

The media use of Ethiopians in Finland

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>In recent times, most western societies appear to be confronted with an ever growing number of immigrants as a consequence of globalization and the need to preserve national culture and identity. This is an intricate situation where migrants themselves are constantly faced with difficulties to socially integrate into their new societies. They also have to deal with maintaining distinctiveness of their identity and cultural heritage. Studies suggest that the media plays a crucial role in constructing immigrant identity and affiliation with their new host society.</p> <p>This empirical study explores the media use of Ethiopians in Finland and its implication to their identity and social integration. I have argued based on the existing theory and scholarship regarding multiculturalism, social integration, media use and identity. Specifically, the study gives a special emphasis to immigrant's diaspora and transnational identity—that has been gaining recent academic significance in migration and media studies. This study employs a qualitative research method using a semi-structured interview with 10 Ethiopians living in Finland and thematic network analytical tool.</p> <p>The finding shows that there is a reciprocal relationship between media use and social integration. Finnish media portrayal of immigrants shows the depiction of "the other", and that this has been affecting immigrant social integration in to the society. It also finds out that the main media menu for Ethiopians in Finland are Ethiopian diaspora media—that employ hybrid journalism where there exists political activism and journalism.</p>		
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Today I finish my study that has inspired me to research more on societal and behavioral issues.

March, 2013, In Espoo, Finland

Feven Chane Abegaz

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1. Introduction

In recent times, most Western and in particular European societies appear to be confronted with an ever growing number of immigrants as a consequence of globalization. Such movement of people brings change to the social, economic and political endeavors of nation states. The immigrant themselves will not settle in one destination, they are continuously looking for better opportunities or experiences and as Appadurai (1990) argues “as international capital shifts it needs, as production and technology generate different needs, as nation-states shift their policies on refugee population, these moving groups can never afford to let their imaginations rest too long, even if they wished to” (p.297). Thus, “these movements constitute an essential feature of the world, and appear to affect the politics of and between nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree” (Appadurai, 1990). The relationship between immigrant and host society has created many different schools of thoughts in social science, cultural studies, humanities, philosophy and anthropology.

Scholars have been studying how this multidisciplinary and multidimensional phenomenon of migration mingles amongst the culture and values of host societies. They use notions such as transnationality versus nationality as well as host culture and values versus immigrant culture and identity. This creates a profound understanding about the phenomenon. I shall come to each notion later on when I discuss the theoretical framework. Correspondingly, migrations from developing and poor countries immensely affect their country’s economy. According to a working paper from the International Monetary Fund (1998), immigrants (whether economic, exile, political or voluntary immigrant) from poor and developing countries have a propensity not to return back to their home country—apparently this trend creates a brain-drain that negatively affects their homeland economy and development (IMF, 1998).

Furthermore, researchers who tend to focus on the social and cultural implications of migration have studied the relationship among policy initiatives such as assimilation, social integration, multiculturalism and media use from the point of view of host society and culture. In his studies on media consumption among immigrants in Europe,

Christiansen (2004) argues that earlier research has created an assumption that people with migrant experience tend to seek news very broadly, and desire more international news than what is generally available in the host country. This notion appeared to create a misunderstanding that such media use is associated with immigrants' lack of social integration into their new societies. Thus, Christiansen (2004) argues, "the practices rather reveal a tense relationship of sense of belonging of the immigrants. However, what they reveal more precisely is still unclear and sparsely documented" (pp.185-207). Hitherto, migration studies have been by and large related to media use and issues of social integration rather than immigrant's sense of belongingness and identity negotiation, which is a crucial factor in an immigrant's everyday life in the host society. However, very recently social and cultural studies of migration have started to recognize the complex terrain that is ethnic minority identity construction, sense of belongingness and media use.

Above all, immigrants have encountered a great deal of complexity. They have had to deal with their own cultural uniqueness and affiliation with the host country. As Morely and Robins perfectly put it "in the experience of migration, difference is confronted; boundaries are crossed; cultures are mingled; identities become blurred, the experience of Diaspora, and also of exile, allows us to understand relations between cultures in new ways" (Morely and Robins, 1996). Therefore, to reconcile the preservation of host society culture and the complexity of immigrant identities, host governments are working on multiculturalism and the politics of integration so that these policies can become an important part of different government policies.

Finland has been experiencing a similar trend, having an increase in the number of immigrants' since the early 1990s and amending its policies and practices to integrate immigrants to its culture and values (Horsti 2008). When we look at Statistics Finland data from 2009, the total number of foreign-language speakers in Finland was around 200,000. Out of this, there is an estimated 3,004 Ethiopians migrating to Finland, although I could not find a precise figure on the actual number of Ethiopians living in

Finland (www.stat.fi, last accessed on May 7). However, the trend shows that the number is constantly growing.

It is evident that there are a very small number of immigrants in Finland when compared to other western countries. However, the discourse of ethnic minorities in Finnish media shows the early stages of development of a multicultural society (Horsti 2008). The media portrayals focus more on law and administrative action, infringement of judiciary, arrival of new immigrants and the relation between Finnish society and migrant groups. According to Horsti (2008), the issues of immigrants themselves have not come into focus. Therefore, Horsti believes that issues of ethnic relations, migration and the media have been gaining a higher significance in Finnish academia.

1.1 Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this study is to scrutinize the relationships between immigrants and host society, their media use, identity construction and sense of belongingness. The study will uncover the prospect for and the challenges of using media to create meanings and how such meanings are instrumental for immigrants' identity. Thus, this study expects to discover certain realities of Ethiopians living in Finland by looking at their diaspora identity, affiliation to the host society and transnational practices for evaluating the use of television, radio, newspaper, the Internet, websites, blogs and established organizations.

The main research question is: what kind of role does the media play in the lives of Ethiopians living in Finland and how does it relate to their identity?

My sub-questions are

- 1) How Ethiopian migrants' media practices participate in building a sense of belongingness in society in Finland?
- 2) How Ethiopian migrants' media practices participate in shaping their diaspora identity?
- 3) How they receive and evaluate migrant representations in Finnish media?

The study will employ a qualitative research method. In particular, it uses a semi-structured interview involving 10 immigrants. Further, I expect to engage in a comparative analysis of similar research from other Nordic countries. Horsti (2008) argues that the field of migration and media in the Nordic countries has been intensively developing. Thus, this study will have a significant contribution to these initiatives and related academic works. This will further enrich the field. Personally, I am an Ethiopian myself and I am fascinated not only to know about the kind of media Ethiopian immigrants in Finland use but also how they negotiate the space and how their media use facilitates or influences their identity construction. I have a humanitarian background as well and I enjoy studying a social situation that goes into detail to understand the meanings and impacts of a particular experience, in this case the media use. Therefore before I discuss the theoretical framework, the following sub-section will give a succinct introduction about Ethiopia, media development and migration in order to establish a familiar milieu for the readers of this empirical study.

1.2 Context: Ethiopian diaspora and media

Ethiopia, or as it is officially called, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is located in the horn of Africa. Addis Ababa is the capital city. According to a 2007 report by the Central Statistic Agency, the total population is estimated to be more than 73.9 million and around 85 percent live in the rural areas (www.csa.org, retrieved on June 5, 2011). Close to eighty different languages are spoken and around 200 dialects are in use. Ethiopia claims to be one of the few countries in Africa to use its own Geéz alphabet and numerals. The English language is a widely spoken foreign language and serves as a medium of instruction in primary and secondary schools, and it is an official working language in many public sector and government organizations. Agriculture is the backbone of Ethiopia's economy—coffee being the major export followed by hides and skins. However, Ethiopia still strives to transcend its society from the rampant poverty that exists for quite a long time.

Media is one of the least developed sectors in Ethiopia. Emperor Menelik II (1844-1913) was a prominent and ambitious royal leader who established a diplomatic relation with

Western countries to introduce formal education and media in the country. Currently, there are less than ten privately owned and three government run media houses. International newspapers such as *News Week*, *the Economist*, *Herald* and *Times* are also available in bookstores and supermarkets. The government still holds the lion-share of ownership of the media agencies. For example, “television broadcasting is state-run and is characterized by nation building agenda and uncontroversial protocol news” (Skjerdal, 2011, p.5). Although freedom of the press and expression is granted by the constitution, many scholars argue that the Ethiopian free press suffers from a severe attack by the government and takes a defiant perspective towards the dominant political discourse or critical journalism that has been arguably absent in practice or is punishable by law. Terje S. Skjerdal (2011) pointed out “journalists both in the private and state media execute habitual self-censorship in place of official censorship, which has been prohibited since 1992 (5).

In terms of reaching out to audiences, private and foreign presses target the elite group who lives in and close to the capital cities. This type of media are also urbanized in content and circulation. There might be many reasons why these presses aim to reach a small segment of the society. There are hardly any studies undertaken on readership of Ethiopian society as well. At least I was not able to find any materials online. However adult literacy constitutes only 36 percent of the whole population (UNCIEF, 2011). Similarly, the Internet is a very recent media phenomenon in the Ethiopian context. The infrastructure is ill developed and it is incredibly expensive for routine use. Thus, low literacy and Internet penetration might be the reason why the content, circulation and targets of these newspapers are only limited to the elite and urban population.

Ethiopians have been migrating in large numbers since 1974. Skjerdal (2011) divided Ethiopian migration in three waves. Accordingly, the first emigrants came with the emergence of the military Dergue regime (1974-91), the second major wave of emigrants came in the 1990s after the current government and the third came after 2005 national elections that ended up in the imprisonment of journalists, opposition party supporters and political parties. All emigrants travel to new destination due to political

changes in the country. Henceforth, Migration Policy Institute 2005 data shows that there are close to 460,000 Ethiopian-born migrant in the United States, 105,500 (Israel), 90,000 (Saudi Arabia), 30,000 (Italy), and 30,000 (Lebanon) to mention some others (Migration Policy Institute, retrieved June 5, 2011 from <http://www.migrationpolicy.org>). Lyons (2004) depicts the Ethiopian diaspora as influential and actively engaged in homeland economic and political affairs. He claims that they lobby the US government and international financial institutions to reconsider financial support for Ethiopia due to alleged human right abuse, and they have been raising funds for humanitarian and development projects.

Ethiopian diaspora also advocate for democracy, freedom of expression and deal with current affairs by using various media outlets such as diaspora TV, blogs, websites and Internet radio. In his study on the self-identity of the Ethiopian diaspora online community, Skjerdal (2011) found out that the diaspora websites are politicized in their contents and presentations, and “unbiased news stories are not given much space” (p.8). This is partially due to the fact that the contributors and writers of some of the diaspora websites are politicians, prominent Ethiopian journalists who are living in exile or academics who have been engaging in Ethiopian public life. This means that their pieces are more opinionated in comparison to journalistic material. Thus, Ethiopian diaspora media portray hybrid journalism where there exists a mixture of activism and journalism. It will be interesting to see the experience of Ethiopians living in Finland with regards to diaspora media use.

2. Literature review

The literature used in this study is divided into four parts. The first part will engage in debates concerning the socio-cultural impacts of diversity from the multiculturalists' point of view. Scholars argue that the social, political, and economic impact of immigrants has made the conceptualization of multiculturalism very complex. They also argue that it has created an evident withdrawal from a theoretical and policy initiative that aimed to establish multiculturalism as a doctrine of social integration (Appadurai, 1990, Joppke, 2004). Thus, this study will discuss these notions in the Finnish context.

The second part deals with the theories of media use and identity construction. This section will be a huge part of the literature review since the study aims to understand the meanings and impacts of media use. Thus, theories such as essentialism and anti-essentialism, and diaspora and transnational practices/consciousness, will be covered in detail. These perspectives conceptualize immigrant media use within the framework of multiple identity, multi-locality and trans-locality. These concepts have been gaining a pronounced academic significance in migration and media studies.

The third part will discuss media representation of ethnic minorities. It will look at the kind of social differentiations that have been introduced by the media discourse and how ethnic minorities are responding to such representation. The issues of "us" and "other" will be contextualized to understand how immigrants challenge the media discourse, negotiate their identity and use the space to create an alternative voice. Thus, it will try to see how immigrants relate to the media portrayal in constructing their identity or diaspora consciousness in particular and how they identify themselves within Finnish society. In the latter case, this study considers Christiansen's (2004) claim that "media consumption is a social practice in which a complex problem area such as multiculturalism and immigrants social integration appears in concrete forms, in that this practice reveals the cultural-geographic orientation among individual consumers" (p.186). Thus, the study relates their media choice and use with their sense of belongingness in Finnish society. Finally, the fourth part will consider relevant

empirical studies in the field of immigration, identity and media. Therefore, by dissecting everyday media use and its implications, these empirical discussions help to compare realities of Ethiopians with that of the research groups.

2.1 Multiculturalism as a promising policy

Diversity is not a new concept. It has been used in many academic and political spheres. This study takes diversity as natural and given. It is seen by Levy (as cited in Barker, 1999) as “an inevitable fact of life”. Though there is an evident push and pull factor for issues related with globalization and the transnational movement of people, technology and business, the impacts of these movements on culture and national identity have been enormous. Until this moment, there is arguably no clear-cut theoretical and political framework for it. One can argue that handling this diversity has been a learning process that has passed through multiple stages of development and different approaches. Accommodating the inevitable differences without affecting the social, economic and political system of the country, as well as respecting human rights, is a unique challenge.

In practice, declaring a state as multicultural is one of the ways in which countries try to show that they tolerate and recognize the diversity. This also reveals a political readiness to integrate immigrants into the culture and values of this new approach to society. Tolerance is a positive word it was defined as, “a belief that all cultures ought to be given equal respect” (Killen & Smetana, 2006, p.226). Equal respect often implies that the majority should tolerate the new cultures, which seems like a one-way process. Similarly, the concept of integration is a two-way process. It involves social interaction where members of the majority and immigrants are required to do something (Modood, 2005). In this case, both groups will share the blame or burden if the latter cannot integrate or show take the initiative to integrate into the host society. Therefore, for Tariq Modood (2005) multiculturalism is a concept that mutually addresses different groups or cultures.

Multiculturalism is where processes of integration are seen both as two-way and as working differently for different groups. In this understanding, each group is

distinctive, and thus integration cannot consist of a single template (hence the “multi”). The “culturalism” – by no means a happy term either in relation to “culture” or “ism” – refers to the understanding that the groups in question are likely to not just be marked by newness or phenotype or socio-economic location but by certain forms of group identities. (Modood, 2005, p.3)

He further argues that multiculturalism and integration are different when it comes to understanding the social reality of immigrants—a sense of cohesion with people of the same origin, language and religion regardless of their locality whether in the homeland, host-land or in diaspora. The notion of the sense of cohesion will be explained in the following sub-chapter. However, multiculturalism as a concept and practice has been very problematic especially in Europe and other western countries. Some scholars have been arguing that difference-conscious policies such as multiculturalism work best in a culturally and ethnically diverse reality if the initial assumption is based on diversity as normal and given rather than on efforts to deal with multiculturalism pragmatically. Hartmann and Gerteis (2005) argue that,

Multiculturalism has been confirmed difficult to attain. Conflicting political agendas inevitably and almost immediately get caught up in any discussion of the term...perhaps the first and most fundamental problem is the lack of theoretical clarity about what we mean by multiculturalism. (Hartmann & Gerteis, 2005, p.219)

One reason for the lack of clarity is the concept itself has been used negatively in both scholarly and popular discourses. Accordingly, the concept has been presented as heterogeneity as opposed to homogeneity, diversity as a counterpoint to unity. Thus, “it becomes (if not impossible) to appreciate the value, benefits, and even functional necessity of difference in modern societies” (Hartmann & Gerteis, 2005, p. 219).

