words if it essential to define the situation without overemphasis.

Bearing in mind that media can contribute to both constructive and destructive roles, analyzing their role concerning peace and reconciliation is imperative. In this regard, there is a difference between the interventionist characteristics of peace journalism versus the ‘bystander’ stance of war journalism (Bell, 1997).

In peace journalism, the practitioners are not detached but are involved in the clarification of the causes and facilitating the resolution process, but fairly and responsibly. Bell criticizes the war journalism genre for its focus of violence, dispute, war, and destruction and stands with the idea of peace journalism. However, peace journalism has been criticized for its lack of objectivity, Amanpour (1996) cited in Gilboa (1997) argues that as much as journalists provide adequate coverage to both conflicting parties, it is not mandatory to be neutral and allocate an equal amount of coverage for two sides. Loyn (2007), on the other hand, criticizes peace journalism for lack of objectivity.



## 2.7. Factors affecting framing

Various factors determine media framing but from two major sides: 1) from the media institution (organizational routines, codes, rules, regulations, and self-censorship) and 2) external sources like political parties, interest groups, and social norms. Scheufele (1999) mentions these factors as follows: “social norm and values, organizational pressure and constraint, pressures of interest groups, journalistic routines and ideological or political orientations of journalists” (Scheufele, 1999, p. 109). I will discuss some of these factors in the following section.

Journalists are the primary decision-makers when it comes to which information to share and how to present it. They are not solely reporters of conflict stories; reasonably, they intervene in frame building and mediate in political and socio-cultural situations. As a result, journalists could be part and agents of transformation (Entman, 1991; Hanitzsch, 2007; Bartholome et al., 2017). Media are the predominant source of information, which determine and shape the perception of the audience (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014). This does not mean that journalists are not using their news sources to organize and structure information, which makes the information more trustworthy, and gratifies the audience.

In addition to the journalists and regulatory laws, the sources of news have much power to construct the structure of a reality, which produces a specific meaning that will be transferred to the audience. The news source likewise engages in the framing of the news item when presenting and defining issues (de Vreese, 2005, p. 52). In reporting conflict stories, various bodies frame a story: government officials, victims, armed groups, international donors, humanitarian organizations, and others. When media use more elite and official sources, the coverage tends to escalate conflict, while the more the coverage relies on common people the more it bends towards peace journalism (Galtung, 1998; Shinar, 2009). Journalists prefer to rely on external news sources that may comprehend “speeches, interviews, corporate reports, and government hearings” (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014, p. 122).

No two news sources agree on the news angle in equal manner (Andsager, 2000; Kensicki, 2004). In a less democratic state, where media are still in the hand of the government, the authorities' are more powerful sources than the public. During crises, government officials occupy the columns, leaving the investigative role of the media out of the game (Kern et al., 2003). Endalkachew (2018) has identified key sources of conflict news, which include government officials, victims, protestors, opposition parties, attackers, humanitarian institutions, and the global society who can get involved in the conflict resolution process. Endalkachew's study strengthens Kern et al.'s (2003) statement that government officials have the highest frequency and occupy most space in the news item.

Moreover, technology, organizational routines, economic controls, business linkage, information and communication devices have much influence on the judgments that a journalist or an editor does when selecting a source (Bennett, 2004). Reese and Shoemaker (2016) identify different levels and forms of influence that could be a pre-condition for selecting, framing, and performing gatekeeping practices in the newsroom and for the design of media content. The media's ownership, journalists' ideology and professionalism, workload, and institutional issues and social systems shape the type of message limit the amount of coverage (Reese & Shoemaker, 2016).

Some scholars associate the issue of framing with media bias. According to Hamborg, Donnay and Gipp (2018), media intentionally or unintentionally frame a reality to change the public attitude and shape their opinion, which generate accidental and projected biases. The news values and the audiences' experience variations are attributed as a basis of unintentional bias, and the media/journalist ideology and personal/organizational partisanship as sources of intentional bias, distracting the context of reality (Mullainathan & Shleifer, 2002). In this regard, media have ideological bias when they support or attack a certain group with a slant in terms of word usage, tone, and interpretation (Mullainathan & Shleifer, 2002).

Identifying media bias is challenging (Chiang & Knight, 2011). The limited airtime in the broadcast media is a source of criticism for unfair, unbalanced, and biased representation. Commonly political and racial conflicts are subject to biased

coverage. Bias can be generated when “different information providers highlight numerous aspects as well as magnitudes of the unattainable true event sequence, and when consulted a complete as well as a comprehensive listing of conflict behavior will not be identified” (Davenport, 2010, p. 31). Additionally, the cognitive skill of an individual equally affects the level of understandings about the social environment. The individuals’ mental development, the communication situation, the receiver’s ability to interpreting and understanding determine the framing too (Ardèvol-Abreu , 2015).

Beyond these, geographic or ideological proximity of media outlets affects the framing of conflict news. A medium operated at the national level with diversified communities might frame reality in a different manner than media on community level for a homogeneous audience. Locasse and Foster (2012) in their study of “The war next door: peace journalism in US local and distant newspapers’ coverage of Mexico” concludes that the more a medium has proximity to a group, the more it reports a conflict positively using peace journalism oriented language. Local media less likely divide the conflicting parties as good and evil, they utilize less sensitive language to narrow the gap observed in the conflicting groups with a balanced and neutral stance.

Shinar (2009) contemplated the 2006 Lebanon war in Canadian and Israeli media to find out whether proximity affected the extent of journalists’ active involvement in war/peace coverage. He found that the more connected in geography or ideology a media organization is, the more it offers coverage to the issue – as opposed to the distanced media outlet. To sum up, the political, societal, professional, and geographic orientations of journalists, media, and sources undoubtedly affect the framing of an issue and the results that media could bring for the conflicting groups.

## **2.8. Background of the Amhara and Kemant people conflict**

Regardless of a voluminous culture and ethnically diversified society, studying ethnicity in Ethiopia has been a puzzle that requires detailed investigation because of cultural assimilations and psychological makeups. Studying the historical relationship of Amhara and Kemant people's ethnic groups remain appealing for many researchers. Demographically, the Kemant people are located in the Amhara region, the northwest part of Lake Tana, in the current North, Central and West Gondar Zones that include Chilga, Lay Armachiho, Dembia, Wegera, Metema, Quara and Gondar Zuria woradas and at Gondar town (Gamst, 1969; Belay, 2010; Yeshiwas, 2014). The Amhara on the other hand, referred to as the second largest ethnic group in Ethiopia with 27% of the total population, next to the Oromo (World Population Review, 2020), covers the Shoa, Wollo, Gondar, and Gojjam (Michael, 2008), as well as in urban areas where Amharic is widely spoken.

Researchers emphasize that the Amhara and Kemant people have not been in any noticeable poor condition that leads them towards a conflict; rather they have lived for long in harmony and hospitality. Inter-ethnic marriage has been common between the two ethnic groups, which fortify their relationships though there were some stratification or class divisions before the year 2015 (Birhanu, 2019). During the regime of Emperor Theodros II in 1855 and the expansion of Orthodox Christianity, rulers that aimed to advance their political hierarchy arranged spiritual and political marriages, and priests were baptizing the Kemant people to create a religious belief shift from *Hige Libona* (literary meaning Pagan-Hebraic) to Orthodox Christianity, which was seen as blissful action (Birhanu, 2019). The two groups have experienced shared values and common ways of life: the economic base of the Amhara and Kemant peoples is still agriculture; both ethnic groups are able to communicate by the Amharic language, and they have shared resources/land fairly since the coming of Emperor Yohannes IV in 1872 who brought forth the baptism proclamation. Culturally, they celebrate epiphany, the most colorful Orthodox Christian festival in Gondar; the marriage ceremony; their food tradition or the funeral ritual remain

undistinguishable; and they have been living peacefully, even if there are people who argue that the two peoples' ancestry, religion, and language is different (Belay, 2010).

The people of Amhara and Kemant have challenged the oppressive military regime since 1974 and scarified to overthrow the 27-year TPLF domination (Birhanu, 2019). Similar interactions observed between the two groups prove the absence of any visible ethnic based conflicts between the two groups, even if conflict is inescapable. Even though the two groups were under similar front to challenge the TPLF domination since 1991, the Kemant political elites have been struggling to reclaim their lost identity and administrative boundaries (Yeshiwas, 2014). By contrast the Amhara elites stand against them (Yeshiwas, 2014). The issues of land and administrative boundaries have been a point of conflict in Ethiopian politics (Mulatu, 2018), and they are for the two groups as well.

The post-1991 ethnicized politics changed the nature of conflict into identity politics. As a result of that the two ethnic group's antagonistic relationship starts openly after November 2015, when the Kemant demarcates their own self-administrative boundaries and seeks some *kebeles* of Central Gondar Zone, where both Amhara and Kemant peoples are living together (Birhanu, 2019). Conversely, the Amhara feel unsecured, fearing the Kemant thinking the prohibition of the Amharas to live autonomously (Birhanu, 2019). The quest for recognition and self-administration creates ethnic grievances and causes for the death and displacement of people (Birhanu, 2019). Yeshiwas (2014) highlights that the Kemant were struggling for their identity, political autonomy, mentioning other small ethnic groups representations in the in the Amhara regional state, however, the regional government was reluctant. Despite the fact that the regional government council has made decisions about the number of *kebeles* for the new demarcated area of the Kemant administration, because the two groups are amalgamated, identifying the Kemant form Amhara is highly demanding (AMMA, 2019).

The Kemant Identity Committee in the 2000s proposed a new administration plan that incorporated eight *woredas*<sup>6</sup>, containing 126 kebeles. However, the Amhara regional government refused what the Kemant committee proposed and decided to organize the Kemant self-administration in 69 *kebeles*. Again, the Kemant committee was not satisfied on the government decision (AMMA, 2019). Thus, the regional government was not given devotion until 2015. Later the elites from the two ethnic groups politicized the case and motivated the society for forceful actions caused by discrimination, prejudice, and hatred that caused loss of life, displacement, and destruction of resources in 2018 and 2019. Nevertheless, the quest for self-administration did not fulfill the requirement of the Amhara regional government's constitution, article 39 sub article seven, but the quest for self-administration has got a response<sup>7</sup>.

However, the need for self-administration from the Kemant side has been referred as a cause of the conflict between the two ethnic groups. In the beginning of 2015, based on the regional house of peoples representative council 42 *Kebeles* were allocated for the new Kemant administration though there was a need to make a referendum for eight additional *kebeles* to be included in the new administration or to remain in the old-Amhara administration<sup>8</sup>. The regional council made a decision in 2013 about the referendum procedures to be done with two guidelines; to follow the constitutional procedures and the public interest (Amhara Mass Media, 2020). Later on, a special *administration* of the Kemant ethnic group was established in March 2015 by taking the pre-identified 42 *kebeles*<sup>9</sup> from *Chilga* and *Armachiho woredas* under proclamation number 22/2015, which is accountable for the people and the regional government. However, "*Kemant interim committee*" brought further questions that seek other *kebeles* to be part of the new administration, where the Amhara and Kemant peoples share common geographical boundaries, covering 27 to 30 *kebeles* that will make the new administration into 69 *kebeles*. Considering its sensitive nature, the Amhara

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<sup>6</sup> Woreda: a government structure similar to a district

<sup>7</sup> Media briefing given by Merhatsidk Mekonnen, the legal advisory of the Amhara Regional State on Amhara Mass Media Agency.

