CULTURE, MEDIA & FILM | RESEARCH ARTICLE

The marginalised voice of the poor: Perspectives and framing of poverty by the Ethiopian print media

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to shed light on how Ethiopian print media organizations communicate poverty. Specifically, it aims to address the framing of poverty in the two English language newspapers (Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter) in Ethiopia. Using framing theory and quantitative content analysis, the researcher analysed articles focussing on poverty from September 1/2015 to August 30/2017. Several articles (95) about poverty were found to have been published in both the Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter newspapers from the sample 384 articles collected for the study. Government officials are the dominant sources (61.1%) used by these newspaper articles. No newspaper article used the poor, the opposition party leaders and the wider community as a source of information. The findings clearly reveal that reporting on poverty is dominated by power holders and the poor are marginalized. Economic perspectives of poverty are dominant, and the newspapers under study primarily used the economic frame (54.7%) over other types of frames. In other words, the newspapers could not communicate the complexity of poverty in the country from a variety of perspectives. In order to avert such “miscommunication about poverty”, the media

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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Mass media could play important roles by informing the public, highlighting crucial issues and emphasising policy decisions and thus creating a climate of public concern and enabling debate about poverty alleviation issues (Panos, 2007). Studying the role of media in poverty alleviation in an African context is one of the under researched pressing issues. This research sheds light on how Ethiopian print media organisations communicate poverty. The research was based on the assumption that studying national media communication of such a national problem might shed light an imperative, but often overlooked aspects of the national media’s role in addressing their own problems such as poverty. Research discloses that poverty communication is dominated by the voice of the power holders and much emphasis is given to the economic dimensions of poverty. The complexity of poverty in the country is not reported and the poor are voiceless and marginalised in poverty reporting. This might reduce the potential roles of media in poverty alleviation efforts.
organizations are recommended to communicate poverty by making the poor at the centre of their reporting and should approach poverty from its multi-dimensional faces, causes and consequences.

**Subjects:** Development Communication; Development Studies; Media & film Studies

**Keywords:** Poverty; framing of poverty; communicating poverty; marginalized voices; perspectives of poverty; Ethiopian newspapers

1. **Introduction**

1.1. **Background of the study**

Poverty is a global problem that affects millions across the world. Global poverty level indicates 8.6% of the world, or 736 million people live in extreme poverty (on 1.90 USD or less a day) (the World Bank, 2017). Ethiopia is among the five countries with the highest number of people in extreme poverty (India, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, and Bangladesh). In the country, as the report of 2015 indicates, 23.5% of the population live under the poverty line which shows that more than 23 million Ethiopians are under the poverty line (the World Bank, 2017).

Poverty has multi-dimensional aspects with varied and complex causes and manifestations. It has a variety of political, economic, social and cultural meanings and manifestations. From the economic point of view, poverty is taken as a result of inequitable and unfair distribution and use of resources. From the socio-cultural point of view, it is considered as a shortage of basic needs and facilities. And from the political perspective, it is seen as deprivation of the right to participate in the decision-making processes and insufficient translation of competing social interests (Sen 1999; Abebe, 2001). With all these multidimensional faces, poverty is a worldwide phenomenon that affects the economic, educational, health and environmental aspects of a society (World Bank, 2002).

Because of its multidimensional faces, poverty has different meanings. For example, Todaro and Smith (2009) define poverty as follows:

Poverty means suffering from undernutrition and poor health, have little or no literally, live in environmentally degraded areas, have little political voice, are socially excluded, and attempt to earn a meagre living on small and marginal farms or in dilapidated urban slums.

Poverty also refers to incapability to achieve the minimum standard of living, usually known as the poverty line, demarcated by the World Bank considering an annual income of 370 USD. The World Bank definition given below shows the multidimensional aspects of poverty.

Poverty is a pronounced deprivation of well-being related to lack of material income or consumption, low levels of education and health, vulnerability and exposure to risk and voicelessness and powerlessness (World Bank, 2001).

This income-based approach is the most common approach to measure poverty level. It is widely accepted that an individual is considered poor when the income level becomes below the poverty line which is assumed to be insufficient to meet basic needs. However, it is also important to note that the nature and level of basic needs satisfaction vary with time and societies. Considering such variation, the World Bank suggests that the poverty line should be appropriate to the level of societal development, norms and values (World Bank, 2001).

Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world. In fact, it has been ranked at the bottom line of the consecutive ranks of United Nations Development Program’s (UNDP) human development indexes. For instance, Ethiopia ranked 174th out of 187 countries in 2011, 173rd out of 186
countries in 2013 and 2014 UNDP’s indexes (UNDP, 2011b, 2013, 2014). This underdevelopment rank of the country shows the level of poverty in the country (Adem, 2017). Being one of the poorest countries in the world, the question of poverty alleviation is one of the grand issues of the country. Accordingly, the Ethiopian government has launched a war on poverty in response to such devastating situations. To this end, poverty alleviation policies and strategies have been designed and implemented in order to alleviate poverty in the country.

Media plays a paramount role in fighting against poverty by communicating the root cause of poverty, promoting poverty alleviation policies and strategies, reporting good practices and success stories, investigating malpractices and the cause of poverty, and by setting the agenda about poverty, its manifestations, dimensions, solutions and related issues (Panos, 2007; Iyengar, 1990; Thomas, 2008).