Lack of clarity in the concept will also have unprecedented effect on a country’s policy and procedure as well as on immigrants’ everyday life. If we take a look at British Prime Minister David Cameron’s speech in February 2011, he declared that multiculturalism has failed in Britain and pushed for a national identity that believes in

liberal society values such as freedom of speech, democracy, rule of law, equal rights regardless of sex or sexuality and freedom of worship. He noted that to belong to “us” is to believe in liberal society values. Cameron’s speech aimed to renounce Muslim extremists in Britain for advancing an agenda based on terror and violence. Thus, he criticizes extremism for not fulfilling these “liberal society values”.

However, the society is unable to differentiate who is an extremist, or who is just a follower of the Islam religion. Of course to a certain extent state directions are needed, but such a direct call to one segment of the society might lead to an “inner exclusion”. As Taylor (1998) pointed out, inner exclusion will be evident if common identity is crafted based on an inflexible formula of politics and citizenship, and the people who decline to accommodate these common identities will be excluded from the majority. But as most agree, in multicultural settings “wrong norms or practices” are assumed to gradually transform to “right or acceptable norm or practice”. Thus, I concur with Modood’s (2007) notion of debate and discussion in this context. He argues that,

National identity is not reducible to a list but should be woven in debate and discussion; and that the citizenship, which is central to this national identity, carries the right to make a claim on it - challenging negative difference and supplanting it by positive difference. (Modood, 2007, p. 7)

However, this discussion is not meant to imply that liberal states should be blind to differences or unacceptable actions such as extremism, rather they have to be addressed in a way that does not affect non-extremist Islam followers in the country. Nevertheless, multiculturalism’s way of celebrating differences has also brought about more damage than actually helping immigrants’ social integration. As researchers claim, it introduces ghettoization (confinement to a particular area or activity that is isolated from other culture) of certain immigrant group.

Above all, diversity has been understood or mirrored with the narrow lens of race, ethnicity, or religion for so long and this has made policy initiatives unclear and as a result, this has led to the failure to harmonize difference. Issues of diversity should not

be treated with a list of policy initiatives, but these frameworks could support the progress towards a more open-minded as well as pluralistic society. As Hartmann & Gerteis (2005) argue “in a highly differentiated societies, unitary values or moral commitments may be impossible or undesirable, yet social solidarity may be maintained by common adherence to procedural rules that guide interactions and facilitate broader collective endeavors” (p. 223). Although critics of multiculturalism are often heard denouncing the concept as a dead end policy, it is a profound policy initiative to address to the ever-growing movement of people and diversified societies that we have today. It has been seen working in Canada and Australia (Cottle 2000).

Therefore, given the initial stage of development of a multicultural Finnish society, the theoretical debates about multiculturalism are relevant when analyzing my interviewees’ social interaction with the majority. It will also be very difficult to study a social situation without analyzing the relevance of corresponding policies and procedures. The next section will uncover how immigrants’ life has been uncertain when they have been faced with the questions of representation, issues about their homeland and host land as well as the ideas of sameness and otherness, identity and belongingness. These are the types of feelings that often arise when immigrants interact between and among individuals, with each other, or as a group and the nation. Media discourse has been playing a crucial role in framing a person’s sense of belongingness and identity.

2.2 Why do we need to discuss media use and identity?

As I briefly explained above, this section covers the different perspectives surrounding the issues of identity that will help me analyze the role of media in the lives of Ethiopians living in Finland. Why do we need to discuss identity in this particular research? Taylor (1994) argues in different parts of his article, the politics of recognition, § that one of the crucial issues in “national movements in politics” is the need for “recognition”. The demand might come from anyone, for instance from minority groups, feminists or from advocates of multiculturalism. However, according to Taylor,

Our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. (Taylor, 1994, p.25)

Thus, the person reacts against the recognition (lack of it) in multiple ways and it has a direct and indirect impact in shaping, changing or shifting his/her identity. Therefore, the coming sub-sections will deal with the intricate relations between media use and identity construction.

2.2.1 The dynamics of immigrant media consumption

Migrants have been using the media for multiple purposes. They get information from a variety of outlets such as from their home country channels or host country media as well as from global media conglomerates such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Cable News Network (CNN) and Al-Jazeera. As explained above, their media use has been linked to their social integration into the host society. However, beyond the social integration aspect, immigrants have been using media to negotiate their identity and sense of belongingness to homeland and host land as well as with virtual community.

An empirical study undertaken on the media use of Arabic speakers shows that despite having similar social and political background or origin immigrants make different media choices. Camauer (2010) claims that individual preference, political orientations as well as ones own perspective towards the media discourse may contribute to their choices (p.753). Albeit, Camauer's study did not present the issues of identity in relation to media in concrete terms, however it seems to be implied in their choices. Studies suggest that immigrants are active and critical media consumers. They are critical to the production and authenticity of media portrayal and fair representation. Due to their concerns on media discourse, immigrants have been inclined to associate themselves with a certain group and as such, they tend to use media to challenge the dominant discourse.

In her study, *Negotiating space: The role of media in perception of identity among Ethiopian migrants in Johannesburg*, Steeneveldt (2004) found out that Ethiopians mainly use the mainstream South African media and only read irregularly imported newspapers from Addis Ababa. Lack of access to Ethiopian national television from Johannesburg is also identified as a reason for the focus on the South African mainstream media. They use these media for current information, news and for entertainment purposes. However, Steeneveldt (2004) claims that this practice might also suggest a need to embrace a certain set of middle-class values—“where the ritual enjoyment of the soap operas, as with that of evening national news bulletins, serve to confirm, even momentarily, a sense of belonging to a shared South African culture” (p.24). Likewise, new communication technologies such as the Internet and web blogs are fundamental communication tools in immigrants everyday life. After studying the case of South Asian mothers in the UK, Thompson (2002) has identified that immigrants actively engage in a virtual community “of their ethnic peer group, even though they might never meet many other members in a face-to-face situation” (p. 410). They exchange information, keep in touch with their kin in the homeland and preserve the virtual group through which they share various ideologies and create a group identity. Also, he points out that there exists a relative democratic space granted by Internet technology—it empowers users to circulate various and even contesting ideologies or experiences.

Additionally, immigrants who have strong attachment and contact with their home country tend use the Internet extensively, thus bridging the physical distance in order to partake in homeland affairs as diaspora. After looking closely at the case of Eritrean diaspora and cyberspace, Victoria Bernal (2006) argues that the notion of physical location seems to be irrelevant because Eritreans are actively engaging in the social, economic and politics of their home country rather than that of their host country. She also finds out that the Internet does not serve as an elite medium in the case of Eritrean diaspora. Active bloggers have a secondary school education or less. Interestingly, the Internet has been providing them with a platform to enhance their creativity and has

paved the way for cultural content productions. The Eritrean case can be understood as a diaspora identity that aimed at negotiating an authentic media representation in the global public sphere. It serves as an alternative media to send out balanced information about happenings in Eritrea that the international mainstream media might not be interested to cover.

However, it is important to note here that most of the Sub-Saharan African diaspora online political engagement could be hard to materialize in an offline and face-to-face mobilization. There is a least development in Internet infrastructure in these countries, despite the limited leeway for expression of opinions and low level of literacy. Scholars interpret these as a digital divide—an inequality of access to the Internet (Castells, 2002). In the case of Ethiopia for example, there are quite a few online forums, blogs, and television and Internet radio stations. These platforms claim to serve all Ethiopians so that they are engaged in the social, economic, and political debates and hopes for the better future of Ethiopia. To various degrees, Ethiopian migrants actively participate in the debates or just visit these sites for information on what is going on in the homeland. However, if the platforms tend to challenge the current politics and alleged stability in the country, their accessibility within the territory of Ethiopia will be in question. However, I will not engage in issues surrounding the digital divide, but rather I will take a look at immigrants' use of the online forms and how relevant they feel that they are to their life or identity in particular.

This empirical study uses a holistic approach to the media use of Ethiopians in Finland. As scholars' suggest, the media use not only implies a need for information, entertainment or news but also there is more to it. It serves as a forum for opinion and experience sharing among people who have migration experiences where the questions of identity, belongingness and uniqueness of immigrant life are negotiated or dealt with in detail. Thus, the next sub-section will have an in-depth look at debates regarding this. It will have three theoretical discussions such as essentialism, anti-essentialism and transnational practices which are very relevant to contextualize my interviewee's media

use and their understanding of themselves as belonging to a certain group, nation, or a trans-local space.

2.2.2 Identity as a continuous construction

The very first concept to unlock while we discuss identity is the pronoun “I”. According to Barker (1999), theoretically it has no conception of self and personhood. Thus, the meaning of “I” varies from culture to culture. When Barker (1999) used the word culture, it is to “refer to a variety of practices which generate meaning” (p.9). The earlier philosophy of The Enlightenment was “based on a conception of the human person as a fully centered, unified individual, endowed with the capacities of reason, consciousness and action, whose center consisted of an inner core—a person’s identity” (Barker, 1999, p.14). Thus, the person will be held accountable regardless of what his/her actions are, unless he/she is mentally incapable of rational thinking.

In the same token, the pronoun “I” refers to “the very source that forms the material”, as an object, a child, a woman or African (Barker, 1999, p.10). Thus it refers to how others see me or identify me. It also denotes what one has in common with others and one’s distinctiveness. Thus, social and cultural studies have maintained a perspective that identity is both social and cultural. Referring to Hall’s perspective of the sociological subject, Barker (1999) notes that this perspective assumes, “the inner core of the subject was not autonomous and self-sufficient, but was formed in relation to ‘significant others’, who mediated to the subject the values, meanings and symbols—the culture—of the worlds he/she inhabited” (p.4).

The significant others can be members of the family or acquaintances with whom an individual learns or unlearns to walk the “ups and downs” in his/her entire life. In this case, the key departure from the philosophical view of rationality is, sociologists argue, that identity “is formed interactively between the inner world and the outside social world” (Barker, 1999, p.14). Therefore, a human being’s identity depends on his/her daily interaction with oneself and other people, materials and technologies. Nevertheless, postmodern theorists go one step further to conceptualize the notion of identity as

fragmented and shifting rather than being stable. A person has been understood to have multiple identities. The concepts of multiple identities are being reflected in various postmodern politics such as marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis and the character of language and discourse. This empirical study treats the identity of Ethiopians living in Finland as multiple, changing through time and space. Above all, it will be a key perspective for studying their media use as a means for negotiating their identity.

Therefore, there are seemingly two kinds of contrast when conceptualizing identity, a stable identity and a changing or shifting identity. The earlier assumptions that underlined the theory of identity consider the subject being a stable, established or as “one-true self” shared among people of the same origin, group, culture and shared ideal. This perspective is often associated with essentialism. According to Barker (1999), essentialism defines identity as the name for a collective “one true-self” and is formed out of a common history, ancestry and a set of symbolic resource (p.27). Basically, the assumption draws its hypothesis from the notion of location and culture; being Ethiopian or Finnish and assuming that each constituency shares a common principle of social, political, religious and cultural values that commonly defines them as citizens, and that these things are carried with them throughout their life.

Critics argue that this sense of sameness places people in oppositional or an antagonistic relation to those who have another historical, social and cultural background. Similarly, the sense of generalization also makes essentialism a very problematic concept. The essence of blackness, whiteness as well as Islam is an essentialist notion of “common identity”. The colonial and imperialism legacy labels black people as slaves, backward, uncivilized, or illiterate. In the same token, it gives white people the role of supremacy, heroism or civilized. Additionally, the famous “war on terror” or fight against “Muslim extremism” that we are witnessing today universally consider Muslims (Islam religion followers) to possess a common identity as perpetrators of violence, or defiant behavior. By any measure, these general behaviors or labels were not proved valid for all people who are assumed to embrace them.

Thus, anti-essentialist theorists introduce or re-conceptualize identity as a construction. They denounce the essentialist notion of common or fixed identity and claim that identity is a construction, an artificial and a continual process. Thus, in concurrence to identities being constructed through similarity, “identities can be constructed, not outside, difference” (Hall, 2000). The process of constructing identities through similarity as well as difference is termed as *becoming*. In this case, identity is not *being*—that offers a sense of commonality, as well as not staying fixed or stable. Barker (1999) describes becoming as,

this anti-essentialist position does not mean that we cannot speak of identity; rather, it points us to the political nature of identity as a discursive production and to the possibility of multiple and shifting identities where discourses of class gender, age, nationality and race are “articulated” together. Articulation suggests both expressing/representing and joining together. Thus, representations of gender, which constitute what gender is, may join together with representations of race but in context specific and contingent ways that cannot be predicted before the fact. (Barker, 1999, p. 28)

Further, he criticizes the essentialist notion of common identity, “We commonly speak of the nation as ‘one people’ without pausing to consider its meaning” (Barker, 1999, p.29). The meaning is looked upon without critically analyzing the apparent distinction in terms of class, gender, sexuality, race, interaction and morality. Therefore, Hall (1990) argues, “identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by and position ourselves within, the narrative past” (as cited in Mainsah, 2005). In this sense, one cannot speak about a single identity or experience such as blackness without acknowledging the other factors that constituent the “whole-self”. The underlying assumptions of anti-essentialism is that there are different things that partially/equally define a person identity, thus, identity is not fixed but multiple and subject to change or shift or always in the process of construction. Barker (1999) describes such phenomenon as “the proliferation and diversification of context and sites of interaction prevents easy identifications of particular subjects with in a given, fixed identity so that

the same person is able to shift across subject positions according to circumstances” (p. 30). The diversification of experiences are implied in everyday life and what we possess—may (not) be conscious about, implicitly shifts our assumed “one-self or identity” to “multiple-self or identity” and is subject to change, as needs or preferences change.

Therefore, to a certain degree the anti-essentialist acknowledgement of multiple signifiers seems valid to me. However, identity as a concept is still ambiguous. Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper (2000) denounce the use of identity as an analytical tool in the social sciences and the humanities in general. They fiercely argue that if identity is everywhere, it is nowhere.

If it is fluid, how can we understand the ways in which self-understandings may harden congeal and crystallize? If it is constructed, how can we understand the coercive forces or external identification? If it is multiple, how do we understand the terrible singularity that is often striven for—and sometimes realized— by politicians seeking to transform mere categories into unitary and exclusive groups? How can we understand the power and pathos of identity politics? (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p.1)

What they criticize most is the open-ended definition of identity. They blame scholars in the social science and the humanities for playing with words and they claim, “it is a blunt, flat and undifferentiated vocabulary” that lacks significance to analytically serve as a tool to study social and cultural phenomenon such as migration (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000). They claim that while used as analytic tool, identity proves to be ambiguous and lacks clarity in academia. Thus, it could reinforce or reproduce unintended consequences. They suggest that self-explaining terms such as race, ethnicity, and nationality are self-sufficient to analytically study social, economic and political phenomenon.