<sup>8</sup> Media briefing given by Merhatsidk Mekonnen, the legal advisory of the Amhara Regional State on Amhara Mass Media Agency.

<sup>9</sup> Kebele: The smallest administrative government structure (unit) in Ethiopia.

regional government forwarded the case for the house of federation in the national level and a referendum was made on October 2017. However, the Kemant Identity Committee remain unsatisfied over the decisions<sup>10</sup>, which is considered as an immediate cause for the September-November 2019 Amhara-Kemant dispute<sup>11</sup> that the Amhara and Tigray televisions have been reporting. In the following section, the background of the two television channels is presented.

## **2.9. Tigray Television**

TTV is one of the departments in the Tigray Mass Media Agency (TMMA) launched after EPRDF took power in 1991. It started on-air broadcasting with a one-hour airtime in Tigrigna language via Ethiopian Television, the now Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporate (EBC). Between 2007 and 2009, TMMA was under the Tigray Information Bureau, the current Tigray Communication Affairs Bureau. Since 2009, Tigray Mass Media Agency has been under the Regional State of Tigray and responsible for covering the regional House of People's Representative, cf. proclamation number 142/2008. The media company started a 24 hours transmission in 2018 in three regional and one national language (Danial, 2019). In addition to the Tigrigna language, Amharic, Erob and Kunama are the working languages of the media company (TMMA, 2020).

## **2.10. Amhara Television**

Historically, the Amhara Mass Media Agency (AMMA) was the first government owned regional media company in Ethiopia, established in 1995 after EPRDF (the current Prosperity Party) came to power, under the Information Department of Culture and Tourism Bureau, the present Amhara Regional Communication Affairs Bureau (AMMA, 2020; Wolelaw, 2012). Still, the Amhara Mass Media Agency has a long history, since it started with an urban centered publication *Bekur Newspaper* in

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<sup>10</sup> Media briefing given by Merhatsidk Mekonnen, the legal advisory of the Amhara Regional State on Amhara Mass Media Agency.

<sup>11</sup> Chuch Alebachew's, mini research about the cause of Amhara-Kemant conflict presented on ATV, who was the former member of Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM). Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0eeUXRg\\_qQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0eeUXRg_qQ)

1994. Amhara Television (ATV) was established in 1999 and started its transmission via a rented airtime on Ethiopian Television with a 30-minute weekly broadcast in 1999. Considering the public interest to know, the television improved its airtime into one hour per week from January 2004 and six hours per week from 2009 (Wolelaw, 2012). Following the establishment of a media complex in 2013, ATV began to broadcast its news and programs for 12 hours per day through four local and one international language: Amharic, Afan-oromo, Awi, Himtana and English (Sørensen, 2020). The agency is also known for its programs in relation with good governance public spheres since 2015. According to the organization's establishment proclamation no. 88/1995, under the supervision of the regional council, the Amhara Mass Media Agency focuses on promoting regional development, sustainable peace, and facilitating democratization process (Sørensen, 2020; AMMA, 2020).



## **Chapter 3: Research methodology**

The objective of this study is to assess the framing of interethnic conflict between the Amhara and Kemant people in the Amhara regional state by ATV and TTV. In addition, it aims to see the sources attributed and the role of the two television companies in escalating or deescalating the conflict. This chapter discusses the research design and methodological approaches, including the research strategy, time horizon, methodological choices, sampling techniques, intended procedures and data validity and reliability issues.

### **3.1. Research design**

Research design is the conceptual structure that constitutes the outline for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data or an outline of what the researcher will do from writing the hypothesis and operationalizing concepts in a way that enables the researcher to the final analysis of data (Kothari, 2004, p. 31). It is the process of transforming an idea into a project by the researcher, which includes the decisions on how the researcher conceptualizes the research and the ultimate goal of the research, whether it is for knowledge development or problem-solving (Given, 2008, p. 761). In quantitative research, the design and data collecting techniques are more or less known. While in the case of qualitative research, the meaning of research design can be debated. Interview, for example, could be both a study design and a data collection instrument (Kumar, 2001). From this point of view, I have adapted the Saunders et al. (2019) '*Onion Model Research*' methodology to make the study concise and understandable, as shown on the next page.

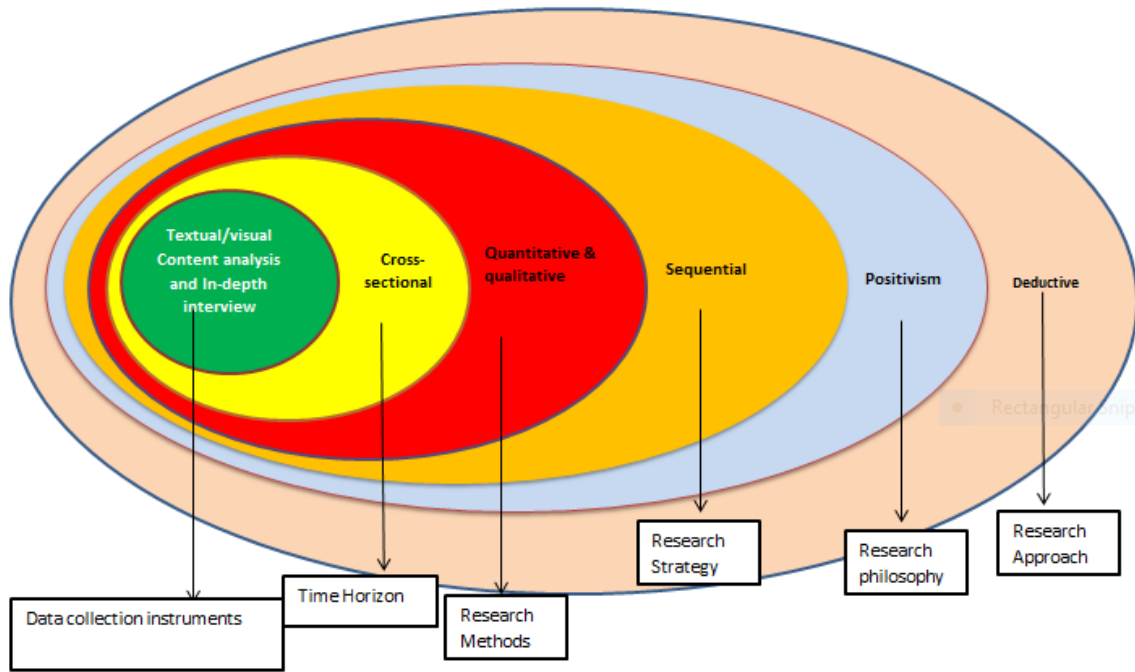


Figure 1: Saunders et al. (2019) Onion model research methodology (2019), Adapted by Melkamu M.

### 3.2. Research approach

A research approach is about the ways of generating data in the form of numbers (quantitative) and meanings (qualitative) methods (Kothari, 2004). Since the objective of this research is to assess the dominant frames and sources used in the coverage of the conflict, quantitative research method was employed to generate meanings from numerical data by using descriptive statistics to understand the characteristics of the population and discover significant differences between the study subjects (Query et al., 2009). Additionally, qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted to validate and deepen the quantitative data. According to Jensen (2002), qualitative research is vital to investigate issues of the study: finding, interpreting, and understanding the context of the issues. Therefore, the study employed a sequential research strategy, which analyzed the quantitative content analysis first and the qualitative interview next.

Much research is done to test a hypothesis based on a pre-identified theory following a deductive approach. On the other side, an inductive approach is concerned with the understanding of a phenomenon in which events take place, and researchers in this tradition are more likely to work on qualitative data lastly

develop a theory (Saunders et al., 2019). For that reason, a deductive reasoning approaches was employed, which are often applied in quantitative content analysis to examine the framing of conflicts and to identify frequently attributed sources that influence the framing of the different parties in the conflict.

### **3.3. Research philosophy**

The way a researcher understands reality (ontology) and acquires knowledge (epistemology) is determined by the philosophy he/she is using. “Quantitative research is generally associated with positivism, especially when used with predetermined and highly structured data collection techniques” (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 166). The typical aim of quantitative research following a positivist approach is to reach as objective conclusions as possible to make the result replicable. Positivism informs this study in the sense that the researcher is defined as an outsider who tries to reach a generalizable result (Mitchell, 2018). The study was not strictly quantitative, however. In-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with five key informants who work as news editors and reporters to disentangle how the reporting was done and to understand its contextual setting.

### **3.4. Research Methods**

Content analysis was the main research technique of this study. Television news items were analyzed in order to “quantify content in terms of predetermined categories and in a systematic and replicable manner” (Bryman, 2012, p. 292). Though the present research represents a case study, the method was more of quantitative content analysis that aims to categorize the content of news on the outlined categories through numerical data (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2014). D’Anglo (2017) argues that quantitative framing analysis focuses on the coding of texts, images and visuals in order to allow reliable observation of even greater numbers of texts than manual coding can accomplish. According to Kothari (2004), “content analysis is particularly suitable to analyze documented materials within a given context where the materials are produced” (p. 110). Therefore, quantitative content analysis was employed to calculate the frequency of the generic frames and the most

frequently used news sources to indicate how the ethno-political situation of the two regions is represented.

Additionally, it is also appropriate to try to understand the reality of the production of frames beyond the text. In doing so, qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of interpretive material that makes the world visible, studied in their natural settings in order to make sense of meanings people convey (Lewis, 2003; Daymon & Holloway, 2002).

Moreover, a case study allows the exploration and understanding of complex issues and used for in-depth investigation (Zainal, 2007). It helps the researcher to go beyond the quantitative statistical results and understand the behavioral conditions through the actor's perspective and helps to explain the process and outcome of a phenomenon through comprehensive observation, reconstruction, and analysis of the cases under investigation (Zainal, 2007, p. 1). Therefore, by considering the socio-political context of two regions, the study investigated the framing of the inter-ethnic conflict, the representation of different parties involved in the conflict, and the role of the two ethnically organized television firms.

### **3.5. Sampling techniques and procedures**

#### **3.5.1. Research material and time horizon**

The research material consists of news items broadcasted in the Amharic language at 6 pm in ATV and 8 pm in TTV from the beginning of September 2019 to the beginning of November 2019. The 6 pm and 8 pm news broadcasts are considered because the evening hours are prime time news that have a potential large audience and have more weight than the mid-day news.

#### **3.5.2. Sampling, sample size, and sample frame**

Even though the Amhara-Kemant conflict was regarded as being solved with various actions in May 2019, it reoccurred in September 2019 and people were displaced from their homes and even lost their lives. Thus, the study time was purposefully selected from the beginning of September 2019 until the regional

government in collaboration with the federal government controlled the conflict in November 2019. The population of this study comprises a total of 64 days evening hour news packages. While 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 20, 21, 23, 27 of September and 11 and 23 of November ATV news were missed, TTV news broadcasted on 13 September and 7 and 8 of November were missed. This happened due to the unavailability of the news packages on their YouTube channel. Hence, 114 (53 from ATV) and (61 from TTV) news packages were the total population of the study. After careful selection of the conflict-oriented news items by using a coding sheet about the Amhara and Kemant ethnic groups, every news item was scripted and numbered. Then, a total of 68 news items were found, which is the sample size of the study. Considering the manageability of the sample size, a purposive sampling has been employed, which was helpful to achieve a maximum precision.

While only news stories are the unit of analysis, words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and visuals are the frame of analysis, which indicates the frame of news (Entman, 1993). Additionally, all of the data that was gathered from the selected research respondents made up the frame of analysis. Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) references to generic media frames were used in this study as well. These framing typologies are conflict, economic consequence, human-interest, morality, and responsibility frames. In addition to the generic frames, Galtung's (1998) war/peace reporting parameters were employed.

