The Framing of Economic Corruption in Ethiopian Media: Revealing or Concealing?

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the 'key framing strategies' used to depict 'corruption issues' in Ethiopian media. A mixed research approach has been employed using qualitative and quantitative content analysis and framing analysis as data gathering and analysis methods. The study focused on two state and two private media. The news stories and articles were gathered in the specified time frame and evaluated using checklists of 'episodic' and 'thematic' frames. The findings show, the private media mainly applied the 'episodic framing' covering specific court reports and custody of individual, but the government media outlets employed 'thematic framing' strategy, adding 'policy discussion' and 'news analyses and detailed contexts and public opinions'.

Keywords: News • Corruption • Framing • Hematic • Episodic

Introduction

We are in the age of mediated world. As a result of the accelerating growth, spread diversification and interlacing of communications media across the globe, human communication has been highly affected. In earlier times people had to dig out information mainly by themselves and from their interpersonal interactions. These days, people learn about the world beyond their immediate experience primarily through various media. 'Media use constitutes increasingly greater parts of everyday life for people around the world. The process of mediatization draws a widening range of activities into the sphere of media, making mediation an increasingly key feature of society and everyday life [1]. Thus, this high reliance on media is not free from influences in making meaning and comprehend the message as information is filtered, organized and depicted in key strategies. So far, there are plenty of studies conducted on 'media effects' at different stages throughout the development of media. This study aims to examine the practice of covering and framing corruption in Ethiopian media.

Conceptual Framework

Researches in media effects theory have passed through various fluctuating stages. The first stage, which covers the years from 1930s through 1950s by the pioneer Harold Lasswel (1930; 35) cited in Schrøder (2009), focused on the immediate and direct effects of media based on the 'the magic bullet' or 'hypodermic' effect theory. The researches at this stage were devoted to planning and designing powerful propagandas to persuade the passive audience. In 1950s and 1960s, there was shift to 'minimal effects' by Paul Lazarsfield and his associates are rejecting the notion of 'powerful effect' [2]. In the third and current stage of theoretical development in media effects literature, a new generation of scholars seeks to justify the discipline itself and to demonstrate significant effects through new theories, better measurement tools, and improved methodological designs [3]. Throughout

these stages, though the perspectives vary, scholars agree that media have been affecting human behaviors. We are still living in an era when we are challenged by the rise of powerful new media that clearly are altering how most of us live our lives and interact to others. Hence, scholars have developed new research strategies and methods that provide us with better measures of media influence and that have already identified a number of contexts in which media can have powerful effects in shaping political issues [4].
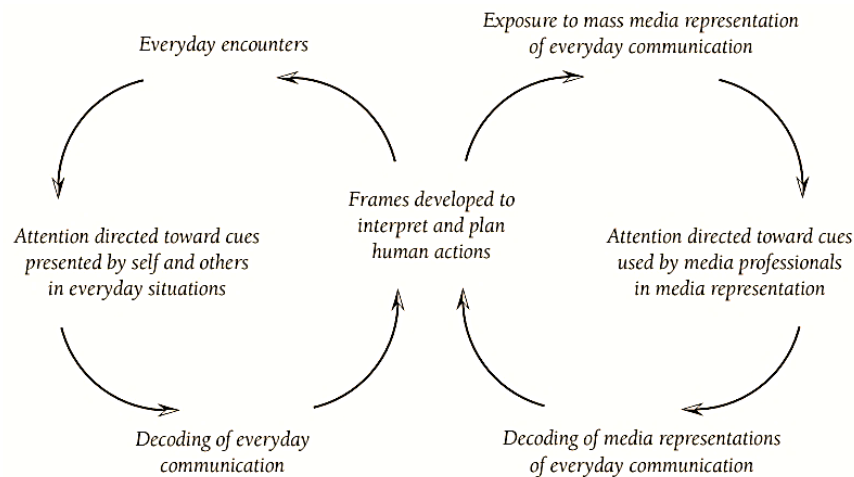
So far, the progress of media effects research has been devoted to the exploration of the relations between input variables (e.g., media information and its characteristics) and output variables (e.g., attitudes, beliefs, and behavior), with little consideration of the cognitive processes that might mediate these relations. Human beings have cognitive skills allowing them to continually scan their environment, make sense of it, and then act on these interpretations [4]. Goffman (1974) believed we use cognitive skills to make sense of daily life and are always monitoring the social environment for *social cues* that signal when we are to make a change, and we ourselves are often quite skilled at using these cues. This theory implies that we learn social cues through everyday interaction and from observing how they are used in media content. Goffman used the term *frame* to refer to a specific set of expectations used to make sense of a social situation at a given point in time.

We are now living in a world full of complex and sophisticated information. Frames help us reduce the complexity of information and interpret and reconstruct reality. Traditionally, world meanings were conveyed through socialization processes, creating a collective reality within a culture or society, but today so-called mediated communication delivers powerful frames of world perception that challenges and re-negotiates these life world experiences [5] (Figure 1).

After Goffman's work in the 1960s and 1970s, framing theory continued to gain interest and acceptance.Other scholars took Goffman's ideas and extended them to create a conceptual framework that considers (i) the social and political context in which framing takes place, and (ii) the long-term social and political consequences of media-learned frames. Most of this framing research has focused on journalism and on the way news influences our experience of the social world [4]. As media maintain a fourth estate role in democratic societies, media researchers find framing theory helpful to analyze the imbalances and underlying power structures that mediate political issues [5]. These framing researches examine how political and social elites use specific strategies to manipulate issues, how journalists frame events and how these media contents are received and interpreted by the audience.