Nonetheless, some of their critique holds true, such as that the concept seems overlapping and open ended. I disagree with their claim of total irrelevancy of the concept of identity. I concur with Barker’s (1999) notion of a “multiple weave of

attitudes and beliefs” as a defining characteristic for an individual or a social situation. Therefore, since this study concerns itself with immigrants, it is valid to understand what immigrants do (not) to interact, integrate or simply live in harmony with the majority. Their experience might be explained by the concepts such as race, ethnicity, or nation. But, their approach will not fully give the why (not) components that may arise in the course of the study. Actually, diasporic identity, which has been gaining much significance in recent years, encompasses a solid/clear perspective—it deals with not only ethnicity or race, or nationality but also trans-nationality. Plus, conflicting identities such as belonging to multiple places at the same time—having collective identities and unique self-consciousness, which I believe gives a better direction to understand the open-ended identity definition and situate the subject of this study to a clear terrain for analysis.

2.3 The relevance of a diaspora identity

Many scholars emphasize that migration helps them to see social, culture, political situations in new ways. This type of diaspora study started in the 1980s on a small scale, but ever since it has been used in many academic and non-academic spheres. It solidly describes and approaches the issue of migration and the experience of immigrants in various dimensions (Brubaker, 2005). Earlier academic use of the term “diaspora” often relates to the concept of “homeland” and was first used to describe the experience of Jewish people, then Armenian and Greek people, and more recently African diasporas who in most cases hold a traumatic memory of dispersal from home land (Brubaker, 2005). However, now the term refers to groups such as, expatriate, refugee, guest worker, exile and ethnic community regardless to their traumatic experiences.

Therefore, as Cohen (1997) explains the word diaspora denotes, “nations unbound, who re-inscribe space in a new way” (as cited in Carter, 2005). The concept of re-inscribing space is to mean that diaspora posses a unique position in the world due to their migrant experiences and everyday communication practices and as such, they conquer a space that goes beyond the nation states physical distance or boundary. Moreover, for Clifford (1997) diaspora is a process of “entangled tension...the discourse articulates, or bends

together, both roots and routes to construct---alternate public spheres, forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identification outside the national time/space in order to live inside, with a difference” (as cited in Carter, 2005).

Clifford’s definition is related to the concept of multiple identities where immigrants are physically located in the host land but emotionally live in multiple places—in the homeland, host land and within the virtual community. Thus, they are assumed to possess a transnational consciousness or identity. The next subsection explains the concept of transnationalism in detail.

2.3.1 Transnationalism

Transnationalism can be explained in different ways. I will look at three perspectives that Steven Vertovec (1999) outlined. The first one is social morphology that constitutes “a triadic relationship”. These are,

- 1) Globally dispersed yet collectively self-identified ethnic groups
- 2) The territorial states and context where such groups reside
- 3) The homeland states and context where they or their forebears came

(Vertovec, 1999, p.449)

Due to these relationships, constituent’s common identity such as myth about origin/history and their ties to host country bring them together under established virtual and real organizations. Ethiopians have been settling in large numbers in the US, Saudi Arabia, Israel, or Italy, and in other countries as well. There is a strong diaspora community organization in each country. There are also a number of diaspora run media outlets that bring together self-identified Ethiopians under a similar platform. However, if the diaspora media depict an oppositional (politically critical to Ethiopian government) perspective in its discourses, they cannot be accessed from Ethiopia. Similarly, establishments such as the Ethiopian Community in Oslo, for example, is a registered organization that mediates different issues between Ethiopians living in Norway and the Norwegian Government. The community also maintains ties with similar organizations

elsewhere to deal with homeland affairs. Further, they actively engage in host land politics, especially on policies that might support or pose a threat to their existence. In this way, immigrants are able to live simultaneously within the two societies, and they are assumed to embrace a dual-loyalty.

Second, diaspora possess a unique status. Shain and Barth (2003) claim that the constituencies are “geographically outside the state, but identity wise perceived as ‘inside the people’—they attach great importance to kinship identity” (p.451). Thus, they promote transnational ties, and serve as a bridge to mediate between their home and host societies. Accordingly, they transfer social and political values, and even skills that their country needs. Remittance can be categorized under this type. Vertovec (1999) defines this phenomenon as **type of consciousness**, “Here and there” or “home away from home”, or as Radhakrishnan (1991) defined it, as a hyphenated identity, such as African-America, or British-Indian, and in most cases the diaspora are indebted to this multiple consciousness. Despite their affiliation and dual-loyalties, inclusion/exclusion, diaspora groups have a unique type of consciousness or stance that they have gained or enlightened by their distinct life experiences. Therefore, they create a new, dynamic or multiple identity about themselves, their histories, and their communities.

Third, diaspora as a transnational experience has been serving as “**a site for political engagement**” (Vertovec, 1999). Since most diaspora populations reside in more technologically advanced and relatively more democratic countries than their own, they actively engage in online forums, blogs, websites and wiki’s to discuss and debate about homeland political affairs, solicit resources for political engagements as well as lobby intergovernmental organizations to interfere in their homeland politics. Vertovec (1999) argues “political parties now often establish offices abroad in order to canvass immigrants, while immigrants themselves organize to lobby the home government” (p. 455). Additionally, they possess dual nationalities that automatically allow them to have dual voting rights, property rights and other forms of action.

Although an Ethiopian national law does not allow dual-citizenship, the diaspora have special privileges to own property (land), duty-free rights, special consideration to access state loans and more. However, their political engagement so far is considered a defiant behavior. Shain and Barth (2003) claim that diaspora (some groups) are also associated with sustaining international crime and terrorism— by equipping insurgents from the host land. Thus, globally, diaspora political engagement is a challenge to both host land and homeland. This is one of the cases that give diaspora identity significance in academia.

2.4 Ethnic minority portrayal in the media

The terms immigrant, ethnic minority, in recent cases diaspora and their definition as well as theoretical frameworks has been very problematic and open-ended. Thus, in this section these words refer to immigrants (first and second generation, who moved/settled to a new country/society) and will be used interchangeably. In his comprehensive study on mapping media research and ethnic minority, Simon Cottle (2000) has identified very interesting and alarming facts about media portrayal of ethnic minorities by the dominant media in host country. Hence, studies that identify immigrants enthusiastic transnational practices have indicated that there is a “collective minority dissatisfaction and frustration with the media’s seeming inability to provide representations” that portray diversity in ways that are thought to be valid or fair (Cottle 2000, p. 25). While discussing the media representation, he describes the dominant societal differentiations constructed by media discourses.

The media occupy a key site and perform a crucial role in the public representation of unequal social relations and the play of cultural power. Members of the media audiences are variously invited to constrict a sense of ‘who we are’ in relation to ‘who we are not’, whether as ‘us and them’, ‘insider and outsider’, ‘colonizer and colonized’, ‘citizen and foreigner’, ‘normal and deviant’, ‘friend or a foe’, ‘the west and the rest’. (Cottle, 2000, p.2)

Thus, society has learned to construct their boundaries as a sense of who they are and where they should belong based on the established divisions. In most cases, media representations of “the other” refers to stereotypes such as “trouble maker”, “dependent” or “entertainer” (Cottle, 2000) or as “exploiting the welfare society” (Haavisto, 2011 & Mainsah, 2005) or “perpetuator of crime”, “lazy”(Horsti, 2008), which collectively denote immigrants. There is a wide play of power by the media in continuously associating negative images with immigrants and the positives with the majority. In the case of Finland, for example, Haavisto (2011) has studied print media representation of immigrants in Finland. Her findings show that “from the beginning of 2000s, all Russians and Estonians were portrayed in conjunction with negative themes, such as crime and prostitution—‘other’. In contrast, immigrants in the fields of culture, art and entertainment were portrayed as cosmopolitan, interesting personalities or as persons very much like ‘us’. However Cottle (2000) claims that the “Multiculturalists way of presenting immigrants’ life, such as cultural festivals, individual success stories and cultural exotica of ethnic minority cultures” is another way of showing ‘otherness’ (p.11).

Nonetheless, media might not present “otherness” as a general identity of others with the same background (country of origin), but media do not seem to establish a mechanism to avoid such biases on audience reception. The portrayals in the media contribute to the antagonistic relationship between ethnic minorities or immigrants and the majority, host society. However, though these divisions make some groups vulnerable for racial discrimination, Cottle (2000) remarks that the current technological advancements and availability of multiple media outlets allowed minority groups to respond to, use and deploy media to negotiate their identity or sense of belongingness. Media helps them to debate about the collective hope for the future, and the authentic and/pluralistic representations..

2.5 Relevant literature

A migrant’s unique position in the society—having to deal with multiple identities, locality and loyalty to an imagined homeland, host land and transnational sphere has

attracted many schools of thought especially those interested in culture and media studies. In his comprehensive study on Nigerian, Polish and Chinese immigrants in Ireland, Gavan Titley et.al (2010), looked into immigrant use of local, Irish national, home country national, diasporic and transnational channels. The findings show that immigrants have been using all media channels to satisfy their need for entertainment, news and information. Immigrants are enthusiastic users and critical of transnational and diaspora media, they also use immigrant run community media where they can voice their perspectives and opinions. These immigrants tend to use the Internet more frequently when compared to their television and newspaper use. Their experience with national Irish channels among others depicts that the national media should strengthen representation of diverse identity within the immigrant population in Ireland and support the inclusion of minorities in program development and production.

Similarly, an empirical study on the relationship between African immigrants and police in Turku, Finland shows that there is a lack of trust between the two and that the media played a main role in these regards. On one hand, Egharevba's (2004) findings show that immigrants have a negative attitude (allege to be marginalized) or have distrust for Finnish justice system. They alleged that the police give unequal treatment to immigrants when compared with the majority of the society. On the other hand, the findings show that Finnish media is not interested/do not give priority to cover stories about immigrants and their challenges in Finland. This media resistance to bring immigrant issues onboard is attributed to commercial purposes as the police have a good reputation in Finland and reporting a contradicting account (how immigrant's feel about police) of a highly regarded institution might jeopardize the media's acceptance or readership/viewership among the majority. Furthermore, it has been difficult for immigrants to join the professional arena regardless of their Finnish language proficiency and expertise in their respective fields of study. Such circumstances interfere with immigrants' interest and ability to follow various debates concerning their position in their new homeland. "Even if immigrants have improved proficiency in

Finnish, it is still difficult to find African immigrants working in banks, insurance companies or even in the local police force.” (Egharevba, 2004, pp. 206-209) However, one of the limitations of this study is, the informants were only African immigrants, and it lacked the perspective of the police.

Studying identity construction and media use among immigrants, Mainsah (2005) has examined in to the case of Cameroonians in Oslo. His findings show that there is an existence of a diasporic identity and massive use of the Internet, as well as the feelings of loss, nostalgia and “not feeling quite at home”. They also show frustration over media representations where they are “often portrayed as ignored, or in essentially negative terms, or generalized as Cameroonians, as Africans, or generally as foreigners” (Mainsah, 2005, pp.102-103). My study is partially inspired by Mainsah’s papers and I assume some of the findings will correspond to the Norway context. However, I will not assume that the experience of Ethiopians and Cameroonians will be the same, despite the fact that they are black and might be confronted with similar or related “otherness” experiences. In the context of a diaspora identity, I believe it will be different because earlier studies have shown that Ethiopian diaspora are politically motivated, whereas Mainsah’s study did not mention Cameroonians as a politically active diaspora community involved in homeland political communication. However, his informants have shown an interest in human right and democracy issues.

Similarly, an overview of Nordic media research on immigration and ethnic relations examined immigrants media use, reception and production (Horsti 2008). The findings show that negative portrayal of immigrants in the national media forced immigrants to use international sources such as the BBC and Al Jazeera for information and news. It claims that the media portrayal constructs a division between “us” and “them” especially young immigrants support such claim. It also reveals that immigrants live in a global and transnational world and that their experiences go beyond nation states. My study will look into the transnational public sphere, immigrant media portrayal and the social constructions created by the media to understand the experiences of Ethiopians in Finland and to contextualize their experience with their Nordic counter parts.

2.6 Summary

Migration is a global phenomenon and a very complicated subject that seems difficult to address in both theories and policies. It is not a win-win, win-lose or lose-win situation, rather it is an intricate social, political and economic reality of our time. To start with, this study takes the position that media is “an inevitable fact of life” and that media plays a very crucial role by determining how host society and immigrant should interact, associate or live together. That said, research suggests that Finland is in an earlier stage of becoming a multicultural society; not by declaring itself as a multicultural country but due to an increase in the settlement of immigrants since the 1990s. The issues surrounding multiculturalism as a promising policy will benchmark the theoretical milieu.

However, the study will not totally focus on whether the immigrant media use helps them integrate in the host society or not. Rather, the multiculturalist’s perspective will help me analyze whether immigrants feel at home or detach themselves from the host society and why. In a situation where they claim to be detached, what kind of mechanism do they employ to sustain themselves in the host country? Whether the Finnish media discourse helps the integration/segregation? In the latter case, if diversity is a social fact in Finland, I expect media discourses will have some role to play in relation to the integration or segregation of immigrants. However, my main focus will be the transnational and diaspora identity. Therefore, I will study if the media use reflects these identities and what does it imply.

Finally, the media, as explained above, has portrayed ethnic minority negatively. Thus, I will look at how my interviewees feel about their media portrayal if it has any influence on their social integration as well as on their identity. One limitation of this theoretical framework is the fact that I could not get access to Finnish national policy and procedures concerning immigrants. Therefore, this study will take a holistic approach and situate itself amongst issue(s) of multiculturalism, media use and identity, as well as the transnational activities of immigrants. These intricate relations and theoretical ambiguities can be uncovered or implicitly lived in the everyday encounters of

immigrants and the host society. The media use of immigrants will give profound empirical data that could help identify and analyze this social situation.

3. Methodology

The research questions largely determine whether qualitative or quantitative or both approaches can be used for this particular study. Similarly, another influential factor in methods selection are the personal interests of the researcher. As Corbin and Strauss (2008) pointed out,

The most important is the desires to step beyond the known and enter into the world of participants to see the world from their perspective and in doing so make discoveries that will contribute to the development of empirical knowledge. (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.16)

A qualitative study also gives a profound understanding of the social context and describe why things are the way they are. According to Hancock (2001), qualitative study is useful “to produce subjective data concerning opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals, describes social phenomena as they occur naturally” (p.2). Furthermore, Silverman (2001) argues that qualitative research is “relatively flexible and study meanings as well as causes” (p.349).

This empirical study aimed to look at the media use of Ethiopians living in Finland. The study qualitatively examined how important (or not) media is in their everyday life. It asked what, how and why questions to answer the connection between media use and everyday life. Thus, the study has a descriptive and an exploratory emphasis on media access, use, representation, identity and transnational practices, as have been discussed in the theoretical framework of this study.

I collected my data from ten Ethiopians using a semi-structured interview. The data is analyzed qualitatively using thematic networks analytic tool. The next sub-section explains the data collection and analysis method, and the validity and ethical issues to consider while undertaking the study.