### **3.6. Coding sheet**

Coding in research is narrowing the frameworks and assigning meanings to the raw data, which is going to be evaluated. In this case, to single out the meaning of the Amhara-Kemant ethnic conflict news stories from the two television stations, the conflict is operationally defined as a quarrel between two or more ethnic groups caused by the politicization of their tribal identity of self-centric groups, politicians or any force. Additionally, the concepts related to the generic frames (conflict, economic, responsibility, morality, and human-interest), war and peace frames, and the type of attributed sources in the news items, were coded (see appendix 1). Coding was essential for this study because it supplies the name of concepts and the

criteria used to identify and sort the variables that could proof the validity and reliability of measurements. To do so, researchers may adapt deductive theories or prior extant research (Given, 2008). As a result, pre-determined (deductive) coding, Semetko and Valkenberg (2000) and Galtung (1998) peace/war categories, employed by Mulatu (2017), Fong (2009) and Lee and Maslog (2005) was adopted (see appendix 1. The researcher and one MA student in Global Journalism and understands Amharic did the coding. Before the actual coding, an explanation about the coding categories was given for the coder.

To check the reliability of the coding, the percentage of the agreements made by the two inter-coders divided for the total decision, which was calculated as  $\frac{2M}{N_1+N_2}$  (Krippendorff, 2004) and among 892 total (68 dominant frames, 76 sources, 748 peace/war frames) judgment, 861 similar agreements were recorded, which were .96 or 96.5%, which proves the reliability of the measurements. The rest 31 stories were re-coded and the disagreements of decision observed between the coders solved during the second coding.

### **3.7. Data collection procedure and instruments**

The news items related to the Amhara-Kemant conflict of the two television stations were collected and examined. The analyzed data were drawn from the two media outlets' YouTube<sup>12</sup> pages and the researcher downloaded all the news packages and organized them in ascending order from September 2019 to November 2019. In selecting the news items, keywords associated with the “Amhara-Kemant conflict” “Amhara and Kemant ethnic groups,” “the current peace and security issues in the north and central zones” and “the government and the Kemant Committee” were under consideration. A semi-structured in-depth interview was also made in Bahir Dar and Mekelle. The interview data were collected from the two media journalists

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<sup>12</sup> Tigray Mass Media Agency YouTube channel, (2019).

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDpMt3PlsYdJGwaiNBt01A1Srt5nDM31b>

Amhara mass media Agency YouTube channel (2019).

<https://m.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmCrONGfZd8Qu22qI0m7NYKJAXGQEsR26>  
<https://m.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmCrONGfZd8Qu22qI0m7NYKJAXGQEsR26>

following ethical procedures. Before the data collection, I notified the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD), and the data collection was allowed by NSD.

### **3.8. Data analysis**

Content analysis (textual/visual analysis) was used to analyze the framing of news items identifying the dominant frames and source usage. The software Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyze the quantitative data, particularly to help determining an independent sample t-test to compare the quantitative differences of dominant frames. In addition, the qualitative data collected from key informants were thematically analyzed in accordance with the research questions, fundamentally used to validate the quantitative data.

### **3.9. Ethical considerations**

Since being ethical is a foundation for sound research, I was dedicated to follow a professional approach. Among the fundamentals here are the important; of using informed consent, not providing incentives to the informants, securing source confidentiality, minimizing the subjects from any form of harm from the respondent's side, and using the data for the research purpose only and avoid advancing any personal agenda of the researcher. For instance, to minimize harm from the respondents' side except one ATV news editor who made consent to be quoted using his real name and a false name was given for the other four respondents from ATV and TTV.

## Chapter 4: Data presentation and analysis

In this chapter, the collected data are presented and the key findings are discussed. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the target of the study is to analyze the framing of the Amhara-Kemant ethnic conflict by the Amhara and Tigray Regional Television stations. The data discussed in this chapter were gathered from the two stations' YouTube channels, which are direct copies of the news packages broadcasted in the evening hours 6 pm (ATV) and 8 pm (TTV). The study combines quantitative content analysis and qualitative in-depth interviews. The discussion is preceded by the analysis of framing typologies and source attribution of news items obtained from the coded data, followed by analysis of purposely-selected respondent interviews from the two television stations to deepen the quantitative data. The interviews were conducted with news editors and reporters who had been involved in the writing and reporting of the conflict news.

### 4.1. Data presentation and findings of quantitative data

The first step of the analysis is to quantify the news items collected from the two television stations.

**Table 1: Distribution of news items reported by the two television channels**

Television Station	Number of News Items	Percent
Amhara TV	41	60.3%
Tigray TV	27	39.7%
Total	68	100%

As indicated in the table above within the specified two-month time frame, a total of 68 Amhara-Kemant conflict news items broadcasted in the ATV and TTV evening news are included in the study. While the ATV broadcast 41 news items, which account for 60.3% of the total study sample, the TTV aired 27 news items that account for 39.7% of the total sample size. From this, one may say that a media outlet with geographical proximity to the concerned events (ATV) gives higher coverage of the issue than the distanced one (TTV). By contrast, TTV as an outsider relatively gave better coverage, as it is not both geographically and linguistically proximate to the case.



## 4.2. Types of dominant news frames

Table 2: Distribution of dominant framing typologies by the two television channels

Frame type	Amhara TV	%	Tigrai TV	%
Conflict frame	14	34.1	14	51.8%
Economic consequence frame	5	12.2	N/A	N/A
Attribution of responsibility frame	15	36.6	13	49.2%
Morality frame	5	12.2	N/A	N/A
Human interest frame	2	4.9	N/A	N/A
Total	41	100%	27	100%

As shown above in *table 2*, the attribution of responsibility frame takes the highest share of the news stories reported by the ATV with 15 news stories (36.6%). The conflict frame ranks second, which presents the conflicting parties in different fronts; entertains polarized views; reveals the presence of conflicting parties; and mentions different groups as victim and attacker. In this framing typology 14 news items are identified, representing 34.1% of the total ATV news items. The third most prominent frame found in the ATV news items is the economic frame that deals with the effect of the conflict on economic activity, observed in five news stories. Another five news stories are framed as having moral values that employ the opinion leaders, usually religious fathers and community leaders, as a source of the news to guide people, which help them to behave ethically, avoid the conflict and foster a peaceful community. Stories that are categorized as human-interest frame are two, (4.9% of the total stories). It is also noted that one news story had more than one frame; however, the most dominant frames are presented in the table.

For TTV the conflict frame was found to be the most frequently used news frame that proves the presence of an antagonistic relationship between the two groups, one as an attacker and the other as a victim, often the Amhara Regional Government and the Kemant ethnic group respectively. The conflict frame counts for 51.8% of the total (27 news stories). The attribution of responsibility frame, which focuses on the causes and solutions for the conflict, made up 49.2 % of the total news stories broadcasted by TTV from 8 September to 10 November 2019. As indicated in the table above, the TTV did not use morality, economic consequence, and human-interest frames.

When we see the most repeatedly attributed dominant frames within the two regional television stations, there is no significant difference as both emphasize the attribution of responsibility frame and the conflict frame (*see table 2*). In both stations, the two frames were used more frequently than other framing typology: economy, morality, and human interest. Based on Levene's t-Test for equity of variance, the p value in which the probability of means being equal between the two media frame is less than .05, specifically .003, which statistically indicates significant framing differences between the two televisions about the Amhara-Kemant conflict. However, morality, economic consequence, and human-interest frames could be the cause of this variation.

### 4.3. Type of news sources in the two television stations

**Table 3: Distribution of attributed sources by the two television channels**

Type of sources used	Media Channel				Total	
	Amhara TV	%	Tigray TV	%	Both	%
Government Official	22	50%	8	25%	30	39.5%
Media/News Agencies	N/A	N/A	2	6.3%	2	2.6%
Opposition	2	4.5%	5	15.6%	7	9.2%
Common people	14	31.8%	14	43.7%	28	36.8%
Religious fathers/Community leaders	4	9.1%	N/A	N/A	4	5.3%
Victims	1	2.3%	N/A	N/A	1	1.3%
Experts	1	2.3%	3	9.4%	4	5.3%
Total	44	100%	32	100%	76	100%

As presented in *table 3*, the news items broadcasted on the two television stations use sources in different extent. ATV often cites the government officials as their source over other types of sources. Twenty-two (50%) of the news sources are local, regional, and national level government representatives. Next to government officials, common peoples (the youth, women, and other ordinary individuals) who are inhabitants of the conflict areas and towns of the Amhara region are attributed with a high frequency, covering 14 news sources (31.8%) in the stories broadcasted in ATV. Religious fathers and community leaders whom the community calls *Shimagilie* are attributed in four stories (9.1%) of the total ATV news items. Only 4.5%

of the ATV stories give the space for opposition parties as a source. Victims and scholars are only used as sources once each.

TTV, on the other hand, uses common people (commonly students, who belong to the Kemant ethnic group and are studying at Aksum, Adigrat, and Mekelle universities) in 43.7% of the total sources. Government officials take up 25% of the news sources, being attributed in eight stories. The opposition party leaders participated as sources in five (15.6%) of the stories. Experts were attributed in three news items, and the news agencies are used in two news items, making up 9.4% and 6.3% of the total, respectively. When we see the total number and percentages of source treatment within the two media outlets, government officials receive the largest portion (39.5 % of the total news sources), followed by common people (36.8% or 28 stories). Opposition party leaders are attributed in seven stories (9.2 %). Religious fathers and community leaders, and experts are attributed in four stories (5.3%) each. While media or news agencies are among the neglected news sources by ATV, TTV abstains from using religious/community leaders and victims as a news source. Despite these differences, ATV and TTV employed a similar set of sources. As indicated in the appendix section, the mean scores of the two television companies p value  $>.05$ , which is .158, thus the variation of sources between the two stations is not statistically significant.

#### **4.4. Peace/war journalism frame**

In identifying the role of the two media stations, a widely employed framing typology of conflict reporting, namely Galtung's (1998) peace/war journalism frame, later modified by Lynch and McGoldric (2005) and employed in Lee and Maslog (2005) study, is adopted. Thus, *table 4* on page 43 presents the coded data with corresponding percentages. The table shows the proportion of the two media channels' peace/war journalism frame. The analysis mainly focuses on the presentation of the conflict, the presentation of parties involved and the language they use in the reporting. The analysis is based on the explanation given in sub-chapter 2.6 in the literature review section.