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Figure 1*: Framing Process Baran & Davis, 2012.*

Based on these conceptual frameworks, this study focus on examining the strategies media employ to portray issues and how the audience perceive them. The study aimed at exploring the Ethiopian Media practicing of covering the news of corruption and the key strategies used to publicize it. The basic assumption is that media do not only provide audiences with information, but put messages in selected 'frames' so that meaning can be extracted and perceptions can be shaped.

Literature Review

As various research findings show, the way media covers an issue has effects on public attitudes, and perceptions which in turn may influence their behaviour and practices. In this regard, both Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw pointed out in their studies that there was a direct or one-way, causal relationship between media's depiction of issues and perception of audiences. This means that we not only get information about an issue from media but also about its relevance. McCombs and Shaw believe that mass media have the ability to transfer the salience of items on their news agendas to the public agenda.

The idea behind McCombs and Shaw's original notion of agenda-setting theory, as Weiss (2009) summarizes, is that though the media do not tell us what attitudes or opinions we should have (what to think) and do not set out public opinion deliberately or purposely, they do tell us which issues we should be focusing on (what to think about)—that is, which issues are most important and therefore most worthy of inclusion on our mental agendas (p.31). In fact, this has been pointed out by sociologists, as Goffman (1974) stated, that human beings are active in creating the meaning of the world around them by classifying, organizing and interpreting their life experiences in particular frames that allow them 'to locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number' of items of information (p. 21). Hence, as media portray an issue embedding it with cues, audiences use their 'schemas' and experiences to analyze and interpret them for complete meanings.

Media Framing

As we have seen from the discussions above, media can influence public opinion not only by feeding information but also by providing signals how to perceive and interpret this information. Scholars in media effect studies have defined these 'media cues or 'frames' in various ways. Framing refers to the way events and issues are organized and made sense of, especially by media, media professionals, and their audiences [6,7]. Framing is often traced back to roots in both psychology and sociology [8].

Entman (1993) defines frames as:

"To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described, "(p. 52).

According to this definition, framing involves selecting a few aspects of a perceived reality and connecting them together in a narrative that promotes a particular interpretation from the audiences. For example, the issue of abortion can be framed as killing unborn human life or can be seen from the perspective of free choice. Both views imply different ending in terms of problem definition, causal interpretation, evaluation, and treatment recommendation [9]. Media frame issues starts from selecting what to present and what not to present in media coverage and then proceeds through emphasis and elaboration using key strategies. In other words, media represent an issue to the audiences through specific strategies which can serve as 'frame of reference' to perceive the issue and act accordingly. Framing refers to the way events and issues are organized and made sense of, especially by media, media professionals, and their audiences

Just like the outside view seen through windows on houses, news content is contained and represented within a frame. In both cases, the construction of the frame itself alters what people are able to see and, ultimately, how they make sense of it [10]. A person who is looking at the outside scenery through the window can only see the light and the pictures just within the limits of the window edges. Besides, the size and shape of the picture which comes to our vision will be affected by the design of the window. Likewise, news content is shaped within the media frame employed to publicize it to the audience. It is based on the assumption that how an issue is characterized in news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences [11]. Accordingly, specific attributions, evaluations, or decisions can be suggested for audiences via media frames.

Frames can be identified in at least three areas: (1) among journalists, newsrooms or media systems, (2) among recipients of media messages or society, and (3) among political, economic, cultural etc. actors, groups, or organizations. Many authors conceptualize frames on a cognitive and on a textual level; others see them as patterns of public discourse. Thus, a frame can be looked at in three ways: (1) as a cognitive complex of issue-related schemata for different aspects of reality, (2) established in public, political or inter-media discourse, and (3) becoming manifest as a textual structure of messages such as press releases or newspaper articles [11]. A journalist or any other communicator has to tell a story within certain time and space constraints, and make it accessible to a broad and often heterogeneous public. This can be accomplished by structuring the information, creating an interpretive framework that allows the comprehension of the message [12].

To sum up, media frames are strategies used to represent an issue through media outlets such as Tv. and newspapers so that audiences can perceive the issue and infer meaning. Based on this assumption, framing theory explains that an issue can be viewed from more than one perspective based on its presentation, thus multiple inferences can be drawn from a single issue The key idea is that neither journalists (communicators), nor

audiences (receivers) do not simply reflect or transport the political and social realities; instead, politics, issues, and events are subject to different patterns of selections and interpretations. These interpretations of issues are negotiated, contested, and modified over time. In light of this, frames are selective views on issues—views that construct reality in a certain way leading to different evaluations and recommendations [9].

Category of Media Framing

Based on U.S. television news coverage, Iyengar developed a typology for two types of generic news frames—episodic and thematic. Episodic news frames are references to isolated news events, focusing on discrete cases or episodes, while thematic frames provide broader societal context to issues and events If media owners and politicians want to save government social programs (government policy at large), they frame messages in episodic frame so as to enhance perceptions that the individual-level solutions are most relevant. Hence, they should reduce perceptions towards the collective-level solutions—i.e., large government programs. In short, episodic frames adopt a case-study perspective on an issue or portray just incidents individually without contexts or backgrounds.

On the other hand, thematic framing of messages about social welfare focuses more on breadth and background information and frames the problem as a collective issue—one that has its locus and perhaps its solution at the governmental or societal level In thematic frame, the news consists of information bearing on general trends (e.g. the poverty rate, the number of states experiencing increase in number) or matter of policy (administrative plans and measures related to the problem under discussion). These are background stories in which the object of the coverage is abstract and impersonal. Conversely, in the episodic frame poverty is covered in terms of personal experience; the audience is provided with a particular instance of an individual or family living under economic risk Thematic frames, which illustrate issues using general evidence, lead citizens to systemic attributions as opposed to individualistic attributions. Thematic frames provide greater contextualization and background, linking that particular incident to larger concerns (Moy & Bosch, 2013). Examples of thematic frames include the prognostic and diagnostic frame. Episodic frame discusses the consequences of actions or events, while thematic frame provides background on the causes for actions or events. Thematic frames are less common in breaking news coverage.