3.1 Qualitative research strategy

There is no clear-cut design in qualitative studies. It is an ongoing process that continues to be checked, modified if needed or enriched throughout the study. However, the researcher should have a semi-structured design that explicitly indicates the inclusion of research questions, theories and explain the data collection and analysis paradigms. As Maxwell (2005) advises, the method should answer questions such as “What will you actually do in conducting this study? What approaches and techniques will you use to collect and analyze your data?”(p.5). He outlines four points that an interactive qualitative research method should consider. Thus, the method should clearly outline,

1. The relationships that you establish with the participants in your study;
2. Your selection of settings, participants, times and places of data collection, and other data sources such as documents (what is often called “sampling”)
3. Your data collection methods;
4. Your data analysis strategies and techniques.

(Maxwell, 2005, p.5)

Interactivity in this study can be demonstrated in various stages of the study. It started with selecting the participants and establishing a good research relationship that stretches towards the completion of the study. I encouraged the participants to collaborate with me even after the interview for respondent validation purposes—some of the participants reviewed the interview transcript and checked if their accounts were recorded accurately. The next sub-section will give a detailed explanation of the four points mentioned by Maxwell.

3.2 Qualitative interview and interview questions

This study used personal accounts as the primary source of data. A qualitative interview is suitable for obtaining direct and detailed personal accounts of the participants in my study—which tried to look at the connection between media use and everyday life. Interviews also gives detailed information about interviewee’s personal experiences and

perspectives towards the concepts used in the study. In an effort to find out participants' own narrative of their everyday life, it is imperative to treat interviews as an active conversation not as a simple question and answer. As Holstien and Gubrium (1995) agree, "treating an interview as a social encounter leads us rather quickly to the possibility that the interview is not merely a neutral conduit or source of distortion but rather the productive site of reportable knowledge itself" (p.3). Qualitative interviews allow the interviewer to instigate conversation and show understanding throughout the interview. In this way, meanings are authored both by the interviewee and the interviewer. In such meaning making junctures, "it is primarily how and what the subject/respondent, in collaboration with an equally active interviewer, produces and conveys about the subject/respondent's experience under the imperative circumstances at hand" (Holstien and Gubrium, 1995, p.4). However, the role of the interviewer should be limited and guided ethically not to reinforce their own viewpoint and influence the outcome of the study.

I used a semi-structured technique due to the nature of the study that requires certain pre-planning, flexibility in the process and seeks to find out subjective meanings—which unstructured or structured interviewees did not fully provide. In using semi-structured interviews, the interviewer prepares open-ended questions beforehand and includes additional questions as they appear during the discussion. This way the interviewer prepares the interview guide. The interviewer can use the guide to conduct the interview in a coherent and professional way but should also be attentive enough to probe emerging issues during the interview.

The interview guide is divided into two parts, interviewee profiling and main questions. The first part, interviewee profiling, includes general background information about the interviewee. It is annexed at the end of this study. It includes, name, age, sex, citizenship, educational background, language, marital status and religion. The second part is divided into four categories:

1. Access

2. Media use and identity
3. Culture, media use and social integration
4. Transnational practices

Background information inquiry can be different from researcher to researcher due to many social, cultural and personal factors. However, it gives the interviewer some quick information about the informant. Plus, it facilitates the interview discussions and the interpretation of the participant's account. In this study, profiling language is very crucial at the initial stage of the inquiry. If the participant says he/she has no command of the Finnish language, I have to reconsider/skip some of the questions that relate to the Finnish language. In this way, I will maintain the interview in uninterrupted and coherent way. I also include religion while profiling the participant. The main reason is that religion and culture are highly integrated in Ethiopian society. People act or respond to some questions in a certain way due to the religious doctrine. For example, during the test interview I asked the participant if he intends to live in Finland forever. He responded: "I was born in Ethiopia and I believe (religiously) I belong there. But until I fulfill what I want, I will probably be in Finland". Therefore during the analysis, such information helped me to delineate religious perspectives from social/economic encounters that shape the participant to respond in particular way.

The second part of the interview guide includes research where the questions are juxtaposed to the themes covered in the literature review. However, it should be noted that this guide is used to facilitate the discussion and more questions can emerge from the actual interview. The main questions are divided into four parts. The first part inquires about access to television, radio, newspapers and the Internet at home or anywhere else and access to national (Finnish and Ethiopian) and international channels. The second part deals with media use and identity giving a particular emphasis to patterns and preferences while spending their time watching their favorite programs or channels. The aim is to find out if these patterns and preferences have any implications for the participants' identity and how they deal with it.

The third part has a particular focus on culture, media use and social integration. This is used to assess the interviewees' knowledge of host country culture and lifestyle, involvement in the social, political and economic arena and the role of media in these regards. It also conveys how participants are integrating into the Finnish society and what kind of factors influence or reinforce the integration process. Finally, the fourth part focuses on the consumption of homeland media and links to the homeland in an attempt to understand transnational practices, diaspora identity, transnational media use and the role of social media in their everyday life as an immigrant.

The interview guide resembles what Rubin and Rubin (2005) illustrate as a "tree and branch" structure (p.145). In this structure, the tree with a stem implies the research problem and the branches represent the interviewee questions. However, both have an equivalent role in the meaning making juncture. This structure helps the interviewer to get more depth, detail, vividness, richness and nuance. The questions are open and not biased. All interviewees were asked the same questions but they were free to choose not to respond for some that they find irrelevant to their context.

The interview lasted for one to one and half hour on average and it was conducted in Amharic, an official language of Ethiopia. All interviews were recorded and transcribed as they happened. I will explain more about transcription later in this study. However, the interviews were conducted either at the participant's home or in other private places where interviewees feel at ease. As a common practice, researchers recommend to have one or two test interviews before undertaking the actual interview. Among others, the interviewer can evaluate his/her skill as an interviewer and check whether or not the questions are clear enough to initiate in-depth discussion. Thus, I conducted a test interview with Kefyalew in October 2011. After the test interview, I was able to modify some general questions into more focused ones that are geared towards the research questions and theoretical discussions.

3.3 The interviewees

Researchers recommend that an interviewee is knowledgeable and experienced in the area of study, but it is not always the case. The study wants to relate everyday life and media use, but it does not seek to gain expertise knowledge/opinion of the subject.

However, I made a preliminary decision about how long the interviewee should have stayed in Finland to be able to participate in the study. This is due to the nature of the research questions that relates media use with identity and social integration. I decided that three years or more is preferred in order to consider a respondent's opinion as contextually relevant enough to enrich the theoretical discussion.

Ten Ethiopians were invited to take part in the study. They are currently living in the greater Helsinki region, Tampere, Kemi and Jyväskylä. Two of my interviewees are women. I wanted to have an equal number of male and female to create a gender balance since I strongly believe that they should be equally represented in all sectors or studies. However, it was difficult to bring women onboard and some had to cancel their initial consent due to various reasons. Furthermore, age is not such an important factor for this study and the participants can be representative of all age groups.

I have met the participants' individually and clearly informed them about the purpose/objective of the study, the duration of the interview and why I consider them as a good candidate for the study. I have also explained the need to record the interview. The reason for recording the interview becomes apparent during the discussion. I have acquired their oral consent to participate before I conducted the actual interview. I personally know almost all of them through social and religious gatherings in Finland and it was easier for me to establish a good research relationship that benefits the conversationally structured interview. However, it is important to be mindful and reflexive as the relationships might be multifaceted and shifting at times. These changing relationships might affect the researcher personally as well as have an influence on other aspects of the study.

3.4 Data analysis

There are various ways to describe and interpret qualitative data. Qualitative content analysis is one such method which seems suitable for this study. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), research that uses qualitative content analysis, “focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text” (p. 1278). The purpose of the study determines whether the researcher uses an inductive or deductive content analysis approach. An inductive approach is suitable where “there is no former knowledge about the phenomenon or if this knowledge is fragmented” and deductive approach can be used when “the structure of analysis is operationalized on the basis of previous knowledge and the purpose of the study is theory testing”(Elo & Kygäs 2007, pp.107-108).

As most scholars outline, transparency is the main challenge while the researcher draws the themes for interpretation. In order to overcome this challenge and as it is a very descriptive data analysis method, I have used Jennifer Attride Stirling’s thematic networks model to analyze the interview data. Thematic networks are analytic tool that “seek to unearth the themes salient in a text at different levels” and to “facilitate the structuring and depiction of these themes” (Stirling, 2001, pp.386-387). Stirling’s thematic networks model is used to dissect the data into codes and draw themes for analysis. This model is instrumental for overcoming the challenge of transparency in qualitative studies and for strengthening the validity of the study because it makes it obvious how the themes are dissected from the data. The themes or patterns are then conceptualized based on, or with the help of, theories and other emerging concepts. I will explain the model in a while. However, this study intends to test theory or previous knowledge, engender new insights and understandings about Ethiopians in Finland with regards to the intricate relationship between their media use and everyday life.

Transcription is the first step in analyzing the qualitative interview data. The interviews were recorded and transcribed accordingly. There are no common rules on how to transcribe audio materials. However, some researchers outline certain principles. Among others, “transcripts should preserve the morphologic naturalness of the data,

they should be the exact reproduction of the interview and generate a verbatim” but “what to include should be driven by the questions that an analysis attempt to answer” (McLellan, MacQueen & Neidig, 2003, pp. 65-67). There are always challenges associated with reproducing the oral into text forms. In this study, the participants preferred to express themselves in Amharic. I transcribed their full personal narratives in Amharic and translated the direct quotes that I used in this study into English. However, my main concern here is strong words or meanings might weaken during translation, especially in an attempt to use verbatim. But I will try to maintain the exact remark or use an equivalent meaning.

After transcription, the data should be further processed before it is ready for analysis. Researchers tend to use their own innovative ways to show that the interview data are properly transcribed, organized and reported. Maxwell (2008) outlines three main strategies to do this, “categorizing strategies (coding and thematic analysis), connecting strategies (narrative analysis and case studies) and memos and displays” (p.236). In the first stage, the data will be classified into smaller categories often called codes. Clearly disclosing the process of coding for the reader is one of the challenges of qualitative content analysis and it often raises the issue of transparency and trustworthiness. Here, Stirling’s thematic networks manifest to overcome these challenges. There are three analysis stages while using thematic networks model.

In the first analysis (stage A), I coded the interview data with regards to the theoretical discussion on this study, research questions and recurrent issues from the interview transcript. Themes were abstracted from codes and finally networked “on the basis of content and on theoretical grounds” (Stirling, 2001, p.392). During the second analysis (stage B), I described the network contents using some extracts from the transcript. In this stage I was able “to explore and note underlying patterns that begin to appear” in the network and as such, this stage “brings together the data and interpretation and elaborate analysis for the audience”. (Stirling, 2001, p.393.) In this stage, I also summarized the themes and patterns on clear and definite terms. With the third analysis (stage C), the major concepts extracted from the summaries were “pooled together into

a cohesive story by relating them back to the original questions, and theoretical grounding of the research” (Stirling, 2001,p. 393). This is where the final stage of dissecting the data and interpretation takes place. Therefore, I contextualized and interpreted the themes and concepts that emerged from the interview text.

I have decided to focus on the concepts or ideas that repeatedly appear the most to reduce the huge chunk of interview transcripts into workable and broken down material to make the analysis more focused on the purpose of this study. For example, when I asked my interviewees their interpretation of Finnish identity and lifestyle, they answered using strikingly similar concepts or words. Thus, I took those interviews verbatim and further process them in to codes. Then, I was able to place basic themes such as individualism and shyness in contrast to their envisaged Ethiopian identity and lifestyle. In addition, they often refer to these themes when talking about their challenge to integrate into Finnish society, to establish friendship with Finns and at times to express appreciation for Finnish society and the government. Therefore, the data is further grouped under one organizing theme—Finnish media use and the public sphere. Themes are further enunciated with regards to their Finnish media use, immigrant representation in the media, belongingness and integration. These are all discussed in detail. This is to showcase how I came up with themes to interpret the data. This way I have used four organizing themes that will be explained in detail in chapter four.

3.5 Validity and trustworthiness

Researchers need to confirm that the studies are credible and that they fulfill the expected professional and academic standards. This can be done in a variety of ways. In qualitative inquiries, validity can be demonstrated using “member checking, triangulation, thick description, and researcher reflexivity and disconfirming evidence” (Creswell ad Miller, 2010, p.124). This is not an exhaustive list, as per the data collection and analysis method; the researcher can specify and justify relevant validity measures for the particular study.

This study uses participant accounts as primary data. According to Creswell and Miller (2010), qualitative inquiries assume that “reality is socially constructed and is what participants perceive it to be” (p.125). With the help of clear and detailed research questions, the participants are encouraged to express themselves and their opinion. However, it is imperative to check with the participants with regards to how the study reflects or represents their realities. Dearnly (2005) suggests that returning transcripts to interviewees, “increase the validity of the findings because participants are able to confirm that they have said what they meant or not” (p.24). They will also have a choice to omit some personal narratives that they are not comfortable sharing with the public. For this reason, I promised the participants to return the transcripts in order to check whether their account is accurately represented or not. This practice establishes a milieu where there is active participation; collaboration and openness during the interview process and in turn this strengthens the validity of the findings.

Furthermore, triangulation in this study goes hand in hand with research questions, data collection and analysis. While coding and dissecting categories for analysis, I used the concepts/themes from the interview, research questions and theories used in this study. Creswell and Miller (2010) suggest that generating “cooperative evidence” or concepts/themes this way ensures “valid narrative account” (p.127). Moreover, the interview took an hour and half on average and the questions are designed in a conversation manner rather than direct question and answer. Thus, it is guaranteed to have a data set that I can use to generate a detailed and thick description of the qualitative inquiry, the setting and the participants. As Creswell and Miller (2010) suggest, “with this vivid detail, the researchers help readers understand that the account is credible and enables readers to make decisions about the applicability of the finding to other settings or similar contexts” (pp.128-129). The thick description also avoids the generalizability problematic in qualitative research. By unfolding and contextualizing the settings, background information and findings in detail, I will give the reader the

autonomy to apply the findings to either Ethiopians in Finland as a whole, or just to the sample size.

Lastly, reflexivity is required from the beginning of the study through to the end. I do not have any preconceived beliefs or biases that might intersect with the research process as a whole. I had a clear role as an interviewer and catalyst during the interview. As a practical guide to demarcate my personal biases entering in to the data, I used field notes or a journal where I can reflect immediately on the interview's general process, including the participants state of mind/mood while responding to the interview, how I perform as an interviewer (eg. whether I probe an issue properly?)-This journal and the interview transcript will be made available if there is a need for further verification of facts and processes. In these ways, I will ensure validity of study.

3.6 Ethical consideration

Ethical issues in this study are considered in terms of “the need to reduce the risk of unanticipated harms” and “protecting their information” (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p.314). I use pseudonyms rather than using the participants' actual names to protect their identity. Although the interview inquiries are relatively simple and hardly sensitive, during the test interview it was evident that some responses are critical of the Ethiopian government in many aspects. Having their opinions and critiques published might have unintended repercussions when they return back to Ethiopia. Thus, I have a moral responsibility to protect my participants. In this way, I was able to gain their trust, openness and collaboration for the richness of the study.

4- Data analysis

This chapter presents an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the interviews. The findings of the study are interpreted as realities constructed and meanings contemplated by Ethiopians living in Finland. The chapter is organized into four sub-chapters or organizing themes and each theme deals with different aspects of the study. I will refer to my interviewees with their first name throughout the paper.