Panos (2007, p. 3) emphasizes the indispensable role of media in poverty reduction as follows: “Policy change has often stemmed from shifts in public and political opinion, and the very reach of the mass media make them a vital force in raising public awareness and debate”. Among the several roles of media in poverty reduction, Panos (2007) elucidates the three major roles the media could play as follows:

- Communicating with and informing a wide range of audiences on poverty reduction issues
- Providing an open forum to reflect different public views, including those of poor people
- Providing an inclusive platform for public debate
- Scrutinising and holding all actors to account for their actions, acting as a force for more transparent and accountable decision-making relevant to poverty reduction.

Owing to its central role, studying how Ethiopian media communicate poverty is imperative to examine the practices and understand how much media contributed to the fight against poverty. Understanding the construction of poverty in mass media plays an important role in identifying the place of media in poverty alleviation efforts.

It is equally important that how the media define and frame poverty contributes to the effectiveness of the media in the fight against poverty. Moreover, studying the communication of poverty enables us to grasp the coverage of poverty issues in the newspapers. This is in line with the arguments of other scholars in that “how poverty is understood and is defined affects how pressing the issue is perceived to be, and what people choose to do or not do about it” (Edelman 1977; Jørgenson & Phillips 2002; Lister 2004 as cited in Redden, 2011, p. 821). Furthermore, Lister (2004 as cited in Redden, 2011, p. 821) argues, “poverty must be recognized as an always contested political concept because how it is understood influences the extent to which social action, through the redistribution of resources is necessary”. Similarly, this idea of media influence is pronounced by several scholars. “Policy, political action, and advocacy are often developed with the media in mind or a response to media demands” (Golding & Middleton 1982; Kuhn 2002; Davis 2007a, 2007b, 2010a, 2010b; Fenton 2010 as cited in Redden, 2011, p. 82). Moreover, Iyengar (1994 as cited in Redden, 2011) states that the types of media framing influence the assignment of responsibility to the individual or societal levels and circumstances.

Therefore, this article aims to give some insight into the framing of poverty that dominates the news coverage in the Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter newspapers. Normative values of mass media imply that the function of mass media is to focus on marginalized voices and hence the newspapers should see poverty issues as one of the top national problems that affect the voiceless.

The Ethiopian Herald is the only oldest English language newspaper established in 1943. Ever since its establishment, it has remained under the ownership and control of the government. It is a daily and the only English language government owned newspaper which focuses on political, social and economic issues (Library of Congress, 2019; Ethiopian Press Agency, 2019). But The Reporter is a privately owned
A newspaper that was established in 1995. The Reporter is published in both Amharic and English languages (The Reporter, 2019). However, the present study considered the English version to see how it frames poverty dominantly for English-speaking community in Ethiopia. This newspaper is one of the few long surviving private newspapers in the country which cover social, political, economic and cultural issues. This makes the newspapers worth being the subject of this study as they are significant in their nationwide distribution, issue coverage and their age in the journalistic practices.

The present study addresses the communication about poverty focusing on the coverage, sources, dimension and framing of poverty by the selected print media houses which have national focus as well as government and private ownerships. Therefore, the study tried to show us the communication of poverty in the Ethiopian print media land escape.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The mass media could contribute greatly to bringing out information that can have an enormous impact on policies for poverty alleviation programs and practices. Media has a central role in raising public awareness and mobilization about a national problem such as poverty. Panos (2007, p. 11) emphasises that in recent years the prospective of communication to enhance the effectiveness of policies and strategies in fighting poverty in low-income developing countries has become clear. In such countries, deprivation and social exclusion are daily realities. However, the independent role of mass media for poverty alleviation in such countries is a neglected aspect of the emerging discussions. Media could play important roles by informing the public, highlighting crucial issues and emphasising policy decisions and thus creating a climate of public concern and enabling debate about poverty alleviation issues.

Communication of poverty by the media has been used as a means of opinion formation and awareness creation for policymakers and development practitioners. Information disseminated by media to influence people about a certain public problem such as poverty in Ethiopia needs to cover and frame the issues effectively to achieve the intended objective. This is because effective poverty communication of mass media has a paramount role in poverty alleviation efforts. Griffin defines media frame as “the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration.” (as cited in Haile, 2011:4).

Mass media are conceived as a fourth estate that check and balance all the three states of government namely legislators, judiciary and executives. In the absence of vibrant media that provide the check and balance endeavours, governments cannot be effective in tackling the deep-rooted and multi-dimensional aspects of poverty. Therefore, it is important to study how mass media check and supervise the government’s work on poverty alleviation. By communicating poverty effectively, mass media are considered as a tool for poverty reduction and popular empowerment. Ideally, the media should provide a voice to those marginalised because of poverty, gender, or ethnic or religious affiliations (Sen, 1999). Studying poverty communication practices would show how the voice of the poor is pronounced and marginalised in the fight against poverty besides to the way poverty is communicated or miscommunicated. This is because the way mass media communicate poverty affects who should take the responsibilities. Iyengar (1990) argues that how people think about poverty is shown to be dependent on how the issue is framed. When news media frame poverty as a general outcome, responsibility for poverty is assigned to society-at-large. Conversely, when news frame poverty as a particular instance of a poor person, the responsibility goes to the individual.

Framing theory enables media researchers to analyse imbalances in covering issues of social significance such as poverty and marginalisation (Entman, 1993). In the contemporary world, the public gets information about social problems, mostly through the media (Kensicki, 2004:54). Media has a huge responsibility of informing the public about poverty and its multidimensional aspects, the root causes and solutions.
As far as the researcher’s knowledge is concerned, there is no study that has investigated how poverty is communicated considering, especially the coverage, sources, definitions and framing in the Ethiopian print media. Lots of media framing studies focused on other problems of the nation such as crime, politics, uprising, violence against women, environmental issues, rural development, Ethiopian drought and famine, but not poverty. Addressing such a research gap is also the rationale for conducting this study since poverty is one of the main challenges of the country.