News Framing and Its Impact on Public Opinion

The way in which news events are covered by the media can affect how receivers of that news come to understand the events. The framing of any topic can influence public opinion and this specific topic deals with the democratic process [13]. Politicians, journalists, interest- group and party leaders, and other political actors—develop frames, or story lines, to convey a particular perspective on political issues; these perspectives come, of course, with suggestions for the best way to understand an issue. The central communication challenge for political elites is to find frames that both engage and persuade the public. Framing research has presented different models for how framing effects operate. Initial work—following from a model of accessibility—assumed that frames affect opinions not by changing the contents of a person's ideas but by a process of making already existing ideas more accessible so that these considerations were more likely to feed into the opinion The impact of messages from media varies based on the type of frame used to represent stories. Vreese (2005) states that there are consequences of framing on the individual and the societal level. Accordingly, people exposed to frames that connect systemic issues to individual behavior (episodic frames) tend to blame individuals for their own condition. Episodic frames, which illustrate issues using concrete events, lead citizens to individualistic attributions of blame as opposed to systemic attributions. In the case of people who already have beliefs about an issue, episodic frames cause them to make more individualistic beliefs accessible by connecting the issue to the actions of individuals. In the case of people who do not already have beliefs about an issue, episodic frames actually generate new beliefs attaching the issue to the actions of

individuals. Spence (2010) further illustrates that:

"Using an innovative experimental design involving four hundred African American participants, I find that episodic framing of HIV/AIDS not only activates negative attitudes toward behaviors associated with the disease and toward black men who engage in them; it also stimulates positive attitudes toward political mobilization and regressive policy solutions," (p.256).

From this we can see that the central component of the episodic frame is that blame is placed on the individual. Those exposed to a message in an episodic frame did tend to condemn people with HIV/AIDS; they were more likely to believe that people who contract HIV/AIDS are irresponsible and do not care about infecting other (Ibid). Audiences who are exposed to a thematic frame did not express negative attitudes toward people with the disease-HIV. In other words, simply writing about the spread of the disease itself, without connecting its spread to individuals, leads to support for political mobilizing without also leading to support for curtailing civil rights.

Individuals exposed to these frames differ in their attribution of responsibility on political issues episodic frames lead audience members to attribute responsibility of an issue to the individual involved, while thematic frames increase the likelihood of blaming the government or society at large. The more episodically social issues are framed, the less likely it is that citizens will hold government accountable for solving the problem. The more thematic and contextual the coverage, the more likely it is that citizens will see the issue as one appropriate to government resolution. Likewise, the frame of the news portrait can be enlarged so that media reports may penetrate the conscious. Or, frame can be shrunk to miniaturize an even, diminishing the amount, prominence and duration of the coverage and thus mass awareness. The framing analysis in this way measures and helps determine a news events' political importance [14].

To sum up, we have seen that audiences do not simply absorb a pile of information from media; rather, they filter and extract meanings by their own. On the hand, media do not rush to dump any news to the audiences; they instead put it into selected frames and portray it. Many researches show that the way news is framed can influence people's perception and shape their actions. The basic assumption is that the media keep people to be informed about corruption, and informed citizens, in turn, are better able to support the fight against corruption. The media are especially expected to play a major role in preventing and fighting corruption by serving as watchdogs and mobilizing popular opinion against corruption [15]. Nevertheless, this attitudinal and behaviour impact on audiences varies depending on the way news is framed in media. Audiences exposed to issues framed episodically will attach attributes to individual incidents and blame individuals for occurrences, whereas those who consume issues represented in thematic frames have wider knowledge of the problems and attach attributes to the contexts or policies.

The Ethiopian Context

Today, corruption remains a symptom of a poorly functioning state as witnessed in most developing countries in general and in the majority of African countries in particular. African Governance Report UN Economic Commission for Africa (2016), states that corruption is indeed one of the major impediments to structural transformation in Africa. When we come across to reports about loss of billions of dollars every year because of corruption, we can easily imagine what might have that amount of money done for the poor citizens-schools, health centers, roads etc… This is the most serious challenge which has been crippling the promising progresses that are at their infancy stages.

Ethiopia seems to be in a paradox. While its economy has been on a growth trajectory for the last fifteen years, more recently, Ethiopia's landscape has been overwhelmed by deplorable rampant corruption [16]. The diagnostics study of corruption,suggests that in Ethiopia, corruption in the delivery of basic services (primary health, basic education, rural water supply, and justice) is comparatively limited and potentially much lower than in other low-income countries. According to the report of the AU High Level Panel

on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa, Ethiopia could have lost 16.5 billion dollars flow from 1970 to 2008 due to illegal financial outflows [17]. As stated by Gebru (2016) in "*Ethiopia's Economic Transformation*", [16] 'corruption has become a way of life of many officials of the country. These days, corruption has been an inevitable act almost in all sectors of the country. As an illustration, corruption is committed when investors get permits and licenses avoiding the complicated bureaucracy.

In 1942, administrative regulations which prohibited the traditionally accepted practice of receiving money (*Gubo*) and other forms of corruption by public officials were enacted during the imperial regime. After a decade, the imperial regime passed a legislation that establishes criminal acts of corruption. Despite the existence of such legislations and initiative, corruption remained an unsolved problem in Ethiopia [18].

Despite the efforts taken by the government and other stakeholders, corruption is one of the many unresolved problems that have critically hobbled and skewed development. It remains a long-term major political and economic challenge for Ethiopia. In 2016, Ethiopia scored 34 (out of 100%) and was ranked 108 out of the 176 assessed countries in Transparency Corruption Perceptions Index of Transparency International (TI, 2017) suggesting widespread and endemic corruption. All of the above data indicates that corruption has been the major problems in Ethiopia which hinder the development path of the country on the one hand and further exacerbate poverty on the other hand.

More specifically, in Ethiopia petty types of corruption, such as giving gifts on festive occasions to government officials and religious leaders, is systemic and common [16]. Facilitation payments and bribes are often demanded from businesses when they deal with land-related issues. In the administration sector, public procurement, tender processes are generally awarded to government officials. As a result, corruption seems to be institutionalized in the nation. My intention in this paper is not to create awareness about the status of corruption in Ethiopia as it is already an obvious reality. It is, rather, to point out the overlooked means in an all attempts of fighting corruption so far.

Objectives

As it has been pointed out, this study focuses on the practice of covering news of corruption in Ethiopian media. The main purpose of the study, therefore, is to explore the strategies used by mass media to portray corruption. Based on this general purpose, the following specific objectives have been drawn.

Specific Objectives

- To analyze the landscape of coverage of corruption in the Ethiopian Media;
- To identify the dominant framing strategies employed to portray corruption;
- To examine the effectiveness of media in shaping the perception of audiences towards corruption.

Methodology

Research design

The main purpose of this study is to examine the routines of covering news of corruption and the 'key framing strategies' used to depict 'corruption issues' in Ethiopian media. Media researchers find framing theory helpful to examine the imbalances and underlying power structures that mediate political issues. The use of framing theory not only identifies the difference framings of one story across a number of news outlets, but allows us to detect journalistic bias [19]. Thus,this study uses two predefined and operationalized framing strategies-'episodic' and 'thematic 'framing-as frameworks to investigate the existing problem of media practices in

representing corruption.

A mixed research approach has been employed so that both qualitative and quantitative data can be analyzed and general evaluations made about the practice of framing corruption in media. The study gathered both qualitative and quantitative data in providing possible answers to the research questions articulated. But as the main purpose is to identify media framing strategies used to depict corruption so as to shape audiences' opinions, mainly qualitative research method has been used though quantitative data has been collected for triangulations. "Qualitative research is a naturalistic, interpretative approach concerned with understanding the meanings which people attach to phenomena (actions, decisions, beliefs, values etc.) within their social worlds," [20].

Research Methods and Data Gathering Techniques

Content analysis

The study makes use of both quantitative and qualitative content analysis. As the study is concerned with how corruption is framed and depicted in media, qualitative content/textual analysis has been adopted as a critical lens utilizing Framing theory as guidepost for the analysis and discussion of the news items containing 'corruption' as headlines which have been collected from selected media sources. In addition, the study aimed to analyze the practice of Ethiopian media in covering corruption as news topic. For this end, quantitative content analysis method have also been employed as data gathering tool. Using Content analysisboth the content and context of documents have been analyzed; themes have been identified, with the researcher focusing on the way the theme is treated or presented and the frequency of its occurrence. "Content analysis is the systematic analysis of the content of a text (e.g., who says what, to whom, why, and to what extent and with what effect) in a quantitative or qualitative manner [21]. According to [14] the major intent in framing is sizing-magnifying or shrinking elements of the depicted reality to make them more or less salient. Thus, using content analysis technique, the questions; 'how much material on the event is available?' 'How prominently is it displayed?' have been addressed to examine how much importance is given to corruption issues.

Framing analysis

Frames reside in the specific properties of the news narrative that encourage those perceiving and thinking about events to develop particular understanding of them [14]. Hence, the frame elements have been operationalized using [22] definition of framing: problem definitions, causal attributions, moral evaluations/treatment in then text. Problem definition is considered to include both issue of corruption and the actors. Causal attribution is operationalized as whether the responsibilities of corruption are attributed to individual or to the government. Moral evaluation will consider whether the issue is framed as individual crime or societal norm violation by both media and the audiences.

Data sources

The target sources of data for this study are Ethiopian Television of Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority, Fana Broadcasting Corporation, Addis Zemen News Paper and The Ethiopian Reporter. These media outlets have been purposely selected using convenience sampling method. EBC is a government television channel which has both the access and responsibility to follow up and publicize corruption in promoting good governance. But 'TheEthiopian Reporter' and 'FBC' are privatemedia outlets which have better readerships and experiences of covering political issues. Hence, these have been purposely selected for comparative analysis. Accordingly, a three- months news stories, containing corruption as news item, of these media have been collected for analysis and interpretation.

As it is impossible to gather and analyze data of a long time from the media outlets selected, news in three months-time have been gathered.

Accordingly, news covered from June 2017-September, 2017 have been gathered and form the selected media outlets.

Data analysis

There are two major approaches which have been applied in the frames analysis researches so far. The first approach is inductivein nature and refrains from analyzing news stories with a pre-defined news frames in mind. Hence, in this approach, frames emerge from the material during the course of analysis [23,24]. A second approach is rather *deductive* in nature and investigates frames that are defined and operationalized prior to the investigation [25]. In this research a deductive approach has been applied as the intention is to evaluate the news and articles about corruption using 'episodic' and 'thematic' frames as evaluating frameworks. Accordingly, the news and articles have been analyzed using the unique of features of these frames as evaluating criteria Table 1.

For this end, articles and news were collected by searching for the Amharic terms such as 'Musina','kray sebsabi', and 'bileshu aserar', which all refer to the English concept 'corruption', in the headlines of news or articles. Besides, news, feature, and opinion/editorial articles were included in the study. As the study employed qualitative content analysis as the main research method, individual articles and news items served as the unit of analysis. After the news items and articles were collected in the specified time frame, an identification number was assigned for each of them. Following an initial orientation session, assistant researchers used a coding sheet to record newspaper name, date of publication, headline, type of article (news, feature, opinion/editorial, and column), word length, and author. Coders analyzed each article to discover: (i) coverage of corruption, (ii) category of corruption news or articles (iii) recurring themes of corruption news and (iv) dominant framings.

News stories of media have been classified and categorized to make meaningful comparisons between different bits of data. Then, episodic and thematic frames have been coded according to several yardsticks

Table 1. Framing Analysis of FBC News.

News-FANA / Headlines of News/Articles	Episodic frames				Thematic frames				
	Specific/ isolated	Name/ photos	date	place	Contextualized (Politics, History, social)	Substantiated (Data Evidences sources)	Compared -similar cases	Causes -root cause	Solution -reform -measure
1. An individual suspected of corruption and disappeared arrested.	X	X	X	X					
2. "Prosecuting officials and investors suspected of corruption will continue", Attorney General					X			X	X
3. Construction of Condominium Houses delayed due to corruption and mismanagement					X	X		X	
4. Court orders Melaku Fanta and others to defend	X	X	X						
5. An individual suspected of corruption arrested after seen on Tv.	X	X		X					
6. A staff of ethio- telecom deceiving and causing a 5 million loss fined and put in in jail.	X	X	X	X		X			
7. The policy of duty free is not managed applied in a useful way.	X		X	X					
8. A court permits more days for investigation for the case of the owner of Addis View Hotel who is suspected and accused of Usury	X	X	X	X					
9.Six individuals arrested for breaking the law of house renting released in warrant	X	X	X	X					
9. Prosecuting officials and individuals suspected of corruption will continue", Attorney General.	X	X		X					
10. The court rejects a warrant request for Ato Abiy Abebe, owner of Addis View Hotel.	X	X	X	X					
11. Individuals who smuggled 11 million birr from Ethio-Railway sentenced to jail.	X	X		X					
12. A jury commenced on 17 individuals who caused government's loss of over 7.7 Million Birr	X	X	X	X		X			
13. Police submitted investigation report of individuals arrested suspected of corruption.	X		X						
14. Four individuals, including Mr. Alemayehu Gujo, Mr. Zaid W.Gabriel, suspected of corruption appear before court.	X	X	X	X		X			
15. 26 individuals from Sebeta Town arrested suspected of corruption.	X			X			X	X	
16. Addition investigation days allowed for corruption cases of 44 officials and investors	X	X	X	X		X			

News story										
17. Prosecution opened on 5 individuals who attempted to close the charges of 2 Chinese investors paying a 5 Million Birr bribe	■	■	■	■						
18. 8 people, including Mr. Samson Wondimu, suspected of corruption appear before court	■	■	□	■						
19. A warrant requested for corruption suspected individuals rejected	■	■	■	■						
20. A driver who deliberately hit a traffic police by car for revenge sentenced to 16 years in jail.	■	■	■	□						
21. Police submitted investigation report on the case of Mr. Alemayheu Gujo and Zaid W. Gabriel.	■	■	■	□						
22. Police investigating additional cases over the owner of Addis View Hotel	■	■	■	■						
22. A policeman sentenced to jail for using money collected from fines for himself	■	■	■	■						
23. Mr. Melaku Fanta and Gebrewahid W. Gabriel gave defense witness for each other	■	■	□	■						
24. Police submitted investigation report of corruption suspected individuals	■	□	■	□						
25. Communication Director of Ethiopian Roads Authority Arrested suspected of corruption	■	■	■	■						

using Park's (2012) model. For this end, Human Assisted Coding Analysis (HACA) has been used for this study. In order to assure the reliability of codding, inter-coding reliability has been implemented involving selected individuals for coding and recoding. For example, a news article focusing on systemic (e.g., social or political) explanations about corruption occurrence, remedial actions, and the extent and scope of influence of corruption have been regarded as a thematically framed story, but mere narrations of a specific corruption cases, simple report of corrupted individuals, and a narrative of causes based on individual perspectives etc…have been coded as episodic framed story. When two different frames are found in the same article, the dominant frame receiving the most space within each story has been chosen as a coded frame. Moreover, for quantitative data using content analysis method, the coverage of corruption as news story has been analyzed and the weight given to the corruption issues have been evaluated by counting words and expressions (to be categorized and coded using HACA) used to magnify or downplay issue Tables 2 and 3.

Discussion

This study aimed at examining the practice of Ethiopian media in framing news stories related to corruption. For this end, the news stories and articles were gathered in the specified time frame (June 2017-Septemeber 2017). The news stories /articles were then categorized using specific numbers and codes. Based on the orientations, the assistant researchers used a coding sheet to record newspaper name, date of publication, headline, and type of article (news, feature, opinion/editorial, and column). Coders analyzed each article to discover: (i) coverage of corruption, (ii) category of corruption news or articles (iii) recurring themes of corruption news and (iv) dominant framings. In order to examine the type of coverage of corruption news stories, of each media outlet selected for this study, coding criteria were identified. Accordingly, 'Public Opinion', 'News analysis', 'Editorial view', 'Court Case Reports', 'Corruption Policy discussion', 'Custody of individuals by police' and 'Government bureau reports' were used as categorizing codes. In order to identify the types of corruptions covered in the news stories, each news story was evaluated and the following codes were identified as recurring themes. The coding criteria used to categorize the type of news stories covered are: 'Corruption of a bribe' 'Corruption of power and good governance', 'Corruption of usury/Arata 'Corruption and laws/policies', 'corruption of tax evasion', 'corruption of government projects & public property'.

Finally, features of the two framing strategies have been identified so that they can be used as criteria in order to evaluate the framing strategies employed. Accordingly, for 'Thematic Framing' 'systematic explanation of news stories (social, political and historical contexts), 'utilization of supporting data or evidences', 'suggestions of possible remedial actions' and 'comprehensiveness' or completeness of the story showing extent and scope' were used as evaluating criteria. Moreover, questions such as, 'Does this story place issues into a broader context, Is the news items presented with supporting data and evidences?, Has the news story used appropriate sources?, Does this story show there are cases of similar nature that have occurred?, Does the news story discuss the root causes?, and Does this story mention policy reform?" were used as checklists to identify news stories or articles framed thematically.

For 'Episodic framing', 'individual presentation of cases', narratives of individual person cases (including names, time, space). In addition, questions 'Does this story present an issue by offering a specific example, case study, or event oriented report?, Does this story mention names or show photos of an individual suspected of corruption? And is this story presented as an isolated act without showing relationships with previous cases?' have been prepared as checklists.

Based on the methodology planned, data have been gathered and analyzed in the previous chapter. In this chapter, the findings discussed in chapter four have been summarized and conclusions have been drawn. The research questions have been used as guideposts in order to summarize the findings.

The first question focused on covering of 'corruption' in the media. As we have seen from the data gathered from selected media outlets, the covering news of corruption is not uniform in private and state media. As it has been learned from the analysis in both FBC and The Ethiopian Reporter mainly covered specific court reports and custody of individuals. On the contrary, the government media outlets, EBC and Addis Zemen, focused on 'policy discussion' and 'news analyses' of news/articles related corruption. These media outlets gave much emphasis for discussing problem vis-à-vis the government laws and policies and reports of different offices about corruption. More importantly, FBC and The Ethiopian Reporter have covered more news of corruptions than the state media outlets Table 4.

On the other hand, the types of the corruption news stories covered by these sample media outlets have been examined. As we have seen from the analysis in, the media outlets have covered various themes in the news stories related to corruption. The state media outlets, Addis Zemen and EBC focused corruptions news topics related to 'power and good

Table 2: Framing Analysis of Reporter News Stories/Articles.

News- Reporter / Headlines of News/Articles	Episodic frames				Thematic frames				
	Specific/ isolated	Name/ photos	date	place	Contextualized Politics, History, social	Substantiated Data Evidences sources	Compared -similar cases	Causes -root cause	Solution -reform -measure
1. Government officials and investors suspected for a corruption of over 1.3 Billion Birr Appear before court	✅	✅		✅		✅			
2. Many companies in relations with individuals arrested for corruption cases banned ; property of210 individuals suspended by the court; Director of Ethiopian Roads Authority arrested	✅	✅		✅					
3. Additional investigation days allowed for the case of the owner of Addis View Hotel suspected of Usury.	✅	✅	✅	✅					
4.Case opened against individuals suspected of receiving a 5 Million Birr bribe from a Chinese	✅	✅	✅	✅					
5.An individual put in custody suspected of offering half a million Birr bribe for the state minsiter	✅	✅	✅	✅					
6.List of government officials and merchants suspected for over 1.1 Billion Birr corruption disclosed	✅	✅		✅					
7.Additional investigation days allowed for cases government officials and merchants suspected f corruption; police reported arresting more suspects	✅	✅	✅	✅		✅			
8.A 20 Birr warrant granted for vice president of Kotebe University who had been suspected of corruption and arrested	✅	✅	✅	✅		✅			
9.Additional 6 government officials and 1 investor appear before court; the total number of suspects is now 45	✅	✅	✅	✅		✅			
10.14 private schools accused of anti-trade law	✅	✅	✅	✅					
11.The vice president of Science and Technology University including 5 staffs accused corruption	✅	✅		✅					
12.Court gives release order again for the owner of Inter-Continental Hotel; prosecutor's claim to cancel court's pardon rejected	✅	✅	✅	✅					
13.The owner of intercontinental Hotel released	✅	✅	✅	✅					
14.Mr. Kebede Tesera, released from prison earlier arrested again; the president's pardon signature has been cancelled	✅	✅	✅		✅				
15.Oromia General Court found 2.7 Billion Birr deficit in the regional institutions					✅	✅	✅		
17.Agency for Government Development to open charges against Horizon Plantation	✅	✅	✅	✅					
18.The Owner of Addis View Hotel arrested suspected of usury crime	✅	✅	✅	✅					
19.Individuals caught rend handed receiving bribe from Chinese company appear before court	✅	✅	✅	✅					
20.Police officials and other individuals accused for preparing fake court order and arresting individuals	✅	✅	✅	✅					
21.Ambo Mineral Water and East Africa Botteling opposed the accuasation	✅	✅	✅						
22.Higher officials and merchants arrested					✅	✅		✅	✅
23.A translator arrested for manupliating Chinese's word of witness	✅	✅	✅	✅					
24. Head of Tourism to be accused for receiving double salaries unlawfully; Ministry of Culture and Tourism higly criticized	✅	✅	✅	✅					
25.Addis Ababa City Development Bureau Engineer arrested being suspected for corruption	✅	✅	✅	✅					

Table 3: Framing Analysis of Addis Zemen News Stories/ Articles.

Headlines of News/Articles	Episodic frames				Thematic frames				
	Specific/ isolated	Name/ photos	date	place	Contextualized Politics, History, social	Substantiated Data Evidences sources	Compared -similar cases	Causes -root cause	Solution -reform -measure
1. Individuals arrested suspected of over a 75 Million Dollar against the government	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
2. How long can we continue just admiring the report of the general audit bureau?					✓	✓			✓
3. History: An individual sentenced for 10 years in prison for receiving bribe	✓	✓	✓	✓					
4. Corruption!								✓	✓
5. A names is given from angles; and actions symbolizes					✓		✓		✓
10.Perceptions towards the current measures against corruptions					✓	✓	✓	✓	
11. Our dream and hope is 'Good Governance!'					✓		✓		✓
13.The measure has to applied up to the lowrer government structure!					✓				✓
14.The Locked Down: Registration of government Officals' property and its consequences					✓	✓			✓
6. Stop conducting the property registration pretension!					✓	✓		✓	✓
7. No Option!					✓	✓		✓	✓
8. The Fight for Anti- Corruption symbolizes the features of government ideology					✓		✓		✓
9. There should not be a doubt on returning all the robbed property through corruption					✓			✓	✓
10. Corruption should not be the obstacle for our development					✓			✓	✓
11. The fight for Anti-corruption will continue					✓			✓	✓
12. "We are determined to fight corruption"					✓			✓	✓
13. "Transparency and Accountability are the key for the fight for Anti-corruption					✓		✓	✓	✓
14. Transparency and accountability at all levels and sectors					✓			✓	✓
15. 'I remember the snake left in the bottle when I think of corrupted people"					✓			✓	✓
16. The support of the public is vital for the fight for Anti-corruption					✓			✓	✓

Table 4: Recurring themes of corruption news and articles.

Media	Themes of Corruption in the News items and articles						
	Corruption of a bribe	Corruption, power and good governance	Corruption of usury/አራጣ	Corruption and laws/ policies	Corruption of government projects & public property	Corruption of tax evasion	Money laundry
AZ	1(5%)	10 (50%)		8 (40%)	1 (5%)		20
Repo	3 (12.5%)	4 (17%)	3 (12.5%)	3 (12.5%)	7 (29%)	4 (17%)	24
Fana	3 (10%)	6 (20%)	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	15 (50%)	4 (13.3%)	30
EBC	1 (4.5%)	4 (18%)	1 (4.5%)	7(32%)	4 (18%)	5 (23%)	22

governance' and 'laws and policies'. Other types such as, 'Corruption of a bribe', 'Corruption of usury/አራጣ and Corruption of tax evasion' have been given less coverage. The two private media outlets, FBC and The Ethiopian Reporter have given better coverage for 'Corruption of government projects & public property' Table 5 and 6.

The second research question was related to framing strategy. As we have seen from the analysis in Table 2 most of the news stories/articles covered by the private media outlets (FBC and The Ethiopian Reporter), have been presented in 'Episodic Frame'. For example, out of 30 news items of corruption, FBC framed 27 of them in episodic frame and The

Table 5. Framing Analysis of FBC News.

News-FANA	Episodic frames				Thematic frames				
Headlines of News/Articles	Specific/ isolated	Name/ photos	date	place	Contextualized Politics, History, social	Substantiated Data Evidences sources	Compared -similar cases	Causes -root cause	Solution -reform -measure
4. An individual suspected of corruption and disappeared arrested.	✓		✓						
7. "Prosecuting officials and investors suspected of corruption will continue", Attorney General					✓			✓	✓
8. *Construction of Condominium Houses delayed due to corruption and mismanagement*					✓	✓		✓	
9. *Court orders Melaku Fanta and others to defend*	✓		✓						
10. *An individual suspected of corruption arrested after seen on Tv.*	✓			✓					
6. A staff of ethio- telecom deceiving and causing a 5 million loss fined and put in in jail.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
7. *The policy of duty free is not managed applied in a useful way.*	✓		✓	✓					
8. *A court permits more days for investigation for the case of the owner of Addis View Hotel who is suspected and accused of Usury*	✓	✓	✓	✓					
9.Six individuals arrested for breaking the law of house renting released in warrant	✓	✓	✓	✓					
9. Prosecuting officials and individuals suspected of corruption will continue", Attorney General.	✓	✓		✓					
10. The court rejects a warrant request for Ato Abiy Abebe, owner of Addis View Hotel.	✓	✓		✓					
11. Individuals who smuggled 11 million birr from Ethio-Railway sentenced to jail.	✓	✓	✓	✓					
12. A jury commenced on 17 individuals who caused government's loss of over 7.7 Million Birr	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
13. Police submitted investigation report of individuals arrested suspected of corruption.	✓		✓	✓		✓			
14. Four individuals, including Mr. Alemayehu Gujo, Mr. Zaid W.Gabriel, suspected of corruption appear before court.	✓	✓		✓		✓			
15. 26 individuals from Sebeta Town arrested suspected of corruption.	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
16. Addition investigation days allowed for corruption cases of 44 officials and investors	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
17. Prosecution opened on 5 individuals who attempted to close the charges of 2 Chinese investors paying a 5 Million Birr bribe	✓	✓	✓	✓					
18. 8 people, including Mr. Samson Wondimu, suspected of corruption appear before court	✓	✓		✓					
19. A warrant requested for corruption suspected individuals rejected	✓	✓	✓	✓					
20. A driver who deliberately hit a traffic police by car for revenge sentenced to 16 years in jail.	✓	✓	✓						
21. Police submitted investigation report on the case of Mr. Alemayheu Gujo and Zaid W. Gabriel.	✓	✓	✓	✓					
22. *Police investigating additional cases over the owner of Addis View Hotel*	✓	✓	✓						
22. A policeman sentenced to jail for using money collected from fines for himself	✓	✓	✓	✓					
23. Mr. Melaku Fanta and Gebrewahid W. Gabriel gave defense witness for each other	✓	✓	✓						
24. Police submitted investigation report of corruption suspected individuals	✓		✓						
25. Communication Director of Ethiopian Roads Authority Arrested suspected of corruption	✓	✓	✓	✓					

Table 6: Framing Analysis of EBC News Stories.

News- EBC	Episodic frames				Thematic frames				
Headlines of News/Articles	Specific/ isolated	Name/ photos	date	place	Contextualized Politics, History, social	Substantiated Data Evidences sources	Compared -similar cases	Causes -root cause	Solution -reform
1. Individuals arrested suspected of over a 75 Million Dollar against the government	■	■	■	■		■			
2. 34 individuals arrested being suspected of corruption	■	■	■	■					
3. The number of government officials and merchants supcted of corruption and arrested is now 42	■	■	■	■					
4. Mr. Alemayehu Gujo, state minster of Ministry of Economic Cooperation arrested for corruption case	■	■	■	■					
5. Government officials and merchants arrested for corruption cases	■	■	■	■	■				
6. "Citizens call for the government to keep taking the measures against corruption'EBC					■	■	■	■	■
7. The federal supreme 2nd Jury starts seeing 7 cases out of 42 suspected of high corruption crime	■	■	■	■	■	■			
8. "To prevent the exploitation of public property, the government has to work upto the lower structure", South Nations and Nationalities.	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	
9. The Atronney General gave press release regarding officials and individuals in custidey suspected of corruption	■	■	■	■				■	
10. Oromia General Court found 2.7 Billion Birr deficit in the regional government institutions				■	■	■			
11. "Staffs with fake documents are disclosing themselves" Addis Ababa City Admin.	■						■		
12. Government officials and merchants arrested for high corruption crimes	■	■	■	■	■				
13. "Citizens should not have a doubt on returning all the robbed property", workshop moderators					■	■	■		
14. The case of 17 individuals suspected of 7.7 Million Birr corruption opens today!	■	■	■	■		■			■
15. Citizens call to keep up the fight for Anti-corruption	■				■			■	
16. Attendants of a forum vowed to keep their fight against corruption					■	■	■		
17. The Prime Minister calls for investors to stand by the government in the fight for Anti-corruption					■			■	
18. It has been announced that transparency and accountability are necessary at all levels					■		■		
19. Many companies have been suspended in relation to their attachment with arrested officals suspected of corruption	■	■	■						

Ethiopian Reporter framed 22 news stories and articles in Episodic Frame out of 24 news items of corruption. The news stories/articles have been publicized in a mere presentation of specific corruption occurrences or cases. Most importantly, the media outlets portrayed individual participants without any sectorial or policy discussion, comparison with previous cases and appropriate evidences. These stories have been narrated separately mentioning names and dates of cases. Only few of the news stories/articles are farmed in a 'Thematic Frame' as per the evaluating criteria identified.

The two state media outlets, EBC and Addis Zemen , have been covering news of corruption differently. The news stories/articles have been publicized with detailed contexts and public opinions. Most of the news stories/articles have been presented using the political and social contexts as backgrounds in the news analyses. They have also been portrayed with possible causes and solutions of the problem. In some cases, data and evidences have been presented. Unlike in Addis Zemen, the news stories of EBC have been narrated episodically. The stories have been presented separately including names of individuals, their positions, date and organizations. The stories do not give comparisons with earlier cases. The stories also are presented without any supporting data of the extent of corruption in the nation. Furthermore, these news stories are publicized with identified causes and possible remedies. Thus, we can deduce that the "Episodic Frame' is the dominant framing strategy employed to portray the news

In order to answer the last question 'To what extent is such journalistic practice inspired vigilance and engagement of citizens in the fight against corruption?' Entman's principles of frame elements have been applied. According to Entman (1993, 2004) frames of news can be displayed in the specific properties of the news narrative that encourage the perceptions and thinking about events to develop particular understanding of them. Based on the Entman's principle the frames elements of news are operationalized as: problem definition (issue of corruption and the actors), causal attributions

(whether the responsibilities of corruption are attributed to individual or to the government), and moral evaluation/treatment in the text (whether the issue is framed as individual crime or societal norm violation).

Accordingly, we cannot conclude that all the media outlets have been working on news of corruption in order to influence attitudes and mobilize the society for change. It is expected that the private media are relatively free to be watchdogs for the society disclosing the wrong doings and illegal activities. However, as it has been learned that the way these media have been disclosing corruption using 'episodic frames' which do not help the audience to get comprehensive information and evidences for further actions. As per the Entman's principle, the two private media outlets have been disclosing corruption news attaching them to individual crimes. The news have not been supplemented by the gaps or weaknesses related to government policies or societal norms. As the news have been presented in separate cases, the audience have no chances to compare and evaluate corruptions cases in relation to the societal norm or policy violations. The two government media have been presenting the corruption news indirectly. These media neither boldly criticize the government policies nor attach the cases to individuals. The corruption news have been presented as 'results of poor performances' not policy gaps.

Conclusion

The findings show that the media outlets have been covering news of corruption differently. The two private media 'FBC' and 'The Ethiopian Reporter' have framed news of corruption almost in a similar way. In these media outlets, the majority of the news stories do not put the issues into a broader context and use appropriate sources, the news are not presented with supporting data and evidences, do not compare similar cases of similar nature that have occurred, the stories do not discuss the root causes and forward policy reform or any remedial actions. Thus, we can conclude that most of the news topics about corruption are framed in an 'Episodic Frame'. Addis Zemen', a state newspaper, has applied a 'thematic frame' as the news stories/articles have been presented with detailed contexts and public opinions, political and social contexts as backgrounds and with possible causes and solutions of the problem. Like 'FBC' and "The Ethiopian Reporter', 'the state owned media, EBC' has been disclosing news of corruption in 'episodic frame'without the contexts, detailed reviews arguments and without any supporting data of the extent of corruption in the nation.

As Freyenberger (2013) pointed out, the framing of any topic in media can influence public opinion. As we have seen the three out of the four selected media outlets have been presenting corruption news using 'Episodic' frame. This will affect the perception of the audience regarding corruption. In this regard, Iyengar (1990, 1991) stated that people exposed to frames that connect systemic issues to individual behavior (*episodic frames*) tend to blame individuals for their own condition. Most importantly, as news are presented as individual cases separately, citizens will not have chances to compare and evaluate the extent of the problem. Consequently, the news will fade right away and the fight against corruption will not be supported by the public at large.

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