The first organizing theme is Finnish media and the public sphere. This theme is developed with regards to Ethiopian immigrant's Finnish media use, immigrant representation on the media, belongingness and social integration. The second organizing theme is Ethiopian and diaspora media use and it looked into diaspora media use and identity, involvement in Ethiopian politics and relationships with family and friends in Ethiopia. The third organizing theme is transnational and social media use. It discusses the interviewees' perspectives on their international ties and forging partnership between the two societies. Ethiopian's membership and participation in communities established by people of the same origin and their social and transnational media use is also assessed in this theme. The fourth organizing theme looks into media discourse on Ethiopia and its effect on their identity, taking into account their media use and its effects in crisis and non-crisis time. The following sub-chapter provides an overview of television, radio and newspaper access, and the media habits and preferences among my interviews. Then I will discuss each organizing theme.

4.1 An overview of television, radio, newspaper and Internet access, habits and preferences

In this study, 80 percent of the interviewees have access to television at home and spend 1-2 hours daily on average watching their favorite program. The rest have decided not to have a television as they opt to get the same service from the Internet. Satellite television is not common among my interviewees except for one who prefers to get Middle East related news and information from his Arab satellite. Although many have access to television at home, the range of channels that they wish to see are available on

pay-per-view. However, they refrain from paying due to financial constraints and they believe that the Internet provides them with other options.

Language is another important factor that determines immigrant media use and preferences. As Christiansen (2004) argues, knowledge of a mother tongue, knowledge of an international language and the host country language affects immigrant choices (191-192). Therefore, knowledge of the English language has made American and British entertainment and reality television among my interviewees' favourite international *television* viewing. With regards to homeland television, my interviewees' watch entertainment and news from *Ethiopian Television* (ETV) and *Ethiopian Satellite Television* (ESAT) online. However, it was evident in this study that proficiency in the Finnish language has made many avoid television programs broadcast in Finnish. They expressed that Finnish language television viewing is confined to sports, weather and transport related broadcasting that does not require Finnish language expertise.

Well all programs that might help me to know Finnish culture and society are broadcasted in Finnish. It's my laziness but still now I don't know Finnish language and I don't watch any Finnish programs that are broadcasted in Finnish (Bubu).

Television use brings together transnational and diaspora consciousness into the forefront of their everyday life. Mainstream television, reality TV, entertainment and documentary film takes the lion-share of my interviewee's television viewing time. They are also regular users of homeland television where they follow news, actively participate in current affairs and watch their favourite sitcoms and movies online. As one of the participants, Azalech, one of the interviewee, expressed, "you love to listen to anything said about your homeland from abroad. You miss that. You even miss their faces". It helps them overcome the feeling of nostalgia and reminisce about their life back in the homeland.

Similarly, radio is an important entertainment medium for Ethiopians in Finland. Most of my interviewees listen to radio inside their vehicle due to the nature of their work that

makes them stay in their vehicle for more than three hours. Music dominates much of their radio listening habits. They use international, Finnish and Ethiopian radio stations interchangeably regardless of the language barrier. However, some turn the radio on for early morning news in English about Finland or world news. For this they listen to the Finnish national radio station YLE Puhe or BBC broadcastings. Very few use Amharic language online radio that specializes in religious and spiritual songs. Ethiopian's radio use resonates with Cameroonian's experience in Oslo as well as with a recent study on Polish, Nigerian and Chinese people living in Ireland. In each case, immigrant radio listening is either confined to a vehicle or they choose internet radio that plays uninterrupted music (Titley et al, 2010, Mainsah, 2005). As can be seen from their preference and habits, radio is largely used for entertainment purposes and as such, it is not used as much for news and information.

If we look at newspaper use and preferences, my interviewees spend a relatively less amount of time reading newspapers when compared to their radio and television use. They check English language newspapers such as *Helsinki Times* and *6 Degrees* that are freely available in the library. They also check online versions of *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Ilta-lehti*. Language, subscription fees and the lack of imported newspapers from their homeland affect newspaper reading among my interviewees. However, translation tools such as Google Translate and the Google Chrome instant translation feature helped my interviewees overcome their Finnish language barrier. Using Internet translation tools are common practices among my interviewees whenever they read online news and information that are available in Finnish. Melaku, one of the participants, tries to read Finnish papers daily using these tools.

Especially when I use Yahoo Suomi on Google Chrome; I will check *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Ilta-lehti* simultaneously because Chrome translates it in English.

(Melaku)

My interviewees read newspapers while they were in Ethiopia. Since they move to Finland, they are not able to get the Ethiopian newspapers that they used to enjoy.

Hence they tend to use online versions of their favourite newspapers. The factors that affect homeland newspaper reading are the lack of imported newspapers from the homeland and frustration over irregular updates to online versions. On the contrary, with the advancement of technological inventions, every single day access to information virtually is easier than previous times where people relied on hard copies and hard covers. The presence of international media on various applications (apps)—an interactive software application developed to utilize the technologies of the social media and smart phones has made it easier to access and use international news and information. Thus, my interviewees use the Economist, Daily Telegraph, The Times and The Huffington post regularly. Most of them are interested in economy and technology related news and information and some are interested in Africa and Middle Eastern affairs, especially news concerning Israeli-Palestinian relations. The overall newspaper use among Ethiopians however is minimal when compared to other media types. And those who read newspapers spend less than thirty minutes daily.

Perhaps the Internet is the foremost media that is affordable, freely available and a fast communication medium for Ethiopians in Finland. Most of my interviewees use the Internet at home, at school, on their mobile phones as well as at both public and school libraries. Although they don't produce their own content online or have a blog, my interviewees spend 10 hours on a daily basis using the Internet for various purposes. They connect with friends, work on their own projects, check out daily news and information, and watch different entertainment and educational materials that are available online. They are frequent users of Skype, Yahoo messenger, Google talk, and other voice over IP services to call their parents and friends who live in the homeland and diaspora. As I have discussed in the previous chapter, different studies on immigrants' everyday life have shown the same result—immigrants spend quite a lot of time on the Internet and Ethiopian immigrant experiences echo these findings. For Ethiopians, the Internet is a means to reconnect with the homeland and meet people of the same origin in the diaspora. It is also a crucial media for them to use in their new homeland as a part of everyday life—relations with the bank, transport, weather related

information often require them to use the Internet extensively and perhaps every day. Their level of education also plays a crucial role in their extensive Internet use. Almost all of the respondents have at least a Bachelor's degree or have moved to Finland to pursue either a Bachelor or Master's degree. However, I will discuss the implications of their Internet use in the following sub-chapter.

To conclude, most of my interviewees moved to Finland for study purposes and they have been in Finland for 4 to 8 years on average. They are slowly integrating into the new society and learning the language. However, learning Finnish has been a challenge for most of them, although they believe it is mandatory to facilitate their life in Finland. There are two perspectives on this. On one hand, learning Finnish seems to not be a priority as they claim to have no time after their very busy work and school lifestyle. On the other hand, the lack of it has been very problematic for them when it comes to finding a professional job, using the media and integrating into the society. Nonetheless, language proficiency and length of stay in Finland play a major role in their access, habits and preference of radio, television, newspaper and Internet consumption. They use these media mainly for entertainment and as a way to relax themselves from a hectic everyday life but also for news and information. The next subsection, Finnish media and the public sphere, looks further into Ethiopian's participation in Finnish public life, their social integration and their perspectives on the Finnish media portrayal of immigrants in Finland.

4.2 Finnish media and the public sphere

The everyday media use of immigrants' gives a glimpse of their media preferences and their interest in participating in the public life of the host country. Immigrants tend to watch programs that are broadcasted in the host country language in order to learn the language as well as to understand the lifestyle better. This is evident among Cameroonians in Oslo. They believe that their Norwegian Television viewing preferences will strengthen their language proficiency and helps them integrate more in to the society (Mainsah, 2005, pp. 43-47). However, this is not evident in the case of Ethiopians in Finland. First, a lack of proficiency in Finnish obstructs Ethiopian's

interest in following current affairs from the Finnish media in general, with the exception of the few that have English language online versions. They do not also use Finnish television to learn the language like Cameroonians in Oslo. Not following or watching Finnish media affects their participation in Finnish public life, as they are unable to follow host country affairs regularly.

Second, as immigration is a relatively a new phenomenon in Finland, Ethiopians feel that the society is way behind in recognizing and accepting immigrants as part of “them”. They believe that negative prejudices about immigrants in general contributed to Finnish society’s lack of recognition for immigrants. They also mention the challenge of breaking “Finns shyness” in order to integrate into the society and actively participate in host country social, political and economic affairs. Third, they feel that they are not well represented in the Finnish media and public sphere and it has a huge impact on their everyday endeavors in the host country. I will discuss each notion as follows.

4.2.1 Participation in Finnish public life

Finland is a relatively new country of destination for immigrants and Finnish society is largely homogeneous. According to the data from Migration Information, out of the total population of Finland, immigrants constitute around five per cent (Migration Information Source, 2011). However, the growing numbers of immigrant communities in Finland made us believe that multiculturalism is soon to be a reality in Finland. In a multicultural setting, immigrant participation in host country social, economic and political affairs is vital for their social integration and it will help them be heard at the national level.

That being said, media is one of the tools that facilitate society’s participation. This study looked at Ethiopian’s use of Finnish media and its relation to participation in host country affairs. The findings show that the majority of Ethiopians use the Finnish media to access information related to weather forecast, transportation and business as most are engaged in the selling and buying of cars. They do not read news and in-depth reporting on host country affairs and they show little interest in engaging in Finnish

public life. First, the information is either available in Finnish or it is not presented as they wish in English. Thus, they find Finnish media not catering to their need for in-depth news and information in English.

Had I known Finnish language I would have read *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Iltalehti*. Their international edition discourages you. They do not report like the Finnish version. I used to Google translate the articles from the Finnish sites and read, but I got lazy and stop that as well. (Esko)

Many participants complain about a lack of in-depth reporting in the international editions of major media organizations in Finland. Considering the growing international community in Finland, they commented that having a media that caters to the needs of these communities is indispensable. Second, the interviewees have been in Finland less than ten years and they are not sure how long they will stay in Finland or if (or not) they will move back to Ethiopia for good. Thus, as they have a vague idea of the future and their whereabouts, knowing about and participating in Finnish politics is not on their agenda. Some attribute the reason for not following Finnish media or participate in the Finnish politics to the way they see themselves integrated into the society and how they feel as a part of it. In which case, they have found integration challenging and they do not feel part of the society enough to be able to actively participate in Finnish politics. Therefore, their information seeking and participation is confined to matters that are relevant to their stay in Finland such as new or existing policies on immigration, visa and immigrant affairs.

I think I am not interested...I don't know. May be its not being present as I want to? Even when I visit the Finnish focused websites, I tend to be interested in economic and immigrant affairs. I never opened the political related news. I am not that eager to know because I don't intend to live in Finland longer. (Damtew)

However, some see the inevitability of having updated knowledge and information about Finland regardless of the limitation of language and in-depth reporting in English. They consider themselves as part of Finnish society and they believe that they should

know the everyday deals in Finland through the media. Their level of participation in Finnish public life is limited to information gathering. For this purpose they use the Finnish Broadcasting service, *YLE* English website. *YLE* English is a popular Finnish media source among Ethiopians in Finland and those who claim to have an interest in host country affairs tend to use this media every day. A few use the *Helsingin Sanomat* international edition, however, as of October 26, 2012 *Helsingin Sanomat* international edition discontinued the online service in English and plans to come in a different format in the future.

I tried to follow the news in all means I can. Because this is the country I am living and I should know about it. It might not be important to discuss in detail, but I know who is doing what in the political arena. (Melaku)

Therefore, the experience of Ethiopians in Finland show us the intricate relationship between language, everyday life, identity and media use. These relationships are not reciprocally dependent on each other but rather on their own, they substantially affect immigrants' perspectives, values and principles with regards to their active involvement and contribution to the betterment of their new homeland. The next subsection will try to analyse immigrant social integration in to the society.

4.2.2 Embracing new culture and society

As argued above, immigrants who actively participate in their new homeland's social, economic and political affairs are seen as making exemplary effort towards positive integration. Their active participation is also related to their sense of belongingness to the society and culture of their new homeland. In an attempt to understand this and because it is a good way to comprehend the lifestyle better, my interviewees were asked about having Finnish friends, families and acquaintances. Interviewees spotted cultural lifestyle differences that affect their level of integration and participation on societal issues.

Finnish friendship doesn't last long like Ethiopian. I have Finnish friends in different times. Even if Finnish notion of friendship is different from Ethiopia, I

think I consider my office colleagues as friends. We meet outside of the office, drink beer together, or we meet at different social events and sometimes talk and do personal favours for each other. That's what you do with friends. But if you ask them, they will tell you that....Esko is my colleague whom I'm very close to. They have a thick line when it comes to personal space. (Esko)

The notion of friendship is comprehended in different ways in both cultures and bringing together the differences seems to be a challenge. For others though, socio-economic factors affect their everyday life with Finns. Bubu, one of the participants, pointed out that "as time goes by I understood that we have different life paths and I detached myself. I think we're still friends". Like Bubu, other interviewees find it difficult to have a strong Finnish social circle although they have been living and learning with Finns since they moved to Finland. As they noted, Finns can be shy and it would be difficult for them to break the ice for the first time. Thus, such circumstances have hindered their chance to socially integrate into the society and know about the Finnish culture and lifestyle like they wished to. They connect their social circle with a sense of belongingness in the new society and culture, and require recognition from Finns to feel part of the society.

The main issue here is not how I see myself as part of the Finnish society but how they see me or accept me as part of them. I have a mix of the two cultures.

Sometimes, whether its forced or part of becoming one, there are a lot of situations that made me consider myself as part of the Finnish society. (Melaku)

Furthermore, the sporadic, traumatic and racist encounters that they have to go through made them realise that there is a lack of recognition or acceptance from their Finnish counterparts to be part of the society. Ethiopian's first or periodic experience with the Finns they met on various occasions was highly prejudiced and often not pleasant. The participants use prejudice and racism interchangeably and it is difficult to articulate their experiences clearly. However, they noted that Finns' prejudice about immigrants, especially the black community, is largely due to the negative

media portrayal. This means that they are asked for cocaine or followed in stores as if they are going to steal something. In fact, associating criminal activity with the black community goes back to the 60s where the discourse on immigration reflected stereotyping “new comers” or immigrants as endangering national culture and law. Barker argues that during the 60s and 70s,

the idea that there was something intrinsically criminal about black culture began to take hold and imagery circulated through the press and Television, of black youth as dope smoking muggers and /or urban rioters come to the fore. (Barker,1999, pp.75-76).

The media has been defining the discourse and how we should perceive the world around us. It has been dictating us to behave or think in certain ways. Ethiopian’s negative encounters with Finns they met made them feel unwelcome in Finland and in order to feel part of the society they require recognition. What they see as a lack of recognition has affected their everyday life in relation to their media use or their social integration processes. I have argued, quoting Taylor (1994), that the recognition or lack of it has real damage to the person and has direct implications for their identity and sense of belongingness in the host country.

Leaving alone my own personality (difficulty to get to know people), the language has been a huge barrier for me not to assimilate. Plus, it could happen only to me but I have had many traumatic experiences in Finland. I have encountered an insult, intimidation at different times. Those experiences have made me to be closed for any kind of interaction with the society. (Bubu)

Some of the interviewee experiences show us that they responsibly fulfil their duty as a citizen, paying taxes and abiding the law and order of the country, but they are still struggling to socially integrate into the society. The experience of Bubu reconfirms that unlikely events as such could blur an immigrant’s sense of belongingness and indicate that they should negotiate their space continuously in order to actively

participate in their new homeland affairs as well as to avoid segregation and inner exclusion.