**Table 4: Distribution of peace/war journalism frames by the two television stations**

	War journalism frames				Peace journalism frames					Neutral/partial frames			
	ATV News (n=41)	Percent	TTV News (n=27)	Percent		ATV news (n=41)	Percent	TTV News (n=27)	Percent	ATV News (n=41)	Percent	TTV News (n=27)	Percent
Here & Now	6	14.6%	16	59.3%	Cause & consequence	27	65.9%	4	14.8%	8	19.5%	7	25.9%
Problem oriented	12	29.3%	14	51.9%	Solution oriented	17	41.4%	8	29.6%	12	29.3%	5	18.5%
Zero-sum game	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Multiple alternatives	24	58.5%	11	40.7%	17	41.5%	16	59.3%
Visible effect	6	14.6%	20	74.1%	Invisible effect	22	53.7%	6	22.2%	13	31.7%	1	3.7%
Elite oriented	26	63.4%	13	48.1%	People oriented	15	36.6%	14	59.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Two parties	28	68.3%	23	85.2%	Multiple parties	13	31.7%	4	14.8%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Label parties as good & bad	8	19.5%	16	59.3%	Avoid labeling	33	80.5%	11	40.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Partisan	14	34.1%	21	77.7%	Non-partisan	27	65.9%	6	22.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Uses victimizing language	5	12.2%	12	44.4%	Non-victimizing Language	36	87.8%	15	56.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Demonizing language	8	19.5%	11	40.7%	Non-demonizing Language	33	80.5%	16	59.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emotional language	10	24.4%	14	51.9%	Non-emotional language	31	75.6%	13	48.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	123 from 451	27.3%	160 from 297	53.9%		278 of 451	61.6%	108 of 297	36.4%	50 from 451	11.1%	29 of 297	9.7%

**NB. The total percentage is calculated from the total frequency of a story has, in which each news item is evaluated 11 times.**

Initially, three major frames of analysis; peace journalism, war journalism, and neutral frames; were proposed. If a frame incorporates relatively equal amount of peace and war journalism indicators, it is coded as a neutral/partial story. Later, 11 war journalism indicators and 11 peace journalism indicators of Galtung (1998) used by Lee and Maslog (2005) were outlined (*see table 4 or appendix 3.3*). Frequencies of the war/peace journalism indicators in the story were counted. As stated in the table above, ATV produced 41, and TTV produced 27 news items on the Amhara-Kemant conflict. Then, a total 451 frequencies for ATV and 297 frequencies for TTV were generated. 27.3% of the ATV and 53.9% of TTV news items were found to be war journalism oriented. By contrast, 61.6% of ATV and 36.4% of TTV news items are reported with a peace journalism frame. Accordingly, 11.1% of the ATV total stories and 9.7% of TTV news stories have a neutral/partial angle.

To see the proportions of each indicator, ATV has six stories with the here and now frame (14.6% of the frames in this category; cf. 2.6), up against 27 of the news items which illustrate the causes and consequences of the conflict (65.9%), and eight stories (19.5%) with a neutral angle. Most of the news stories from TTV, on the other hand, emphasize the conflict as current, immediate, and instantaneous. Among the total news stories of TTV, 16 stories (59.3%) contain the here and now frame, four news items (14.8%) carry the cause-consequence indicators, and the remaining seven stories (25.9%) have neutral characteristics.

Furthermore, when it comes to problem vs. solution, 12 news stories (29.3%) in ATV have been reported with a problem-oriented angle, supposedly contributing to further division and magnifying the differences between the conflicting groups. On the other hand, 17 (41.4%) of the stories value the peace journalism frame, focusing on the two groups' common characteristics, values, cultures, and good memories. The news stories reported by TTV, on the other hand, are mainly problem-oriented (51.9%), while 29.6% of stories emphasize solutions. Eight ATV news items (29.3%) and 5 of TTV's news items were found to be reported with a neutral frame, incorporating both the war and peace indicators.

The other evaluative criterion was the zero-sum game vs. multiple alternatives indicators. Neither of the channels was found to employ the zero-sum game, meaning that a clear winner and a clear loser are not portrayed. Instead, multiple alternative frames are employed on ATV (58.5%) and TTV (40.7%). These are frames that present any available mechanisms that could serve to solve the quarrel. The rest of the stories can be categorized as neutral. When it comes to visible vs. invisible effects, six of the stories by ATV (14.6%) were reported with visible effects, all produced in the first weeks of the conflict. 22 stories (53.7%) are framed with invisible effects, simply stating the presence of the conflict. To the contrary, TTV reports more visible effects (74.1% of the stories) than invisible (22.2%).

In relation to elite vs. people orientation, a majority of the ATV stories (63.4%) used elite sources that could tweak their framing towards war journalism. One-third (36.6%) of the stories carried people oriented news that could be associated with a peace journalism angle. 68.3% of the ATV stories are being reported with only two parties represented, while the multiple party frame is found in 31.7% of the news stories. The latter is more likely to carry diversified views and comments to calm down the conflict. 19.5% of the stories on ATV label the conflicting party in a good/bad binary, while the remaining (80.5%) did not label any faction as good and bad, rather it simply presents clarifying facts. When it comes to the question of showing support, 14 stories (34.1%) had a partisan stand, meaning that they are reported in a way which excludes the other conflicting group, and 27 news items (65.9%) were reported in a balanced manner (all these data relate to ATV).

Unlike ATV, TTV allows reasonable space for ordinary people to speak. Specifically, 14 news stories (51.9%) attribute common people, while the elites are attributed in 13 stories (48.1%). While 85.2% of the stories on TTV reflect two parties, 14.8% of the stories give a voice for several parties. 16 stories (59.3%) present the conflicting groups in a good vs. bad approach, while 11 stories (40.7%) were found to portray the conflicting groups impartially. A journalist's stance was observed in 21 (77.7%) of the TTV total news stories, giving support to the view that the Kemants are right and constitutional (elaborated on in the qualitative section), and on the contrary it

portrays the Amhara regional government as repudiating the rights of the Kemant group. Only six (22.3%) of the TTV stories were found to be reported objectively.

Based on the analysis of language, 36 stories on ATV (87.8%) were found not to use victimizing language that intentionally exaggerates the dispute and sensationalizes the inflicted damage. Comparatively, more stories are being framed with the use of ill-treating language on TTV than on ATV. Among all, 12 news stories (44.4%) used victimizing language, compared with 12.2% for ATV. The remaining 15 stories (56.6%) on TTV and 36 (87.8%) on ATV used neutral language. TTV used derogative terms rather than denotative attribution when reporting in eleven news stories (40.7%), and 16 stories (59.3%) did not employ demonizing wording but rather reflected a factual account of how the conflict happened and its consequences. On ATV 8 stories (19.5%) were found to use demonizing language. The majority of ATV stories (80.5%) use the real name of the disputing parties. Lastly, 14 news items on TTV (51.9%) use inflammatory language, which could make people more emotional and reactionary by dramatizing the issue through revealing the visuals. Some of the stories used footage that show a group of police forces who wear uniform and chase civilians, and there are images of destructed houses and demonstrations. This may create confusion and motivate people for further action against others. On the reverse, 13 TTV stories are being reported with a neutral tone, counting for 48.1% of the total coverage. By contrast, ATV used emotional language in 24.4% of the stories, while 75.6% of the stories used positive expressions rather than emotional language. Concerning the language use, both television channels used a relatively positive tone.

As shown in *appendix 3.3*, the independent sample t-test result reveals a significant difference in the use of peace and war frames between the two television channels. While most of the news on ATV leans towards peace journalism, TTV news stories tend to favor a war journalism frame. Less significant differences are observed in variables such as problem vs. solution, elite vs. people orientation, and visible vs. invisible effects of framing (p values of .340, .169 and .217 respectively) that denotes an equal variance is assumed. On the remaining indicators of the war/peace

journalism frame, the two media outlets have rather different ways of reporting with a p value of  $<.05$  (see *appendix 3.3*).

## **4.5. Interview data**

This section presents the data collected from the interviews with key informants. Two reporters and one news editor of ATV, and two journalists from TTV (one editor and one team coordinator) took part in the in-depth interviews. Initially, I was scheduled to conduct the interview with three media professionals from each media house, but due to troubles of accessing the first chosen informants from TTV, two other respondents (the team coordinator and one news editor) participated in the study. Essentially, the in-depth interview was done to make sense of the natural environment in which the reported stories occur; to identify the role of the media outlet in the conflict; and to monitor the journalists' position during the reporting, which is a position that could have a bearing on the message. Personal consent was made with one ATV news editor to be quoted by name, but the other respondents from ATV and TTV preferred to be cited anonymously, so the name of the remaining four respondents have been changed in the thesis.

For clear understanding, I made a choice to present the interview data from the two television stations separately (below). The data collected from the ATV respondents are presented in the following section in line with the research questions. Considering the productive and destructive roles of media, the journalists' intervention remains vital in changing the conflicting situations and change the direction of unmanageable controversies (Bell, 1997). Thus, this section attempts firstly to assess the overall role of the two ethnically operated television channels.



#### **4.5.1. Interviews with Amhara Television journalists**

All of ATV's informants approved a potentially enormous positive role of the television medium in negotiating the two groups for peaceful means of conflict resolution over and against violent reactions.

In relation to conflict reporting, all respondents recognize that ATV has an editorial policy and procedures which regulate the type of frames which are 'allowed' in the reporting. Usually, the news angles are constructed to keep the wellbeing of the public and to favour the interest of the Amhara region. All respondents were asked, "Who frames the news?" upon which one of the ATV reporters suggested that the news reporter and the editor are the chief responsible bodies to decide which part of reality should be highlighted. Dawit (name has been changed), a news reporter who has four year of journalism experience, suggests that equal to the editor, the news sources possibly also decide on the news angle. By exemplification, he says, "people who were leading the dispute from both the Amhara and Kemant direction were determining the frames of the news." Occasionally, the media managers and the government give directions on how to frame the conflict and decide who should speak regarding the violence. In such cases, the official views are expressed, according to the informant.

With reference to the focus of the news frame, ATV respondents assure that the news stories give emphasis to the causes and point out solutions for the observed conflict so that the responsible body can act accordingly. Additionally, exposing actions of egocentric political brokers who divert the people; creating awareness about the harmfulness of the conflict for the two ethnic groups'; magnifying the importance of harmony and hospitality; and motivating people for dialogue rather than the arm-struggle and violent actions, are all at the attention of the media, Dawit says.

Yohannes (name has been changed), a reporter who has been working for eight years in political and sport beats, and who has traveled to the conflicting area and stayed there for three weeks, argues that ATV has produced the conflict stories with both positive and negative outcomes. Stories that uncover the intrigues projected by the

third groups intend to make the Amhara region “a war zone” are the news angles, Yohannes mentions. He also notes that little emphasis has been given for the crisis following the conflict. “Solution based stories and recommendations, what kind of structural and legal measures should the government apply, in what way the audience should avoid confrontations were the focus of news framings,” he says. Besides this, Dawit says the journalists convey stories with the aim of developing the public awareness regarding peaceful means of conflict resolution and recommending discussion as a best alternative. However, indicators of future clashes and the potential consequence are the overlooked story angles that could be used as a risk management strategy, he says.

Respondent three (Kalkidan), the news editor of sports and current affairs team, states that journalists are conscious enough about the conflict that occurred between 8 September 2019 and 10 November 2019. According to him, ATV assigned reporters to the conflicting area from two criteria, which was important to understand the situation and bring information from the spot: First their professional experience and work efficiency, and second the journalist’s geographic proximity to the conflicting area. He argues that sending journalists who have geographic proximity to the conflict area advances the audiences’ trust and strengthens the audience and media linkage. He also emphasizes the gate keeping role of the news editor: he/she checks the accuracy, balance, and fairness of the events, so that the journalists’ personal attitude and the negative impressions of proximity on the story would be minimized. Additionally, editors shape a story weighing its significance envisioned to minimize the gaps of the two conflicting parties and build up their former togetherness, he says.

Yohannes from ATV further explains that more attention has been given for the resettlement and reconciliation process than revealing the number of victims and the extent of damage by the conflict. News stories are twisted to indicate the immediate actions to be taken by the regional or the federal government, he adds. As well, the news frames are designed to reverse the propaganda and false information fabricated by other media companies like DW, OMN and TMMA, Kalkidan says. Kalkidan is

absolute about the presence of “proxy war” declared from third groups, mostly what he labels “TPLF and other anti-Amhara groups, which have a mission to make the region unstable all the time.” These groups are considered as “the enemies of Amhara,” that promulgate hate speech and divisive ideologies against the Amhara region people. Thus, the media have short and long-term strategies; “closing conflicting agendas of the two groups and creating a sense of unity and reversing the anti-Amhara ethnocentric narrative is the long-term project of the media”. Supporting the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority’s warnings against defamatory and sensational reporting, he says:

We used to monitor other media, often Oromia Media Network (OMN), Dimitse Woyanie (DW) and Tigray Mass Media Agency. These media channels were representing the regional government and Fano<sup>13</sup> stereotypically, as an oppressor and extremists committing genocide over the Kemant people. Rwanda is the best example who suffers a lot from such kind of reporting. Furthermore, while the Kemant Committee opened an office at Mekelle and they were using other media (Tigray Mass Media Agency), enemies of the Amhara but they were not willing to give information for ATV (Interview with Kalkidan of AMMA, 17 May 2020).

Here one could see how the Amhara Television news framing has a second agenda next to solving the conflict, which is to reverse competing media outlet’s negative portrayal of the region and the Amhara ethnic group. Affirming omission as one of the media strategies that is employed to exclude less significant information, fundamentally facts with undesirable effect in the peace deal and conciliation process, Kalkidan says:

Some individuals who have belonging to the Kemant Committee want to portray the regional government as barbaric and irresponsible, which is initiated by the third groups. Then the media omit such views in reference with the media code that editorial consensus has made not to report stories that goes against the Amhara regional state interest (Interview with Kalkidan of AMMA, 17 May 2020).

Yohannes also clarifies how journalists select the most salient information and omit less important facts via their framing policy in the case of the Amhara-Kemant

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<sup>13</sup> Fano, a name given for the Amhara freedom fighters.

conflict. According to Dawit some grains of facts, typically clashing views that may worsen the conflict, deteriorate the negotiation process and neglect a peace deal. He confidently argues that using a victimization frame possibly escalates the conflict; however, when the journalists' team recognizes a story's positive role, victim-based stories are produced to demonstrate the magnitude and severity of conflict, so that people could avoid ferocious actions. He illustrates this by means of an example:

Because of a resettlement program, a teenager who comes from Quarit<sup>14</sup> to the conflicting area has lost her hand by a gunshot. I have framed the news in a way that shows how the conflict is darkening the vision of many people. Perhaps it may make people emotional and lead them for further action. Actually, she was not from the two conflicting groups, and the journalists' team was certain as no more negative consequence would happen (Interview with Yohannes of AMMA, 16 May 2020).

Having in mind the two groups' unity, ATV has outlined the news frames in a way that makes the two people groups aware of the political conspiracy designed by different groups, according to Yohannes. All three respondents in ATV agree that the political atmosphere of the regional government is the sole driver of the media. Yohannes further mentions that "the political tightness and elasticity, the audience media literacy, the sensitivity of the ethnic conflict and the issue of trust" shape the way the news is being framed. The fact that news sources decide the angle of a story can be a cause for distortion of reality and may create a wrong impression. "The choices of ATV news sources are highly dependent on the situation and the journalists' freedom," Yohannes says. He gives an example that clarifies how ATV journalists select their news sources.

If there is a story about water shortage in the conflicting area, a fecund woman has more water consumption than others have. If there are people complaining over their room size, people who live at the camp are being interviewed. Moreover, if the story is about the impact of the conflict on students, students who are going to take national exam are the news source. Occasionally, when a journalist believes a person has the skill of oratory, the media could give him/her a chance to speak to convey persuasive ideas and describe situations for the target

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<sup>14</sup> A Woreda, found in West Gojjam Zone of Amhara regional state.

audience. The sources are more or less randomly chosen (Interview with Yohannes of AMMA, 16 May 2020).

Respondent three (Kalkidan), disagrees with the randomization of sources, somehow the selection is done purposefully to balance contradictory views. He states that the Amhara "*Yegobez Alekoch*"<sup>15</sup> and the Amhara regional officials are the main sources of the news. On the other hand, "the Kemant are not cooperative to give information during the outbreak of the conflict, which was a cause for lopsided and slanted news story," Kalkidan says. He argues that officials are representative of both groups and employing them as a source is therefore the best approach to minimize personal bias and prejudice. "While the conflict gets calm, the journalists are capable of identifying their sources themselves, which incorporates common people, community leaders, scholars, and victims," he says.

Dawit, a reporter who had traveled three times to the conflict area, underlines the sensitivity of conflict reporting that requires careful choices. During the eruption stage of the conflict, selecting news sources needs journalists with keen desire and curiosity, he says. The respondent explains:

The journalists do not actively decide who shall speak about the issues, we abstained from choosing the news sources ourselves, and rather recommendation was needed from "*Yegobez Alekoch*" or from the Kemant Committee to speak about the issue. Even somebody who is motivated to speak about the issue was allowed (Interview with Dawit of Amhara Mass Media Agency, 16 May 2020).

The reporter claims that using news sources based on others' preference can result in false information that diminishes the accuracy of facts and the notion of professionalism. "At last it defects the media credibility," he adds. Officials, committee members, community and religious fathers, and ordinary persons are sources of the news, composed of multiple parties that give a life for the story and could be an input for rational decision-making.

All three ATV respondents conclude that ATV's reporting has contributed a lot to transforming the situation from a conflict zone to a peaceful community. According

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<sup>15</sup> A group name given for the opinion leaders in the Amhara ethnic group, usually they are the decision makers in a community level.

to Dawit, the media have applied peace journalism principles to stimulate the peace making process and to strengthen their togetherness by designing a message that could bring their former interaction and good day memories. However, he asserts that limitations have been observed in depicting what will happen next, so that the government could be able to take immediate action to avoid destruction of resources and loss of life.

The three respondents point out different factors that affect the objectivity of journalists and result in biased information. Yohannes confirms that the audience's media literacy level, the political pressure and the ethnic-driven thinking has a noticeable impact on journalists' professionalism. According to him, the media are in line with the political orientations of the managers and top politicians. The political tension observed within the former EPRDF coalition (the ADP and TPLF) has contributed to the formation of polarized and sensational reporting, according to respondent three (Kalkidan). According to Yohannes, since 2015/16 the ethnic based media have developed a trend of belongingness rather than being neutral and the voice for the whole public. He claims that the outlets propagate the political attitude of their respective party, not the public interest.

The media work for and against different political groups. When the media want to portray the TPLF negatively, it invites people that have an anti-TPLF spirit. However, in case of Amhara-Kemant conflict reporting, the journalists are trying to be impartial. Confidently, the media are working for the government, however, some media reforms and professionalism were observed in the first year of prime minister Abiy Ahmed's rule, particularly when the TPLF supremacy was replaced by the new team (Interview with Yohannes of AMMA, 16 May 2020)

The Kemant group has a stereotypical attitude towards AMMA, representing its nomenclature, which affects the journalists' personal behavior and attitude in reverse, according to Dawit. He argues,

The media are working for both groups equally; but the Kemants refuse to be a source. They perceive that AMMA is not the Kemants' media referring its naming but nomenclature does not matter, what should be evaluated is the media content. People developed a perception that regionally organized media are ethnic centered and the

media are losing its credibility (Interview with Dawit of AMMA, 16 May 2020).

Ideally, according to respondent three, the Amhara Mass Media Agency serves all racial groups living in the region without any discrimination, however, being credible and trusted within these ethnic groups demands unreserved effort. “While the Amhara tribe grumble over the medium is silencing the Amhara question, and it works for the minorities, the Kemants on the other hand was accusing the media for merely serving the ruling class by neglecting them”, he adds. In addition to naming, the issue of media literacy, which goes against the professionalism principle, was an obstacle, Dawit states. The media trend in the last 27 years, which favors the ruling class over the public, has eroded media credibility as observed in the Amhara-Kemant conflict.

The audience does not have trust the media. Due to extremist attitude resulted from 27 years of TPLF dominancy; everybody is interested to see things framed from victimization angle, which is observed in ethnocentric channels. The audiences become subjective enough; the youth from Gondar forwarded hate speech on the AMMA journalists, and was appreciating ASRAT TV<sup>16</sup> (Interview with Dawit of AMMA, 16 May 2020).

Beyond the above-mentioned hindrance factors, reporting conflict from the spot threatens journalists’ safety. “Journalists were at risk, and then we are obliged to wait until the police forces are assigned with us. Due to the above mentioned factors and skill gaps the media have silenced some stories,” Dawit adds.

#### **4.5.2. Interviews with Tigray Television journalists**

From TTV, two key informants (one news editor and one coordinator) took part in this study. According to Abel (name has been changed), who is a news editor, being a voice for all Ethiopians, building mutual consensus and transforming the democratization process is the reason for the establishment of the team.

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<sup>16</sup> ASRAT, (Amhara Satellite Radio and Television), an ethno-centric charitable media house mainly works for the Amhara ethnic group, often its source of funding is donations from the diaspora society and nationalists of Amhara ethnic group.

In endeavoring to the democratization process, the Tigrai people have paid their scarifications. The right of self-administration up to secession was among the democratic rights that the Tigrai people were struggling so far. Thus, we value these constitutional rights and we are working for its enactment. Likewise, the Kemant people are struggling for their identity and self-rule. As a media, we are working to be their voice (Interview with Abel of TTV, 21 May 2020).

Mesifin (name has been changed), the coordinator of the Amharic language department in TTV, correspondingly argues that the media have a social responsibility of speaking for the disadvantaged, the poor, and the powerless. Regarding the Amhara and Kemant elites conflict, the media have exposed the maladministration of the regional government, despite the fact that officials of the Amhara region are unwilling to clear up the scenarios and the stories are one sided, he says.

We receive footage from ordinary people from the area that show the dead, the devastated houses, and the cry of women that needs balancing opinions from the regional officials, however, the appointed officials switch off their phones instead of clarifying the issue (Interview with Mesifin of TTV, 21 May 2020).

In relation to the framing of the news items, TTV aims to inform the people, being a voice for voiceless and resolving the conflict. "People may perceive the news angles have political bias, but we have professional codes that oblige us to remain neutral," Mesifin says. "It is obvious and procedural that TTV favors the neglected group, on the other side the Amhara ethnic group has its own respective media, the AMMA," Mesifin adds. TTV believes that "the demand of Kemant is constitutional and they need to have their right, because it is their democratic right," Abel says. Thus, the news stories are being reported in a way that "discloses the Kemant people's oppression and the regional special police force's cruel actions," Abel adds.

Agreeing with Abel, Mesifin confirms that the framing of TTV is highly focused on "revealing the anti-Kemant attack and the maladministration practices of the Amhara regional government for the national and international society and asking speedy federal government involvement." According to him, the television channel has used sound bites that are intended to create empathy so that any neutral body



could be involved. “Accordingly, the sufferings and confrontations, the displacements, and the loss of civilians’ life have got attention,” Mesifin states. He further states that the framing of the news are targeted to flatten the two groups’ dispute.

“Yet, the media are not the adherent of any group but people may have a sort of thought that the framings are apt to the TPLF beyond the Kemants and have a political mission, but the journalists are acting professionally and we give high value for humanity”, Mesifin adds. According to Abel, TTV is zealous to broadcast balanced information, but it is evident that most of the stories are one sided. However, it did not happen because of the journalist’s intentional act; rather it is caused by the reluctance of responsible bodies to provide information. Besides this, Mesifin underscores that the number of deaths, displacement, violation of rights and a presence of ethnic attack are among the news angles employed via TTV. However, to minimize the consequences, the journalists’ team usually discusses at editorial meetings whether a story should be transmitted or not. “The TTV journalists’ value humanity over other influential factors, as a result of that, the media framed the stories that show the pain of the Kemants,” he says.

TTV has sent no news reporter to the conflicting area, which is a source of controversy and criticism by the Amhara regional government officials and activists. According to Mesifin, because of ethnic extremism, sending journalists to the Amhara region puts the journalists’ safety under threat. He has mentioned ATV’s portrayal of TTV journalists. He claims that ATV has portrayed journalists from TTV stereotypically, which could motivate the Amhara ethnic group to take counteraction on TTV journalists. Accessing information from the Amhara regional government is another challenge, according to the TTV journalist. The two regional governments’ political bitterness has been a hurdle to report the conflict from the spot and to involve different groups as a source. Thus, the media company used people who make a phone call from the conflicting area, students who came to the television studio and the Kemant Democratic and Agew Shengo<sup>17</sup> party leaders.

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<sup>17</sup> Agew Shengo is an opposition party organized for the Agew ethnic group in Awi Zone.

Basing a story on phone calls admittedly has limitations, but Mesifin is assertive about the fact that Kemant are victims, and used video footage recorded by citizen journalists as evidence. He contends that the information broadcasted on TTV was entirely factual.

Though we did not travel to the conflicting zone, it is obvious that it was risky for the journalists. However, broadcasting false and sensational footage could result in conflict, which is not ethical and harms the profession too. Every story is reported by means of journalistic principles, checking the truth, balancing the story and predicting its consequences (Interview with Abel of TTV, 21 May 2020)

According to the two respondents, since TTV has what they claim to be ‘populist policy’, it presented the sufferings of the Kemant group straightaway without awaiting a response from the accountable body, although it was open for correction if the Amhara regional government officials proved the information to be false and inaccurate. “If there are false and inaccurate information that needs correction, TTV has promised the airtime for any response,” Abel states. “Still, OMN<sup>18</sup> has communicated the regional peace and security chief, via telephone but no one was genuine to respond on the issue” Mesifin says.

Fundamentally, the TTV respondents claim that the conflict is reported with one ultimate goal, namely to reverse the unhealthy relationships between the two ethnic groups (the Amhara and Kemant) instead of being a catalyst of division. According to the respondents, TTV has played an immense role in alleviating the conflict with the help of the national government. Especially the TTV has presented the Kemants as underprivileged and attention has been given from the federal government. However, there have been criticism that the media have not promoted a solution; rather they have been politicizing the issue due to regional resentment.

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<sup>18</sup> OMN (Oromia Media Network), a US based ethno-centric media house, works for the Oromo ethnic group, often its sources of funding are voluntary donations, advertisements and external grants (OMN, 2020).

## 4.6. Discussion and analysis of the findings

This study aims to evaluate the framing of the heightened conflict between the Amhara and the Kemant between 8 September and 10 November 2019, in the case of ATV and TTV. In this part, the dominant frames used by the two regional media houses, the frequently attributed news sources and the role of the media from the peace/war journalism perspective are topics to be covered. Parallel with the roles, the journalists' stance, the issue of professionalism, and the impact of ethnicity are assessed.

Based on the analyzed data, the Amhara-Kemant conflict has been covered with different extent and objectives. A significant difference between the two media channels has been observed. Whereas ATV broadcasted 41 news stories, TTV broadcasted 27 news stories in the primetime concerning the conflict. This supports the findings of Lagasse and Foster (2012), who argue that the closer a medium is to a group, whether geographically or ideologically, the more coverage it gives. Shinar (2009) also states that proximity has an influence on the extent of journalists' active involvement in war/peace coverage. Perhaps the geographical proximity and the administrative belongingness of the conflict zone towards the Amhara regional state may be a reason behind. On the other hand, the political ideology of TTV, working for the provision of democratic rights for the Kemant, is possibly a factor for giving media coverage beyond the Tigray region. However, one may argue that TTV's coverage is not for the provision of democratic rights, mentioning the presence of lots of democratic right violation in Tigray, which the station does not cover. Thus, it may have a political angle; aims to form a strategic alliance with the kemants people and reveal the weak or the wrong doings of the Amhara state, and possibly to weaken the region.

Regarding the dominant news frames, conflict and attribution news frames have the largest ratio above the other categories. The TTV news stories used conflict and attribution of responsibility frame over other framing typologies, which accounted for 51.8% and 49.2% of the frames, respectively. No significant difference has been observed between the two frames; still the conflict frame takes the highest

proportion. This corresponds with the findings of Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) based on an analysis of U.S. news. More than half of the September-November 2019 Amhara-Kemant ethnic based conflict news stories broadcasted via TTV narrated the presence of dispute, disagreements, and opposing views. The attribution of responsibility frames “presents an issue or problem in such a way to attribute responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96). There was a lack of other dominant types of news framing being employed by TTV.

By contrast, close to 2/3 of the ATV stories used the attribution of responsibility frame, which has the highest frequency over other typologies. The conflict frame ranks second, accounting for 1/3 of the total stories. Morality and economic media frames have 1/10 share of the total news stories each. Neuman et al. (1992) state that morality frames are rarely used, usually existing more in the audience’s mind than in the media. This is confirmed by the current study. Despite the fact that Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) note that using human interest stories is the best way of capturing the audience’s interest and creating awareness, it is a merely occasionally used media frame in ATV broadcasts, with only 1/20 share of the total frames. By comparison, while ATV framed the conflict in a way which proposes solutions, TTV highlights the conflict frame.

As the qualitative data clarifies, both television channels framed the story with a purpose. The ATV respondents highlight that bringing peace and strengthening the positive relationship between the two quarreling groups are the main purpose of the news stories. Additionally, finding solutions and narrowing the gaps, as well as identifying the cause of the problems, were the news angles most often produced by ATV journalists. Moreover, the media outlet presented stories that could stabilize the conflict situation, hide the losses, preach the value of peace, and inform the people as the conflict zone is relatively peaceful today compared with previous times. According to Bratic and Schirch (2007) when media focuses on promoting peace and building bridges between conflicting groups rather than fuelling hate, division, and discrimination it have a constructive role. Mulatu’s (2018) research supports the

positive role of media in ending conflicts through employing peace discourses and finding a way to solve conflicts in Ethiopia.

The TTV respondents, on the other hand, suggest that being the voice for the disadvantaged was the main goal of the news coverage. Admitting the one-sided nature of the news stories, TTV reports were intended to uncover the Amhara regional government and the Fano or Yegobez Alekoch's ill-treatment over the Kemant people. The respondents assured that the stories are not provocative, even though the news broadcasted on September 17 of 2019 proves the provocative nature of the news stories, which says,

“Following the quest for self-administration, the Kemant people are losing their life, displaced from their home and they are facing human right violations. Fifty-eight individuals are killed within one day. [...] The Kemant people's existence is under risk and they are committing genocide against us” (TTV, 2019).

Additionally, the news broadcasted by TTV on 29 September 2019 presents the Kemant ethnic group as a victim attacked by the regional special force police. The report quotes individuals over phone calls, summarized by a voice-over: “Massive genocide has taken place in the previous days on the Kemant people. Children, youth and pregnant women are killed in a volley of shots” (TTV, 2019).

Mesifin of TTV adds that the framing emphasized the presence of conflict, notifying the rest of the world that Kemants are killed and displaced, and their rights are violated. The other respondent from TTV claims that the station has no adherence to any political group; instead, it works to support the Kemant people, who are the disadvantaged and neglected in the conflict. However, this statement contradicts the statement that the media are supposed to be the voice for all citizens. The quantitative data on the other hand finds that the framing is conflict-oriented, which challenges the statement of the respondents. The presented analysis of peace/war journalism frames found more stories to carry a war journalism frame, which may serve to escalate the violence (see appendix 3.3). Thus, the qualitative data collected from TTV key informants and the quantitative data based on an analysis of media content are in disagreement.

Likewise, on the issue of partisanship, ATV closed its eye to the Kemant. Beyond this, respondents from ATV expressed the presence of a proxy war that the media are working to reverse through a propaganda war. Stories that accuse third parties, often referred to as TPLF and anti-Amhara groups, were the media emphasis. Often the media will blame them for being the actual cause of the conflict. From this, one can understand how the two media companies' framing was shaped and manifested in accordance with the respective regional political economy. The finding of Ayele (2020) strengthens this result, insofar as the political economy and ideologies are manifested in most of the ethnically based media channels (OMN, AMMA, TMMA, DW and ASRAT).

In relation to the type of sources used in reporting the Amhara-Kemant conflict, there is no significant variation between the two media houses, but a significant difference has observed on the way of accessing their sources. Professionally speaking, journalists are required to rely on solid sources for the information and perspective of events, being responsible for reporting facts objectively without slants of his/her own expression (Hamilton & Lawrence, 2010). Regional government appointees; predominantly, the regional peace and security chief, the regional higher officials, the Zone and Woreda administrators cover half of ATV news sources. On the other hand, common people such as students and people who give information over the phone are frequently attributed news sources by TTV, representing 43.7% of the coverage. Ordinary people from ATV's side and government officials from TTV's side are the second most cited sources. The ordinary people quoted by ATV are individuals who are affected by the conflict directly; the zonal and regional town residents; children and youth; and any independent body conferring on the cause and best approaches to alleviate the conflict. Also, government appointees, elites and opposition members are used as sources. While religious and community leaders share approximately 10% of the sources on ATV, opposition parties, experts, and victims have a share of less than 5% each. On TTV, the government officials have a ¼ share of the total sources, which constitute the second largest proportion next to common people. Approximately 1/6 of the TTV news sources are opposition parties, often the Kemant Democratic Party and the Agew Shengo Party. Experts and the

media themselves are also used as sources, but less than 10% each. As shown in the appendix 3.2, the t-test result reveals the absence of variation between the two media sources' usage.

According to the respondents of ATV, the selections of sources are done both intentionally and unintentionally. Two of the respondents claim that the source selection is highly dependent on the situation, while the news editor disagrees and say the sources are chosen with a purpose. During the initial stages of the conflict, most of the interviews were done with the recommendation of the Kemant Committee or from the Amhara Fano leaders rather than using witness reports. Because of that, journalists faced challenges accessing the respective informants. In line with the nomenclature of the ATV, the Kemants were not genuine to give information, considering that the media are serving the Amhara people and not the minorities. On the other side, people who are from the Amhara group also blamed the media for their negligence and silence. Dawit of ATV emphasizes that conflict reporting is a tough task that needs the journalists' passion and forbearance. The ATV respondents reproached the unwillingness of the Kemant Identity Committee to give information that caused biased reporting and forced ATV journalists to rely on the government sources, which is considered to be the most certified type of sources (Cook, 1998).

Equally, the government officials need the media to speak loudly and decisively to the audience. Therefore, since the Amhara regional government was one of the conflicting parties, perhaps they may use the media (ATV) to tell their side of the story for the audience (Gamreklidze, 2015). To the opposite, TTV was challenged in accessing information from the Amhara regional officials even though the journalists were trying to communicate via telephone. The absence of information about the conflict affects the audience's understanding about the issue (Kabi, 2012). Reporters are advised "to learn how to find sources that can readily be scheduled and who will provide the kinds of information they seek in a concise and manageable way" (Berkowitz, 2009, p. 104).

From ATV's side, using government sources with high frequency over other types of sources remains an effective mechanism to have balanced and fair information. On the other hand, TTV reported the conflict from distance, using a phone call that endangers the journalistic principle of verification. Accepting the limitations of using uncertified sources, Mesifin of TTV argues that various verification mechanisms were used, such as receiving footage and sound bites from the conflict area, and checking the identification cards of each interviewee, which was taken as a best alternative for accessing news sources and verifying information. Beak (2011) suggests that using unidentified sources, fundamentally a phone call interview triggers polarized views that lack objectivity and exacerbates the existence of reporting bias. Furthermore, it could be a source of confusion that degrades media trustworthiness and could be taken as propaganda.

As indicated in the interview section, the TTV respondents admitted that the media were supporting the Kemant position, expressed as "the right for self-administration, which the Tigrai people have been struggling for many years." Despite the divergence between the quantitative and the qualitative results, almost all of the news sources of TTV were found to be from the Kemant community in different capacities; common people, opposition representatives, government officials, media sources and experts. The TTV respondents mentioned that the unwillingness of the Amhara regional government officials to clarify the situations was the reason behind this reporting strategy.

Throughout the period covered in the study, ATV was able to use several types of news sources to highlight multiple solutions with the aim that the peace deal process could be realized quicker. The respondents assured that government officials, victims, opinion leaders of the Amhara group and Kemant society representatives (not committee members), were major sources of the news produced by the ATV journalists. In contrast, the TTV respondents confirmed that the students who attend their study in Aksum, Adigrat and Mekelle universities, people by Kemant descent who live abroad, opposition political parties, as well as media and experts, were all used as news sources.



When examined from the peace/war journalism frame, while more than 2/3 of the ATV reports was leaning towards peace journalism, more than half of the TTV stories were inclined to the war journalism frame (specifically, 53.9%). Conversely, about 1/3 of the frames on ATV could be categorized as war journalism and 1/3 of TTV's frames could be categorized as peace journalism. A lesser proportion on each channel consisted of neutral frames.

1/7 of the frames on ATV were categorized as 'here and now' frames, meaning that they do not explain the conflict but rather simply gives shallow information like who did what, or what happened. This type of reporting was predominant in the first week of the conflict. For example, the ATV news stories broadcasted in the first week reported the outbreak of the conflict, the number of deaths and casualties with immediate and instantaneous frames, attributing the regional government peace and security chief. On TTV, closer to 2/3 of the news stories were reported with the here and now frame. The majority of the stories on ATV, on the other hand, was framed as cause-consequence (2/3 of the total frames) that gives explanation about the formation of the conflict, when it happened, why it happened, with what purpose and goal, which gets little attention. By contrast 1/7 TTV stories have the cause consequence frame.

As stated earlier, the elite oriented and two party frames are rather salient on ATV, magnifying the war journalism frame. Closer to 3/5 of ATV news used elite oriented sources, quoting the government officials and some military officials, religious and community leaders, opposition party leaders and experts as the main sources, while allotting little space for ordinary people. Closer to 70% of ATV stories present only two parties (the regional government, the Yegobez Alekoch from one side, and the Kemant Committee the other side). On the other hand, visible effect frame and partisan way of reporting accounts for 4/5 and 3/5 shares of the total stories reported via TTV. Generally, more than half of the TTV stories show the presence of the here and now frame, focus on problems rather than solutions, use emotional rather than neutral language and label the conflicting groups as good vs. bad (see table 4/appendix 3.3).

Divergent results of peace journalism framing are recorded from the two television stations' news stories. Among the variables, the use of people oriented news, and the use of non-demonizing and non-victimizing language, take the largest share of peace journalism frames employed by TTV. Little amount of demonizing and victimizing language are used by the TTV journalists that minimize the contesting parties' dichotomization of good and bad categories. Instead, the two television stations used more accurate titles and descriptions. By contrast, half of the ATV stories are reported with a cause and consequence frame, present multiple alternatives of from the stakeholders, avoid labeling the conflicting party as good and bad, use non-partisan way of reporting, and avoid victimizing and demonizing language, which shows that peace journalism is given emphasis. ATV cited not only the conflicting parties, but also various sources from different groups; people living in different places of the region; scholars, opinion leaders, and activists; and opposition party leaders.

## **Chapter 5: Summery and conclusion**

This study intended to analyze and evaluate news reporting at Amhara Television (ATV) and Tigray Television (TTV), their media framing, frequently attributed news sources, and specifically the role they played in covering the Amhara-Kemant conflict, which happened between September and November 2019.

Having a culturally and ethnically diversified society, conflict in Ethiopia is expected. The unfair allocation of resources, ethnically motivated politics, and wrongly narrated historical relationships remain the cause of different ethnically motivated conflicts (Mulatu, 2018). Following the quest for identity and self-administration, and the delayed responses of the Amhara regional government, visible conflicts have happened between the Amhara and Kemant elites since 2015 (Birhanu, 2019). Active involvement and quick measures to respond to conflict breakout in specific areas led to the situation being solved with different measures in May 2019 (AMMA, 2020). Later, with the quest of further geographical boundaries by the Kemant group, the Amhara and Kemant ethnic elite's confrontation started in September 2019 and with the involvement of the federal government, reconciliation was made. In parallel with the Amhara-Kemant conflict, the Amhara and Tigray regional government officials (ADP and TPLF) were under a conflicting situation, one group blaming the other.

In stabilizing or escalating the conflict, many parties participated. Among others, the Amhara Mass Media Agency and the Tigray Mass Media Agency were in the lead among the nation's media outlets. Arguably, both were active change agents in clarifying the situation and pointing to solutions. Thus, studying the news reporting of two ethnically based televisions stations with different political orientations, the Amhara Mass Media Agency as a local and the Tigray Mass Media Agency as an outsider, is intriguing. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. A purposive sampling was used and 68 (41 from ATV and 27 from TTV) news stories were collected from the two media channels' YouTube pages.

In terms of coverage, ATV's share of the total news items is 60.3%, compared with 39.7% for TTV. The ATV reports the conflict from the spot and TTV does not, mentioning the two regional governments' unhealthy relationship as a cause during the time of the conflict. Additionally, geographical proximity of the media channels has a significant influence, which is explained in terms of resources and interest. As the qualitative data reveals, the ATV journalists report the conflict from the ground, making ATV advantageous in reporting fair and balanced stories compared with TTV where the majority of stories are one-sided and shows favoritism for the Kemant people. The study found that ATV primarily applies the attribution of responsibility frame that accounts 2/3 of the total stories, which has the highest frequency over other typologies. The conflict frame ranks second, accounting for 1/3 of the total stories. Morality, human interest, and economic frames are the rarely used frames by ATV. TTV on its part was found to focus on conflict and attribution of responsibility frames over other framing typologies, which accounted for 51.8% and 49.2% of the frames, respectively.

The amount of source usage between the two media houses is also significantly different observed on the way of accessing their sources. This is caused by a variety of factors: the political antagonism between the Amhara and Tigray regional government; the ethnic extremism observed in the country; and the unwillingness of the sources to give information from both sides. ATV relied much on the government sources, which were used in half of the total stories. However, from a war/peace journalism perspective, ATV used more elite oriented news sources, indicating a war orientation rather than a focus on peace among the people groups.

From TTV' side, even though the findings pretends to war journalism, close to half of the stories used common people as a news source, which is an indication of the peace journalism frame particularly. Government officials are attributed in 1/4 of the total stories reported by TTV. The political opposition is used as sources in 1/7 of the news items, while experts and news organizations have smaller shares.

From a war/peace journalism frame angle, 27.3% of the ATV and 53.9% of TTV news reports are war journalism oriented, and vice versa for the peace journalism

orientation. Neutral reports are found in 10-15% of the reports on each channel. This result puts the two regional televisions into contradictory categories: the ATV stories tend to favour a peace journalism frame more than TTV does.

Professionally, the two media companies are expected to aspire to calm the dispute between the Amhara and Kemant people; however, different interests are observed via their framing. In ATV, the news framing emphasized solutions by attributing the responsible body, whereas TTV works to be a voice for the voice less. Moreover, ATV framed the news to reverse the anti-Amhara agenda set by other groups and TTV was working to expose the maladministration and anti-Kemant actions that could result in a strategic alliance. Bearing in mind that the ADP's and TPLF's political struggle, one could discern the presence of a hidden agenda that each of the two media companies are pursuing, in addition to reporting the conflict.

To sum up, ATV and TTV reported the Amhara-Kemant conflict with different proportions of coverage, different framing, and diverging types of source and objectives. Despite these differences, both television channels could be said to contribute to both escalating and deescalating the conflict. The main tendency still, is that ATV was found to be reporting with an aim to calm down the conflict while the findings from TTV reveal escalating characteristics in the news stories. Different factors are relevant to explain the difference in amount and purpose of coverage. The finding of this study also reveals that the political quarrel between the Amhara and Tigray regional states, lacking media literacy level of the audience, the unwillingness of people to give information, the unstable political atmosphere, and the notion of ethnic extremism observed in the past quarter century, as well as the journalists' personal attitude and the geographical proximity of the media channels were factors that contributed much to give a specific direction in the reporting.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Coding categories of the quantitative data

- i. **Dominate News Frames: Read/watch each news story carefully and decide the dominantly used news frame.**
  - a. **Conflict frame**
    - Does the story contain opposing views?
    - Does one party/ group of society, an individual, or a government blame the other about the conflict?
    - Does the story involve disagreements of groups?
    - Does the story refer polarized views/sides of an issue?
    - Does the story present attackers and victims?
  - b. **Human-interest frame**
    - If a story provides a human example, entertains a life story of a person or groups of individuals
    - Portray the consequence of a conflict on the life of an individual, or groups of individuals
    - If there are sound bites, or visuals of a person that can generate feelings of empathy
    - If there is a person /groups emphasized in the story
  - c. **Attribution of responsibility frame**
    - Does the story refer somebody as the responsible one for the conflict?
    - Does the story suggest certain institutions, civic organizations, government organs, or individual or community to find solutions for the conflict?
  - d. **Morality frame**
    - Does the story refer any moral and ethical values?
    - Does the story refer God, Allah or any religious sect?
    - Does community leaders and religious fathers referred in the news that may guide people to behave good/bad?
  - e. **Economic consequence frame**
    - Does the story refer any financial/ resource loss?

- Does the story refer as an economic activity is interrupted?
  - Does the story refer cause or consequence of the conflict on the economy of the people?
- ii. **News sources: Read/watch each news story carefully and decide what types of news sources are used.**
- a. **Government:** officials from different government organs from federal to the *kebele* level
  - b. **Opposition Party Leaders:** If opposition political parties are attributed in the news items
  - c. **Opinion leaders:** Community leaders, religious leaders,
  - d. **Victims:** individual/groups who face a challenge or are disadvantaged due to the conflict
  - e. **News Agency/Media:** If other media organizations and journalists are attributed as a source of news
  - f. **Experts:** If people who has special expertize about the issue are invited
  - g. **Common people:** If any ordinary person who are living in Ethiopia and speak about the conflict
  - h. **Others:** NGO, Human right organizations or national and international humanitarian organizations.

ii. Peace/war journalism frame: Read/watch each story carefully and put the right sign on the yes/no columns.

War journalism frame	Yes	No	Peace journalism	Yes	No
<b>Presentation of conflict</b>					
<b>Here and Now</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflict is reported as an instantaneous and immediate action</li> </ul>			<b>Cause and Consequence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflict is reported with investigations of causes, and suggests future consequences</li> </ul>		
<b>Problem Oriented</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presets facts as a cause of divisions</li> <li>Magnifies differences of the conflicting groups</li> <li>Leaves for next conflicts than proposing</li> </ul>			<b>Solution oriented</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Propose dialogues, non-violent ideas</li> <li>Brought their former cultural and structural relationships of the peace time</li> <li>Works for reconciliation process</li> </ul>		
<b>Zero-sum game</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the story presents one party as winner and the other loser</li> </ul>			<b>Multiple alternatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents available alternative mechanisms that can dry the conflict and</li> <li>Usually focus on constructing win-win strategies.</li> </ul>		
<b>Visible effects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focuses on the incidents related to the number of deaths, causalities that could be visible.</li> </ul>			<b>Invisible effects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tries to hide events related to destruction, death, and causalities and present other cultural or structural violence (like heat speeches, words of war, social injustice)</li> </ul>		
<b>Presentation of actors involved</b>					
<b>Elite focused</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involves only professionals, experts and opinion leaders as a source of news</li> </ul>			<b>people-orientation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gives the chance to the ordinary people to speak, (Children, women, disabled and common peoples in general)</li> </ul>		

<b>Two parties</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only the conflicting parties are attributed</li> </ul>			<b>Multiple parties</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involves many actors who can provide diversified views and voices the interest of various groups</li> </ul>		
<b>Labels parties as good and Bad</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents the parties as good and bad</li> <li>They associate names to the groups as good and evil, or victims and attackers</li> </ul>			<b>Avoids Labeling</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoids good and bad division or presents both groups in neutral tone</li> </ul>		
<b>Partisan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>takes sides and support one over the other</li> <li>form us-them categories</li> <li>portray the other as a problem</li> </ul>			<b>Non-partisan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>abstains from reporting a biased view</li> <li>present all parties equally</li> <li></li> </ul>		
<b>Language Usage</b>					
use of victimizing words <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>victim and something has been done to that group (disadvantaged, devastated, as the groups are hopeless and defenseless)</li> </ul>			Use non-victimizing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoids victimizing languages and replaces it with an empowering tone.</li> </ul>		
<b>Use demonizing language</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses “emotionally charged languages” than using their group/individual name, (eg, cruel, barbaric, inhuman, terrorist, extremist, fanatic, fundamentalist, militants)</li> </ul>			<b>Non-demonizing language/</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports the truth what has been happened, by whom and with what effects</li> </ul>		
<b>Emotional language use</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aggravate the emotions of the people, sensationalize, and dramatize the issue</li> </ul>			<b>Non-emotional language</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoids provocative and sensational language rather it presents a story with a neutral language</li> <li>Present reality objectively</li> </ul>		

## **Appendix 2: Interview guide for key informants**

- 1. How was the situation when you report the Amhara Kemant conflict**
  - Have you been in the conflict area?
  - How long did you stay there?
  - Do you face any challenge during your stay in the conflicting area?
- 2. How did you frame the Amhara-Kemant conflict?**
  - What was the main emphasis of the stories produced by your media?
  - Do you have any editorial policy, or professional codes that guide the journalist how to report conflict?
  - Was there any pushing factor that guides you to frame the story in a certain way?
- 3. Who are your news sources when you report the Amhara-Kemant conflict?**
  - How do you choose news source that fits with your story angle?
  - How do you check the reliability of the news sources?
  - Does your media policy allow using unverified sources?
- 4. What factors do you influence the media reporting?**
  - Does anybody direct the journalist to report/silence the conflict?
  - How do you explain the belongingness of your media in reporting the Amhara Kemant conflict?
- 5. How do you evaluate the role of your media in finding solutions for the conflict?**
  - Do you think that your media covered the conflict in appropriate and sufficient way?
  - What were the roles that you played when you cover the Amhara-Kemant conflict?

## Appendix 2.1: Interview guide for key informants (Amharic version)

1. የአማራ-ቅማንት ግጭት በምትዘግቡበት ወቅት የነበረው ሁኔታ ምን ይመስላል?
  - ♣ ግጭቱ በተከሰተበት ቦታ ተገኝታችሁ ነበር?
  - ♣ ግጭቱ በተከሰተባቸው ቦታዎች ለምን ያህል ጊዜ ቆይቶታል?
  - ♣ ግጭቱ በተከሰተባቸው ቦታዎች በነበራቸው ቆይታ የገጠሟቸው ችግሮች አሉ?
2. ግጭቱን እንዴት ነው የዘገባቸውት?
  - ♣ የእናንተ ሚዲያ ዜናዎች ዋና ትኩረት ምን ላይ ነበር?
  - ♣ ግጭትን እንዴት መዘገብ እንዳለባችሁ የሚገልጽ/ የሚያመለክት የሚዲያ ህግ ወይም ኤዲቶሪያል ፖሊሲ አላቸው?
  - ♣ የዜና ትኩረት/ frame/ እንዴት መሆን እንዳለበት የሚያስገድድ ወይም የሚገፋፋ ምክንያት ነበር?
3. የአማራ-ቅማንትን ግጭት ስትዘግቡ የዜና ምንጮቻችሁ እነማን ናቸው?
  - ♣ ከዜናው ይዘት ጋር ተሰማሚ የሚሆኑ የዜና ምንጮችን እንዴት ትመርጣላችሁ?
  - ♣ የዜና ምንጮችን ታማኝነት በምን መልኩ ነው የምታረጋግጡት?
  - ♣ የእናንተ ሚዲያ ፖሊሲ ማንነታቸው ያልተረጋገጠ ምንጮችን እንድትጠቀሙ ይፈቅዳል?
4. የዘገባ ስራዎቻችሁ ላይ ጫና ያሳደሩባቸው ምክንያቶች ካሉ ቢገለጽ
  - ♣ ጋዜጠኞች ግጭቱን እንዲዘግቡ ወይም እንዳይዘግቡ አቅጣጫ የሰጠ አካል ነበረ?
  - ♣ የእናንተን ሚዲያ በአማራ-ቅማንትን ግጭት ወቅት የነበረውን ወገንተኝነት እንዴት ትገልጻለህ?
5. የእናንተን ሚዲያ ለግጭቱ መፍትሄ ከመፈለግ አኳያ የነበረውን ሚና እንዴት ትገልጻለህ?
  - ♣ ሚዲያው ግጭቱን በተገቢውና በአግባቡ የዘገባ ሽፋን ሰጥቶታል በለህ ታሰባለህ?
  - ♣ የእናንተን ሚዲያ የአማራ-ቅማንትን ግጭት በሚዘግብበት ወቅት ምን አይነት ሚና ነበረው?

## Appendix 3: SPSS Results

### 3.1 Independent sample T-test results of dominant frames by the two media channels

#### Group Statistics

	Media	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Framing Typology	Amhara-TV	41	2.17	1.181	.184
	Tigrai TV	27	1.48	.509	.098

#### Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Framing Typology	Equal variances assumed	9.347	.003	2.857	66	.006	.689	.241	.208	1.171
	Equal variances not assumed			3.300	58.583	.002	.689	.209	.271	1.107

### 3.2 Independent sample T-test results of source by the two media channels

#### Group Statistics

	Media	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Source	Amhara TV	44	2.11	1.781	.269
	Tigrai TV	32	2.22	1.128	.199

#### Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Source	Equal variances assumed	2.039	.158	-.293	74	.770	-.105	.358	-.819	.609
	Equal variances not assumed			-.314	72.800	.754	-.105	.335	-.772	.562

### 3.3 Independent sample T-test results of peace/war journalism frame by the two media channels

#### Group Statistics

	Media	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Her & now Vs. Cause and consequence	Amhara	41	2.05	.590	.092
	Tigrai	27	1.67	.877	.169
Problem oriented Vs. Solution oriented	Amhara	41	2.00	.775	.121
	Tigrai	27	1.67	.784	.151
Visible effect Vs. Invisible effect	Amhara	41	2.20	.679	.106
	Tigrai	27	1.30	.542	.104
Elite Oriented Vs. Common people	Amhara	41	1.37	.488	.076
	Tigrai	27	1.52	.509	.098
Two parties Vs. Multiple parties	Amhara	41	1.32	.471	.074
	Tigrai	27	1.15	.362	.070
Label parties Vs. Avoid labeling	Amhara	41	1.80	.401	.063
	Tigrai	27	1.41	.501	.096
Partisan Vs. Non-partisan	Amhara	41	1.66	.480	.075
	Tigrai	27	1.22	.424	.082
Use Victimizing language Vs. Non victimizing language	Amhara	41	1.88	.331	.052
	Tigrai	27	1.56	.506	.097
Use demonizing language Vs. Avoid demonizing language	Amhara	41	1.80	.401	.063
	Tigrai	27	1.59	.501	.096
Use emotional language Vs. Avoids emotional language	Amhara	41	1.76	.435	.068
	Tigrai	27	1.48	.509	.098
Zero Sum Vs. Multiple Alternatives	Amhara	41	2.41	.499	.078
	Tigrai	27	2.85	.362	.070



**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Her & now Vs. Cause and consequence	Equal variances assumed	16.544	.000	2.151	66	.035	.382	.178	.027	.737
	Equal variances not assumed			1.987	41.392	.054	.382	.192	-.006	.770
Problem oriented Vs. Solution oriented	Equal variances assumed	.925	.340	1.728	66	.089	.333	.193	-.052	.719
	Equal variances not assumed			1.723	55.290	.090	.333	.193	-.054	.721
Visible effect Vs. Invisible effect	Equal variances assumed	1.553	.217	5.770	66	.000	.899	.156	.588	1.210
	Equal variances not assumed			6.045	63.469	.000	.899	.149	.602	1.196
Elite Oriented Vs. Common people	Equal variances assumed	1.930	.169	-1.241	66	.219	-.153	.123	-.398	.093
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.230	54.073	.224	-.153	.124	-.401	.096
Two parties Vs. Multiple parties	Equal variances assumed	12.197	.001	1.580	66	.119	.169	.107	-.045	.382
	Equal variances not assumed			1.667	64.327	.100	.169	.101	-.033	.371
Label parties Vs. Avoid labeling	Equal variances assumed	11.689	.001	3.619	66	.001	.397	.110	.178	.617

	Equal variances not assumed			3.458	47.156	.001	.397	.115	.166	.629
Partisan Vs. Non-partisan	Equal variances assumed	4.914	.030	3.838	66	.000	.436	.114	.209	.663
	Equal variances not assumed			3.939	60.462	.000	.436	.111	.215	.658
Use Victimizing language Vs. Non victimizing language	Equal variances assumed	32.420	.000	3.179	66	.002	.322	.101	.120	.525
	Equal variances not assumed			2.923	40.626	.006	.322	.110	.100	.545
Use demonizing language Vs. Avoid demonizing language	Equal variances assumed	11.689	.001	1.933	66	.058	.212	.110	-.007	.432
	Equal variances not assumed			1.847	47.156	.071	.212	.115	-.019	.444
Use emotional language Vs. Avoids emotional language	Equal variances assumed	9.180	.003	2.380	66	.020	.275	.115	.044	.505
	Equal variances not assumed			2.304	49.538	.025	.275	.119	.035	.514
Zero Sum Vs. Multiple Alternatives	Equal variances assumed	29.505	.000	-3.921	66	.000	-.437	.112	-.660	-.215
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.184	65.303	.000	-.437	.105	-.646	-.229