1.3. Objectives of the study

1.3.1. General Objective
The general objective of the study is to examine how poverty is communicated or framed by the Ethiopian print media.

1.3.2. Specific objectives
The specific objectives of the study include:

• To discover the coverage of poverty in each newspaper during the selected time period
• To identify the dominant sources and quotes in poverty related coverage by the two newspapers
• To define the type of stories and their location in the newspapers
• To point out the perspectives of poverty covered by the newspapers
• To identify the dominant frames of poverty by the print media organizations

1.4. Research questions

1.4.1. Central research question
• How did the selected newspapers communicate poverty?

1.4.2. Specific research questions
• To what extent poverty is covered by the two newspapers in the selected time period?
• What are the dominant sources and quotes in covering poverty related issues?
• What are the dominant types of poverty related stories and their location in the newspapers?
• What perspectives of poverty are presented and excluded from the newspapers’ report?
• What are the dominant types of frames used by the selected print media houses to portray poverty?

1.5. Delimitation
This research is delimited to studying the English versions newspapers: the Ethiopian Herald and the Reporter print media. They were selected purposely in order to ensure diversity of content and ownership of the newspaper.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Media Framing Theory
It is evident that mass media affect public attitude and political actions about certain issues in societies. Panos (2007, p. 10) emphasises the influence of news media in private and public arenas as follows: “Within public affairs coverage, for example, there are countless examples of how the force of effective journalism—from ground-breaking news articles to hard-hitting human stories and campaigning reporting—can affect decision-making in both public and private spheres”.
This study used framing theory to guide the research process. Media framing could be defined as “persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation and presentation of selection, emphasis and execution by which symbol handlers routinely organise the discourse, whether verbal or visual” (Gilton, 1980, p. 7). In other words, some aspects of an issue become more dominant and visible than others because of media framing. News media play an important role in the process of defining a social problem. The media frames an issue in a certain way, telling the audience what is important to know about and how to think about it. In particular, Lyengar has demonstrated that news media can frame questions of responsibility, leading the audience to determine the causes of and solutions for social problems. For example, his study shows that how poverty is framed by the news media influences the belief on the responsibility and cause of poverty. As he states “in the case of television news coverage, the thematic frames engender a stronger sense of societal responsibility, whereas the episodic frame engenders a stronger sense of individual responsibility of poverty” (1990, p 35). Analysing newspaper articles, this study examines how the Ethiopian news media have presented poverty in their news coverage.

R. M. Entman (1993) explains the relationship between selection and salience of some aspect of a story or an event over others in the process of media communication. The purpose of selecting and making salience is to promote a particular issue and its casual interpretation, evaluation and recommendation. According to Entman frames serve different functions, such as defining problems, determining causal agents, identifying root causes of problems, making moral judgments by evaluating causal agents and their effects and suggesting way outs for the problems. In order to perform such activities framing could use different mechanisms, including the use of certain words and phrases, making contextual references, choosing certain pictures and referring sources. Using such mechanisms enables one to present an issue with different perspectives. This shows that media provides facts and contexts to engage the readers and viewers. In other words, framing influences how the public think about an issue by defining the issue, indicating the causes and suggesting the solutions (R. M. Entman, 1993).

Similarly, Andsaga & Powers (1999) argue that media farming is a selection process that determines the selection and placement of information in news stories. The selection of frames informs the more valid opinions, interpretations and definitions of an issue (Pan & Kosicki, 1993:68). Components in the frame might be perceived as credible and legitimate, which in turn marginalises components outside the frame of the public debate.

Media framing also reflects the dominant norms, values and culture of a society. Kathleen (2004) states that framing effectiveness depends on its consistency with the values of the audience. If media farming is inconsistent with the values and culture of a society, the frames will lose their organizing power. For instance, frequent converge of poverty in mass media might tell about the concern of the media or the society.

As Entman (1993) explains, a frame is defined by its inclusion, exclusion and omission of a story about an issue as well as its definition, explanation, evaluation and recommendation of such issues. Therefore, by farming news media could hold the attention of readers or viewers by focusing on one aspect of a story and directs their attention away from the other side by omitting some parts of a story. Likewise, news stories about poverty might be selected to appear in the media and the question of what part of poverty is most emphasised and what part is omitted. Therefore, it is clear that farming theory helps to analyse and interpret the data collected in order to address the research questions. For example, in news framing study, Redden (2011) identified rational and individual frames as dominant framing types of poverty issues in UK and Canadian media. In this regard, Redden (2011, p. 837) points out
In contemporary news coverage frames that rationalize package discussions in terms of quantification, calculation, cost-benefit analysis and instrumental reason. Frames that individualize package issues in relation to discussions that isolate specific individuals and groups, avoid thematic discussions, while also employing depictions that blame or place responsibility for poverty on the individual.

In another study of media framing, Neuman et al. (1992) identified five frames (economic, conflict, powerlessness, human impact and morality frames) which are applicable to politics, economic, health, drug and foreign news.

2.2. Perspectives of Poverty
There are many dimensions and debates about poverty and its manifestations. The dominant views include economic poverty which can be further classified as absolute, moderate and relative poverty, political poverty, social and cultural poverty as well as information poverty (Sachs, 2005). In this study absolute poverty, social exclusion, gender disparity, information poverty and a culture of poverty are operationalized as follows.

**Economic poverty** refers to poverty as economic scarcity such as material scarcity, food insecurity, incapability to achieve the minimum standard of living/the poverty line, poor quality of life, malnutrition, poor health condition.

**Political poverty** has been defined as a lack of freedom, justice, equity, having little political voice, absence of empowerment, deprivation of capability, etc.

**Absolute poverty**: refers to a condition characterised by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education, and information (Sida, 2002).

**Or Absolute poverty** is defined as lack of the basic needs for survival. That is a condition of having insufficient resources with which to keep body and soul together.

**Relative poverty** defines income or resources in relation to the average. It is concerned with the absence of the material needs to participate fully in accepting daily life.

**Moderate poverty** generally refers to the conditions of life in which basic needs are met but bare.

**Social exclusion** is described as “... a shorthand label for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown”.

**Gender disparity**: when the story presents gender disparity as the centre of social poverty or the gender perspectives of poverty.

**Communication and information poverty** refers to lack of access to media and information. Or communication and information poverty is a lack of the basic capabilities needed to participate in the information society.

**Culture of poverty** suggests that poverty is the result of people’s values or cultural norms. It suggests that people who are poor have different cultural values than mainstream society. Basically, the theory suggests that we learn certain norms when we grow up in a family who is poor, and this shapes our life choices and opportunities. We internalise the values we grow up with, which explains the notion of why people who grow up poor often remain poor.
3. Methodology and design

3.1. Design
This study used quantitative research method as a research approach in order to study poverty communication by the print media houses. Quantitative content analysis was also used as the research design of the study because in media farming study tradition content analysis is a suitable and well-established research practice which enables to study the problem mentioned.

Kendall (2011, p. 10) illuminates the importance of frame analysis as follows: “A basic premise of framing analysis holds that the process of framing is an active endeavour involving patterns of selection, emphasis, and exclusion on the part of journalists and writers who determine what material might be entertaining or newsworthy for readers and viewers”. She argued further that in the process of selection, some topics are taken while others are discarded. The aspects of a selected topic could be further emphasized, minimised or excluded by the journalist considering certain conditions. Thus, frame analysis enables us to count the presence, dominance or absence of certain types of frames in news media.

3.2. samples
The subjects of the study are national English language newspapers, namely The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter. First, the selection of these newspapers was based on the political, economic and social matters they cover. The assumption is that poverty is a multi-dimensional issue incorporating the social, political, economic and cultural life of a given society. Currently, the selected newspapers are considered important in reaching the ruling powers, decision makers and development partners at the national level that might have a significant impact on poverty related works. In addition, the selected newspapers have the potential to show a broader picture since they are both government and private owned long stayed newspapers in the newspaper industry in the country. Moreover, the selection of the English language newspapers was based on the assumption that the target audiences of the newspapers are mainly the Ethiopian elites, NGOs, ambassadors and other international and regional bodies who have a direct or indirect role in the alleviation of poverty in the country and participate in the development of the nation.

3.3. Sampling techniques
Taking the above points mentioned into account, the research used purposive sampling to pick up two important newspapers, namely The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter. This technique helps the researcher to see how the long stayed and leading English language newspapers communicate poverty. It also helps to show if ownership has impact i.e. whether there is a difference in the coverage and framing of poverty between government owned and private owned newspaper.

3.4. Time frame of the study
Poverty remains one of Ethiopia’s biggest challenges. Hence, the war against poverty should not be a onetime activity; rather it needs a continuous engagement. Because of this, the researcher prefers to study poverty communication, especially the framing in the Ethiopian print media starting from the launching of GTP-II, 1 September 2015 to 30 August 2017. It is good to remember that there was a great drought and famine in 2015/16 in Ethiopia that affected the country. For example, the UN warned that 15 million Ethiopians might be affected by the drought till the first quarter of 2016 (UN News Report, 2015; BBC News, 2015; Chaina, 2015; ECADF, 2015; Jazeera, 2015). The Global Post reported that “Ethiopia is facing its worst drought in 30 years. Can the government stop famine this time?” It is important to understand how poverty is framed in such disastrous conditions. Because in Ethiopian context famine and drought affect the poor section of the society in one way or the other more than other sections of the society.

Besides, in 2015, the world leaders gathered in New York to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals that determine the development agendas as a blueprint for 15 years. They set the number one goal as no poverty and number two as zero hunger (Sustainable development Goals, 2019; Un, 2019).
Thus, in such global and national contexts the media are expected to give due attention to poverty alleviation issues. Especially from a country that sets development model of journalism as the country's journalism model, media might have a huge responsibility to work on such grave issues. Second, currently the country is found in the middle of the GTP-II corridor and this by itself potentially might invite the attention of media, which are found in a country struggling with poverty, and has a vision to become middle-income country in 2025. Media has the responsibility to check whether the country’s journey towards the success of the strategic plan is on a good track or not.

There were 576 editions of The Ethiopian Herald in 2 years while there were 96 editions of the weekly Reporter. Due to the time and other resource constraints, it was difficult to examine and manage 672 newspapers. Thus, the study selected half of the publications (288) from the Ethiopian Herald and all the 96 editions of the Reporter. In other words, 384 issues were included in the study. From the daily newspaper (The Ethiopian Herald), all editions were arranged chronologically and every odd number was taken starting from the first edition. The systematic random sampling technique enabled the researcher to collect the first, the third, the fifth, the seventh, etc. editions until it reached the last record.

3.5. Articles
Each newspaper article was considered as a unit of analysis. All articles (news, features and interviews, editorials) which were related to poverty were analysed. The articles were identified as relevant if their headlines or sub-headlines contained words such as poverty, scarcity, shortage, deficieney, dearth, poor quality, paucity, destitution, underdevelopment, impoverishment, penury, neediness, indigence, pennilessness, deprivation, impecuniousness, food insecurity, housing problem, etc. Counting the presence or absence of these frames in the overall sample was done to identify the dominant frames.

Articles which contained one or more of the above words in their headline, sub headline, but turned out to cover other issues in the article itself were excluded. In sum, 95 articles were identified as relevant and coded for the study. Sixty-two articles were from The Ethiopian Herald and 33 were from the Reporter. Only the written texts were coded, but pictures were not included.

3.6. Method of data collection
To collect the necessary data, quantitative content analysis was used.

3.6.1. Coding categories and definitions
This research was planned to study how the Ethiopian newspapers communicate poverty focussing on coverage and framing besides to analysing dominant themes (i.e. dimensions of poverty) and sources in the articles. By doing this, the research assumed to examine the media's role in the war against poverty. Each article was accordingly coded by considering a number of variables such as genre, location, sources, dimensions and frames.

The coding sheet contained four parts. The first part was allocated to article description namely genre, location, and theme while the second contained sources. Genre refers to the type of story (news, feature or interview) whereas location refers to the placement of the story (in front or inside pages) in the newspaper. Theme refers to the central focus of the story. It categorises the different dimensions of poverty, such as economic, political, social, cultural, information, holistic, etc. Sources were defined as those that directly or indirectly quoted in the story (such as the name of a person, group, or organisation). This might include governments, experts, the poor, an opposition party, community members, etc. The other two parts dealt with dimensions/definitions of poverty and frames used by the newspapers.
3.6.2. Frame analysis
To study media framing of an issue such as poverty, researchers developed a series of guiding questions. The most cited example is developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) that needs answering “yes” or “no” types of questions by coders. This study adopted these questions with some changes to measure the absence or presence of the different types of frames such as economic, moral and attribution, etc. In addition, the researcher developed a range of similar questions to measure other types of frames following Semetko and Valkenburg’s model. Moreover, the researcher developed codes in order to see the existence of the different dimensions of poverty in the newspapers (see Annex-A for definitions and framing types).

3.6.3. Coding process
After the researcher developed a coding sheet and a coding book based on the above mentioned categories, two postgraduate students were trained to code the articles. The percentage method was used to check in-coder reliability. Based on Kassarjian’s (1977) idea, the in-coder reliability check was made across all categories that ranges from 100% to 93%. This was done using a percentage method and the 15% of the stories coded by the two coders were checked for the in-coder reality.

3.6.4. Frame prevalence
As it is commonly calculated, the existence of a frame was decided based on the number of “yes” which was being divided by the total number of questions under that frame. The coefficient of frame existence varies from 0.00 to 1.00. It was assumed that a specific frame exists if the coefficient is more than half (more than 0.5).

3.7. Data analysis methods
Applying the content analysis, data have been analysed quantitatively using coding as a technique of analysis. The SPSS statistics, specifically descriptive statistics, was used as an instrument of analysis to calculate per cents, ratios and produce tables, figures and other products of the quantitative data.

4. Presentation of findings and data analysis
This part presents the data and its analysis. It focuses on presenting and discussing the dominant sources and quotes, location of the articles, perspectives as well as the frames of the newspapers about poverty.

4.1. The nature of newspaper coverage
There were 95 articles that dealt with poverty issues in the selected media houses from 1 September 2015 to 30 August 2017. As the figure below shows, “The Ethiopian Herald” published 62 articles and “The Reporter” published 33 articles about poverty within the two-year period. The 95 articles were found from the samples of 384 publications studied for this purpose. This shows that, in one way or the other, it is possible to say that the newspapers were concerned about poverty and raise the issues as one of the priority agendas. This might be consistent with the 2015/2016 severe drought and associated famine hit in the country as it was reported by the global media houses and organisations, such as the UN, which warned that 15 million Ethiopians might be affected by the drought till the first quarter of 2016 (UN News Report, 2015; BBC News, 2015; Chaina, 2015; ECADF, 2015; Jazeera, 2015). The Global Post also reported that “Ethiopia is facing its worst drought in 30 years.” Can the government stop famine this time?” “The 2015–16 Ethiopian Famine: Yet another Avoidable Tragedy is Underway!” (ECADF, 2015). It is important to note that such type of drought and the associated famine could be one factor of reporting poverty related issues because in one way or the other the poor are vulnerable to famine and other consequences of drought than any other section of the society. Maybe this is one reason for the newspapers to considerably report about poverty in the country. However, the source of the poverty report shows that the poor are not speaking about the impact of the drought on their life and its potential expansion of poverty. Reading the contents of the Ethiopian Herald and the
Table 1. Percentage of articles published by the newspapers

| Name of Newspapers     | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| The Ethiopian Herald   | 62        | 65.3    | 65.3               |
| The Reporter           | 33        | 34.7    | 100.0              |
| Total                  | 95        | 100.0   |                    |

Reporter shows that the newspapers did not report the impact of drought on the poor and the potential expansion of poverty. Nonetheless, they reported poverty as one economy scarcity as usual time report throughout the delineated time period. It is possible to argue that such type of country level phenomenon should create room for a rigorous debate about poverty and its impact more than any in normal time (Table 1).

4.2. Sources identified and quoted in the articles

One of the attempts in this research was to see the dominant sources and voice of the newspapers in covering and reporting poverty issues. The finding shows that the government officials are the dominant sources in the newspapers. As Figure 2 shows, the majority (61.1%) of the articles were sourced from government officials, 8.4% from non-government organisations, 9.5% and 3.2% attributed by experts and donors, respectively. Opposition party members, the poor and community members are sourced zero times (0.0%) (Table 2).

It is surprising that both newspapers failed to quote a single individual from the 23 million economically poor people in the country (23.5% of the population) in 2016 (UNDP, 2018). The newspapers excluded the voices of the opposition party leaders and the community members on the issue of poverty. They, too, are voiceless about one of the grave challenges of the country. This clearly shows that the poor are voiceless and cannot be heard by the decision makers about their problems. This shows that it is possible to argue that the war against poverty did not reflect the centrality of involving the poor as their own agent. Newspapers marginalised the poor in the war against poverty and failed to become a voice for the voiceless. The war on poverty that marginalised the poor in particular and the community in general could not become effective as Mefalopulos (2005, p.253) argued in that sustainability of development depends not only on the perceptions of stakeholders towards the planned change but also the way they participate in identifying problems, priority issues and decide paths for solutions. The marginalisation of the voice of the poor in the fight against poverty or in communicating poverty hampered the endeavour to achieve sustainable development in

Table 2. Percentage of source distribution of the newspapers

| Source of the Information       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid                          |           |         |               |                    |
| Government Officials           | 58        | 61.1    | 61.1          | 61.1               |
| Non-Government Organizations   | 8         | 8.4     | 8.4           | 69.5               |
| Opposition party members       | 0         | 0.0     | 0.0           | 69.5               |
| The poor                       | 0         | 0.0     | 0.0           | 69.5               |
| Community members              | 0         | 0.0     | 0.0           | 69.5               |
| Donors                         | 3         | 3.2     | 3.2           | 72.6               |
| Experts                        | 9         | 9.5     | 9.5           | 82.1               |
| Others                         | 17        | 17.9    | 17.9          | 100.0              |
| Total                          | 95        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
general and poverty alleviation goal in particular. The poor and the wider community should speak about their experiences and perspectives concerning poverty alleviation so that decision makers, development partners and stakeholders of the country could listen and understand the situation of poverty from the poor’s perspectives (Figure 1).

The data show that there is no significant difference between “The Ethiopian Herald” and “The Reporter” in quoting sources about poverty issues. The government source is the dominant one for both. However, it is also good to note that there is no donor source in the government owned newspaper, but there are some sources out of which three of the total 33 in the private owned newspaper. This might be related to the rough relation between NGOs and Donors following the now changed Civil Society Laws of 2005 which affected donors and civil society’s participation in the country’s development. As discussed by Adem (2017), political-economic climate of the country after the 2005 national election changed the role and performance of the NGOs in Ethiopia. Charities and civil society proclamations set restrictive regulation on non-governmental organisations in a way that deters approaching poverty from multiple dimensions (Ethiopia. Federal Democratic Republic Ethiopia, 2009). The law restricts NGOs that earn more than 10% of their income from foreign aid to engage in the root causes and multiple dimensions of poverty, such as absence of democracy, freedom and social justice or deprivation of capabilities. This restrictive law might be one reason for the absence of donors and the limited number of sources from the NGOs in the fight against poverty.

4.3. Article location
To understand the importance of poverty related reporting and identifying the location of the article is important. The following table shows how the location is dominated in the inside pages (Table 3).
The finding shows that 83.2% of the articles are located in the inside pages of the newspapers while only 14.7% and 2.1% are located in the front and last pages, respectively. The Ethiopian Herald placed 87.1% of the stories on poverty on inside pages and the Reporter placed 75.76% in the inside pages. The small number of articles on the front pages show that the newspapers did not treat poverty as the top priority in their reporting. This is inconsistent with the GTP, which aims to alleviate poverty in the country by 2025 and bring Ethiopia to the level of a lower middle income country. One of the factors that affect the newspapers to put poverty as top priority agenda might be the country level uprising in the 2016/17 that finally forced the resignation of the then Prime Minister, Hiale Mariyam Desalegn and forced the ruling EPRDF party to enter into reforms in response to the persistent uprising in the country. Generally, taking location or placement as a media strategy to determine the level of prominence and priority, the target media houses have not been making poverty as a priority area by making it in their front pages.

| Article Location | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Front Page       | 14        | 14.7    | 14.7          | 14.7               |
| Inside Page      | 79        | 83.2    | 83.2          | 97.9               |
| Last Page        | 2         | 2.1     | 2.1           | 100.0              |
| Total            | 95        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Table 3. Percentage of location distribution in the newspapers


4.4. Article type

The study tries to examine the nature of newspaper articles by categorizing them as news, features, interviews, editorials and letters. The findings show that 46.3% of the stories are news while 36.8% of them are features and the rest 5.3% and 8.4% and 3.2% are interviews, editorials and letters, respectively. Covering a significant number of the articles as news with headlines is one of the media strategy to give emphasis on the issues than presenting as features and interviews. However, the location mentioned above (as the majority placed in the inside page 83.2%) overshadows the prominence of poverty related news. If such huge number of news articles were presented in the front pages, this would add prominence and increase the priority of the issues by the target newspapers. The placement affects the prominence of the article types (the news articles) in the selected newspapers (Table 4).

| Article Type | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| News         | 44        | 46.3    | 46.3          | 46.3               |
| Feature      | 35        | 36.8    | 36.8          | 83.2               |
| Interview    | 5         | 5.3     | 5.3           | 88.4               |
| Editorials   | 8         | 8.4     | 8.4           | 96.8               |
| Letter       | 3         | 3.2     | 3.2           | 100.0              |
| Total        | 95        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

4.5. Perspectives of poverty by the newspapers

| Perspectives on Poverty | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Economic Poverty        | 73        | 76.8    | 76.8          | 76.8               |
| Political Poverty       | 4         | 4.2     | 4.2           | 81.1               |
| Culture of Poverty      | 1         | 1.1     | 1.1           | 82.1               |
| Absolute Poverty        | 6         | 6.3     | 6.3           | 88.4               |
| Social Exclusion        | 5         | 5.3     | 5.3           | 93.7               |
| Gender Disparity        | 6         | 6.3     | 6.3           | 100.0              |
| Total                   | 95        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

The Table 5 below shows the dominant perspectives of poverty by the selected newspapers.

As indicated in the table above, the economic perspective of poverty is the dominant one which covers 76.8% of the total articles studied. The economic perspective is the dominant one in both newspapers coverage as presented in the graph below (see Figure 3). A similar finding was found in Redden’s (2011, p. 827) study, which states that “poverty is most often in the UK and very often in Canada presented as an issue to be evaluated and understood based on quantification, calculation, and cost–benefit analysis (rationalizing frame)".
Therefore, the above data reveal that economic development is presented as a solution for the alleviation of poverty which fails to see the complexity of poverty in the country. Next to the economic perspective, there are other dimensions that did not get a significant amount of coverage, such as absolute poverty which accounts for 6%, gender disparity 6% and social exclusion 5%. Lack of the gender perspective on poverty and social exclusion is in contradiction with the presence of gender gap, social exclusion and call for gender mainstreaming affirmative action by the government and other development partners in the country. The newspapers also did not define poverty from the perspectives of communication and information poverty, and culture of poverty. The data shows that both dimensions got zero rates. It is surprising that in the country where the majority did not have access to media and information and disconnected from the information network society, the media houses fail to raise the issue as one of the top-poverty dimensions in the country. ICT and other modern means of information and communication works are concentrated only in the urban area while the majority of the Ethiopian people are in the rural area where television and other digital communication systems are unreachable. The digital divide is observed between urban and rural people in Ethiopia, which shows the persistence of information and communication poverty in the time of information systems. How can a country be successful in the fight against poverty in the presence of information and communication poverty, political poverty and social exclusions? Both newspapers give a deaf ear to such critical aspects of poverty in the country. This is in line with Kendall’s (2011) argument that shows the media’s selective framing of the world to manipulate salience so that they urge audiences towards certain issues and they ignore or diminish other issues.

The other dimension of poverty which shares a very small amount of coverage is the political dimension (4.2%). Political poverty refers to defining poverty in terms of lack of empowerment, political participation, etc. Such dimensions of poverty are presented only by the Reporter. The Ethiopian Heralded did not say anything about the political dimension of poverty. This is in contradiction with the presence of the 2016/17 political uprising in the country, which demanded freedom, democracy and social justice through violent demonstrations and reactions in many places. The newspaper did not see the political dimensions of poverty even though the county was/
is on the verge of civil war and disintegrations because of political suppression and injustice. The reason is that the government owned media house in the country was engaged in political propagation. Because of this, both newspapers did not dare to report social injustice, absences of freedom and democracy from the perspectives of poverty.

Furthermore, the newspapers failed to present the holistic approach of poverty which refers to presenting poverty related newspaper story as lack of economic, political, social, cultural prosperity. No single newspaper article showed a holistic approach to the problem.

4.6. Framing types

As indicated in the above statements, the newspapers defined poverty dominantly from the economic perspective. Thus, the following frames show how the cause, effect, solutions to poverty and other frames depicted in their articles. The newspapers primarily used economic frame over other types of frames as it was found 52 times in both The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter. This accounts 54.7% of the total articles published about poverty.

Other frames that are often used were appealing frame (13.7%), attribution of responsibility (11.6%), and solution (6.3%) frames. Diagnostics and empathy appeared 4.2%. But other frames like conflict, prognostic and morality appeared insignificant. That means they appeared only one time. Similarly, human interest frame appeared only two times and donation frames were never used in this newspaper in a disability story (Table 6).

| Table 6. Types of poverty frames | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Appeal Frame                     | 13        | 13.7    | 13.7               |
| Conflict Frame                   | 1         | 1.1     | 14.7               |
| Diagnostic Frame                 | 4         | 4.2     | 18.9               |
| Prognostic Frame                 | 1         | 1.1     | 20.0               |
| Solution Frame                   | 6         | 6.3     | 26.3               |
| Empathy Frame                    | 4         | 4.2     | 30.5               |
| Attribution of Responsibility Frame | 11     | 11.6    | 42.1               |
| Morality Frame                   | 1         | 1.1     | 43.2               |
| Human Interest Frame             | 2         | 2.1     | 45.3               |
| Economic Frame                   | 52        | 54.7    | 100.0              |
| Total                            | 95        | 100.0   |                     |

When we look at the distribution of frames between The Ethiopian Herald and the Reporter, economic frame is the dominant frame for both newspapers. While appeal and attribution of responsibility frames are the second dominant frames by The Ethiopian Herald, diagnostic, empathy and appeal frames are the second and third dominant frames by the Reporter. It is important to note that there are no conflict, diagnostic, morality and human interest frames in the Ethiopian Herald. They are found only in the Reporter. Another difference between the two newspapers is the absence of prognostic frames from the Reporter. The following graph shows the distribution of these frames between the two newspapers (Figure 4).
5. Conclusion and recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

Based on the findings presented above, it is possible to conclude that poverty communication is dominated by the voice of the power holders and much emphasis is given to the economic dimensions of poverty. Newspapers could not communicate the complexity of poverty in the country which reveals that media ownership influences the content and determines the sources. This is supported by Kendall’s (2011, p. 5) argument that “framing is an important way in which the media emphasize some ideological perspectives and manipulate salience by directing people’s attention to certain ideas while ignoring others”. As she explains, by doing this, media organisations exercise power since framing enables them to influence us “how we make sense of the world”.

Poverty is a multidimensional problem that has many faces, root causes, manifestations and consequences in the country. Besides, in an Ethiopian context, it is possible to say that poverty is transmitted from generation to generation just like hereditary diseases. These faces of poverty and its vicious circle were not communicated effectively by the media houses. By focusing on the economic framing, the media houses did not show the reality of poverty in the country. The worst is that they did not include the voice of the poor, the wider community and the opposition party leaders in communicating poverty. Communicating poverty by excluding such significant section of the society shows how much the media is under the control of the power holders. In other words, the print media houses involved only the power holders who speak about the very limited aspect of (the economic) dimension of poverty by marginalising the voice of the poor and the community, and other dimensions of poverty.
As explained by R. M. Entman (1993), media framing is a strategy of inclusion, exclusion and the omission of a story about an issue as well as its definition, explanation, evaluation and recommendation of such issue. In this context, they included the voice of the power holders (the government) and the economic dimension of poverty by excluding the voice of the poor, the community, opposition party and the multi-dimensional faces of poverty. They omitted the deep-rooted reality of poverty in the country. They define poverty as economic scarcity, low income and GND/GDP and did not define it and evaluate it as deprivation of capabilities (Sen, 1999). They should have evaluated the political, cultural, historical and social dimensions of poverty in the country. They are excluding the reality of the poor and poverty in their communication work. Kendall (2011, p. 11) in her study about news framing of the American media further argues that “positive images of the wealthy may make us believe that they are deserving of their wealth; negative images of the poor and homeless may make us believe that they deserve their wretched condition”. In conclusion, the study confirms that the communication of poverty in the selected media organisations in Ethiopia marginalises the poor and the complexity of poverty is miscommunicated.

5.2. Recommendations
In order to contribute significantly in their fight against poverty in the country, it is recommended for the selected newspapers to consider the following points in communicating poverty:

- The media houses should show a more rigorous sense of concern in communicating poverty issues by placing poverty, one of the top challenges of the county, in a front page of their news.
- The sources of the poverty should not be dominated by the government voices. The poor themselves, the wider community members and the opposition party leaders should speak about their experiences and perspectives regarding poverty and the efforts of the country against poverty. The media should be inclusive in this regard to become a voice for the voiceless. This will increase the participation of the poor and other stakeholders in the fight against poverty and will empower them with roles in deciding their destiny.
- The newspaper should approach poverty from its multi-dimensional faces, causes and consequences. Addressing only the economic perspective will not be an effective method to alleviate poverty. The political, cultural, the information and communication and the gender dimensions of poverty should get due attention so that the policy and decision makers can have a holistic view for poverty eradication. As poverty is a complex issue in the country, it cannot be solved by giving much attention only to the economic dimension of poverty which hides the reality of the problem.
- Poverty communication should make the poor at the centre of their reporting work if they want to contribute in the fight against the poverty.

6. Limitation of the study
The main limitation of the study is the scope. It studied only two national newspapers. It would have been good to have a better understanding by studying other newspapers and media outlets.

7. Recommendations for further research
By considering the significant role of communication in poverty alleviation, it is important to recommend the need to study poverty communication by other broadcast and digital media in Ethiopia and use the findings for at the policy and practical levels.

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Annex-A (Coding Guide)
Definitions of Poverty and types of frames

1. Definitions of Poverty

(1) Economic poverty: when the article defines poverty as economic scarcity such as material scarcity, food insecurity, incapability to achieve the minimum standard of living/the poverty line, poor quality of life, malnutrition, poor health condition.

(2) Political poverty: when the article defines poverty as lack of freedom, justice, equity, political voice, absence of empowerment, deprivation of capability, etc.

(3) Communication and information poverty: lack of access to media and information. Or communication and information poverty is a lack of the basic capabilities needed to participate in the information society.

(4) Culture of poverty suggests that poverty is the result of people’s values or cultural norms.

(5) Absolute poverty: Absolute poverty is a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education, and information (United Nations 1995:57).

(6) Relative poverty defines income or resources in relation to the average. It is concerned with the absence of the material needs to participate fully in accepted daily life.

(7) Social exclusion is described as “… a shorthand label for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown.”

(8) Gender disparity: when the story presents gender disparity as the centre of social poverty or the gender perspectives of poverty.

(9) Holistic approach: when the story presents poverty as a lack of economic, political, social and cultural prosperity.

2. Types of Frames

(1) Appeal frame: Appeal frame refers to request for aids to help the poor.

(2) Diagnostic frames: It refers whether the article states how and why poverty occurred.

(3) Prognostic frames: When the story assess the effect of poverty

(4) Solution frame: When the story states the measures being taken or needs to be taken by different agents to solve poverty

(5) Empathy frame: refers to when the story indicates poverty affected peoples as victims

(6) Attribution of responsibility frame: Presents an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for causing or solving either to the government or to an individual or to a group.

(7) Morality frame: Puts the event, problem, or issue in the context of religious tenets or moral prescriptions. Media outlets cover events in terms of morality aspect that is either emphasizing the bad or good side of an event
(8) Human interest frame: brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem.

(9) Economic frame: reports an event, problem, or issue in terms of the consequences it will have economically on an individual, group, institution, region or country.

(10) Conflict frames: emphasize conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest.

(11) Episodic frame: frame which focuses on an individual, a single event; frame is more likely to keep its focus on the private realm.

(12) Thematic frame: emphasizes society’s role in a given issue. A thematic frame would include the public (the surrounding environment, public institutions.) Such frame highlights how to fix the conditions that led to the problem. The solution to the problem is better policies.