Nonetheless, it would be wrong to boldly draw this conclusion because the scope of the study and interview guide limit further exploration that would study their experiences and everyday life to reach to such conclusions. In general, once migrants are dispersed from their home, they often seek acceptance and recognition to be part of their new society. Media plays a huge role in this regard. Ethiopians attribute the negative representation in the media as affecting their everyday life in the new homeland and refrain from embracing the new culture and society. The next sub-chapter deals with how Ethiopians feel about the media portrayal of immigrants in Finland and its effects on their everyday life.

4.2.3 Immigrant portrayal in the media

Representation is a big concept, especially when images and discourse are concerned. But for this study, the term representations of immigrants takes all foreigners into consideration and sees how Ethiopian immigrants feel about the Finnish media portrayal of the immigrants. It also asks whether the portrayal has any impact on their everyday life.

The findings show that Ethiopians feel the Finnish media has been portraying immigrants negatively and it has affected their everyday life in Finland. Negative connotations such as Romania=beggars, Somali=terrorist, immigrants=asylum seekers and perpetrators of crime are often implied in Finnish media reporting. These negative connotations affect them emotionally and interfere in their everyday life. Kefyalew, one of the interviewees, follows what is going on in Finland from the Finnish YLE every day and believes that YLE does not represent immigrants fairly.

Immigrants are not well represented in the media. I don't remember specific issues. However, mostly you see YLE presents immigrants as asylum seekers or if there is a crime committed by immigrants. You will read news about number of asylum

seekers increase or decrease, some criminal activity has happened in Tampere or Helsinki and the perpetrators are not Finns...things like this. (Kefyalew)

Representations like this interfere with Ethiopian's everyday life as they are opting for employment in Finland and interacting with Finns. Kefyalew believes that the negative portrayals force the society to encode biases against immigrants and it affects their integration into the professional employment realm. Some even feel ashamed and uncomfortable after reading negative news about the immigrants for fear of being considered as one. Similarly, when there is a crime committed by an immigrant, the news portals tend to generalise the incident to the immigrants as a whole; they are portrayed as the foe. This is in a sense because the news reporting does not focus on the perpetrator alone but rather generalizes the incident to a particular immigrant group or race.

Mostly they talk about Somalia people or will just say Africa/ foreigner did this or that and you don't know where that person comes from. The Finns trust what is there on the media. Such negative news creates a bad impression. It makes readers/viewers not to trust immigrants. The impression will not rest on the person who does the evil. It also applies to all groups of people who are foreigner/African/ Somalia. (Akalu)

This was also a fact in the case of Cameroonians in Oslo and they have to deal with identifications such as immigrants, Cameroonians, Africans, or black people at different times and negotiate their multiple identities (Mainsah, 2009, pp. 87-88). Such faulty generalisations not only affect immigrants' social integration but also create a societal boundary. As Cottle (2000) argued, host country media portrayals in a way establish a boundary between the majority and minority, "us" and "them", "a friend" and "foe and create societal biases to fear the unknown, the immigrant or the person with a new culture (p.2). This is especially apparent in smaller cities in Finland where racism has been a challenge for my interviewees.

For example, while I was in Oulu racism was a big problem especially towards African descents. I haven't experienced it myself but saw it first hand on my friends. I remember a case where Finns tried to attack an African descent with a knife. The police was not cooperating to calm the situation. (Melaku)

Melaku's, one of the interviewee, experience resonates with Egharevba's (2004) findings after studying the experience of African immigrants living in Turku. In his studies, Egharevba pointed out that immigrants do not believe that they are treated equally by the Finnish justice system. They believe that negative media portrayal and other prejudices about immigrants are to blame for such treatments. However, Ethiopians not only blame Finnish media but also international media for their often biased and negative portrayal of immigrants and black people in general. They hold that Finn's are also affected by these international media discourses that aggravate Finn's biases and prejudices towards immigrants in Finland. Being part of the prejudice group, black/African/immigrants, Ethiopians are vulnerable and the media generalization affects their everyday life in Finland.

Nevertheless, although they are discontent with their present circumstances, the media portrayals do not seem to have an impact on their Finnish media use. Those who claim to watch/follow happenings in Finland still do so regardless of the images. Hence, many voice their wish to see a positive or fair representation of immigrants in the Finnish media. The interviewees have pointed out positive reporting that showed them that the Finnish media have been giving a progressive outlook to immigrant image building. This particular channel has been broadcasting experiences of earlier immigrants and their endeavours to integrate into the society by showing success stories of some immigrants in different arenas.

There is this channel I think TV5 that I love. It showed how the first immigrants were able to settle in Finland, the kind of challenges they faced and in what situation they are now. Such programs are good for new immigrants in particular. This same

channel also shows about other cultures. For example I saw programs on Somali, Vietnamese and Ethiopian culture and society. (Bubu)

This kind of reporting helps to build a positive image of immigrants in Finland and informs them that immigrant life is gaining prominence by the Finnish media. It also helps strengthen their attachment to their origin reinforcing their collective memory of the homeland. When the program about Ethiopia was on air, my interviewees were exchanging SMS text messages and calls from other Ethiopians not to miss the program. For people like Bubu, such programs served as an opener when he met Finns for the first time. It also gave him a good excuse to talk about or correct the program material if there was a bias on cultural-geographic orientation on both sides, Finns and Ethiopians.

For me it does serve as an icebreaker. I remember in one situation this program about Ethiopia made my first time contact easier. The program mentioned Ethiopia's Lucy as a cradle of mankind and when I meet Finns at least for 2-3 times such portrayals serves as a common ground to start a discussion. (Bubu)

Thus, the experience of Ethiopians in Finland shows us that immigrants face dissatisfaction or frustration over the media portrayal as it has had a huge effect on their everyday life in Finland. Its impact on social integration is also immense as they feel not welcome in the new society and it undermines their potential to contribute better for their new homeland because they are often associated with criminal/wrong doings. Thus, they believe that the media should take responsibility and not reinforce generalisations and exclude a part of society that could be instrumental in building a respectful and tolerant Finland. Nevertheless, the perceived lack of fair representation and frustration over the host country media portrayal evidently contribute to immigrant's active engagement in homeland affairs and watching homeland media. The following section will deal with Ethiopian and diaspora media use.

4.3 Ethiopian and diaspora media use

Living in a technologically advanced society will definitely make communication affordable and easy. Ethiopians in Finland use the Internet rigorously; they check various news and information portals every day, they maintain contact with Ethiopians in the homeland and diaspora as well as keep their memories of the homeland intact by actively participating in homeland affairs. For these purposes, they use national and diaspora television and radio channels, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)—an online telephone service which they use to call friends and families, read their favourite blogs and use social media such as Facebook and Paltalk. News and information takes a lion share of their media use, entertainment channels, online radios as well as telephone services keep Ethiopians abreast of homeland social, economic and political affairs.

This section will discuss the dynamics and the extent to which Ethiopians are interested in following news about the homeland and its impact on their everyday life as a diaspora. Nevertheless, as was apparent during the interview, Ethiopians' consumption of homeland news is enormous and the majority of their sources are the diaspora media. Thus, it is important to briefly mention their media consumption menu and their perspective towards this type of media to make the following sub-chapters easy read.

4.3.1 Diaspora media menu

My interviewees' most popular entertainment and news media are Diretube and Ethiotube. Founded in 2008, both websites cater to reach out to Ethiopians at home and in the diaspora by serving Ethiopians as a multi-dimensional entertainment and information hub. Ethiopians are able to watch their favourite *Ethiopian Television* programs, they can access videos and contents related to Ethiopia and they can engage in discussion forums. However, at times controversial content that is posted by users will be subject for removal or access to the content will be denied in Ethiopia. Although Ethiopia employs a multi-party system, in practice there are two broad political blocs. There is the ruling party that dominates the main media channels in Ethiopia and the opposition parties voice their critical perspectives through a variety of diaspora media. In both ways though, extreme opinions about one another is shared or broadcasted.

However, my interviewees consider Diredube and Ethiotube as objective and not favoring either the incumbent or the opposition group perspective.

When my interviewees were looking for in-depth reporting or analysis on Ethiopian affairs, they use Nazret.com. The website posts news and analysis on matters related to Ethiopia from various international and national news sources as well as content from Ethiopian dissident bloggers who are living in exile. The Ethiopian government has denied access to Nazret.com in Ethiopia. According to the data obtained from Alexa-the web information company, 42% of Nazret.com users are located in the United States. (See <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/nazret.com#>). For Ethiopians in Finland, Nazret.com provides them with a moderate view on news and information concerning their homeland. They appreciate the rich content and its objectivity in terms of presenting a relatively unbiased account of information about Ethiopia.

Nazret.com is a political site but somehow it has a moderate perspective. I used to read different diaspora sites but they are totally against the government and its achievement. They don't report any positive news whatsoever. So I shifted to Nazret because it provides both positive and negative info's and analysis. (Kefyalew)

Another news source for Ethiopians is Ethiomedia. According to the information obtained from the website (www.ethiomedia.com), the news portal is a pro-democracy website that serves Ethiopians with news and information. The website has links to other Ethiopian focused websites, blogs, radio programs and advocacy organizations that are voicing their concerns for democracy and good governance in Ethiopia. Most of these links are not accessible from Ethiopia. Like nazret.com, Ethiomedia is also not accessible from Ethiopia due to its "controversial" content. My interviewees enjoy reading political, social justice and human right articles and videos shared on the site.

Some Ethiopians also follow bloggers such as Abiy Tekelmaria. Abiy is an Ethiopian dissident living in exile. He has been editor in chief of one of the most popular private

newspaper in Ethiopia, Addis Neger, literary translated as “new thing”, before the government decision to shut it down. From exile, Abiy shares his critical perspective on Ethiopian government policies, social and economic affairs both on their website and Facebook pages. Accesses to both pages are denied in Ethiopia.

In terms of radio use, Ethiopians use Admas radio, a four-hour weekly entertainment program aimed to reach out to Ethiopians and Eritreans all over the world. The radio program started transmissions in 2006 in Atlanta, United States. Audiences can listen live or have access to previous programs from their website. The online radio can be accessed both from Ethiopia and elsewhere. For my interviewee, Admas is her main source of news and entertainment in Ethiopia.

I enjoy drama, guest interview and poetry reading. They are also talking about your country and you are listening to them from abroad...it makes you happy.

(Azalech)

Nonetheless, access to most of these sites and blogs are denied in Ethiopia and this makes them news and entertainment portals whose main audiences are Ethiopians in the diaspora. Since most of them are owned or managed by exile Ethiopian journalists or media professionals, their loyalty and the authenticity of their reporting or perspectives are debatable amongst Ethiopians who have different political orientation towards the current government. Regardless, Ethiopians in Finland seem to use these diaspora media everyday as they anticipate returning back to their homeland one day and want to keep abreast of current debates in the country. They participate in discussion about government policies and read people’s perspectives on current affairs and other economic and social endeavours of the country.

4.3.2 The dynamics of “good” and “bad” news

Politics in Ethiopia is a very delicate and contested terrain. Ethiopians in the diaspora are one of the most politically active immigrant communities and they often voice their concern in various media for a change of government in the country.

International human right groups and activists often blame the Ethiopian government

for a lack of freedom of expression, silencing dissents and imprisoning journalists in Ethiopia. They also condemn the government for restricting the endeavours of private press (See <http://www.hrw.org/>, and www.cpj.org for further information). for international, homeland and diaspora media reports about Ethiopia. Ethiopian focused website articles and documentaries, as well as the national television broadcasted programs, lack authenticity and serve to voice a particular political agenda. Regardless, Ethiopians use their personal parameters and choose certain media to update themselves on Ethiopian current affairs. However, the findings show that Ethiopians generally have contempt for international, homeland and diaspora media reports about Ethiopia.

However, in attempting to be informed, Ethiopians tend to avoid media that they believe distributes “negative news” and are inclined to use other media that serve them with moderate or neutral perspectives. There is a clear distinction among my interviewees evaluation of these media. For example, what one considers a neutral or moderately opinionated site, is a politically motivated or pessimistically opinionated media source for another. In general, for politically active Ethiopians, diaspora media are the main source of political news and they actively participate in the comment and discussion sections. Esko, one of the interviewees, strongly believes that pessimistic views are often portrayed by these diaspora media and at times, this prompts him to actively participate in the comment section.

One time I was so angry and emotional after reading a lot of negative opinions on Nazret.com site. I asked people to differentiate what they should oppose and agree with. Another time, I joined one opposition (to Ethiopian government) Paltalk group. I challenged their attitude and approach towards Ethiopian politics. (Esko) Participation is highly emotional. Even among those who claim to hate politics, the different perspectives shared in online forums and groups tempted them to engage in hot debates that made Ethiopian current political affairs their core agenda. The content might not only be politics, my interviewees engage actively in discussion

about the human right situation in Ethiopia. Thus, platforms such as Paltalk and Nazret.com

discussion forums help immigrants to engage politically, economically and socially in discussion about their country of origin. Actively engaging in the comment section is a daily routine for interviewees like Damtew.

I enjoy the comment section. I spend most of my time there, reading people's perspective- I also comment when I needed. I can find political news from nazret.com. Even if it's from the opposition perspective, it helps me see the news and information in Ethiopia. I also see Ethiomedia but I hate it so much. It reflects very extreme view. (Damtew)

Interviewees with less political interest tend to avoid certain media that they see as distributing “false rumours” and will take the bad news or information off of their media menu. Myth and memories of homeland, through which they often recall the good times, made some overlook the realities on the ground and seek to only get updates about the good things, how people's life have been improving or about economic growth. They want to confirm their ideal image about their homeland from the media they use.

I am happy to see news especially good things that Ethiopia has been doing. To be specific, good economic growth or things become affordable. I love to hear when the people are living a good life. (Zebenai)

Ethiopian's news consumption is for different purposes. The interviewee's perspective of good news brings about their aspiration to know about development and social affairs in Ethiopia and to compensate their struggle for social life in Finland. When they read about inflation and the high cost of living, they think about supporting their families at home. Plus, they will utilize the information to help them decide on their whereabouts for the future—either to move to Ethiopia for good or stay in Finland. Likewise, apart from updating oneself on the homeland and making decisions about the future, they also exchange the information offline during

different social occasions in Finland. They keep their memories of the homeland intact while sharing any kind of information with like-minded Ethiopians in Finland. Nevertheless, their sceptical perspective about mainstream and diaspora media forces some to rely on information that they get from people during conversations.

The media didn't provide you with the right picture at least that was the case when I was in Ethiopia. Diaspora writers are subjective as well. What would be the best medium to know news and information about Ethiopia is when you talk to people while living there. Things like....did you hear about this thing....somebody says this and that. Those are perhaps the most authentic news you could ever get. (Esko).

Therefore, as Christiansen (2004) argues, if the media policy and strategy premises on "pluralistic integration", ethnic minority consumption of homeland media should be viewed as natural because they need to supplement their media use (pp.190-191). It also supports the hope and myth of going back to their homeland one day. Thus, the need to have knowledge and information about the homeland is crucial. Entertainment and soft news are their favourite homeland media consumption habits and they stick to diaspora media for politics and other current affairs.

In conclusion, the experience of Ethiopians homeland news intake shows that regardless of the content providers political orientation, legality in Ethiopia and my interviewees' trust in the genuineness of their reporting, they still look to diaspora media for news and information. By the same token, homeland news use takes the lion-share of Ethiopians everyday media use and preferences. This practice partially implies a lack of fair representation in the Finnish media and their Finnish media use. The next sub-chapter will look closely into immigrants' transnational practices and their social and transnational media use. This is in an attempt to understand the dynamics of diaspora and transnational identity and their implications with regards to the unique consciousness as a person living through migrant experiences.

4.4 New country, new community: Ethiopian's transnational and social media use

Facilitated by increased global transportation and telecommunication technologies, more and more migrants have developed strong transnational ties to more than one country, thus blurring the congruence of social and geographic space. The migration experience gives people the chance to blend and transfer their experiences, expertise and money to both countries and societies as they feel multiple loyalties and localities. There are three types of transnational practices, explained in the theoretical framework that Vertovec (1999) outlined. These will help interpret the immigrant transnational practices that are relevant for Ethiopians in Finland.

4.4.1 Diaspora, transnational identity and consciousness

In the experience of migration and immigrant lifestyle, it is common to be part of a social group with people of the same ethnic origin who are assumed to have common identity, history and ties to host country that bring them together under various associations or organizations. This is what Vertovec (1999) call **social morphology**. Ethiopian diaspora, who have been living in Finland for more than 20 years, have established an Ethiopian Community in Finland. It is an organization aimed at bringing Ethiopians together. The interviewees did participate in one or two of the events organized by the community such as the Ethiopian New Year celebration, other national and religious holidays. The events help as a platform to have a good time, share experiences and reminisce about common history and heritage.

The community uses word of mouth, SMS messaging, telephone and brochures for communication. However, many agree that the community is weak in terms of reaching out to Ethiopians in Finland. Likewise, depending on individual religious orientations, Ethiopians in Finland have been meeting either weekly or every other week at different religious congregations that host programs in their native language. There are Ethiopian Orthodox congregations, Evangelical, Muslim and Catholic gatherings in Finland. They use the Internet to communicate and send email reminders about upcoming events. Moreover, a few of the interviewees are part of an Ethio-Finn sport club that takes part in a football tournament organized yearly by the

Ethiopian diaspora in Europe. My interviewees have been participating in such events either as a spectator or representing Ethiopians in Finland. Abebe, one of the interviewees, plays for the Ethio-Finn club. He says, “this year it’s going to be in Italy, Rome and I will attend that”. The Internet is their main mode of communication. The tournament has an official website and Facebook pages where information, pictures and videos of past and present events are available.

In such social events and congregations, Ethiopians share their experiences, introduce their host country culture and society as well as talk about the collective identity and myth about their history and origin. These practices are indicators of a diaspora and transnational identity among Ethiopians in Finland. The platforms bring people of the same origin and the same history, but through different routes together to share their unique position in the world. They identify themselves as Ethiopian when they engage in community related events, and as part of Finnish society while they meet other diasporas in Europe, and through their own identities having passed through the experience of migration and immigrant lifestyle. However, studying their diaspora identity and transnational practices helps us to see how kinship identity has a significant place in the mind and heart of Ethiopians in Finland.

Moreover, immigrants tend to have a new consciousness due to their migration experiences. Vertovec (1999) described such realization **type of consciousness**. Thus, Ethiopians constantly feel here and there, and they identify themselves inside the people—Ethiopian family and friends, and they are indebted to help or support their families and friends in whatever way they can. As scholars agree, regardless of an immigrant’s everyday life in host country and their level of integration into the society, they tend to show strong attachment and profound emphasis for kinship identity (Vertovec, 1999). Thus, they promote transnational ties and transfer values and principles wherever they see it fit, either to the host land or the homeland. Ethiopians in Finland meet other Ethiopians from the homeland and in the diaspora on a weekly basis to greet, share knowledge and information.

I share my gained knowledge from here. For example if people ask me about scholarship and education situations in Finland, and I will share what I know with them. (Esko).

Knowing the host country system and its procedures allows Ethiopians in Finland to offer support for their fellow friends and member of their family who want to travel on the same boat. They share skills and expertise gained from opportunities that are presented or are available in their new homeland or from their transnational experiences. As they are relatively closer to a good technological infrastructure, they are better off in some technology related skills and they have access to high speed internet that encourages them to know more about new inventions and innovation than their counterparts in Ethiopia.

They also transfer money to support their family. Kebede, one of the interviewees, sends money regularly. He said, “this is one of the reasons I came to Finland, to give a better life for myself and my family”. Like Kebede, many contribute to Ethiopia’s foreign exchange in the form of remittance. As studies have shown, a large share of Ethiopia’s economy is generated from aid and remittance. My interviewees contribute to the national economy by supporting a family or more although they do not articulate what they remit and whether or not it is relevant to the economy.

Likewise, some establish companies that promote transnational ties between the two countries and share values and principles. After getting coaching from Finnish technical expertise, Ethiopians were able to establish their own start-up company and solicit funding from Finnish companies that aimed to help start-up companies flourish.

An Ethiopian, a German and I, founded a start-up company that aim to work on transportation sector in Ethiopia. We’re doing preliminary market study and implementation plan” (Kefyalew).

Although they have been facing challenges from their Ethiopian counterparts, they are still working hard to achieve their goal. Thus, the experience of these Ethiopians tells us that they are not only transferring technology but also values and the establishment of a good working relationship between the two countries. Therefore, the findings show that despite their affiliation to both societies, immigrants acquire a unique consciousness that they have gained through their distinct life experience that mingles among diverse cultures and societies. Internet telephone and other VoIP services are the main mode of communication that promotes their transnational ties. They also use social media to reach out to people in the diaspora as well as in the homeland. The next sub-section will focus on the use and implication of various international media and Ethiopians' use of social media every day.

4.4.2 Transnational and social media sphere

The Internet has many different services for Ethiopians in Finland. This leads to the idea of having the Internet dominate my informants' media use and preferences, especially the need to have a television subscription. Thus, their global media use is exclusively on the Internet. BBC and Al Jazeera are among their favourite foreign media as they cater to my interviewees' need for objective and representative news and information. Ethiopians are partial to a critical perspective in their choice of these transnational media and they base their media use on this regard. For those who are interested in African and Middle East affairs, Al Jazeera and BBC are their main source of information.

If you see CNN, they focus on stories about the US and that of US interest countries. It doesn't represent me. It couldn't give me any worldview. But BBC relates to me more, it covers all country stories. Al Jazeera reports stories that you don't find on western media, so I like to see what's in there. (Abebe)

Some are interested in US politics, as they believe that matters related to US economy and politics affect their life directly. For example, Esko says, "we fail because US

economy fails. There's been an economic crisis because of America's economy has been in crisis". Thus, they are interested to see who will challenge Obama in this election and what kind of foreign policy they would have. Thus, Ethiopians who are interested in US affairs use CNN and the Huffington Post regularly. What can be concluded from their media use is the fact that they do not rely on one or two media for their daily intake. They have multiple sources. Ethiopians' consumption of current affairs supports Christiansen's (2004) notion of diaspora media use,, "it appears that ethnic minority's attempt to handle the lack of single news source that covers their varied needs in two ways: they use more time to obtain news, and they choose from several news sources" (p.196). Thus, they do not rely on one source, but many to get their daily dose of global news. However, they strongly believe that the BBC and Al Jazeera are moderately objective and they are inclined to trust these two the most out of all media they use. In order to find global news, my interviewees navigate through these international media official pages or use their official Facebook apps. Media companies have their own apps available on the social media site where users, my interviewee in this case, can add to their list of official pages to visit regularly. If we look at their transnational media use, Ethiopians either watch current affairs from their Facebook apps or navigate to the main pages of the media house.

When we look at Ethiopians' social media activity, Facebook dominates much of my interviewees' social media use. They also use the video and audio based Paltalk to communicate with different groups in the diaspora. Those who think that Facebook evades their privacy choose to use Paltalk group chat where they can make their identity anonymous and express their opinion freely on the issues at hand. However, Facebook is an everyday endeavour for most of my interviewees since it is their main information hub for accessing links to their favourite mainstream media, a place to enjoy status updates for homeland related affairs and a forum for chatting. Most expressed their desire to be online whenever they are free. Likewise, Facebook caters to my informants' need to connect to and interact with global people, an online society where various

information and knowledge is constantly shared and exchanged among groups or individuals.

I have friends who live in different parts of the world. Facebook is one means to find them. Plus, there are also different communities on Facebook, for example Android community, windows development community and more. They have important things to share. I can say I use Facebook for multiple purposes. (Abebe)

As Bernal (2006) noted “The internet might be the quintessential diasporic medium because it builds up on, reinforces and extends social networks” (p.168). Internet use dominates my interviewees’ everyday life and even if they are not looking for specific news, status updates and news feeds that appear on their Facebook timeline remind them to check interesting events, new innovations or news right away. Ethiopians’ use of transnational media shows their hunger for and interest in being informed about news in the global arena.

Their transnational media use depicts two extreme views, some refrain from watching global news as it “always” reports catastrophe or disaster, for others it is an everyday endeavour to fulfil their hunger for global news that affects their life directly or indirectly. Social media has been catering to their need to maintain contact with close friends and the virtual community where they can exchange knowledge and information as well as entertain themselves. The next sub-chapter will look at the international and homeland media discourse on Ethiopian affairs and how the interviewees view the discourse and whether it has an effect on their everyday media use.

4.5 Media discourse on Ethiopia

Interviewees were asked about the media discourse on Ethiopia and its effect on their diaspora identity. The recent drought that affected Sub-Sahara Africa was used as a case point. Ethiopia has been dealing with poverty and drought related issues over the years. Since its major drought incident in 1984, international media have been portraying Ethiopia as a nation of hunger and conflict, often referred as a “drought stricken”

country. Whether the news about Ethiopia is totally related to the drought or not, it is evident that the discourse on Ethiopia never refrains from using such terms. This has a big impact on Ethiopians' trust and use of international media because they grew up hearing and learning that they are a citizen of a great nation of culture and history, and the cradle of mankind. Therefore, the locals consider the "drought stricken" portrayal as wishful thinking motivated by the political agendas of the international community and media, more or less a distorted image that the international media give for the country.

This perspective towards the international media portrayal is evident when I discuss the recent drought that effected Sub-Saharan Africa and my interviewees' media use during that time. The news about the recent drought was received with a negative perspective and Ethiopians were hesitant to solicit support to send to drought stricken region. Most of my interviewees came to an understanding that the international media portrayal of the drought is exaggerated and that things are actually not that bad in Ethiopia.

I think the media is very negative. Of course it's hard to have 6 million in hunger out of 80 million; still the media portray it as if everyone is going to die. (Abebe)

What strengthens their perspective is local media coverage of the drought. Government owned and private media in Ethiopia has covered the story so that it is received positively, thus making sure that public trust is maintained to keep the country's peace and order. As such, those who have accessed information through the local media do not actually know or feel the drought or hope the government handled it well. As Damtew, one of the interviewees, believes, had the local media portrayed it as an urgent problem, people would have responded differently and Ethiopians in Finland would have been no different.

The media portrayed it as if the government controlled the drought and the people thought ...ok so they solve it. They depict the incident positively to make them calm down. So people don't talk about it as an agenda any place you go. (Damtew).

Therefore, such misconceptions and international media distrust prevented Ethiopians in Finland from feeling the urgency that would have compelled them to contribute their part in an effort to alleviate the suffering of the people that are affected by the recent crisis. Moreover, some hold a firm belief that the drought is caused due to governance problems and it that these problems should be addressed first, as doing something now will not guarantee future occurrences.

In times of crisis in the homeland, diaspora enthusiastically reach out to each other and financially support the people in their country of origin. Many diaspora studies suggest that the social capital is stronger in times of crisis than in non-crisis times (Procopio & Procopio, 2007, pp. 67-87). Communication, either offline or online, will strengthen and there would be smooth and fast flow of information among people of the same origin. The Ethiopian diaspora in particular, organize fund-raising events, charity fairs and send money back home to the people who need urgent support. Whenever an Ethiopian is in trouble (either financially or socially) abroad, Ethiopian activists will voice their concern on social media and solicit support for that person or group. Thus, it was encouraging to find out how Ethiopians in Finland have responded to the recent drought.

We're saying why don't we organize a fund-raising event in Finland but we did not put our words in to action. We even try to book a place, but we stop it there. I think there was no one who was ready to take the responsibility. (Abebe)

Responsibility does not seem to be the reason for not organizing a fund-raising event. The interviewees do not believe in sending support even if they consider the drought an urgent problem that desires their attention. The interviewees are sceptical that their solicited support might not reach the intended people in the homeland. They base their scepticism on a BBC report that claims funding for the drought that occurred in 1984 in Ethiopia was used to buy weapons. The discourse on abusing aid money for war purposes was also highlighted in other international media. This has a profound effect on my interviewees' loyalty to the homeland and affects their

diaspora identity—where people of the same origin are known to communicate passionately and support each other in crisis time. The findings give a contradicting account. In crisis time, Ethiopians seem to rely on local media for truthful and authentic accounts of the event. Similarly, they show a certain cynicism to the international media for aggravating the situation. However, international media discourses on Ethiopia that has been going on for decades intercepts with their diaspora identity and creates a dilemma on their perspective and understanding about the drought situation in their homeland.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study has explored the media use of Ethiopians in Finland. While studying their media use, this study discovers new things about the reality of Ethiopians' everyday life in Finland, their sense of belongingness and identity, and the role of media in these regards. The strength of this study is the use of diaspora and transnational identity to interpret immigrant's everyday life, which is instrumental to explore their multiple consciousness, multi-locality and their dual loyalty to both societies. This study will have a significant academic contribution to the study of migration, media and identity as well as for policy framework that would like to understand the everyday life of immigrant in the host society.

There are two aspects that I think limit the exploration potential of the research questions. First, a semi-structured interview method gives a detailed account of the information. However, future studies would benefit from an additional methodology such as ethnography to take the research inquiry to the next level and improve the understanding of this social situation. Second, it would also be beneficial if this and future qualitative inquiry considers different social groups such as refugees, permanent resident, expatriates, students and first and second generation Ethiopian immigrants. This way, it would help to study a social situation where results can be examined and used across different population groups.

Here, I would like to discuss the findings of this study from two prominent aspects. These aspects are media use and integration and diaspora political communication.

5.1 Media use and integration

Much of the scholarship on migrants emphasises the need to accommodate diversity and fair representation in the media as ways to avoid societal division or boundary. One of the strong findings of this study is the link between media use and social integration. The study participants articulate their Finnish media use and preferences in relation to their readiness to be part of the new society and to seek recognition of their existence. The negative images that the media broadcast, often associate

immigrants, in this case the black community, with criminal behaviour and this has been affecting their social life in Finland.

There can be no doubt that the media have a very important impact on attitudes among the population with regard to migrants. Obviously, the news media report more often on things that go wrong than on things that go well. Consequently, and related to immigration, emphasising the 'bad news' tends to reinforce prejudice and to hamper integration. (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003, p.30)

The result of this study shows that Ethiopians tend to lead a very secluded life and that their interaction with Finnish society is minimal. The interviewees connect their minimal interaction to the negative images and prejudices that they have met every day, either handling everyday business or while seeking professional employment in Finnish firms. This finding agrees with Hall's (2000) study that examines the relationship between media representation and the politics of inner exclusion. It strengthens Egharevba's (2004) findings about the challenges African immigrants face getting professional employment in Finland. The question of inclusiveness and fair representation in the media should be addressed because it has a huge contribution to immigrants' reduced participation in society and the challenges that they face with regards to social integration. However, it is difficult to find a good balance between fair representations and indigenous concerns about immigrants (Entzinger & Biezeveld, p.30).

However, it is important to be mindful that recognition of immigrants (or lack of it) that this study participant's pointed out, not only affect integration but also disturb peaceful co-existence. Current happenings in Europe indicate that there is a rise of xenophobia and racism in these countries. In contemporary Europe, we have also been witnessing the emergence of political parties with a clear anti-immigration agenda. The participant of this study pointed out their concern for the future of immigrants under such situation. Such realities are a true challenge of multiculturalism and the inevitability of diversity that we are seeing in societies and

cultures in the present day. The scope of this study, which is mainly focused on media use, limits the extent of the knowledge that could be gained from everyday life of immigrants and their challenges with regards to social integration. However, future study can explore whether these social and political situations such as xenophobia and anti-immigration have any relation with immigrant media representation. What are their impacts in countries such as Finland where multiculturalism is arguably a new phenomenon?

5.2 Diaspora political communication

One of the objectives of this study is to find out if the everyday lives of Ethiopians in Finland exhibit a diaspora identity and how they articulate this identity through the media. The findings confirm the existence of a strong diaspora identity. This corresponds with Skjerdal (2011) and Lyons' (2004) analysis of Ethiopian diaspora. They argue that Ethiopian diaspora are influential and active in homeland economic and political affairs. As discussed in the previous chapter, the interviewee's economic participation is mainly in the form of remittance. Here, I would like to focus on their political participation.

Ethiopians majority of their Internet use is for information and news about homeland. Ethiopians' digital presence facilitates and indicates their need for civic engagement such as their participation in political chat-rooms like Paltalk and other forums on the Internet. Norris (2004) argues that "the use of the Internet by groups and social movements is often believed to exemplify digital politics"(p.14) and these practices are indicators of political communication.

Political communications has therefore always been central to the electoral and policymaking process but in the last decade certain important structural developments have fundamentally altered this process, particularly postwar trends in the mass media moving from the traditional world of newspapers, radio and television broadcasting towards the Internet (Norris, 2004, p.3)

Norris argues that the Internet has a huge potential for knowledge sharing and transferability of information that fosters development and democracy in societies. She said, “..many hope that recent developments, especially the spread of new information and communication technologies, will serve to undermine authoritarian regimes, creating a ‘dictators’ dilemma’ in countries like Burma, China and Cuba.” (Norris, 2004, p.15). Most of the diaspora websites and news portals that my interviewees use challenge the status quo in Ethiopia. This reflects a desire to change the system with democratic and participatory politics. It is true that the Internet allows for such possibilities that benefit societies, but the fact that access to diaspora media are banned in Ethiopia limit their impact to just the diaspora community, which have little power to challenge the situation or set an agenda in Ethiopia.

This finding in no way invalidates previous findings that accentuate diaspora significance and influential power to nation building and democracy. This nonetheless implies, in less democratic societies diaspora activism exists virtually and their impact to nation state is problematic. However, Ethiopian diaspora political communication using a diaspora media source is one dimension that could benefit from future research to better articulate immigrant’s media use, identity and diaspora consciousness.

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Annex 1 Interview Guide

1. General information

Can I have your full name please?

How old are you?

Which country do you come from?

Where do you live in Finland? Are you permanently residing in Finland?

Why do you come to Finland?

How long has it been since you moved to Finland?

What is your educational background?

Are you a student? If so, what are you majoring?

Are you currently employed? What is your occupation?

Are you a Finnish citizen?

Are you married?

-which country is your spouse from?

Do you have any children?

Do you have any other relatives in Finland?

How many languages do you speak?

How good is your Finnish?

Do you use Finnish at home/work/schools/social gatherings?

Do you belong to any religion? What?

2. Media access

Do you have Television at home?

Do you have a cable or satellite connection?

Which channels do you have access to at home?

Do you have any TV channel from Ethiopia?

Do you have any international channels?

Do you have Radio? Does it have a shortwave band?

Do you have digital Radio?

Do you use the Internet?

-Do you have connection at home? If not, where do you use the Internet?

Do you read newspapers?

Do you read any Finnish newspapers? Which?

Do you get any newspapers from Ethiopia? How?

Do you read any international newspapers? Which?

3. Media use

3.1 Television

How many hours do you spend watching Television on a daily basis?

When do you usually watch?

Where do you usually watch?

Which channels do you have access to?

What kind of Finnish programs interest you? (News, TV series, talk shows, soap operas, reality shows, music, movies)? Which? How often (for each genre)?

Do you watch other international TV programs? (News, TV series, talk shows, soap operas, reality shows, music, movies) which? How often (for each genre)?

3.2 Radio

Which Radio stations do you usually listen to? Finnish? Ethiopian? International?

How many hours do you spend listening Radio on a daily basis?

Which Radio programs do you usually listen to?

What types of programs interest you from Finnish stations?

Do you listen to other international stations? Which? What kind of programs (genre)?

3.3 Newspaper

How often do you read newspapers? Finnish? Ethiopian? International?

Which paper do you read the most?

Did you read newspapers when you were in Ethiopia? Which one?

3.4 Internet

Do you usually use the Internet?

How much time (on a daily basis) do you spend on the Internet?

What is your favorite activity on the Internet?

4. Multiculturalism, media use and identity

Do you have Finnish friends? How did you become friends?

How do you denote a typical Finnish culture and society?

Do you consider that you have become one?

According to you, are there are major differences between ethnic Finns and Ethiopians? Explain?

How well do you think you know about Finnish culture, society, and politics? Give examples

How do you learn about these things?

Are you familiar with the political frameworks that aim to assist immigrants?

How do you learn about these things?

Have you been part of any organizations, student union, political parties, trade unions etc?

Which?

What are your roles in these organizations? What do you aim to get out of?

Do you feel a part of the Finnish society?

Do you intend to live in Finland forever? Why?

Do you anticipate being back to your homeland for good? Why?

How do you learn about that Finnish culture and society?

Do you think one can learn a lot about Finnish culture and society from watching or listening to Finnish TV, Radio, or any Internet activity ranging from social media to blogs?

Do you think you have learnt much about the Finnish culture and society through TV, Radio, the Internet, friends, etc?

Do you think ethnic Finns know a lot about people from Ethiopia?

Do you think they get to learn about them through what is in the media?

What do you think about the way immigrants are presented in the Finnish media? Can you give examples?

Do you think this affects their views about immigrants like you?

How do you feel these different media have affected your life here in Finland?

5. Media use and decoding

Which TV program (in general) do you watch most?

Which ones are your most favored?

What do you enjoy about the programs?

Which Finnish TV programs do you watch most? Why?

What are your favorite Finnish TV programs (if any)?

What do you like about these programs?

What don't you like about the programs on Finnish TV?

Do you find Finnish TV programs to meet your tastes? Why?

Do you consider watching Finnish Television helps you to learn something about the Finnish culture, society and the people?

Do you think Finns can learn something about people of Ethiopian origin (immigrants in general) from watching Finnish Television?

What is your attitude about the way immigrants are portrayed on Finnish Television?

Do you feel immigrants' media portrayal have any impact on your user experience? in what ways?

Do you feel the media portrayal have any impact on your everyday life in Finland? How?

What do you often do on the Internet?

Name some of the websites you visit regularly

Do you surf Ethiopian focused websites? Which? Why?

Do you surf Finnish focused websites? Which? Why?

What do you like about these websites?

Do you consider yourself as an active user on these sites?

What is your favorite Internet activity? Why?

Of all the media that have mentioned in this interview, which do you think are the most important to you? Why?

6. Transnational Practices

Are you interested in happenings in Ethiopia?

What are you most interested in?

Do you follow the news from Ethiopia?

How do you access this news? (TV, newspaper, magazine, Internet, telephone, friends, etc.)

Do you feel you have enough news from Ethiopia?

What is the most useful media to keeping in touch with happenings in Ethiopia? Why?

How do you use the media information?

Are you in contact with people in Ethiopia? Who? How often?

How do you measure your involvement in Ethiopia in terms of economic and political participation?

Do you support your family or relatives in Ethiopia? How?

Are you in contact with Ethiopians in the diaspora? Who? How often?

Through what means do you keep in touch?

Are you part of any organization that brings together Ethiopians living in Finland?
Which? Why?

If yes, what kind of role do you have in this organization?

7. Crisis communication

Have you heard about the recent draught that has been affecting Ethiopia recently? How do you know about the draught?

What have you done to contribute, if at all? And why?

Was there any event organized in Finland to support the draught victims in Ethiopia?
Were you part of the event? Why?

Is there any question I didn't ask that you would like me to know? Please?

Thank you so much for your participation in the study. If interested, I would let you know the findings.

Annex. 1 Informant profiling

1. Kebede

- Age 27, Male
- Lives in Espoo, Finland
- Move to Finland on August 2008
- Citizenship. Ethiopian
- Marital status. Single
- Reason for coming: to study Bachelor's degree in EVTEK
- Education and Work background. Have Bachelor's degree from Haramaya University
- In Ethiopia. Used to work as instructor for local college.
- Career in Finland. Cleaner and advertisement delivery
- Language. English, Amharic (Ethiopian official language) and basic Finnish
- Finnish language skills, basic
- Religion. Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido
- Relatives in Finland, No

2. Esko

- Age 29, Male
- Lives in Kilo, Espoo
- Citizenship, Ethiopian
- Moves to Finland on January 2006
- Marital status, Married to Ethiopian girl
- Reason for Moving to Finland, to study Bachelor's degree at EVTEK,
- Education background, Started Bachelors at Mekele University in Ethiopia and interrupted at 2nd year to pursue education in Finland

- Career in Finland. Software developer
- Language skills, English, Amharic. French, Finnish and Tigrigna (Ethiopian language), basic
- Religion. Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido
- Relatives in Finland, 1

3. Akalu

- Age 29, Male
- Lives in Räsätilä, Helsinki
- Citizenship, Ethiopian
- Moves to Finland on August 2007
- Marital status, Single
- Reason for Moving, to study Bachelor's degree at EVTEK in Electronics Engineering
- Education background in Ethiopia, Have Diploma in Physics, then interrupt his studies in Computer science after learning for seven months to pursue education in Finland.
- Career in Finland. Cleaning
- Language skills. Amharic (Ethiopian official language), English and basic Finnish
- Religion. Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido
- Relatives in Finland, has no relative in Finland

4. Damtew

- Age 31 , Male
- Lives in Espoo, Finland
- Citizenship, Ethiopian
- Move to Finland on September 2008
- Marital Status, Married to Ethiopian woman

- Reason for Moving, to study Bachelor's degree at Rovaniemi polytechnic University in Information Technology field. The, quit that and he started learning Master's degree at Aalto University School of bioinformatics.
- Current education status, a PhD candidate on bio-informatics course at Aalto University.
- Education background in Ethiopia, has Bachelor's degree at Addis Ababa University in information systems. The, he start Master's degree program in Computer Science and interrupted his studies to pursue education in Finland
- Career background in Ethiopia, College instructor for 2 years and half after completing his bachelor degree.
- Career in Finland. Research Assistant as part of the Phd program and works as a part time cleaner.
- Relatives in Finland. has one relative.
- Language Skills. Amharic, English and Somali.
- Finnish language skills. Basic.
- Religion. Atheist.

5. Abebe

- Age 31
- Citizenship, Ethiopian
- Currently living in Otaniemi, Finland
- Reason for moving. To pursue Master's degree program in Communication Engineering at Aalto University.
- Marital status. Single
- Careers in Ethiopia. Worked for Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation at different capacities.
- Careers in Finland. Student
- Language skills, English and Amharic
- Finnish language skills. Basic

- Relatives. No relatives.
- Religion. Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido

6. Bubu

- Age 28, Male
- Citizenship, Ethiopian
- Currently living in Tampere
- Reason for coming to Finland, to study Bachelor degree at EVTEK. Later on, started Master's program in Space Science at Helsinki University.
- Education background in Ethiopia, has Bachelor degree in Physics from Dehub University.
- Marital Status, Single.
- Career in Ethiopia, teacher
- Career in Finland. Cleaner, dishwasher on part time basis
- Language skills. Amharic and English fluently.
- Finnish language use. Basic
- Relatives in Finland. has no relatives
- Religion. Orthodox Tewahido.

7. Zebenai

- Age 25, Female
- Citizenship, Ethiopian
- Currently living in Kemi, Finland
- Martial Status, Single
- Reason for moving to Finland, to pursue Bachelor's degree in Business Information Technology at Kemi-Tornio Polytechnic.
- Education background in Ethiopia, has Degree in Marketing Management in Ethiopia
- Career in Finland. Cleaner during summer.

- Relatives in Finland, has no relatives.
- Language Skills, Amharic and English.
- Finnish language skills. beyond basic. Able to understand and communicate
- Religion. Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido

8. Melaku

- Age 31, Male
- Citizenship, Ethiopian
- Comes to Finland in August 2007
- Currently lives in kaukatie, Espoo
- Reason for moving to Finland. To pursue education.
- Education background in Ethiopia. Has Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Bahirdar University.
- Career in Ethiopia. I have been working in different capacities.
- Career in Finland. Early morning delivery at Itella Posti
- Marital status, married to Ethiopian woman.
- Language skills. Amharic and English fluent.
- Finnish language skills. I have basic skills. (at the time of writing this paper, he is studying comprehensive Finnish language full time given by kaupunki...municipality.)
- Religion. Protestant Christian

9. Azalech

- Age 31, Female
- Citizenship, Ethiopian
- Used to live in Jyväskylä for three years. Moves to Vantaa, few months ago.
- Reason for moving to Finland. to pursue education at Jyväskylä Polytechnic in International Business in a bachelor's degree program.
- Education background in Ethiopia. Diploma in Management. I started learning my Bachelor's degree in the same field but interrupted my education and move to Finland.

- Career in Finland. secretary and assistance at Palestine Embassy
- Marital status. Single
- Language skills. English and Amharic.
- Finnish language- Basic knowledge of Finnish.
- Relative in Finland. I have a sister
- Religion. Christian

10.Kefyalew

- Age, 29
- Citizenship, Ethiopian
- Lives in Espoo, Finland
- Reason for moving, studies Communication Engineering on Master's degree program at Aalto University department on. Currently a doctoral candidate at Aalto University
- Education background in Ethiopia. Has a Bachelor degree in Electrical Engineering. Career in Finland. Research scientist. Used to work as early morning delivery at Itella Posti.
- Marital status, married to Ethiopian Woman.
- Language skills. English and Amharic fluent speaker.
- Finnish language skills, has no command of Finnish language.
- Relative in Finland. Has a sister living in another city.
- Religion. Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo