Norwegian University of Life Sciences

The role of Social media in youth activism: A case study of Oromo youth associations

Zubeida Haji Hassan

Master of Science in Global Development studies

The Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Noragric, is the international gateway for the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU). Established in 1986, Noragric´ contribution to International Development lies in the interface between research, education (Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes) and assignments. The Noragric Master´s thesis are the final thesis submitted by the students in order to fulfil the. requirements under the Noragric Masters programmes "International Environmental Studies" "International Development Studies" and " International Relations». The findings in this do not necessarily reflect the views of Noragric. Extracts from this publication may only be reproduced after prior consultation with the author and on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation contact Noragric.

Noragric

Department of International Environment and Development Studies

The Faculty of Landscape and Society

P.O. BOX 5003

N-1432 Ås

Norway

Tel.: +47 67 23 00 00

Internet: https://www.nmbu.no/fakultet/landsam/institutt/noragric

Declaration

I, Zubeida Haji Hassan, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not previously been submitted to any other university for award or any type of academic degree.

Signature: Zubeida Haji Hassan….

Date : . 16.05.2022….

Abstract

In the last decade, activists have increasingly used social media platforms to participate in social and political change efforts. This phenomenon also referred to as *social media activism,* has raised interest in how digital platforms affect the traditional landscape of activism. This thesis explores the subject of *social media activism* through a case study of four Oromo youth associations (OYA) in the diaspora and their activities following the death of Oromo singer and activist Hachalu Hundessa. By using concepts from social movement studies, literature review on social media activism, and the Honeycomb framework, the thesis explores: how social media activism relates to offline activism, how social media platforms are used in activism and the online resources used to operate on activist initiatives. Ten qualitative interviews were conducted to further explore how activism exists between the digital and physical realms. Findings show that the OYAs use social media activism to supplement a broader set of offline initiatives. While social media is recognized as an efficient tool to create awareness, communicate with others, and mobilize to action, the participants believe it prerequisites offline efforts to make a change. It is used to bring about visibility, recruit people, share strategies, provide important information ahead of protests, share grievances and build relationships. Findings also show that activists have a wide range of resources online to operate on their initiatives. For the OYAs, the seven blocks of Honeycomb Framework: identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationship, reputation, and groups appear as relevant social media strategies.

Keywords: Activism, youth activism, offline activism, online activism, social media activism, Honeycomb Framework,

Acknowledgements:

Table of contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

In the last decade, activists have increasingly used social media platforms to participate in efforts for social and political change. This phenomenon, also known as *social media activism*, has increased with platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube and is now one of the main methods used to push for social and political change (Bugini, 2018). In research on social movements, social media activism is linked to ways of organizing a protest, creating communities online over specific issues, and efforts to strengthen collective identities (Alonso & Oiarzabal, 2018). One group harnessing social media platforms in this way is the Oromo youth diaspora from Ethiopia.

In Ethiopia, as in many other countries, students and youth are well known for driving social and political change - in 1974 overthrowing the monarchy regime, fighting the military regime in 1991 , and protesting unjust power balances within the government between 2014-2018. The totality of these struggles galvanized Oromos in the diaspora to establish associations like the Union of Oromo students in Europe (UOSE) and Union of Oromo Students in North America (UOSNA) to support actions for change in their homeland (Jalata, 2011). In recent years, Oromo Youth Associations (OYA) have continued the legacy abroad. Situated in cities like Oslo, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Kansas, the OYAs have employed social media platforms to support struggles for justice in their homeland and create awareness about the circumstances of the Oromo people in Ethiopia (Madebo, 2020). On June 29th, 2020, popular Oromo activist and singer, Hachalu Hundessa, was killed in Ethiopia's capital Addis Abeba. After the murder of Hachalu Hundessa, the OYAs used social media platforms vehemently to organize protests, address issues of oppression and marginalization of the Oromo people in Ethiopia.

In academia, the rise of social media activism implies rethinking on how activism works. As stated by Martha Ayers & McCaughey (2005) "forwarding an online petition to your email recipient list is far from sitting in at Woolworths lunch counter or chaining oneself to an old tree". Thus, raising the question if online activist efforts work, furthermore, their relationship to traditional, offline, methods. Accordingly, studies on social media activism have coined categories such as: slacktivism, paradigm shift, and facilitating to explore the role of social media activism in traditional forms of activism (Allsop, 2016).

These studies are situated in what is called the "*intersect between social context, political purpose, and technological possibility*" (Cammaerts, 2015). Nonetheless, what is possible is said to be ever-changing due to technological innovations and the ways activists are appropriating social media resources to suit their needs and purposes (Cammaerts,2015). Assessing interventions social media activism makes in *current* acts of activism is, therefore, a vital task that improves understanding of the tangible effects of this phenomenon. With their harness of social media platforms after the death of Hachalu Hundessa, the OYAs show tendencies that are relevant to this demand. This thesis will explore the topic of social media activism by looking at a case study of the OYAs activism following Hachalu Hundessa's death. By using concepts from social movement studies, literature review on social media activism, and the Honeycomb Framework, the thesis raises the following questions:

How does social media relate to offline activism in the case of the OYA?

This question aims to understand how social media activism relates to offline activism for the OYAs. More specifically, it will explore the relevancy of slacktivism, paradigm shift, and facilitating arguments from previous research (Allsop, 2016), and discuss whether the OYAs online initiatives supplement, replace, or facilitate offline initiatives.

How does OYA use social media in its activism?

There are several ways activists use social media platforms to operate on their cases. But more than often, these initiatives tend to revolve around acts to spread awareness, call for action, demand justice, and voice concerns. This is verified in McCaughey and Ayers (2013) three modes of social media activism where they are categorized as: awareness and advocacy, organization/mobilization, and action/reaction. By using the three modes, this question will explore how social media activism appears in the case of the OYAs. From this, it will discuss how and if social media activism is used for awareness and advocacy, organization, and mobilization and or action/reaction.

What are the resource pools used by OYA online?

The last question will explicate the social media resources the OYAs employ to carry out their initiatives. The Honeycomb framework will be used as a springboard to explain the dominant characteristics of social media platforms and how this can be used to form and operate on activist initiatives. The honeycomb framework has become a popular framework used by scholars to study social media adoption (Ngai, Spencer & Moon, 2015), and consists of seven

blocks that that explain the make-up social media platforms. These are, identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationship, reputation, and groups (Kietzmann, Leyland & McCarthy, 2012). This question will explore if the OYAs use some, none, or all the blocks in their activism.

Thesis outline

The thesis organizes into six chapters. Following the introduction, the second chapter will present the conceptual and theoretical framework. The second chapter divides into two parts: the first part will introduce the core concepts of this study, namely *youth activism*, and *social media activism*. It will include various definitions of the youth-age brackets and characteristics of social media activism and present the descriptions this thesis will espouse. The second part of this chapter will offer the theoretical framework, the *Honeycomb framework*, and explain how it applies in social media activism. The third chapter consists of a literature review on social media activism and central debates in this field, splitting into slacktivism, paradigm shift, and facilitating. The fourth chapter will present the methodology used to collect and analyze the data. It will also illuminate rationales behind the choice of method, how the research organizes, and discuss the limitations of the thesis. Chapter five will focus on describing the Oromo Youth Associations (OYA) by providing a historical background to Oromo movements. Chapter six dedicates to the findings and discussion of this study. This part will focus on answering the research questions by connecting the conclusions of the data collection to the theory, concept, and literature review chapter, where applicable. The final chapter will recap the conclusions and discussions.

Chapter 2

Conceptual and theoretical framework

This chapter will present the core concepts of the study, namely youth activism, and social media activism. It will include various definitions of the youth-age bracket and give the descriptions as espoused in this thesis. It will also present *youth activism* as understood in social movement studies before introducing the term *social media,* its characteristics, and a list of the most popular social media platforms globally. The second part will present theory frameworks. According to Bryman (2016), theories enable researchers to connect the phenomena they are studying to the existing body of knowledge in that area. This thesis will employ the Honeycomb framework as a springboard to explain the functionality of social media activism and the resources available online for the OYAs to form and operate on their initiatives.

Youth activism

In explaining the origins of youth activism, Azzopardi (2013) states that youth activism, as a social phenomenon, was defined in the mid-to-late nineteenth century when young people began forming labor strikes in response to their working conditions, wages, and hours. Since then, young people have been at the forefront of almost every revolution bringing a significant change in different world societies. However, the 1960s was depicted as the "golden age" for youth movements with acts such as US civil rights movement, protests and demonstrations against Vietnam War, and collaboration between far-left students and workers in France to protest for progressive, liberal politics (Azzopardi, 2013). While young people's leadership has always been central, the forms of youth activism have changed throughout history according to sociopolitical context, resource availability, and technology. Under its historical development, the concept of youth activism in social movement studies has also changed. To understand contemporary definitions, we will look at what constitutes the terms - *youth* and *activism* separately and present the descriptions this thesis will use.

The English terms youth, adolescent, teenager, kid, and young person are interchanged, often meaning the same thing but differently defined. The United Nations (UN) defines *youth* broadly as ranging from ages 15 to 24, and the African Union represents youth as ranging between ages 15 and 35. In contrast, many sub-Saharan countries apply their definitions ranging between 15 to 30 or 15 to 40 (Filmer, et al. 2014). Similarly, in social movement studies, youth is espoused through an age-segmented perspective that applies *youth* to adolescents, children below the legal age of consent, or children and young adults (Conner & Rosen, 2016). Other definitions

include socioeconomic factors, where *youth* is understood as "those persons in a period of less social, financial, and familial responsibilities and commitments" (Conner & Rosen, 2016). Nonetheless, most definitions vary according to norms, attitudes, and values within cultures and institutions about who characterizes in the youth age group. For practical and contextual reasons, this t h e s i s adopts a definition of *youth* that refers to individuals between the ages of 18-30, and that is in a period of transition – from either school, to work and to exercise independence. I believe this will capsulate the reference group - diaspora Oromo youths, with affiliations and roots from sub-Saharan Africa more precisely.

Equally, many examples can situate under the term activism. The concept of activism was introduced in the mid-70-s and referred to the ability to act, make or change history (Benjamin, 2018). Although dominant definitions still describe it broadly as "action for social change" (Sherrod et al., 2006), others have developed this to "struggles for social justice" (Taft, 2011) or "transformation of civil society" to describe what activists do (Kirshner, 2015). Common to these definitions is activism, understood as acts that challenge undermining structures by seeking to include in decision-making structures and processes those whose voices have been muted (Conner & Rosen, 2016). With this in mind, activists are typically described as challengers to policies and practices to achieve a social goal rather than power themselves (Benjamin, 2018)

In the *changing nature of community activism and infrastructure,* Milligan et al. (2008) touch upon why individuals engage in activism. The authors argue that individuals are motivated to participate in activist behaviors due to a sense or feeling of injustice that derives from personal experiences, upbringing, and events on the local or global scale (Milligan et al. 2008). More explicitly, they stress that if an individual's family or social circle affiliates with activist behaviors, then that individual is more likely to become involved. Milligan et al. (2008) add that the individual experiences an urgent sense of injustice in such cases through interactions within the family or social circle. In *Young People and Political activism,* Norris (2004) echoes this argument by stating that patterns of activist behavior are often acquired during an individual's formative years in the family, school, workplace, and local community. Further, that these habits will, through time, intensify and galvanize individuals to become involved as well. Adding to this, Milligann et al. (2008) argue that triggering events, both local and global, are also a significant catalyst for individuals deciding to participate in activism. Activism as

such come in many forms and varies from face-to-face conversations to peaceful protests to violent attacks. Gene Sharp (1973), one of the world's leading scholars on non-violent activism, divides methods of activism into three main categories that have left their mark on contemporary understanding of activism:

(i) Protests and persuasions such as speeches, slogans, banners, picketing, protests, vigils, singing, marches and teach ins. He argues, to count as activism initiatives require to go beyond conventional behavior. For example, singing in a choir is not activism, but singing as a protest can be.

(ii) Noncooperation such as religious excommunication, disobeying social customs, protest emigration, rent strike, producers boycott, withdrawal from bank deposits, international trade embargo and a wide range of strikes and boycotts

(iii) Intervention including sit-ins, nonviolent occupations, guerilla theater, fasting and setting up alternative economic and political institutions.

Sharp (1973) acknowledges violent methods of activism such as beatings, imprisonment, torture, killing, and bombing. Nonetheless, he argues that these are usually freedom fighters, terrorists, and armed struggles rather than activism. Although Sharp's (1973) definition prevails as the widespread understanding of activism, scholars have in the last decade worked to move away from this definition to broaden how activism is perceived in the literature on social movements. For instance, after analyzing media reports on activism and public protests, social movement scholars Dough McAdam and colleagues (2005) contend that the *activism* narrative is "outdated, too restrictive and has outlived its usefulness". The basis for their argument is that disproportionate attention accorded to the struggles of the 1960s and 70-s (being the backdrop of much of Sharp's work) created a stylized image of movements by focusing on a smaller subset of activities such as demonstrations, strikes, and occupations (McAdam et al., 2005).

Similarly, Grace Yukick (2015) states that while activism can be broadly conceived as "work for social change," social movement studies and scholars typically define it as "public, disruptive action involving collective claims against outsiders". In studying how interfaith associations worked for immigration reform and greater acceptance of immigrants in the US society, Yukick (2015) found some initiatives such as public protests, public vigils, and press

conferences to raise awareness, quickly and generally identifiable as *activism*. However, a substantial number of initiatives were also private and more minor acts with no megaphones, microphones, or police officers' insight, which, according to traditional definitions, would not perceive as *activism* by not being disruptive and loud (Yukich, 2015). The totality of these arguments explicates what is perceived as the most significant constraint on current activism studies, being an expansion of what counts as activism (Brenman & Sanchez, 2014). Given this consideration, this thesis defines *activism* in a broad form as actions to bring about social or political change through the resources of various means. Various means emphasize offline activities, such as protests but also social media resources, as a mode of activism.

Social media

Similarly, scholars have tried to define social media, its genesis, and its characteristics. Providing a single definition that will encompass all the technologies and activities associated with social media platforms is difficult as this will vary by scope, format, topic, audience, or source. Nonetheless, when most scholars and practitioners espouse social media, it usually refers to a set of online activities that have emerged over the past three decades – including blogs, social networking sites, and microblogging (Dailey et al., 2016). As one of the earliest scholars on social media, Shirky (2008) states that "social media and social software are tools that increase our ability to share, co-operate with another, and take collective action all outside the framework of traditional institutions and organizations. Baym and Boyd (2012) add that the novelty of social media is "the scale at which people who never had access to broadcast media are now doing so on an everyday basis with the conscious strategic appropriation of media tools in this process ."Van Dijck (2013) further elaborates that "the very word social associated with media implies that platforms are user entered and facilitate communal activities». The definitions above illustrate the main characteristics of social media platforms: collective action, communication, communities, connecting/networking, cooperation/collaboration, creative making, user-generated content, playing, and sharing (Fuchs, 2014). Kane, Alavi, Labianca and Borgatti (2014) explain what this looks like practically. Social media, they argue, is defined by a digital profile authored by the users, the ability to search content and restrict others from viewing content, means of displaying relational ties, and network transparency that reveals the connections of other users (Kane et al., 2014). There are, in other words, many ways to present social media and its functionalities. But for the sake of specificity, this thesis will frame social media within Kietzmann et al. (2012) definition with a broad stroke in that social media "employs a mobile and web-based technologies to create highly

interactive platforms through which individuals and communities can share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content". The thesis espouses Kietzmann et al. (2012) definition as I perceive that their description incorporates and summarize the definitions mentioned above under one caption.

The most popular social media sites list includes Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Facebook – is the latest in a long line of what is known as "social networking sites." By April 2022, the size of active monthly users was estimated at 2.85 billion (Facebook, 2022). Facebook was established in 2004 and allowed users who sign-up for free profiles to connect with friends, work colleagues, or people they do not know online. A user profile on Facebook usually contains a name, pictures, and personal information. Connections are made with others through a "friendship" request /invitation that the other person must accept. Users can decide the level of privacy of their profile by choosing to display personal information to friends, close friends, or everyone. User profiles can also contain text, pictures, and videos. It is also possible to establish a Facebook group, a place for group communication that lets people share their common interests and express their opinions. Groups on Facebook let people come together around a common cause, issue, or activity to organize, express objectives, discuss issues, post photos, and share content.

Twitter – is another popular social networking site with 330 million monthly active users (Twitter, 2022). Twitter is a free micro-blogging network that allows registered members to broadcast short 140-character posts called tweets. Users that register on Twitter can read and post tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. Unlike Facebook, where members need to approve social connections as "friends," the default settings for Twitter are public, where anyone can follow anyone on public Twitter. Twitter members can broadcast tweets and follow other users' tweets using platforms and devices. Members can hashtag a keyword in their post to weave tweets into conversations thread or connect them to a broader topic. The hashtag expresses as #. Similarly, members can find every message containing that topic by searching for a given hashtag. A significant source of storage and communication is the platform YouTube.

YouTube – is the world's biggest video-sharing website where registered users can upload and share videos with anyone able to access the site. YouTube has more than 2 billion active users (YouTube, 2022). Videos posted on YouTube can also be shared on other websites or platforms.

The slogan of the YouTube website is "Broadcast Yourself," which implies that the YouTube service was primarily designed for ordinary people who want to publish videos they have created. However, several companies and organizations also use YouTube to promote their business.

Before the internet and communication technologies, activist organizations and groups utilized coffee shops, group meetings, and social hubs to disseminate information to their members (Emmanuel, 2019). With the advent of the internet, the communication procedures for activists have been drastically transformed. The emergence of Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube and their usage by the masses have become crucial in our everyday lives so that activists, citizens, governments, and non-government organizations have become active users of its channels (Emmanuel, 2019). Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, combined with the rise of smartphones and the development of instant text message services such as WhatsApp[1], enabled users to reach a much larger audience than traditional media, which mainly employs radio, television, and print media such as newspapers would allow (Miller et al. 2016). Though conventional media channels support information dissemination, it takes longer to reach the mass than when such information is shared on social media (Benjamin, 2018). The interactive features and widespread media adoption enable users to disseminate information and rally support quickly. Elaborating on this, Lomborg (2011) uses three characteristics to describe how social media has altered the landscape of information and communication:

❖ compared to traditional media, the internet and mobile phone allow for symmetrical communicative relations between the individuals interacting and permit its users to communicate directly with each other without the need for a third-party agent like newspapers, radio, or televisions

❖ social media and the internet, generate a de-institutionalized/de-professionalized space, by giving the average citizen and media professionals the ability to produce and distribute content

❖ Texts published on social media are continuously revised and can therefore change as different users elaborate or re-interpret them.

---

[1] Launched in 2009, WhatsApp is a free messaging app that lets users make video and voice calls, send text messages and more with just a Wifi-connnection (Dove, Udavavant & Mehra, 2022).

The wide range of social media platforms is why social media has substituted much of the traditional methods of mobilization for activist groups and is being used by most movements that have taken place in recent times (Benjamin, 2018).

Social media demographics

The youth is reckoned as some of the most avid users of social media platforms which is why activism on social media is also said to vary by age. In their research on online activism, Auxier and McClainn (2020) found that more than one-half (58%) of social media users in the 18 to 29 age groups took steps to advance or support cases on social media compared to just 36% in the 30-49 group, 26% in 50-64 and just 20% in the 65+ age groups (Auxier & McClainn, 2020). Although the youth is not committed to one single social media platform, Facebook appears as the dominant network for this generation. *The 2021 social media demographic* study by Khoros (2021) found that the leading social media app among 18-39-year-olds are Facebook (86%), Instagram (67%), Twitter (38%), and WhatsApp (24%). On YouTube demographic showed 81% amongst 15-25 -year-olds and 71% amongst the 26-35 group (Khoros, 2021). By being the biggest group of social media users, social media platforms have become a platform for the youth to engage in socio-political debates and activities, thus creating the phenomenon that we refer to as social media activism.

Social media activism

Social media activism often goes under broad terms such as *"cyberactivism"* or "*media activism,"* which depicts activism that utilizes media, internet, and communication technologies to communicate and organize traditional actions as a direct form of activism (Benjamin, 2018). Social media activism covers a broad range of activities, but often, its activities revolve around sharing hashtags to changing profile pictures to recruit like-minded individuals and encourage others to act. In the last decades, a new generation of activists has used social media platforms to support and sustain movements worldwide. In 2011, activists across Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and other Middle Eastern countries involved in the Arab Spring uprising used social media platforms, particularly Twitter, to spread awareness about their protests (Khiry, 2020). The activists created large grassroots movements that ignited the disintegration of unjust regimes in Tunisia and Egypt. Videos of demonstrations and speeches posted on YouTube received millions of views, and studies have shown that the week before the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak, tweets referencing the movement grew from 2,300 to 230,000 a day (Khiry, 2020). Another example of social media activism is the Black Lives

Matter movement. In 2013, an international network of organizers and activists launched the hashtag BlackLivesMatter's on Twitter following the acquittal of the police officer who killed a black teen, Trayvon Martin. The hashtag helped the birth of the movement witnessed today as the Black Lives Matter, which has, with more killings of black people such as Mike Brown, Sandra Bland, and Eric Garner, evolved beyond any organization (Khiry, 2020). The BlackLivesMatter hashtag signified the movement and became a tool for the activist to amplify marginalized voices (Freelon et al., 2016).

Another case of social media use in activism and demonstrations is the Norwegian Rose March to commemorate victims of the 22 July attacks in Norway. In this case, Norwegian citizens created Facebook events and groups to organize the Rose Marches. These online groups had a particular influence on mobilizing younger and lower socioeconomic participants (Enjolras, Steen-Johnsen and Wollebaek, 2012). More recent examples, such as the "Me too "movement on awareness of sexual harassment, stand as sustained efforts during this time to bring attention to a cause using social media platforms (Pew Research Center, 2018). The movement's commonality is reliance upon social media to spread awareness, mobilize and educate about the injustices (Dailey et al. 2016). The cases also demonstrate how social media affords people to share and participate in activities that might previously be inaccessible to them. Furthermore, it shows that social media helps social movement networks through organization, mobilization, validation, and the enlargement of reach (Emmanuel, 2019). Research on social media activism prompts different explanations for how these initiatives work. McCaughey and Ayers (2013) argue that there are three ways through which social media activism occurs:

awareness and advocacy, organization/mobilization and action/reaction. Organizing groups can be easier by using social media platforms as individuals may already have signed up to receive information through the awareness phase. Mobilization, however, can occur in three different ways: (1) to call for offline activities such as rallying a public demonstration by posting details online; (2) to call for an action that normally happens offline but can be done online like emailing state/local representatives; and (3) to call for an online activity that can only be carried out online such as spamming campaign (Mcaughey & Ayers, 2013).

The action/reaction phase can include "hacktivism," where activists employ computer-based techniques such as hacking as a form of civil disobedience to promote a political agenda or social change. For example, the international activist and hacktivist group *Anonymous* is widely known for promoting political ideas and issues often related to free speech, human rights, or

freedom of information movements (Dookhoo, 2015). In 2011, during the Arab Spring, Anonymous hacked the Egyptian government websites to shut down until President Hosni Mubarak stepped down (Trend Micro, 2015).

The Honeycomb framework

In defining the characteristics of social media, Kietzmann et al. (2012) developed the *honeycomb framework* with seven segments that explain the makeup of social media. These are identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationship, reputation, and groups. Kietzmann et al. (2012) use the seven blocks to explain social media by how social media platforms focus on some or all these blocks to share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. The blocks can be used individually or together and are not mutually exclusive, nor do they all have to be present (Kietzmann et al., 2012). The honeycomb framework has become a popular framework used by scholars to study social media adoption (Ngai, Spencer & Moon 2015), and Effing and Spil (2016) state that the framework serves as a functional basis for examining the various functions of social media. While the framework was initially created to understand social media from a digital marketing perspective (Kietzmann et al., 2012), it has also been used in research on the youth's political participation on social media, proving to be fruitful in studying the implications of online platforms in activism (Irwansyah, 2012). The honeycomb framework will explain the functionality of social media in activism and the resources available online to form and operate activist initiatives.

Figure 1. The Honeycomb framework of social media (Kietzmann et al., 2012).

Identity

Identity, as the first and core block of the framework, focuses on the extent to which users reveal their identities in a social media setting or, convergingly, the degree to which sites allow or require identities to be shared (Kietzmann et al., 2012). These identities can be personal information such as name, age, gender, profession, and location. But it can also be associated with more personal information that reveals to users through conscious or unconscious "self-disclosure" of personal data (Kietzmann et al., 2012). The framework shows that users, through a "virtual representation," share thoughts, feelings, likes, and dislikes to be understood as the person they desire or believe themselves to be online (Kietzmann et al., 2012). Identities online can be expressed through texts, visual materials, likes, shares, and links to other sites. Facebook, for instance, depends heavily on identity as it would not be feasible to identify and connect with friends if they do not use their names. The same is also said to be valid for activists. Activist associations form their connections based on shared collective identity - described as the "shared definition of a group which derives from a member's common interest, experiences and solidarity" (Taylor & Whittier, 1992) – or broadly as the sense of "we-ness" that binds activists together.

In talking about activist identity, Horowitz (2017) states that activist identity occurs when an individual recognizes that they belong to a larger category of individuals through a process of distinguishing who belongs to "us and "them." Moreover, he argues that this social identity is politicized so that belonging to the group entails adopting grievances and working for the group's goals of change (Horowitz, 2017). This notion of collective identity also pertains to activist identification on social media (Davis et al., 2019). For example, through social media platforms, individuals can form a personal network with like-minded people by sharing information about themselves in a network, community, or group. Social media can also facilitate activist identities through participation patterns such as liking, commenting, and sharing, which also says something about their personal or collective identity. Through these processes, activists form personal and emotional attachments to the collective identity (Davis et al., 2019)

Conversations

As the second block in the honeycomb framework, conversation represents connecting, talking, and confronting other users on a social media platform. In essence, social media platforms build for conversations, but their fast-track communication style has shifted conversations from face-to-face instances to through the-screen ones, enabling us to expand the number of people we can interact with. On social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, user conversations engrain trust, similar tastes, and viewpoints (Kietzmann et al., 2012). In activism, Van Dijck & Poell (2015) state that the power of social media to amplify voices and spread information, i.e., conversations, is "intricately intertwined with activist mobilization, communication processes, and alternative reporting practices." For example, during the Arab Spring, Facebook pages and groups created spaces where individuals shared stories and information about actions on the ground. The dissemination of information by sharing local self-generated news translated into mass and international media bringing the issues and events into the global discussion, resulting in international pressure against the regimes (Aday et al. 2012). The example of Arab Spring demonstrates that social media allows activists, under the right circumstances, to disseminate information, mobilize people, and directly communicate with the large public - making them less dependent on television and mainstream newspapers to influence public communication audiences (Tufekci, 2013). The communications are, as such, shared with wide-ranging actors.

Sharing

The sharing block emphasizes how individuals exchange, distribute, and receive information and content online (Kietzmann et al., 2012). Sharing is a way of interaction that may lead to a conversation, engagement, or relationship, and social media has become a place to share all types of knowledge -from news articles to popular restaurants (Wise, 2016). Content on social media is broadly categorized into *User-Generated Content* (UGC), and proprietary generated content (Malgieri, 2016). User-generated content includes images, videos, text, and audio that users on online platforms have posted, whereas proprietary is brand messages or advertising by companies and giant corporations (Malgieri, 2016). Although most social media platforms center around user-generated content such as individuals' posts, photos, and videos, they also heavily incorporate proprietary content such as commercials on Facebook, movie trailers, and music videos on YouTube (Malgieri,2016). Content can, in other words, come in different forms according to various interests or aims. Commenting on sharing patterns, Kietzmann et al. (2012) state that it embeds in linkages between people, such as favorite movies, similar cars, leisure activities, and identities and values. For activists, sharing is an opportunity to plug into a like-

minded online community and recruit and mobilize individuals for collective action. For example, by posting or sharing a slogan, picture, videos, or details about an issue and distributing that info in the network through the sharing function, other individuals may be exposed to information even if they did not actively seek it (Park & Chon, 2019). Studies have found that individuals that are present and involved in online political groups can receive information unattainable in other places and thus acquire opportunities to engage in activism (Valenzuela, 2013).

Presence

The presence block revolves around availability and knowing where other social media users are in the virtual world and real-world (Kietzmann et al., 2012). On social media platforms, this can be controlled by status choices like "available," "hidden," or "idle." Facebook, for example, has buttons users can click if they are online and are available – or if they do not wish and are open to communicating with others. The Honeycomb framework states that presence on social media generally connects with the desire to share with others in real-time (Kietzmann et al., 2012). Presence can thus be fostered through live chats on Facebook messenger or WhatsApp application. Researching digital activism among Lebanese social movement organizations, Melki & Mallat (2014) found that a strong online presence increased the credibility of organizations and that it indicates they are serious. Furthermore, they add that online presence generates visible results for activists' initiatives. By being active in real-time, activists could increase the number of volunteers and form stronger relationships among its members (Melki & Mallat, 2014).

Relationships

The relationship block in the honeycomb framework addresses how individuals relate to each other (Kietzmann et al., 2012). When talking of "relate," the framework defines it as two or more users who have some form of relationship that leads them to converse, share objects, meet up, or list each other as friends, followers, or fans (Kietzman et al., 2012). The framework address two main qualities of relationships: structure and flow. Structure refers to how many connections they have and their position within their network of relationships. Flow describes the strength of a relationship, where strong relationships are long-lasting and affect-laden and weak ones are infrequent and distant (Kietzmann et al., 2012). In discussing the role of social media in producing a connection between activists participating in protests, Nien (2017) state that social media can create "weak ties" that draw together activists who come together for a

common cause. On the other hand, Hwang & Kim (2015) contend that online relationships contribute to both weak and strong ties – and that both of them have positive impacts on intentions to participate in activism. In talking of activist relationships online, Barassi (2015) adds that connections activists build online have enormous value for them. Moreover, she explains that thanks to their digital social relationships, activists can spread their message and mobilize and organize action in fast and effective ways (Barassi, 2015).

Reputation

The reputation block represents whether users know the social standing of others including themselves in a social media setting (Kietzmann et al., 2012). In defining the concept of reputation on social media, Kietzmann et al., (2012) state that reputation is a "tool to predict behavior based on past actions and characteristics". Furthermore, they state that these predictions are largely shaped by mass experiences distributed through conversations, coverage in the popular press. In social media context, reputation refers not only to people and audience, but also an individual's content, and how often it is liked or shared (Wise,2016). For example, number of friends, comments, views, likes, positive votes can all be potential factors to say something about a user's social standing within a community. Reputation as such can potentially steer the choices and actions of individuals and society in many ways. Reputation is in other words important in everyday life and is also said to influence the course and outcomes of activist's groups.

Writing on activist reputation and media, Rohlinger (2015) argues that reputation has many strategic benefits for activist groups and organizations. She makes her case by referring to traditional media outlets and how reputation affects the trajectory of a movement. Here, an activist group with a strong reputation will have more tools at its services and more opportunities to get media attention which aids them in shaping news coverage on an issue (Rohlinger, 2015). On the contrary, an activist group with a weak reputation has fewer opportunities to get media coverage on their use. According to Rohlinger (2015) an activist group with weak reputation may be inclined to settle for "mainstream media scraps" who may not display the movement in the best light. Reputation also affects how activist organizations employ social media platforms. Activists with a strong reputation are said to utilize social media platforms to connect with their followers much more than groups with weak reputations which largely use social media to pitch their case, campaigns, and organization to new audiences

(Rohlinger, 2015). Lastly, groups are about the ability to form communities or sub-communities on a social media platform.

Groups

The feature of forming groups is present in most, if not all, social media platforms. It can be groups espoused by a user to organize its contacts like lists on Twitter or groups created with several users' active participation. Facebook and Google+ circles, for instance, offer several options to make the latter type, setting them to be open to everyone, closed (requiring approval), or secret (invite only) (Kietzmann et al., 2012). Individuals are said to form groups primarily around interests and values on social media platforms rather than gender-age characteristics (Sokolov et al., 2018). For this reason, groups on social media platforms are often very active communities that hold conversations on specific topics. In his study on political Facebook groups, Jose Marichal (2013) examined 250 activist groups from 32 countries to explain why and how activist organizations create online groups. His findings show that activists make political groups to (a) raise awareness about a political issue and (b) to take part in the meaning-making process about their identities, roles, and responsibilities via those they encounter by revealing their position or opposition to something or someone (Jose Marichal, 2013). Concerning raising awareness, Marichal (2013) found that the groups often asked users to sign petitions or that they would direct individuals to a second website for more information on their cause. On meaning-making processes, Marichal (2013) states that individuals would show elements that spoke of their social statuses, manners, and religious or nationalistic persuasions concerning meaning-making processes. He thus argues that group formations on social media platforms enable activists to spread political messages but to reflect more deeply on themselves as conscious, active, and engaged beings (Marichal, 2013)

Chapter 3

This chapter will give a contextual background on social media activism and the dominating debates in this field. The chapter will predominately focus on conceptualizing how social media activism relates to offline activism by looking at the three categories: *slacktivism, paradigm shift*, and *facilitating,* mainly as presented by Allsop (2016) and other studies. Thus, it sets the premise for exploring the first research question: "*how does social media activism relate to offline activism for the OYAs?".* The chapter will cover elements such as the role of commitment, risks, effort, time, and social ties in activism and link this to the different perspectives on social media activism. The chapter will summarize by addressing the need for more research and the efforts of this thesis to contribute to this quest.

Social media activism – a literature review

During the last decades, several studies have emerged to explore the role of social media platforms in activism. The debates of this field explore whether social media activism: (a) performs simple measures without any active engagement or effort, (b) supplements existing traditional forms of activism; (c) unlocks a new domain of distinct virtual political behavior separated from traditional forms of activism (Allsop,2016). Furthermore, it discusses whether social media is an effective political and social engagement form compared to traditional, offline, activism. This debate is broadly categorized into three arguments: *slacktivism, paradigm* shift, and *facilitating* (Allsop (2016)*,* which we will discuss in turn.

Slacktivism

Slacktivism, as the perhaps most well-known argument, has been defined as "feel-good online activism with little meaningful social or political impact" (Morozov 2009) and "political participation that lacks a strong commitment by the participants" (Vargas 2013). The concept of slacktivism encompasses acts such as clicking "like" or "retweet," signing online petitions, sharing videos, and changing profile pictures to explicate support for a cause without any further engagement (Dookhoo, 2015). By combining the words "slacker" and "activism," slacktivism suggests that online actions that require relatively little time or commitment from individuals produce little political impact (Allsop, 2016). While slacktivism acknowledges that it is easier to create awareness on social media platforms, it contends that these online connections are inclined to take actions that do not require much from them thus screening out significant grassroots efforts such as protests (Dookhoo, 2015). Slacktivism, therefore, occurs

when individuals perceive that they have already made a difference in supporting a cause online without any further participation. Similarly, research has demonstrated how social media platforms permit individuals to support a cause by liking or sharing without any other action. Lacetera, Macis, and Mele (2016) found that an online campaign that involved almost 6.5 million online users in the form of "likes" or "shares" only produced 30 donations (Lacetera, Macis & Mele, 2016).

Others, such as Gladwell & Shirky (2010), subscribe to the slacktivist paradigm and take it further, stating that social media has no role in mobilizing individuals for social movements. They argue that activism was present before social media saw daylight. Additionally, that these movements employed their activities successfully without any online presence (Gladwell & Shirky, 2010). In his strong critique of social media activism, *"Small change – why the revolution will not be tweeted,"* Gladwell (2010) further elaborates on this argument. In making his point, he uses the civil rights movements of the 60s and describes the strong presence of strong ties (commitment) and high risk amongst the participants as essential elements in activism. He compares these elements of the strong relations and increased risk to social media activism, which he says only fosters weak ties; furthermore, weak ties connections rarely lead to high-risk activism and thus do not have the dedication and structure to take on an established power structure (Gladwell, 2010). Through such arguments, slacktivism stress that social media activism is inadequate for reaching political goals compared to traditional activism (Vargas, 2013).

Paradigm shift

Paradigm shifts go against slacktivism and describe social media activism as empowering individuals and communities in new ways (Allsop, 2016). The underlining thought of the paradigm shift is that social media is changing political behavior and challenging existing power structures in a revolutionary way (Allsop,2016). Lievrouw (2011) suggests that *"by blurring the once firm line between mass media and personal communication,"* social media empowers individuals to engage in socio-political conversations easier and thus creates a platform for ordinary voices to become more public than before. Accessibility as such can be understood as the most significant advantage of social media activism. There can be many barriers and dangers associated with traditional activities such as in-person mobilizing and protesting. Social media provides those who, for various reasons, cannot physically participate a way through which they can engage in activism. McCafferty (2011) echoes this and adds that

social media provides a modern platform for individuals to engage in activism as they can easily reach their social connections and make them aware of issues. It mainly applies to the youth as their age bracket is among the heaviest social media users (see ch.2), making online platforms one of the easiest ways to reach their connections (Auxier & McClainn, 2020). By these arguments, the paradigm shift presents social media activism as an entirely new sphere that fundamentally changes how people communicate, interact, and engage with one another (Ganious and Wagner, 2014). However, research shows that only a small percentage of individuals who express interest online are committed to offline action; for this reason, many within the paradigm shift perceive social media as the "first step in a ladder of engagement" (Bijan, 2015) that require facilitation.

Facilitating paradigm

The facilitating paradigm can be understood as an intermediate between slacktivism and paradigm shift. What exists in the literature on this standpoint defines social media activism as complementary to other forms of activism rather than a new or separate type of activism (Allsop, 2016). As one of the earliest scholars of social media activism, Shirky (2011) echoes the facilitating argument and states that the arrival of social media and the internet has not changed the reality of activism. Further, that it has only modified the terrain of activism, enabling individuals and activist groups to work on a new and various set of rules (Shirky, 2011). Similarly, in his study on the Arab Spring, Gerbaudo (2012) emphasizes this point by stating that social media is merely an independent activity (as suggested by paradigm shift) as much as it is used as a part of a broader set of political activities, i.e., offline activities. Several studies have raised the facilitating qualities of social media platforms in activism in a similar manner. Lievrouw (2011) found that online actions such as joining a group on Facebook or sharing articles lower participation thresholds, making political mobilization easier and more accessible. Similarly, Abdullah's (2011) research on the Arab Spring uprisings in 2011 proved that social media facilitated offline movements. In this, Tunisian protesters organized on social media platforms before taking to the streets to participate in demonstrations and sit-ins to demand political changes. Other studies have illustrated how social media helps organize and facilitate offline initiatives. In his research on Chilean activists using social media, Valenzuela (2013) found that social media users were frequently eleven times more likely to attend protests, suggesting that social media is not so much creating new forms of protests but amplifying traditional forms of protests. A study by Tufekci and Wilson (2012) of participants

of Egypt's Tahrir Square protests also found that social media use significantly increased the probability that an individual attended the rally on the first day.

Beyond the three paradigms, literature regarding the role of social media usage on activism focus on factors such as motivation, collective identity, and norms of reciprocity. Kristofferson et al. (2014) contend that whether social media activities led to more concrete action or not depends on the individual motivation. They found that if the engagement was spurred by individuals' motives to be viewed as a conscious and politically active person, it was unlikely to ignite offline action such as protests. Contrastingly, being motivated by a desire to be consistent with personal values was more likely to produce offline engagement. By using norms of reciprocity, Valenzuela, Park & Kee (2009) also suggests that if individuals act toward a cause for another individual, that individual is likely to support them in the same way. Their study found that social trust and Facebook may have such reciprocal relationships that can lead to collective action. For example, if an individual signed a petition on equal rights that one of their social connections posted on Facebook, that media connection will likely return the favor and support a cause the individual brought to their attention.

However, a controversy in the literature on social media activism is based on what Gerbaudo (2012) defines as "essentialist views of social media and political activism, rather than concrete empirical evidence." In the book *Tweets and the Streets – social media and contemporary activism*, he argues that research on social media and activism essentially presents indefinite statements about the impacts social media has on behavior (as understood within the three paradigms above) without reasoning for how and why this might be (Gerbaudo, 2012). A call for more nuance is also expressed in "Towards *cyberactivism 2.0*?" by Sandoval- Almazan & Gil- Garcia (2014). Drawing upon previous research on the Arab Spring protests and "outraged" in Spain, they argued that much literature focuses on how social media manages information, organize protests, and facilitate engagement without presenting their actual impact on social movements and why this might be. The totality of these arguments is said to have left unanswered questions within the field, such as if social media changes the way protests organize and creates a new kind of activism and its actual impact on activism. According to Gerbaudo (2012), conclusions on these questions can only be made by assessing social media interventions in specific acts of activism. Based on the above, this study will investigate the nexus between social media and activism to link and contribute to what is already known within the area of social media activism.

Chapter 4

Methodology

This chapter will present the methods used for data collection, including the data collection process, criteria for sample unit, sample size, analysis technique, ethical considerations, and limitations. This study employed a qualitative methodology through interviews to explore the research objectives. Qualitative methods allow data to be collected in the forms of words and statements in contrast to quantitative methods, which focus on numbers and quantities (Bryman, 2016). Furthermore, qualitative methods emphasize the researcher's understanding or interpretation of the information that comes to the fore by examining meaning frameworks, motives, social processes, or contexts that all have the commonality that they cannot or should not be quantified (Tjora, 2012).

This study intends to explore the OYAs as the subject of social media activism, emphasizing the resource pools they use online and how this relates to offline activism. In this regard, qualitative methods will facilitate capturing the various nuances, patterns, and latent elements of their experiences and, in turn, the phenomena of social media activism (Bryman, 2016). It is, however, recognized that the qualitative method is not the only technique that could be used to address the objectives. The study could have employed a quantitative approach and used a survey targeting a larger sample size (Bryman, 2016). While facts and numbers generated by quantitative research would be helpful, this study aims to understand the "whys and hows" behind numbers which would be difficult to gain from a closed question survey. Furthermore, I believe that youth activism as a social phenomenon that often encompasses values, thoughts, personal stories, and identities is not best to approach with numbers or statistics. Thus, conducting a qualitative method seems to be a better choice concerning the research questions.

Case study approach

As a part of the qualitative methodology, the thesis adopts a case study approach to begin the research process. Lune and Berg (2012) define a case study as a "method involving systematically gathering enough information about a particular person, setting, event or group to permit the researcher to understand how the subjects operate or function effectively". By providing background information on the emergence of Oromo youth activism in Ethiopia and the diaspora, the case study technique facilitates an important backdrop on the OYA and why

they organize and operate through social media activism. Case studies are often adopted for post-fact studies (after events) rather than ongoing issues or questions (Bryman, 2016). It is also the case for this study, as its focus is on how OYAs social media activism in somewhat recent but *past events* to voice issues of political and social concerns in their homeland.

Data collection method

In qualitative methods, data collection is characterized as an intersection between the "everyday conversation" and "the social science research project" (Tjora, 2012). To capture the realities in the subject of interest, data collection is best conducted under conditions as close as possible to the unit of study (Bryman, 2016), i.e., everyday conversation. This study was employed by conducting ten interviews with members of OYAs in the diaspora, namely from: OYA Oslo, OYA Kansas, OYA Melbourne, and OYA Adelaide. The advantage of employing qualitative interviews lies in the participant's closeness to the research objectives, which gives direct insight into experiences, thoughts, and perceptions relevant to the research questions, concepts, and theory framework (Bryman, 2016).

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured fashion instead of a structured or non-structured way. Berg and Lune (2012) observe that semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to have pre-determined subtopics and questions while allowing the flexibility to direct the course of the interview according to how the conversation develops. For this thesis, topics and sub-topics were written down in an interview guide[2] to ensure that the main themes referencing the research questions, concepts, and theoretical frameworks were covered while changing or adapting questions according to participants' answers (Bryman 2016). The interview guide consists of fifteen questions in total. However, as some overlap, only eleven were in focus, while the remaining five were used as backup questions if needed.

The first question of the interview was a "warmup" question to initiate the conversation, while the remaining ten addressed topics related to the research questions, literature review, concept, and theoretical framework, such as (1) youth activism and the participant's relationship with OYA, (2) perceptions on social media activism and traditional "offline" activism, (3) Social media as a strategy in activism and (4) Social media platforms and online resources with emphasis on the seven blocks: identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationship, reputation, and groups.

---

[2] See appendix 1 for interview guide.

Qualitative interviews typically rely on face-to-face interaction for data collection (Bryman, 2016). This study altered this to digital solutions due to the participant's different geographical locations and timetables. The video-conference service Zoom was employed to replicate the face-to-face interview. Through Zoom, I could see the participants and have a conversation closely resembling face-to-face interaction. Zoom also enabled the interviews to be conducted in real-time though they were situated in different parts of the world. The interviews were conducted between March 25th and April 23rd, 2022, with an approximate duration of 30 min- to 1 hour each. The interviews were conducted in Norwegian for OYA Oslo and English for the remaining associations.

The sample size and the sample unit

A purposive sampling strategy was espoused to recruit participants for the study. Purposive sampling entails that the researcher uses their own judgement to choose participants for the study. In other words, it ensures that those sampled are of relevance to the phenomenon of interest and thus might help elucidate information related to the studied objective (Bryman, 2016). The commencing purposive sampling strategy employed was a criterion sampling approach signifying "sampling all units that meet a particular criterion" (Bryman, 2016). To recruit participants, three criteria were prepared. The first criteria were related to ethnicity and location, entailing that the sample had to be Oromo in the diaspora, namely people who recognize themselves as Oromo and have a residence outside of Ethiopia. The second c r i t e r i a was age, specifical individuals between 18-30. This age bracket reflects a period in life where most people are developing themselves socially, professionally, and economically which can often raise interest in social, economic, and political issues. The age criterion could be expanded to include individuals from the age of 15, which complements other characterizations of the youth age group. However, ethical considerations regarding interviewing underaged individuals guided the criteria to 18-30. The third criterion was the association, stating that the participants had to be members of OYA associations and have participated in at least two online or offline activities.

The sample unit situates in different countries and essentially has an "online office" than physical meeting spaces. For this reason, the sampling process was conducted through Facebook. Accordingly, a request was sent to the private Facebook groups administrated by the different OYAs with a message inviting them to participate in the study posted in all three groups. The same message was also posted in an open Oromo Youth Movement group on

Facebook affiliated with the OYAs. The responses from the Facebook posts and invitations were low, resulting in two feedbacks. For this reason, I had to employ another sampling approach, which was snowball sampling. Snowball sampling can happen in several ways but generally occurs when a group of people recommend potential participants for a study or directly recruit them for the study (Bryman, 2016). Accordingly, a personal message was sent to the listed administrators of the OYAs private Facebook groups in Oslo, Kansas, Adelaide, and Melbourne. The message explained the research objectives, asking if the administrators or others would be interested in participating. After some time, the administrator responded, explaining they had forwarded the message to relevant candidates. Getting feedback and participants who were elidable to participate was somewhat lengthy, but after about three weeks, I was put in contact with two OYA Kansas, three Adelaide, and one from OYA Melbourne. With OYA Oslo, snowball sampling was espoused through my social networks, where I contacted individuals within the Oromo community in Oslo, asking them if they knew, through their networks, participants who meet the elidable criteria. Through this method, four individuals from OYA Oslo volunteered to participate, resulting in ten participants in total.

The sample size

How many participants are enough for a qualitative interview is debated, yet some guiding principles persist when considering the sample size, one being saturation (Bryman, 2016). Saturation refers to when gathering new data does not provide any new insights into the studied phenomenon (Bryman, 2016). This principle can also be controversial as the longer one reflects on the data, one can be inclined to find something new. Similarly, the literature on saturation does not provide a definite answer to what sample size is sufficient for qualitative studies. For ethnography and ethnoscience, 30-50 interviews have been suggested. Phenomenology studies encourage five to 25 or at least six. Others state that all qualitative research should have fifteen as its smallest acceptable sample (Mason, 2010). While these numbers are offered as guidance, the sample size is affected by factors such as the heterogeneity of the study scope, adopted methods, and application (Mason,2010). Therefore, the sample size for this study was determined by the time allotted, resources available, and study objectives, principally landing on 15 participants. However, as explained above, only ten participants were collected through the sampling process. Because of this, the scope is too narrow to generalize about social media activism, a limitation that will be discussed in greater detail below. Nonetheless, it may still present new insights within its limited selection.

Ethical aspects

One of the main ethical principles in social research is to avoid endangering or harming participants (Bryman, 2016). For social movement studies, every stage of a research process can introduce such ethical questions (Blee & Vining, 2010), and this study is no exception. The groups and individuals in this study reflect a population in a place of vulnerability. The group represented have either left their homeland or are children of people who left their land due to civil war, ethnic conflicts, and political persecutions. It can also mean that they likely carry personal affiliations with previous and current circumstances of political turmoil in the homeland. Therefore, it was important that the study reflected upon the risks associated with their participation and did not bring additional harm to their well-being. To ensure this, the thesis followed official ethical standards of research and was registered with the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD).

Furthermore, a written consent declaration was used to safeguard participants' integrity and well-being. The consent form was written according to NSDs [3]guidelines. It included a description of research objectives, who is being approached to participate, how they are selected, the interview procedure, and their role in the interview. Participants were also informed that the data would be stored and made anonymous at the end of the project. The form also stated the voluntary aspect of the study where the decision to withdraw or decline to participate would have no adverse consequence for the participants. The written consent declaration was given before the interviews so questions could be cleared beforehand. In this way, the participants had enough information about the study to decide whether they truly wanted to participate or not (Bryman, 2016). The themes of the interviews mainly focused on the participant's experiences with OYA and social media activism. But some questions connected to their perceptions and political and philosophical beliefs through inquiries related to their understanding and commitment to activism also appeared. This demanded that the data collection had to be handled with caution. Accordingly, the data was stored, analyzed, and processed in a private NMBU office 365 safe storage. The documents were also classified so that no unauthorized person would have access to the data. Lastly, all participants were given the opportunity to have insight to interview summary once concluded.

---

[3] See appendix 2 for consent form.

The second concern regarding ethical considerations is the tensions associated with social activism, which need to be faced with critical reflection (Blee & Vining, 2010). The political situation in Ethiopia made it essential to make choices about what is reported in the thesis and in what terms. The study, therefore, refrains from addressing government policies, human rights issues, and conflict situations. Instead, it focuses on the participant's experiences with activism, the use of social media for activism, and how this relates to traditional activism. Additionally, cover numbers 1-10 were used to safeguard the participants anonymity (Bryman, 2016).

Limitations

As briefly mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there are limitations to this thesis that undoubtedly will have affected the results. The most apparent weakness is the sample size. Getting in touch with informants for the study was more difficult than anticipated. This is because most associations are less active now than when the idea to conduct this study emerged over a year ago. Accordingly, when the invitations to participate in the study were sent, it took (as explained above) time to receive feedback. Once contact was established, several OYA members were optimistic about the idea of participating. However, some who initially said yes did not respond to the follow-up inquiry to schedule an interview date. Others who initially said yes to participating withdrew due to busy schedules. For this reason, the number landed on 10 participants. However, it is worth noting that the study was able to get at least one key person from each association. Yin (2012) points out that insights from key persons in interviews are perceptibly more beneficial as they have broad insight into their communities. The key person's insights were indeed an advantage as they were able to contribute relevant information from an administrative perspective, that is, how the associations conducted their affairs in an orderly fashion.

Another limitation is concerned with the choice of method. In addition to qualitative interviews, the plan was to investigate the OYAs online activities. These included relevant news coverages about the OYAs protests, principally their social media platforms, with relevant posts on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Combining qualitative interviews with online posts would have worked to triangulate the study and safeguarded the findings from being the artifact of one

perspective (Berg and Lune, 2012). However, due to the time limitations of the thesis, this was omitted in favor of finding informants to conduct qualitative interviews, which I believed would provide better insight and, in turn, more knowledge about the topic.

Another limitation that has invariably affected the results is that the interviews were not taped, as most participants declined the offer to record the conversations. By not recording the interviews, the analysis could not do a line-by-line analysis and thus give a *thick description*, which Bryman (2016) suggests gives a more detailed description of the contextual and cultural aspects of the studied phenomena. Transcription of the interviews thus relied on notes and, in cases with specific statements, quotations written into a summary as best as I could from my memory. Nonetheless, this poses the risk that intervals of information may have been missed as it is challenging to write as fast as free-flow speech.

To account for this and process each interview thoroughly, I arranged the interviews with good time apart and took quick field notes after each interview. Moreover, all participants were frequently asked follow-up questions to their answers. This was particularly done in instances where their answers were unclear or derailed from the discussion's main topic. Participants were were also asked to comment on notes and statements that I had taken at the end of the interviews. All interviews were concluded by asking the participants if they had anything they wanted to add or if there was anything I had forgotten that they deemed essential. While recording interviews would improve the accuracy of the data and reveal things not directly spotted during the interviews, I found other methods to help improve accuracies, such as triangulating statements from the interviews with some of the public posts on Facebook pages and groups.

Nonetheless, Bryman (2016) proposes that the most fitting way to enhance credibility is to ensure that the participants feel they have been depicted accurately and precisely. For this reason, the participants were asked if they could be contacted in hindsight to clarify or read through the summaries, to which they agreed. All participants were notified once a tentative summary was ready and thus allowed to add, delete, or change anything they deemed as misrepresentative. However, only three participants gave feedback on the summaries, whereas the rest did not have anything to add or take. This may be because they felt that the summaries were in line with their statements but also because they all had hectic schedules as students and workers with little time to review the summaries properly.

Another weakness worth mentioning is the process of data collection. Looking back at the interviews and interview guide, I realize some of the questions appeared as close- ended questions because of the way they were formulated. That is, leading questions seeking answers that were exclusively connected to the three paradigms, the Honeycomb framework, and three modes of social media activism. This might have influenced the participant's responses by believing that this was the only information the thesis was looking for. While it was principally a part of the plan to have these topics in focus, I now see that it could have been helpful to broaden the horizon, which might give more spontaneous answers from the participants. However, this remains a lesson for me and a suggestion for future research to formulate questions more broadly as to not inadvertently influence participants' answers, which might reveal new areas of social media activism altogether. I have also observed that the thesis's perspective could also be slightly modified. The thesis has many themes, many of which are relevant to understanding the implications of social media activism. However, as I have realized now, while they are essential in themselves, they are not closely related. Thus, the length of some topics such as "youth activism", could have been reduced. This would have given more time to focus on social media activism from a larger perspective, such as an instrument in development-related processes.

The last limitation worth addressing is cultural biases and the interpretation of situations, actions, things, and people from the standards of one's own background and culture (Masterclass staff, 2020). Since it is unfeasible to achieve complete objectivity, Bryman (2016) proposes that the best way to reach this criterion is to be aware of your personal biases. As a young member of the Oromo diaspora, such tendencies may come forth when I conduct the research. My own life is intertwined with some of the cases the OYAs are raising. While I have not participated in OYA or other associations similar to its kind, I do know individuals who support the Oromo cause fervently and have observed the complexities of this life. Me raising lines of the questions, furthermore, the perspective of the study underscores the importance of being critical in the manner in which I select to represent a person, place, or name the phenomenon.

To reduce biases as much as possible, I used investigator triangulation, being when another researcher conducts or goes over the analysis with you, which contributes to greater confidence in findings (Flick, 2002). For this, I discussed the interpretation of the data with two fellow students who were also writing their thesis. The fellow students did not have direct access to the data findings as this would have opposed the guidelines I had already listed

on NSD regarding who would have access to the data. On the other hand, I did discuss some general and "superficial" ideas without mentioning any personal information and asked for their input on the perspectives I was using, such as the decision to leave out government policies, human rights issues, and protracted conflict situations and instead focus on the participant's affiliation with the OYAs, youth activism, and social media activism. Lastly, as the participants were quickly aware of my ethnic background, it is also reasonable to assume that this may have affected some of their answers. Nonetheless, I tried to keep the focus on the topics to the best of my ability so that my being Oromo would not be a hindrance to their statements. This was done by clarifying the purpose of the interview in the first message inviting to participate in the study, in the consent letter and at the beginning of the interviews. Furthermore, by highlighting the centrality of their thoughts, perspectives, and ideas and that there could be no correct or wrong answers to the questions that were asked.

Analysis

This study employed a thematic analysis to investigate the data collection. Essential thinking in thematic research produces accounts of common themes, topics, ideas, and patterns that come up repeatedly across the dataset (Terry et al., 2017). Thematic analysis has a flexible nature and is suitable for analyzing a wide range of data types from "traditional" face-to-face methods such as interviews but also textual data from reports, surveys, diaries, online forums, and other media sources (Terry et al., 2017). The flexibility of its approach was, therefore, the preferred method to illuminate views, opinions, experiences, and knowledge from the datasets of this study. Bryman (2016) states various ways to identify themes in a dataset - which can roughly speak separate into two approaches: *deductive* and *inductive*. The inductive approach allows the data to determine themes, whereas the deductive process involves coming to the data with preconceived themes (Bryman, 2016). This study employs a *deductive* analysis where predetermined themes were applied to the data. A deductive approach was preferred as it facilitated focusing on the research question, concepts, and theoretical framework as outlined in chapter two.

Every interview summary was read through to get a general overview of the data. After this, important topics aligned with the research questions and the conceptual and theoretical framework was listed in a separate document. These ideas and statements could be connected to the first research questions and categorized as *slacktivism, paradigm shift, or facilitating*. Below these categories were statements related to the second research question

concerning how social media platforms can be used in activism. These were categorized as *mobilization, organizations, awareness*, and *calls to action*. The third category focused on the third research question. It sorted the participant's answers into the seven blocks of the Honeycomb framework as *identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationship, reputation,* and *groups*. The data from the interviews were subsequently marked with the topics they touched upon and sorted into these categories as they emerged during the read-through. In this way, each body of data could be examined to identify patterns, themes, and meanings that could be placed to the relevant research objectives. Sorting the data into categories also allowed the study to quickly focus on pertinent data from the findings and discussion chapter.

Chapter 5

What are the historical backgrounds to the Oromo youth movements?

As Berg and Lune (2012) stated, one way to effectively understand how a subject operates is through the *case study* approach and gathering enough information about the topic. Therefore, to understand the OYAs as a subject of social media activism, it is essential to review previous events that led up to their current activities. Accordingly, this chapter will provide a historical background to the Oromo youth movements. It will begin with a brief backdrop of Ethiopia's country profile, including the main ethnic groups, languages, religions and past conflicts and wars. The following parts will emphasize Ethiopia's historical and political background. It will introduce the Ethiopian student movements during the Haile Selassie and Derg period, followed by the emergence of Oromo nationalism and the Oromo student movement. It will also present how these movements developed with associations like the Union of Oromo students in Europe (UOSE) and the Union of Oromos in North America (UONA). Lastly, it will focus on recent uprisings in Ethiopia and the OYAs reaction, which will serve as the backdrop for the subsequent findings and discussion chapter
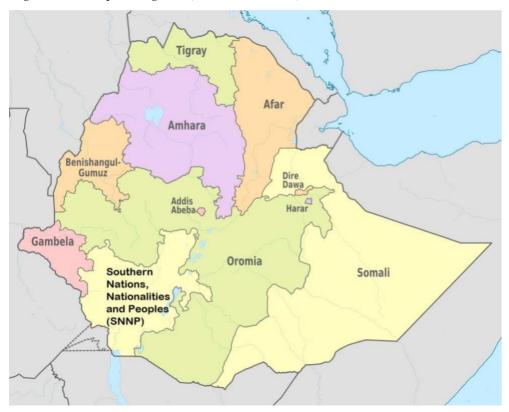
Ethiopia country profile

Ethiopia is a country located in the northeast part of Africa. It is the second-largest country in Africa, holding around 122 million people, over 80 ethnic groups, and multiple languages and religions (Mehretu, 2022). About one-third of Ethiopia's population is the Oromo people, who make up the largest ethnic group in the country with 34.4%. The Amhara is the second largest group with 27%, followed by Somali (6.2%), Tigray (6.1%), Sidama (4%), Gurage (2.5), and Welayta (2.3%), Afar 1.7% and others (World Population Review, 2022). Ethiopia is divided into eleven regionals according to the different ethnicities; Afar region, Amhara Region, Benisghangul-Gumuz, Gambela, Harari, Oromia, Sidama, Somalia, South West, Southern and Tigray and has two administrative bodies that are located in the capital Addis Abeba and the city of Dire Dawa (Mehretu, 2022). Ethiopia is described as one of the first Christian states in the world, and over 60% of those living in the country are Christians (World Population Review,2022). Another third of the population (34%) practices Islam, followed by Judaism, and traditional indigenous beliefs such as Waaqeefanna (World Population Review,2022).

Ethiopia is much celebrated for resisting colonization in the late 19th century and is recognized as one of two African countries that were never colonized (Boddy-Evans 2020). It has, however, suffered through multiple uprisings, ethnic violence, and territorial wars throughout the years. The country's last emperor, Haile Selassie, ruled Ethiopia according to a feudal monarchial system. During this period, students and workers started sympathizing with change, marking the first time his absolute right to rule was questioned (Ahmed, 2006). In 1974, the Derg deposed the emperor, abolished the monarchial rule, and shifted Ethiopia towards socialism, although militarism characterized its rule (Zewde, 2002). During the Derg era, multiple wars and conflicts continued to erupt. In 1977 Ethiopia and Somalia clashed in the *Ogaden war* caused by a territorial dispute over the Ogaden, a region in Eastern Ethiopia that both countries claimed as theirs (Yared, 2016). Another regional conflict with a more extended history continued to develop with neighboring Eritrea. This conflict erupted periodically between 1960 and 1993, halting once Eritrea gained its independence from Ethiopia in 1993, only to resurface once again in 1998- 2000 in the Eritrean-Ethiopian war over disputed border regions (Underwood, 2018). The Derg era also marked the start of the liberation movement for the Oromo people. The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) fronted this struggle to end what they perceived as prejudice against the Oromo people, language, culture, and identity (Jalata, 2002). The following sections will present the unfoldment of the Oromo movement and struggle in more detail.

---

[4] Ethiopia fought and won against Italian forces attempting to colonize the country at the *Battle of Adawa 1896*. The Italians were able to occupy a part of ancient Ethiopia from 1935-36 to 1941, an area that is now the independent country of Eritrea. Nonetheless, Ethiopia is alongside Liberia, generally believed to be the only two African countries to have never been colonized (Boddy-Evans 2020).

Figure 2. Ethiopias regions (Ethiovisit, 2022).

Student movements during Haile Selassie and the Derg periods

The Ethiopian sector for higher education was considered the "base" of the movement that would change the country's trajectory in the 1970s (Zewde, 2014). Before this period, the students, who mounted the action, were not exceptionally organized (Zewde, 2019). Unions were effectively run for them by university administrations, and most thoughts of political protests were stifled by emperor Haile Selassie's authority, combined with the possibility of risking their education, future, and lives in any acts of resistance (Ahmed, 2006). From here, two essential catalysts are said to transform student consciousness from one of relative passivity to active opposition. The first catalyst is the massive expansion of higher education throughout the 1960s and 1970s by the Ethiopian Imperial Regime (EIG) (Ahmed, 2006). At that time, most colleges in Ethiopia were dispersed around the capital Addis Abeba when the emperor integrated them into one university bearing his name, thus transforming the previous University College of Addis Abeba (UCAA) into Haile Selassie University I in 1961 (Ahmed, 2006). The university site enabled students to hold meetings to address national, political, social, and economic issues under the emperor's rule in a way not possible before (Ahmed, 2006).

The university expansion further granted several students scholarships to study in Europe and America under the auspices of EIG (Getahun, 2002). These students were principally from the affluent class, being close affiliates of EIG. Nonetheless, a few who distinguished themselves in academia were also granted the opportunity to go abroad (Getahun, 2002). This takes us to the *second catalyst*; the clandestine currents that emerged by Ethiopian students in the diaspora in the late early 1970s. The students who went abroad were quickly exposed to The New Left[5] in the universities of Europe and North America. Subsequently, they studied figures like Marx, Lenin, and Mao, whose ideologies later became the guiding principle for establishing a Marxist-Leninist Ethiopian organization (Tiruneh, 1990). The freedom and security in the western states enabled the students to develop associations such as the All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement (with the native acronym: MAISON) in 1968 and Ethiopian Liberation Organization (EPLO) in 1973 (Tiruneh, 1990). With associations abroad, the Ethiopian student movement established a base outside the country not as easily controlled as those within its borders (Balsvik, 2009).

The 1974 revolution

In February 1974, a massive uprooting among workers, taxicab drivers, teachers, students, and farmers, galvanized students abroad to return home and participate in demonstrations against the EIG (Tiruneh, 1990). Accordingly, the students started distributing unofficial newspapers to educate the public on Marxist-Leninist ideology (Tiruneh, 1990). The students marked the most visible opposition to the emperor. Ideologically grounded in Marxist-Leninist thought, the students also concocted the ideological direction of the Derg, the military power that managed to seize power in 1974 (Zewde, 2002). Despite instituting several reforms after the revolution, the Derg persisted with the same methods as the IEG, which caused protests to spur (Zewde, 2002). After they had accumulated the revolutionary ideas introduced by the students, the Derg excluded the students and other political parties from power and established a reputation for dealing with any opposition, including labor, student, and peasant protests with fury (Zewde, 2002). As conflicts intensified, the Derg took several measures, including the Key Shibr (Red Terror)[6] where thousands of opponents of their regime were killed, with the youth

---

[5] The *New Left* was a broad political movement in the 1960s and 1970s that consisted of activists in the Western world that campaigned for issues such as civil and political rights, environmentalism, feminism, gay rights, abortion rights, gender roles and drug policy reforms (Carmines & Laymann,1997)

[6] The "Red Terror" campaign took place between 1977-1978 in Ethiopia and depicts the extra-judicial execution, torture, and arbitrary imprisonments by the Derg against its political opponents (Gebisa,2019)

compromising its primary victims (Tiruneh, 1990). Although the Derg monopolized the revolution in its favor, the student movement's impact on changing the political scenery of Ethiopia was profound and consequential. Nevertheless, the movement was described as an elitist one as those with the possibility to go to university at that time. Consequently, other groups emerged to explicate grievances that were left out of the equation. This is the case for the Oromo people (Balsvik,1985).

Oromo movement

In the late 1960s, the rural-urban migration of a few Oromo intellectuals laid the foundation for Oromo nationalism to flourish in Ethiopia (Jalata, 2000). In Oromo nationalist thought, it is argued that the habashas (the Amharas and Tigrayans), allied with the church and Western Imperial powers, came to subdue other ethnic groups, including the Oromos, to serve their exclusive interests of socio-political, cultural, and economic domination (Jalata, 2000). For this reason, the Oromo people understood (and many still understand) their history as one of oppression by and struggle against the oppressive practices of the habasha (Jalata, 2000). The Oromos who migrated to the urban areas in the late 60´s mainly came to seek educational and employment opportunities. However, exposure to higher education created an Oromo intelligentsia keen to develop their aspirations for freedom and equality within the Ethiopian state (Jalata, 2011). For the Oromo students at Haile Selassie I University, the broader Ethiopian student movement rejected their independent Oromo agenda labeling it "narrow nationalist" (Jalata,1995). Consequently, the Oromos created clandestine study circles where they discussed the Oromo struggle and articulated the collective grievances of their people (Jalata, 2001). By the mid-1970s, an underground party was created to further this movement, namely Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). The OLF developed an intellectual, ideological, political, and military struggle with the Derg regime and became the Oromo movement's primary organizational expression (Jalata, 2002). The circulation of underground political pamphlets in the mid-1970s depicts the existence of their activities. Through these mediums, the OLF raised questions about Oromo self-determination, self-sufficiency, and democracy (Jalata, 2002).

Oromo activism in the diaspora

The terrors of the Derg-era (1974-1991) created a large scale of Oromo refugees seeking protection beyond Ethiopia's country borders. More so, limits on political activities within the Ethiopian border placed much of the movement's responsibility onto Oromos in the diaspora (Jalata, 2011). While living outside the boundaries of Ethiopia, the new Oromo diaspora quickly became engaged in building Oromo organizations to continue the struggle for the Oromo cause. In Europe and North America, these organizations came into fruition in 1974 with the creation of the Union of Oromo Students in Europe (UOSE) and Union of Oromo Students in North America (UOSNA) (Jalata, 2011). The organizations functioned according to the political programs and ideas of the OLF and supported their efforts through mediums of political, financial, and diplomatic initiatives (Jalata, 2011). The base of the Oromo diaspora community has been expanding in the past 30 years both in number, diversity, and organizations (Jalata,2011). As more refugees arrived in the West, the Oromo diaspora was transferred from a handful of educated Christian males to a more broadly based representation, including women, children, farmers, traders, Muslims, and generally people of less urbanized and relatively less privileged backgrounds and experience (Jalata, 2011).

Emerging Oromo and International media

The 1990s were described as the decade in which most Oromo people had "awakened" (Jalata,1993). In the diaspora, this manifested in dozens of seminars, workshops, and international conferences by the UOSE and UOSNA on Oromo culture, language, and history (Jalata, 1993). The outcomes of these initiatives were profound and consequential for the Oromo movement in the following decades. A significant result was the launch of the Oromia Media Network (OMN) in 2014. The OMN is a nonprofit news organization headquartered in Minnesota and was created in part by Jawar Mohammed, a central Oromo political analyst, and activist (Atoma, 2020). The OMN is one of two major media outlets that broadcast to Ethiopian audiences, other being Ethiopian Satelite Television (EST) (Adamu, 2020). Through newscasts and social media updates, The OMN plays a vital role in broadcasting information about the Oromo people from an international perspective. The OMN, alongside Jawar Mohammed, was also an influential voice in the 2014-2018 protests and the Qeerroo movement, which will be explained further below (Adamu, 2020).

The Qeerroo movement and Oromo youth associations

The periods after the Derg era were marked by several protests and violent uprisings. As it is beyond the scope of this thesis to cover everything, we will focus on the most recent protests that were also more influenced by the usage of social media platforms.These protests were instigated by the Qeerroo fi Qaarree[7] between 2011-2018 followed by the Hachalu Hundessa riots of 2020.

The Qeerroo fi Qaarree Bilisumma

Influenced by the 2011 Arab Springs and the revolution of the Middle East, the Oromo youth group *"Qeerroo fi Qaarrree Bilisumma"* was established in 2011 (Dibaba, 2020). The movement was a continuum of the ongoing struggle of the Oromo people in claiming an end to their marginalization, further, in demand equality for their people in Ethiopia. After its formation, the group started showing itself in several universities and higher educational institutions in the Oromia region (Dibaba, 2020). Followingly, they released the first manifesto, opened a website, and organized a series of protests that went on and off in the following years (Dibaba, 2020). The protests reached a peak in 2015 when the Addis Ababa Master plan protests began [8] which the group claimed was a blueprint for the government to displace Oromo farmers and increase control in their region (Dibaba, 2020). Besides disapproval of the master plan issues in the protests reflected a generation of people who felt marginalized at the hands of the Ethiopian government (Hugo, 2017). Further issues such as ethnic-based discrimination against the Oromo people were also vehemently expressed during protest (Dibaba, 2020). In acts of resistance, the *Qeerroo fi Qarreee* employed ethnic discourse, university campuses and social media to mobilize people to engage in the movement (Dibaba, 2020).

---

[7] The term Qeerroo/Qarree means "youth" and/or "young unmarried person" and derives from the age segmented Gada system (Oromo traditional democratic system) (Aiga,2020).

[8] Addis Abeba Master Plan (AAMP) was the Ethiopian government's planned expansion of the capital city Addis Ababa into the Oromo region for investment purposes. The Oromos feared the plan would cause expulsion and resettlement of thousands of Oromos farmers, whereas the government insisted the project would benefit the Oromo region by integrating towns and rural districts with utilities, infrastructure, and better market access for the Oromo people. The project was suspended to accommodate the public dissatisfaction (Dibaba,2020).

Social media platforms were particularly described as a significant part of their strategy where individuals who were blogging, using Twitter, Facebook and YouTube were said to pioneer the entire movement (Buongiorno, 2014). *The Qeerroo fi Qaarree* continued protesting in the following years, which eventually called for the overthrow of the government in 2018 (Østebø, 2020). At that instant, Lemma Megersa and Abiy Ahmed came and practiced a more positive attitude toward the *Qeerroo fi Qaarrree* and vowed to "address the legitimate concerns of the youth" (Østebø, 2020). This earned the two significant support among the Oromo protesters, and the *Qeerroo fi Qaarree* became a powerful ally for Abiy Ahmed as he became prime minister in April 2018 (Østebø, 2020). For the *Qeerroo fi Qaarrree* and Oromo people in general, Abiy Ahmed's inauguration were perceived as the "now it's our turn" moment (Østebø, 2020). However, Abiy Ahmed's popularity dissipated due to increased skepticism and unrest in the following periods (Østebø & Tronvoll, 2020). While the *Qeerroo fi Qaarree* took to the streets to protest, the Oromos in the diaspora supported their efforts through social media platforms and satellite television statements (Van der Wolf, 2020). The OMN and platforms like Twitter and Facebook were central to this, which were used to shun Ethiopia's media censorship[9] and organize protests (Adamu, 2020). Describing how the OMN facilitated demonstrations and broadcasted information about the demonstrations, Jawar Mohammed stated in an interview with Al Jazeera (2018). *"People from all corners of the world will snap a picture, record a video and send it to us through WhatsApp or Through Facebook. We take that, we verify it, we edit, and we air it back to them"* (Al Jazeera, 2018).

The Hachalu Hundessa riots

The Hachalu Hundessa riots of 2020 were the last in a long line of protests for the Oromo people. On June 29th, 2020, a famous Oromo singer and activist, Hachalu Hundessa, was killed in Addis Abeba. The death of Hachalu caused widespread grief and anger throughout Ethiopia and in the diaspora (Ayana, 2020). His death was a significant loss for the Oromo people, and particularly the *Qeerroo fi Qaarree*, as he was recognized as the voice of their movement, wherein his music was the soundtrack to much of the protests of 2014- 2018 (Ayana, 2020). Following his death, violent protests broke out in Addis Abeba and Oromia, killing hundreds of people (Ayana, 2020). Several Oromo activists and central political figures were also arrested

---

[9] Ethiopia is considered one of the most restrictive countries globally in terms of internet use. This is attributed to the government's sole control of its telecommunication infrastructure, allowing it to shut off or restrict information flows and access to the internet and mobile phone services (Freedom House, 2018). Throughout 2017 and 2018, the internet was frequently shutdown to curb the protests from organizing and spreading information through online communication (Freedom House, 2018).

in the waves of unrest following his death, one being Jawar Mohammed (Madebo, 2020). Political analysts state that public reaction to the killing of Hachalu shows that he was considered "a strong defender of Oromo rights and Oromo interests" (Bula, 2020). The detail behind his murder remains unsolved; however, widespread speculations imply that his murder was an ethnic and politically motivated (anti-Oromo) assassination (Chala, 2020). This assumption was rooted in an interview Hachalu Hundessa did on June 22nd, roughly one week before his death, where he criticized successive Ethiopian government(s) and spoke out against the marginalization of the Oromo people. Accordingly, the interview was claimed as the triggering catalyst for the murder (Chala, 2020). As the Hachalu Hundessa protests increased, the Ethiopian government implemented a country-wide internet shutdown to curb the situation from further escalation (Feleke, 2020). This positioned Oromos in the diaspora to shape the narrative of the incidence to the international community and report on behalf of the Oromos in Ethiopia.

Central to this for the Oromo youth was the International Oromo Youth Association (IOYA), also known under the over-arching nickname of the *Qeerroo fi Qaarree* (IOYA, 2015). The IOYA functions as an umbrella organization for Oromo youth associations around the world, and branches can be found in cities like Oslo, Manchester, Stockholm, Leipzig, Melbourne, Adelaide, Michigan, and Houston, Minnesota, Dakota, Edmonton, and Seattle (IOYA, 2015). The OYAs keep up with Oromo affairs in Ethiopia through meetings, discussions, and conferences (IOYA, 2015). They also arrange educational, cultural, and social activities for Oromo immigrants seeking to create new lives in their communities after emigrating from Ethiopia (IOYA, 2015). When the word of Hachalu Hundessas death got out, the OYAs mobilized and organized protests in places like North America, the United Kingdom, Germany, Norway, and Sweden to demand a thorough investigation of his murder and the release of Oromo activists and political figures like Jawar Mohammed (Hairsne, 2020). In this, social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube were vehemently used to organize the protests and voice the circumstances of the Oromo people in Ethiopia (Madebo, 2020). The following chapter will be based on OYA Oslo, OYA Kansas, OYA Adelaide, and OYA Melbourne's activism following the death of Hachalu Hundessa.

Chapter 6

Findings and discussion

This chapter will present and discuss the findings according to the research questions. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part will introduce the participants in this study and their thoughts on social media and youth activism, followed by background info on the four associations. The second part will focus on the research questions, namely social media activism compared to traditional activism, how social media is used in activism, and the resource pools used online. The themes which emerged from the data collection will all be discussed in relation to the theory, concept, and literature review chapter, where applicable.

The participants

The participants in this study are numbered from one to ten. These numbers will be used to single out the participants and connect them to the responses they provide without the risk of revealing their identity. Accordingly, when the participants are cited, they will be introduced as "participant," followed by the given number. Before we analyze and discuss the data collection, it will be helpful to familiarize ourselves with the participant's general perspective on social media and youth activism. For this reason, the following part will present the participants, their personal use of social media, why they believe young people engage in activism and how they got involved with OYAs activism.

- Participant 1 is an 18-year-old female high school junior. She is a member of OYA Kansas which was founded in 2020 after the murder of Hachalu Hundessa. She has attended several activities under OYA Kansas's auspices, including protests, social gatherings, petitions, and cultural events.

- Participant 2 is a 30-year-old male bachelor's student. He has attended several activities since OYA Oslo was founded in 2018, but his involvement escalated after Hachalu Hundessa's death in 2020. He has participated in demonstrations, online petitions, sit-ins, hunger strikes, and fundraisers.

- Participant 3 is a 25-year-old male master's student. He is longtime member of OYA Adelaide and has attended protests, fundraisers, campaigns, and petitions.

- Participant 4 is a 29-year-old male working as a teacher. He is a longtime member of OYA Melbourne and has participated in protests, online campaigns, cultural events,

volunteering, and networking initiatives.

- Participant 5 is a 24-year-old female working as a caretaker. She engaged with OYA Oslo after the death of Hachalu Hundessa and has participated in three activities protests, hunger strike and online campaigns.

- Participant 6 is a 20-year-old female on a gap year before university. She is a member of OYA Oslo and has participated in two activities that were protests and online petitions. Both activities were after the murder of Hachalu Hundessa.

- Participant 7 is a 26-year-old female bachelor's student. She is a member of OYA Kansas and has participated in three activities that were protests, online campaigns, and fundraisers.

- Participant 8 is a 23-year-old female master's student. She is a longtime member of OYA Adelaide and has participated in several activities such as protests, fundraisers, cultural events, and online petitions.

- Participant 9 is a 25-year-old working male. He is a member of OYA Oslo and has participated in several activities like protests, sit-ins, online petitions, and fundraisers. All activities posted Hachalu Hundessa's death.

- Participant 10 is a 26-year-old bachelor's student. She is a member of OYA Adelaide and has participated in two activities, both after Hachalu Hundessa's death.

The Associations

OYA Adelaide

This association was established as a social hub for Oromo youth in Adelaide, Australia in 2013. The main agenda was to connect but also educate young Oromos about Oromo culture, history, and language. They arrange gatherings once or twice a month to play Oromo music and engage in creative activities and in-depth conversations about "the Oromo experience" in the diaspora. They also form smaller groups according to the member's preferences, such as dance groups and football groups. Occasionally, they participate in local festivals in Adelaide to portray the Oromo culture and identity to the local community. It was not until prime minister Abiy Ahmeds inauguration in 2018 and Hachalu Hundessa's death in 2020 that OYA Adelaide began focusing more on politics in the homeland and arranged activism-related activities such as protests, fundraisers, and petitions (Participant 3 - key person).

OYA Melbourne

The idea behind OYA Melbourne is to bring Oromo youth together to network, connect and become more "socially aware" of their historical background. It was founded in 2009 and organize various activities every year but places much emphasis on culture by organizing music, dance, and poetry events for its members. For this reason, OYA Melbourne has always organized activities to promote social, political, and economic reforms for the Oromo people in Ethiopia. These initiatives include fundraisers, protests, and video campaigns. This association is the only one that directly identifies itself as the diasporic equivalent of the Qeerroo fi Qaarree in Ethiopia and recognizes the protests between 2014-2018 as a major inspiration to their work. (participant 4)

OYA Kansas

This association is the latest addition to the list of OYAs. It was established in 2020 after the death of Hachalu Hundessa as a place for the youth in Kansas to share and express frustration over issues in the homeland, but also commemorate Hachalu Hundessa as a political symbol for the Oromo people. Following his death, they have arranged protests, fundraisers, and various campaigns on social media (participant1 - key person).

OYA Oslo

This association was created as a social and cultural arena for young Oromos in Oslo. It was established in 2018 and focused on arranging social gatherings, meetings, and cultural events, with the aim of educating the Oromo youth about Oromo culture, tradition, language, and identity. They also arrange fundraisers to support school, education, and health projects for the Oromo people in Ethiopia. In terms of activism, they increased their efforts after the death of Hachalu Hundessa. After this, they arranged protests, sit-ins, and different awareness campaigns on social media (participant 2 - key person).

Social media usage patterns and youth activism motivations

When asked about their personal use of social media, the participants stated that they have profiles on various platforms. Amongst these, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are mostly used, whereas YouTube was somewhat less. All participants state that they use social media daily to communicate with friends, family, and co-workers. But also, to stay updated on various topics and post personal content such as photos, texts, and short videos. When it comes to news and keeping up with current events, the participants prefer traditional media outlets such as newspapers, radio, and television to get daily updates. This is to avoid trolls, fake news, and disinformation which they perceive as big problems within the social media landscape.

As for youth activism, the participants provide different explanations as to why young people might be particularly inclined to push efforts for social and political change. Amongst these, emotions such as frustration, hopelessness, and anger come forth as the principal catalyst that can induce the youth to engage in activism. Participant 6 underlines this and says: *«I think activism comes from a place of helplessness. Especially for the youth with their entire lives ahead of them [...] It's frustrating to see that things are not going the direction they had hoped"*. Her statement goes well with Milligan et al. (2008) argument that feelings of injustice can spur individuals to engage in activism. It also shows that activism can function as a place for individuals to experience emotional release while they engage in actions to improve the circumstances they are opposing. The participant's statement further indicates that the youth, being in a transition to adulthood, can be inclined to engage in activism as they are more alert and concerned about the levels of uncertainty regarding their future.

Beyond feelings, the participant's statements emphasize the "need for belonging" as a potential catalyst for young people to engage in activism. Participant 5 stands by this argument, stating that young people engage in activism mainly to induce change and be included, ergo be a part of a collective. She explains the latter by saying that young people often experience fears of missing out, which can, in turn, can impel them to join specific movements and activities. Elaborating on this, she says that the attention storm surrounding Hachalu Hundessa's death spurred her to partake in certain OYA activities out of an underlying concern that she might be missing opportunities for social interaction and experiences if she refrained from participation: *"The summer Hachalu died, that was the only thing people were talking about, so, I think in a way I was there to support the case but to be where things were at"*. The participant's views echo Milligan et al. (2008) findings on activist participation, stating that if an individual's social

circle engages in activist behaviors, then that individual is apt to become involved as well. Youth activism, in the case of the participant, can thus be understood as a socialization process that her friends reinforced.

Subsequently, the participants were asked about how they became engaged with OYA and their activism. The findings show that participants' upbringing and identity were the principal catalysts for their involvement with OYA. Through early life interactions with family members, the participants explain how they were made aware of the injustices the Oromo people experienced in Ethiopia. Furthermore, how this awareness has been and continues to be a push factor for their commitment to their respective associations. Participant 2 echoed this shared experience amongst the participants with his nuance and said: *"I came to Norway when I was eleven years old, so I've never felt the oppression directly. But my parents have, and I grew up listening to stories about the injustices they experienced [...] It's simply a part of our environment, we have it around us all the time, so it was impossible not to get it in».* His experiences support Milligan et al. (2008) observation by showing that family and social circles substantially impact the probability of engaging in activism. In the case of the participant, the parents were a direct influence on his participation under their stories which were transmitted to him.

Identity is emphasized as another factor that prompts the participant's engagement in OYAs activism. Participant 8 expands on this and says that for her, it was not only social interactions and upbringings but also a personal quest for identity that led her to join the association: *"It started with a kind of identity crisis. I wanted to know more about my background, I guess, so I started getting more Oromo friends, reading books about the history and culture, and it went in an automatic direction from there".* Her statement verifies the concept of activist identity, which according to Horwitz (2017), occurs when an individual recognizes that they belong to a larger group of individuals. It also affirms Horowitz's (2017) statement that these identities are politicized and that belonging to the group entails working for the group's goals of change. The participant confirms this when explaining her "automatic" involvement after the initiation phase of "finding" her Oromo identity.

How does social media relate to offline activism?

This part will discuss how social media activism relates to offline activism for the OYAs. By revisiting the three paradigms that were defined in the literature review chapter, it will examine whether it facilitates, change, or replace traditional activism. These results will be discussed in turn as *facilitating, slacktivism, and paradigm shift.*

Social media activism as facilitating

When asked about the role of social media in OYAs activism, the participants gave similar answers, although expressed with some individual nuances. It is a widely held belief that social media activism best serves to supplement and not replace traditional, offline, activism. While they recognize it as an efficient tool to communicate, organize, create awareness, and mobilize, they believe it prerequisites offline actions to produce physical outcomes and long-term effects. Their response thus goes well with the *facilitating* paradigm and the idea that social media activism is merely a singular activity as much as it is part of a broader set of initiatives (Allsop, 2016). Participant 4 from OYA Melbourne echoes this and explains that social media activism, for them, only represents a fraction of their total work. He emphasizes that their strategy has always been to use social media to create awareness, share messages and discuss ideas which are then used to facilitate physical activities such as public gatherings, meetings, and protests. He underlines how social media activism is used to facilitate offline actions and says: "*We would use Facebook to inform people about protests, where to meet and the roles they would ask to have during the protests [...] it just made easier to plan and organize everything"*. This ease goes well with Shirkys (2008) argument on social media platforms as "tools that increase our ability to share and co-operate with each other". The participant underlines this when mentioning social media's interactive feature and how it enabled them to delegate authority to their protests.

Another shared perception amongst the participants is that social media platforms enable them to coordinate their association more effectively. The idea that social media platforms make it easier to disseminate information and mobilize people is a reoccurring theme amongst the participants. Participant 8 from OYA Adelaide illustrates this and says: *"Most of our members are in different places, people have moved away for work and studies, those who are here have different schedules, so it would be difficult to catch up and reach everyone with the same message, so it just became a natural way to keep the movement going."* Participant 9 from OYA Oslo echoes this but adds that not only do they use social media to organize and coordinate

activities but also to scout for resources, both human and material: "*We would send out a message and say these are the dates we are protesting, we will walk from here to here, and we need two people who can make protests signs, two that can write an appeal and so on.*" The participant's answers verify the common understanding of social media activism: it helps activists' networks through organization, mobilization, communication, and enlargement of reach (Emmanuel, 2019). It also corroborates McCaughey and Ayers (2013) modes of social media activism by showing that social media is used to call for offline such as protests by posting details online.

Social media activism as slacktivism

One of the main critiques iterated against social media activism is that it is a passive and ineffective substitute for traditional activism (Allsop, 2016). While the participants generally do not regard it as such, they do, however, express skepticism towards the idea that social media activism alone can create change. In discussing this, they share insights showing that, in some cases, where all efforts are concentrated on social media platforms, it can lead to *slacktivism*. There are two arguments that characterize the participant's explanations of this. The first argument stresses the short-lived media publicity (in popular culture, this phenomenon is often referred to as *performative activism*[10]) that often molds online phenomena and how this fails to produce long-term commitment amongst people and thus fails to create real-life change. Participant 6 elaborates on this by referring to the Black Lives Matter movement and hashtag BlackLivesMatter in June 2020 following the police killing of George Floyd. She indicates that these acts only receive attention for a short time, when (and if) everyone is posting, only to disappear amongst regular social media content shortly after. Furthermore, this inability to produce long-term engagement makes it incomplete as a tool for change, as people are inclined to take measures only while the topic is trending. She emphasizes the statement and says: *"For two weeks, my feed was full of posts about Black Lives Matter. But shortly after, no one talked about it [...] I think it is important to discuss and share on platforms, but we need actions too"*.

---

[10] *Performative activism* depicts activism that is done to increase one's own social capital rather than devotion to the cause (Lartaud, 2021). It can, in this way, be understood as a form of slacktivism. In many cases, *performative activism* occurs when people support a cause to follow a trend and illuminate that they care even though they may not (Lartaud, 2021). For an insightful explanation of *performative activism*, see the article *Understanding the trend of Performance Activism* by Gabby Lorenzo (2019).

Her statement goes in line with slacktivist thought and the idea that social media activism as such fosters weak ties, which rarely yields physical outcomes compared to traditional forms of activism that produce strong ties (Gladwell, 2010). It also verifies that "long-term" and "commitment" are essential keywords in activism, as further suggested by Gladwell (2010). The principle of these keywords collides with social medias fast-track style by not giving an activist-movement sufficient time to create a prolonged and sustainable impression and engagement. The participant argues that although social media can be applied when discussing and sharing topics, the effort must go beyond this digital realm. Her argument echoes the slacktivism paradigm once again when explaining that social media activism cannot, alone, be successful in bringing about societal change. Further, a hybrid form of activism with traditional roots is the right way to go (Allsop, 2016).

The participant's second comment related to *slacktivism* is concerned with "passive support" and how simple measures such as sharing or liking produces little active effort and commitment from people, which in turn is not enough to create long-term change. The passive and lazy aspects of these acts are especially highlighted. By signing a petition, hitting a like button, or writing a Facebook post, social media platforms give people the ability to support a cause without offline activism's time, money, risk, and effort. Participant 10 specifies that relying solely on such initiatives can stagnate movements and says: "It *creates a kind of limbo. People think that when they post something online, they have done their part and do not follow up with any other action*". She further adds that taking up social media activism as the only mode of engagement gives "a false sense of activism," indicating that it does more to satisfy people's need to feel good about themselves than it does for the actual cause. The participant's response thus goes well with Morozov's (2009) strong critique of social media activism as "feel-good online activism." On the other hand, it is not reckoned as "having little meaningful social or political impact," as further suggested by Morozov (2009). The participants counteract the latter statement and explain that social media can be a catalyst for involvement and an opening for individuals to be educated about why movements arise and decide if they relate or agree with the cause.

Another participant who believes that activism requires more effort than what social media platforms alone can produce is participant 7 from OYA Kansas. Elaborating on this, she says: "*Sharing or liking a post is not the only thing that makes a difference. It is not as simple as that; it takes more effort*". Her statement goes well with Gladwell's (2010) argument that the presence of commitment and effort amongst participants is essential in activism. It also supports a central slacktivism argument that social media induces passivity by allowing individuals to choose the level of effort and commitment. In contrast, offline activism requires a certain level of commitment (Gladwell, 2010). The participant goes on explaining that even though COVID-19 made OYA Kansas depend more on social media initiatives than what they would principally like, they encourage their members to follow up with offline activities, when possible, to avoid passive participation.

Social media activism as Paradigm shift

One of the counterarguments against s*lacktivism* can be found within *paradigm shift* and the idea that social media has changed activism (Allsop, 2016). While the participants believe social media acts rely on offline activities to produce change, they also recognize that it has altered several of the basic steps in traditional activism. The participant's arguments on this mainly rests on accessibility and the fact that social media platforms make it easier for people to engage despite physical distance, physical disabilities, dangers, and or other barriers that would otherwise be a hindrance in offline engagement. Accessibly as such is one of the core arguments of *paradigm shift*, stating that social media as a "new and changed" domain gives individuals unprecedented access to social movements and in turn, activism (Allsop, 2016).

The participants echo this, explaining that not everyone has the time or opportunity to participate in offline activities. By there being fewer physical barriers, social media is thus said to foster a higher level of engagement from people who might otherwise not participate or identify themselves as activists. The participant's thoughts are in line paradigm shift view of social media as a modern platform for individuals to engage in activism (McCafferty, 2011). Other participants further explain that social media platforms also break down traditional information, communication, and knowledge barriers. While traditional media such as radio, television, and newspapers have moderators or gatekeepers at bay, social media platforms permit anyone to partake and contribute to the discussion as they would like. Elaborating on how social media has flattened the traditional media hierarchy, participant 6 makes the point: "*In the past, media was controlled by people with money or power. Now it is free, accessible,*

and people can communicate and engage how they like". Her thoughts underline what Lomborg (2011) observed in describing how social media has changed the information and communication landscape. Applying this to activism, the absence of an intermediate faculty is advantageous as the participant's statement verifies. Social media thus enable activists to communicate their messages directly to each other in communication processes. Concerning awareness, they can create their content and depict the narrative with which they are concerned. Moreover, when traditional media outlets produce content, social media enable activists to raise questions and comment on the content.

Another point made is that social media has transformed how knowledge is acquired and shared. Elaborating on this, participant 10 makes the point that social media has made it easier for them to gain knowledge and information about topics: "*sometimes you don't have the time to read books or rapports to know what is going on. On social media you can see videos, photos, and posts that sum it up".* Her statement depicts the potential of social media in bringing about awareness about societal issues, furthermore, it shows how social media is used to broaden one's knowledge on a particular topic by making necessary information readily available. The participant's thoughts thus go well with Lievrouws (2011) argument that social media empowers individuals to engage in socio-political conversations easier and thus creates a platform for ordinary voices to become more public than before. There is also a belief that social media has changed the domain of awareness by making it easier and cheaper to inform the public about a case. Whereas traditional methods might require individuals to take time off their studies or work or pay fees to prepare posters to promote the case, social media shortens and simplifies the process. The participants emphasized the ability of social media to reach many people in this manner, with fewer costs, as highly beneficial. Participant 9 says: "*Instead of word-to-mouth information, we would create fliers and posts online and send them to many people. So, it saves much time because all the time you spend on talking to one person can be spent doing other important stuff*". Their response affirms Lievrouws (2011) argument that online activism makes activism easier and more accessible. It also shows that social media provides an alternative model for activists to conduct their affairs.

How is social media used in activism?

There are several ways activists can use social media platforms in their endeavors. But more than often, these initiatives tend to revolve around acts to spread awareness, call for action, demand justice, and voice concern. This is verified in McCaughey and Ayers's (2013) explanation of how social media activism works, categorized as *awareness and advocacy, organization/mobilization, and action/reaction*. By using these three modes, this part will look at how the OYAS uses social media. This will discuss if and how they use it for awareness and advocacy, organization, mobilization, and action/reaction.

What is the role of social media in awareness-raising?

As affirmed by previous research on social media activism: raising awareness about political issues is one of the main reasons activists use social media platforms (Marichal, 2013). In cases where the topic is receiving low coverage by traditional media outlets, social media platforms become of greater importance for activists in awareness-raising. And when looking at the OYAs, this point becomes a fact. Several participants believe that the "mainstream" or public has little to no awareness of the Oromo people and their struggle in Ethiopia. Participant 8 echoes this common understanding amongst the participants and says: *"Many people don't know who the Oromo people are. They just think of you as Ethiopian, so it was important for us to show who we are, our story, and identity"*. Because of this, raising awareness became somewhat comprehensive for the OYAs. They needed to illuminate whom the Oromo people were first before addressing the key issues they were opposing.

In this, the OYAs appropriated Twitter, Youtube, and Facebook in multifaceted ways. For instance, before a protest in August 2020, OYA Oslo uploaded a video on YouTube and Facebook. In the video, two OYA Oslo members express their sentiments on historical Oromo issues of marginalization before addressing the murder of Hachalu Hundessa. Similar efforts to bring about visibility are also found on Twitter. Participant 3 explains how Twitter and hashtag feature were used to build up social support conveniently: *"Creating hashtags was the way to get our message going, then the only thing people had to do was to retweet for it to spread."* Participant 8 adds that OYA Adelaide, through this method, also made attempts to issue their case to politicians: *"We would launch these Twitter campaigns and tag members of the parliament to show them why we are protesting".* Between these methods, the OYAs were able to display the existence of their movement while encouraging others to follow suit and support

their case. Their initiatives thus go in line with McCaughey and Ayers (2013) observation about how awareness in social media activism occurs when relevant information about an issue is accessible online. By dispersing information about the Oromos and the murder of Hachalu Hundessa across multiple platforms, the OYAs were able to raise awareness and ensure that the information would be available to as many people as possible. Participant 5 from OYA Oslo echoes this and says: *"We would basically post on every platform there was a person, every chance we had"*.

What is the role of social media in organization and mobilization?

Social media is often praised as a communicative tool that facilitates activism. Individuals can connect with like-minded individuals through social media platforms, share grievances, and build relationships around a common cause. Nevertheless, the question remains as to how these facilitation abilities exceed beyond the digital realm. Namely, how does it function in mobilizing and organizing individuals for physical/offline activities? As explained at the beginning of this chapter: the OYAs are a diverse group. They are spread across different locations, and their members have different timetables. Providing real-time information to all members is essential, especially when planning protests, as many, if not every association, was following the death of Hachalu Hundessa.

When asked about the use of social media platforms in facilitating such groundwork, the participants explained that it has helped them recruit people to act, share strategies on protests, and provide members with important information about protests. In this, Facebook appears as the leading platform used. Participant 8 underlines this and says: *"We used Facebook a lot. Especially during the pandemic, but also before [...]. We would host these meetings to talk about protests and how we're going to make it happen [...] the meetings were always open, so anyone could come and ask a question [...]. We always tried to recruit newcomers to join us too.* The participant's statements correlate to McCaughey and Ayers's (2013) ideas on how the internet is used for mobilization amongst activists. They contend that calls for offline action to a public demonstration are one of three ways in which activists employ the internet to mobilize. McCaughey & Ayers's (2013) point is actual when looking at the OYAs and how Facebook is used to rally their members to protests.

Another point made is communication processes as a mobilization strategy. Kietzmann et al. (2012) mentioned that presence on social media platforms relates to people's desires to talk with others in real-time. For activists looking to engage and motivate individuals to act for social

change, this desire to talk can benefit their mobilization strategy. This comes forth when looking at the OYAs social media tactics. As a part of their mobilization strategy, the OYAs would facilitate discussions on relevant topics and encourage their members to use their voices actively. Commenting on how Facebook is used in this manner, participant 3 says: "We *would use it as a mode to create conversation and a talking point for everyone [...] We shared articles, photos, and videoes, and shortly after the comment sections would be full of comments.* He further explains that the initiative to create a "talking point" came with a purpose: *"I think that if they are connected and know more about the struggle, then they will want to do more".* The participant's statement as such can be argued as an attempt to foster "strong ties", that is, individuals who are committed and engaged as opposed to weak ties with individuals that are infrequent, distant, and not as engaged. In this, the participant also affirms Hwang and Kim's (2015) ideas on activists' online ties when explaining that facilitating commitment online in such a way may positively impact the individuals intentions to engage in offline activities.

Hacktivism

The last mode in McCaughey and Ayers description is action/reaction, involving acts such as Hacktivism. As explained in the theory chapter, activists employ Hacktivism to shut down or halt websites for their politically or socially motivated purposes. While the initiative, driven by a desire to promote social justice, is legal per se, the tactics used in its efforts are illegal (Anton, 2021). When asked about *Hacktivism,* the OYAs explain that they always were determined to conduct their activities within the legal means of struggle, promoting their cause without the risk of legal consequences and without their members risking their freedom or future for their cause. But also, because they believe the ethical way is the best way to raise support amongst the public. Accordingly, the OYAs social media activities do not align with the hacktivism, as explained   by   McCaughey   and   Ayers   (2013)

What are the resource pools used online?

Social media appears to function more like a supplement and a facilitator than a replacement for the OYAs. In this, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter are presented as platforms to create awareness, organize the associations and mobilize/recruit members and people to offline protests. The following part will take these findings further and explore the online resources the OYAs employ to carry out their initiatives. The Honeycomb framework will be used to explore the relevancy of identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationship, reputation, and groups in the case of the OYAs, and thus answer the last research question: *What are the resource pools used online by the OYAs?* In explaining the framework, Kietzmann et al. (2012) argue that some blocks naturally may overlap. This is an occurring fact in this study when looking at the presence and reputation block. For this reason, these two blocks will be combined when presenting and discussing. The blocks will thus be presented accordingly as identity, groups, conversation, sharing, relationships, and lastly presence and reputation.

Identity

As the central block of the framework, the identity reflects the extent to which information regarding the users is a part of social media (Kietzmann et al., 2012). However, as most social media platforms require users to disclose personal information to create a profile, this block can arguably be understood as a given practice in a social media setting. Similarly, identity is an essential element in activism considering that activists are generally said to mobilize and form their connections based on a collective identity stemming from shared interests, experiences, and solidarity" (Taylor& Whittier, 1992).

It is, therefore, relevant to see *how and if* disclosing one's own identity in a social media setting relates to engagement in activism. To test the assumption of identity, participants were asked how they revealed themselves in a social media setting to engage in OYAs social media activism. In this, the participants explain that their name, age, gender, and location were revealed while engaging in OYAs online initiatives. This information mainly appeared on the associations Facebook groups and pages, whereas Twitter was generally limited to name and location. Possible explanations for this difference can be attributed to the distinct functions of the platforms. Facebook, a social networking site, is mainly used to connect with friends, family, and acquaintances and may thus require more information for individuals to recognize and connect. On the other hand, Twitter is less about such relationships and more about keeping up with important topics, people, and conversations; in that sense, do not require equally as

much information for an identification process. Another possible explanation is that the OYAs, as a youth association with branches according to different locations, might also presuppose some information to verify that one is within a youth age segment and within the associations proximity.

However, amongst all information, disclosing ones name is presented as the most important information shared in a social media setting for the participants. From a broader Ethiopian perspective, the Oromo case is often a controversial topic as not everyone agrees with the narrative that the Oromo people are marginalized. Several of the participants express that revealing one's real name is important by virtue of the many "internet trolls" that spread misinformation and hate speech online that can potentially harm their movement and efforts. Participant 9 illuminates that OYA Oslo has experienced incidents of hate speech rooted in these thoughts from users with false names and explains why she thinks disclosing one's name is important: *"Fake names or nicknames make it easier for people to post things anonymously. […] bad, degrading and even illegal things without consequence because you can hide your identity"*. Other participants echoed the importance of revealing their names differently. While they believe it is not mandatory to be Oromo to support or join the association, they believe the visibility of their name on social media functioned as a gateway to be accepted at least into the closed Facebook groups, as many of them have well-recognized Oromo names. These explanations thus verify Davis et al. (2019) idea that a collective identity relates to activists identification on social media platforms.

Groups

The ability to form groups is present on multiple social media platforms and comes in different formats. For the OYAs, Facebook was the primary platform used to form an online community. The purpose of these groups was to connect and share content amongst themselves and bring about visibility to the Oromo people and struggle. All three associations disclose that they have two types of Facebook groups. One that is open and serves as a "broadcaster" is used to disseminate information outwards. In this, they share essential articles, videos, and photos about the Oromo people and notify the public about upcoming and ongoing activities like protests, fundraisers, and petitions. The second group is a closed type that requires approval or invites and is used to give and exchange information amongst themselves and organize activities. Beyond their different formats, the Facebook groups also have distinctive communication styles. Information disseminated in the open Facebook groups is

straightforward with concrete messages, whereas the ones in the private groups were more comprehensive and detailed in information.

Writing on why activists create Facebook groups, Jose Marichal (2013) points out that beyond raising awareness about political issues, activists create online groups to participate in meaning-making processes about their identities, roles, and responsibilities. Evidently, for the OYAs, it is true when looking at their online groups. In discussing the meaning of these groups for their associations, the participants explain that it has allowed them to work together, share resources, show emotional support, and organize activities. However, in conjunction with Hachalu Hundessa's death, the private Facebook groups helped the participants take part in such meaning-making processes, enabling them to share sentiments on his passing and their thoughts on broader issues such as the circumstance of the Oromo people in Ethiopia and their affiliations to this. Participant 7 emphasizes and says: "*We needed a place to get together and express how we were feeling about everything that was going on and what we're going to do".* Elaborating on the meaning of their Facebook group, participant 7 further adds that Hachalu Hundessas death sent a shock wave through the Oromo community in Kansas, but particularly amongst the youth. She explains that because he was one of the few Oromo artists the youth was familiar with, the need to establish a "meeting space" became profound. On the subject of social media usage, studies show that the youth are some of its most avid users and, for this reason, are also more conducive to engaging in activist behaviors on social media (Auxier & McClainn, 2020). This knowledge also came forth while discussing the group block. When explaining the rationale for creating a Facebook group for OYA Adelaide, participant 3 points: *"Everyone we could think of was on social media, or at least Facebook, so I think it would be a disadvantage if we didn't use it".*

Conversations

Another important feature of social media platforms is conversations. In the Honeycomb framework, conversations refer to communication processes amongst individuals and groups in a social media setting (Kietzmann et al., 2012). Conversation as such has been a reoccurring theme amongst the participants and is widely used by the OYAs as a part of their social media strategy. When addressing the role of social media in organization and mobilization in the previous chapter, the OYAs use Facebook to facilitate discussions on relevant topics and encourage their members to use their voices actively. In discussing the potential outcomes of these conversations, the participants believe that they help elevate issues that do not get much

media coverage. Furthermore, assist people who cannot speak up in getting their voices heard. Particularly during incidents of political unrest and turmoil in Ethiopia, the ability to converse about the happenings and further articulate it to a broader audience seems essential for the participants. This is underscored by participant 9, who says: "The *only thing we can do in these situations is to be a voice for those back home, and social media helps us with that."* The participant's statement goes well with Van Dijck & Poells (2015) idea about the power of social media to amplify voices and spread information, i.e., conversations. Accordingly, the conversation block depicts the ability of activists to become more engaged and aware of social issues and uplift the voices of people who may not have the opportunity to issue their own cases. Another point concerning conversation on social media is the freedom and privilege it offers to exercise freedom of speech. As Lomborg (2011) affirms, social media brings about a de-institutionalized/de-professionalized space by giving the average citizen the ability to produce and distribute content. Participant 3 reflects Lomborg's (2011) idea and compares the media freedom in Adelaide, compared to Ethiopia, where internet services are frequently shut down amidst periods of unrest and protests, says: "*I feel we can make some difference here, but in Ethiopia, they just shut down the internet".*

Relationship

Barassi (2015) points out that the online connections activists have enormous value for them. This point is also relevant for the participants in this study. As mentioned above, Hachalu Hundessas death triggered feelings of solidarity and fellowship among the participants. His death was also the catalyst for some participants to engage in OYAs. In this, the private Facebook groups functioned as a method to share objects of concern and listen to each others feelings, and as such, form an online relationship which Kietzmann et al. (2012) define as two or more users who have some form of connection that leads them to converse (amongst other things). It can also be said that this common starting point of shock and grief led them to form a closer relationship than what they would otherwise do.

Barassi (2015) further suggests that activists can spread their message and mobilize and organize in fast and effective ways because of their online relationships. Applying this to the OYAs, and the speed they managed to arrange protests after Hachalu Hundessa's death, her point becomes evident. Because so many young Oromos were triggered by his death, the participants believe it became easier to mobilize and organize protests. For instance, roughly one week after the death of Hachalu Hundessa, on July 11th, 2020, OYA Adelaide arranged a

demonstration, thus confirming the speed with which strong activist relationships can create physical outcomes. The above-mentioned shows that the participants formed an online relationship by engaging in OYAs activism. It also shows that the participant's relationship, by being *affect-laden* due to Hachalu Hundessa's death, also falls into Kietzmann et al. (2012) description of strong online relationships.

Share

When it comes to sharing, Kietzmann et al. (2012) define it as the process of exchanging, distributing, and receiving information and content online. Content can come in different forms according to users interests or aims. The OYAs, mainly employ social media platforms to bring visibility to the Oromo people in Ethiopia. Consequently, their content focuses on information and knowledge about this cause. In this, all participants disclose that they have, throughout their engagement, shared pictures, videos, posts, and information amongst themselves and to their network of friends and acquaintances. Their sharing's are mostly user-generated content as they originate from their own Facebook pages, groups, and Twitter accounts.

Nonetheless, publishing relevant new articles from traditional media outlets, blogs, and other websites were also distributed. In discussing sharing patterns on social media, Kietzmann et al. (2012) point out that "sharing embeds in linkages between people from similar interests, values, and leisure activities." This point is also visible in the sharing patterns of the OYAs. For them, this connection appears to be embedded in their vested interest in achieving justice for Hachalu Hundessa and generating awareness about the Oromo people in Ethiopia. Accordingly, most of the content they share is concerned with issues surrounding his death and the Oromo people in Ethiopia. Nonetheless, they have also distributed some information about their activist initiatives, such as protests, online petitions, and fundraisers, and calls to action.

As an interaction process, sharing is conducive to conversation, engagement, and relationships (Wise, 2016). In discussing their sharing activities, the participants support this idea. The participants explain that because sharing has the potential to reach many people fast, it can also foster socio-political discussions by giving people access to information and knowledge they would otherwise not have access to or be aware of. Furthermore, it also can induce participation by making information about protests and other offline initiatives available. Their explanations go well with Valenzuelas (2013) findings, saying that individuals who are a part of online political groups are opted to receive information unattainable in other places. It also supports

Lievrouws (2011) suggestions that actions such as sharing article lowers the participation threshold and makes political mobilization easier and more accessible.

On the other hand, the participants believe that this window of opportunity largely depends on the platform. The question as to which platform was most conducive to facilitating conversations is contested. On the one hand, Twitter is argued to be more effective in disseminating information to a large audience because of its hashtag feature, which helps people detect all published information about the same topic. On the other hand, they believe that Twitter's 140-character text limit curbs the dept of the conveyed information. Here, Facebook is expressed to be more efficient in giving comprehensive information and thus creating enough in-depth information around a case for people to get involved. The participants stress the multifunctional sharing features of Facebook as an advantage in sharing texts and posts and circulating videos and photos from their offline activities. For example, during the protest in Oslo, OYA Oslo used Facebook to stream and share their sit-in with their members but also the public.

Presence and reputation

Within the Honeycomb framework, presence revolves around availability and the capacity to know where other users are in the virtual world and real-world (Kietzmann et al., 2012). For instance, by checking Facebook or Twitter, it is possible to find out where friends, family, and acquaintances are today. On the subject of online presence, the participants explained that they were, to some extent, able to know about the availability of others on their social media platforms. However, this capability was not embedded in the status choices like "available, "hidden," or "idle," as suggested by the Honeycomb framework. However, through the sharing activities of others, were they able to get an indication as to if they were or had just been active online. In their work on activists' online presence, Melki & Mallay (2014) suggest that a strong online presence increases credibility and generates visible results for activist initiatives. The participants echo this understanding and recognize that being available online is important in the cultivation and outcomes of their association. They explain how they, for this reason, conduct much of their online initiatives, such as publishing posts or sharing pictures, videos, or articles according to specific timings. This is to make the most out of online presence, principally members, but also to maximize the outreach of their messages towards the public and make sure that it reaches as many people as possible. Participant 4 from OYA Melbourne explains that they timed their online presence according to people's everyday routines and said:

"I think it's important to know when it's best to be online and to post things so we always ask ourselves when will many people see this before sharing or posting anything [...] We would schedule our posts to around five pm when people are usually home from work and studies". Other participants stated that being present online is also a way for them to increase their credibility and reputation. Participant 8 states that being available online is a way for them to set the narrative on whom they are as serious activists: *"Creating an impression is a big part of what we do, because we want to be seen, heard and taken seriously [...] so it's important to be intentional when you are online, with what you post but also the words because it carries the movement and doing it wrong can confuse people".* By explaining that their online presence also has implications beyond the digital realm, the participant's statement echoes into the reputation block and supports Rohlinger (2015) writing on activist reputation, stating that a good reputation is essential in everyday life and can influence the course and outcomes of activist groups. A concluding remark on reputation is the difference between strong and weak reputation and how this manifest in activists' social media use. Rohlinger (2015) suggests that activists with strong reputations use social media platforms to connect with their followers compared to activist with weak reputations, which primarily use social media to pitch their cases. Looking at the OYAs social media strategies from this perspective, one can argue that they fall within the strong reputation block as they used social media to connect and share sentiments on Hundessas passing and their feelings on broader Oromo issues in Ethiopia.

Conclusion

In the last decades, activists have increasingly used social media platforms to participate in social and political change efforts. This phenomenon, also referred to as *social media activism,* has caught scholars' attention and raised interest in how digital platforms affect the traditional landscape of activism. Debates in this field characterizes by three ideas stating that social media activism provides an excuse for citizens to take a lazy and passive approach to activism. Further, social media activism creates a new model through which people can engage in activism. Lastly, social media activism is merely a part of traditional activism as a facilitating entity. These ideas fall under the paradigm's *slacktivism, paradigm shift, and facilitating* (Allsop, 2016). While studies have explored the nexus between social media activism and the three paradigms, there has also been calls for more examples of social media use in specific acts of activism to strengthen the field (Gerbaudo,2012).

This thesis has explored the subject of social media activism through a case study of four Oromo youth associations (OYA) in the diaspora and their activities following the death of popular Oromo singer and activist Hachalu Hundessa. Using concepts from social movement studies, literature review on social media activism, and the Honeycomb Framework, the thesis has raised three questions of how social media activism relates to offline activism, how social media platforms are used in activism, and the resource pools used online to operate on activist initiatives.

The first question was interested in knowing how social media activism relates to traditional activism for the OYAs. Furthermore, to discern the participant's personal views on the three paradigms. The findings show that the OYAs use social media platforms to facilitate their offline activities. In this, Facebook appears as the principal platform used to create awareness, share messages, discuss ideas, and plan protests. Findings also show that the participants generally believe social media activism best serves to supplement and not replace traditional activism. While they recognize it as an efficient tool for awareness, communication, and mobilization, they believe it prerequisites offline actions to change. The OYAs social media activities thus fall within the facilitating paradigm*,* showing that social media activism is merely a separate activity as much as it is part of a broader set of initiatives (Allsop, 2016).

The second research question was interested in exploring how the OYAs used social media. In this, McCaughey & Ayers (2013) three modes of social media activism was used to discern how and if the OYAs use social media platforms for awareness and advocacy, organization and mobilization, and action/reaction. The findings show that OYAs use of social media goes well with McCaughey & Ayer's (2013) observation on awareness and how this occurs when relevant information about a case is available online. By dispersing information across multiple platforms, the OYAs were able to raise awareness and make their case available to as many people as possible. The findings also support the mobilization and organization mode where social media activism calls for offline actions by posting details online (McCaughey & Ayers, 2013). The participants verified this by disclosing that social media is used to recruit people, share strategies, and provide members with important information ahead of protests. Concerning *Hacktivism,* the findings show that the OYAs social media activities do not align with any acts to shut down or halt websites as a part of their social media activism strategy.

The last research explored the online resources the OYAs used to carry out their initiatives. The *Honeycomb Framework* explored the relevancy of the seven blocks: *identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationship, reputation, and groups*, and how they appeared in the case of the OYAs. Identity as the first and core block of the framework raised the question if the participants disclosed any personal information to engage in OYAs activism. The findings support Davis et al. (2019) suggestion that activist identity relates to activist identification on social media platforms. The participants corroborate this when explaining that they disclosed some personal information about themselves to engage in OYAs activism. Participants emphasize that the visibility of their name functioned as a gateway of identification as an Oromo into the private Facebook groups.

Concerning the group block, the findings show that the OYAs employ this function as part of their strategy. The participants disclosed that Facebook was highly relevant for forming an online community around their association, further sharing content amongst themselves, and disseminating information to the public. Jose Marichal (2013) contends that activists create online groups to participate in meaning-making processes about their roles, identities, and responsibilities. The findings show that in conjunction with Hachalu Hundessa's death, the participants took part in such meaning-making processes by sharing sentiments on his passing and their thoughts on broader issues like the marginalization of Oromo people in Ethiopia their own personal affiliations with this.

Equally, the conversation block appeared as a relevant strategy within OYAs social media activism. The OYAs used Facebook to facilitate discussions on relevant issues while encouraging their members to use their voices actively. As for outcomes and rationales for facilitating discussions, the participants believe conversations on social media platforms help elevate issues that otherwise do not get much media; furthermore, that it assists marginalized people in getting their voices heard. One participant echoes Lomborg's (2011) idea that social media brings about a de-institutionalized space by giving the average citizen the ability to produce and distribute content. The participant affirms this by emphasizing the freedom social media platforms offer in exercising freedom of speech.

As for relationships, findings show that through Facebook groups, the OYAs were able to share their objectives of concern and thus form an online relationship, defined by the framework as two or more users who have some form of connection that leads them to converse, and share objects of concern (Kietzmann et al., 2012). The findings further verify Barassis (2015) point that the relationship activists have online has enormous value. In connection with Hachalu Hundessa's death, the private Facebook groups functioned as a mode for the participants to share sentiments on his passing and thus form a relationship that was important to several OYA members. Because their relationship is affect-laden due to Hundessa's death, the OYAs relationship also accords with Kietzmann et al. (2012) description of a strong online relationship.

Sharing is another feature that the OYAs widely use to operate on their initiatives. On the topic of sharing, the participants disclosed that they shared pictures, videos, and posts amongst themselves and their network of friends and acquaintances. The sharing mainly was user-generated content (UGC) originating from their own Facebook pages and Twitter accounts. Nonetheless, publishing such as relevant news articles from traditional media outlets, blogs, and other websites was also distributed. The Honeycomb Framework contends that sharing embeds links between people (Kietzmann et al., 2012). For the OYAs, this was rooted in their vested interest in achieving justice for Hachalu Hundessa and creating awareness about the Oromo people in Ethiopia. Sharing on social media platforms is conducive to conversations, engagement, and relationships (Wise, 2016). The participants echo this and state that because sharing has the potential to reach many people fast, it can foster socio-political discussions and give people access to information and knowledge they would otherwise not be aware of. This verifies Lievrouws (2011) suggestion that actions such as sharing lower the threshold for participating in activism. However, the participants believe this opportunity largely depends on

the platform in use. Here, Facebook appears to be more conducive to participation by providing sufficient information and awareness around a case.

As for the presence block, findings show that the participants were, to some extent, able to know about the availability of others on social media (Kietzmann et al., 2012), through the sharing patterns of others, which indicated to as if they were or had just been active. The participants stressed the availability and online presence as essential elements in the cultivation and outcomes of their association and go well with Melki's (2014) suggestion that online presence increases credibility and generates visible results for activist efforts.

The participants mirror this idea and explain that they, for this reason, conduct much of their online initiatives like publishing posts and sharing pictures or articles according to specific timings. Findings further illuminate that being present online is a way for the OYAs to increase their credibility and, in turn, reputation. Being present on social media platforms is for the OYAs a way for them to influence their reputation and set the narrative on who they are as serious activists. In this, it appears that a good reputation is essential and has implications beyond the digital realm. Thus underlining Rohlinger (2015) writing on activist reputation and media, stating that a good reputation can influence the course and outcomes of activist groups.

Bibliography

Adamu, Meseret Assefa. 2020. Journal of Media and Communication Studies, Vol 12(2), April-June, pp. 13-22.

Aday, Sean, Henry Farrell, John Sides, and John Freelon. 2012. New Media and Conflict After the Arab Spring. Peace Works.

Al Jazeera . 2018. Social media shaping calls for Ethiopia political change: The Listening Post. Retrieved March 27, 2022, from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkNuDr4Tbxk.

Allsop, Bradley. 2016. Social media and activism: a literature review. Social Psychological Review, Vol 18 (2) pp. 35-40.

Alonso, Andoni, and Pedro Oiarzabal. 2018. Diasporas in the New Media age : Identity, politics and communnity. Abhay Chawla: University of Nevada Press.

Anton, P. Is Hacktivism a fight for justice or a crime? Retrieved February 11, 2022 from : https://atlasvpn.com/blog/is-hacktivism-a-fight-for-justice-or-a-crime

Atoma, Bekele. 2020. Ethiopian Mogul taking on Abiy Ahmed. Retrieved March 22, 2022, from: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-53306091.

Auxier, Brooke, and Colleen McClainn. 2020. Activism on social media varies by race and ethnicity, age, political party. Retrieved February 17, 2020 from : https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/13/activism-on-social-media-varies-by-race-and-ethnicity-age-political-party/.

Ayana, Ribka. 2020. How the Murder of an Ethiopian singer Triggered an Uprising. Retrieved March 19, 2021 from: https://time.com/5871217/ethiopia-protests-haacaaluu/

Ayers, Michael D, and Martha McCaughey. 2005. A review of Cyberactivism: Online activism in theory and practice. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

Azzopardi, Andrew. 2013. Youth activism: Social movements in the making or in the taking? In Azzopardi, Andrew (Ed.) Youth: Responding to Lives, pp. 45-56. SensePublishers.

Balsvik, Randi Rønning, *Haile Sellassie's Students: The Intellectual and Social Background to Revolution, 1952-1977*, East Lansing: African Studies Center, Michigan State University (1985)

Balsvik, Randi.R.(2009). Addis Ababa University in the Shadow of the Deerg, 1974-1991. Trondheim: Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies.

Benjamin, Themba. 2018. Social Media Activism: Limitation and Benefits. *INOSR ARTS AND MANAGMENT 4 (1)*, pp.30-37.

Berg, B. L., & Lune, H. (2012). Qualitative research methods for the social sciences (8th ed.). Pearson.

Bijan, Stephen. 2015. How Black Lives Matter Use Social Media To Fight the Power. Retrieved November 2, 2021, from: https://www.wired.com/2015/10/how-black-lives-matter-uses-social-media-to-fight-the-power/.

Blee, Kathleen, and Timothy P Vining. 2010. Risks and ethics of social movement research in a changing political climate. Research in Social Movements. Conflicts and change, (30), pp.43-71.

Boddy-Evans, Allistar. 2020.Countries in Africa Considered Never Colonized. Retrieved March 13,2022, from: https://www.thoughtco.com/countries-in-africa-considered-never-colonized-43742.

Bongiorno, Rachael. 2014. Worldwide Protests Ongoing in Support of Oromo people in Ethiopia. Retrieved March 19, 2021, from: http://www.rachaelbongiorno.com/worldwide-protests-ongoing-in-support-of-oromo-people-in-ethiopia.

Brenman, Marc, and Thomas W, Sanchez. 2014. Social activism. In: Michalaos A.C. (Eds.)
    Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research. Springer.
        https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5

Bryman, Alan. 2016. Social Research Methods 5th ed. Oxford University Press.

Bugini, Rachele Orsola. 2018. Social media and Its effect on Socio-Political Movements. Online activism and Information Sharing on Social Media Platforms. Grin Verlag.

Bula, Merga. 2020. Ethiopia: The Killing of Hachalu Hundessa cuts deep. Retrieved March 17, 2020 from: https://www.dw.com/en/ethiopia-the-killing-of-hachalu-hundessa-cuts-deep/a-54024538.

Bulcha, Mekuria. 2015. Oromia's Irreecha Festival-A Revival of an Ancient African Culture An Attempt to Understand and Explain. Retrieved March 14, 2022, from: https://www.waaqeffannaa.com/irreechaa/oromias-irreecha-festival-a-revival-of-an-ancient-african-culture-an-attempt-to-understand-and-explain/

Bystydzienski, Jill, and Steven Schacht. 2001. Forging radical alliances across difference: Coalitation politics for the new millenium. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Cammaerts, Bart. 2015. Social media and activism. In Mansell, Robin and Hwa, Peng, (Eds.) The Interational Encyclopedia of Digital Communication and Society. The Wiley Blackwell-ICA International Encyclopedias of Communication series, pp.1027-1034

Chala, Endalkachew. How the murder of musician Hachalu Hundessa incited violence in Ethiopia. Retrieved August 23, 2021 from: https://globalvoices.org/2020/08/07/how-the-murder-of-musician-hachalu-hundessa-incited-violence-in-ethiopia-part-i/

Chavez, Karma R. 2011. Counter-Public Enclaves and Understanding the Function of Rhetoric in Social Movement Coalition-Building. Communication Quarterly, 59 (1), pp. 1-18. doi: 10.1080/01463373.2010.541333

Civicus. 2021. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and the COVID-19 Pandemic : A Snapshot of Protests and Restrictions. Retrievied March 15, 2022 from: https://monitor.civicus.org/COVID19September2021/.

Conner, Jerusha, and Sonia M Rosen. 2016. Contemporary Youth Activism: Advancing Social Justice in The United States. Praeger.

Dahir, Abdi. 2020. World. Ethiopia Announces Arrest in Prominent Singers Killing. Retrieved March 19, 2020, from:https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/11/world/africa/ethiopia-hachalu-hundessa.html

Dailey, Stephanie L, Jeffrey Treem, Casey s Pierce, and Diana Biffl. 2016. What We Are Talking About When We Talking About Social Media : A framework for study. Sociology Compass, 10, pp.768-785.

Davis, Jenny L, Tony P Love, and Phoenicia Fares. 2019. Collective Social Identity :
Synthesizing Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory Using Digital Data. Social
Psychology Quarterly, 83 (3), pp.254-273

Dibaba, Solomon Desalegn. 2020. Qeerroo fi Qaarree Oromoo" National Movement and
Sustained Gross Human Rights Violations in Ethiopia. LAP LAMBERT Academic
Publishing.

Dookhoo, Sasha. 2015. How Millennials Engage in Social Media Activism: A Uses and
Gratifications Approach. University of Central Florida. Retrievied Januar 12, 2022
from:https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd/1364/#:~:text=The%20results%20showed%20tha
t%20Millennials,in%20social%20media%20activism%20behaviors.

Dove, Jackie, Sakshi Udavavant, and Sahas Mehra. 2022. What is WhatsApp? Retrieved
March 29, 2022 from: https://www.digitaltrends.com/mobile/what-is-whatsapp/.

Emmanuel, Ibukun. 2019. Social Media Activism: Affordances of Social Media Usage in
Activism and Social Movement. University of Lapland. https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-
fe201902104459

Enjolras, Bernard, Kari Steen-Johnsen, and Dag Wollebaek. 2012. Social Media and
Mobilization to Offline Demonstrations: Transcending Participatory Divides. New
Media & Society 15 (6), pp. 890-909.

Facebook.2022. Retrieved February 1, 2022 from : https://about.facebook.com/

Feleke, Bethlehem. 2020. Internet cut off in Ethiopia amid outcry over death of singer
activist. Retrieved March 22, 2021, from:
https://edition.cnn.com/2020/06/30/africa/ethiopia-singer-killing-sparks-protest-
intl/index.html#:~:text=Internet%20cut%20off%20in%20Ethiopia%20amid%20outcr
y%20over%20death%20of%20singer%2Dactivist&text=A%20screengrab%20of%20
Hachula%20Hundessa,singer%20and%20activist%20Hachalu%20Hundessa.

Filmer, Deonne, Louise Fox, Karen Brooks, Aparajtia Goyal, Taye Mengistae, Patrick
Premand, Dennna Rignold, Siddart Sharma, and Sergiy Zorya. 2014. Youth
Employment in sub-saharan Africa. World Bank publications.
openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/16608/9781464801075.pdf

Freedom House. 2018. Freedom on the Net 2018. Freedom House. Retrieved February 17,
2022 from:https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FOTN_2018_Final.pdf

Fuchs, Christian. 2014. Social Media: A critical Introduction. Sage.

Georgiades, Niko, and Jenn Schreiter. 2020. Youth Lead Summer of Oromo Protests in Minnesota. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from: https://unicornriot.ninja/2020/youth-lead-summer-of-oromo-protests-in-minnesota/.

Gerbaudo, Paolo. 2012. Tweets and the streets: Social Media and Contemporary activism. Pluto Press.

Gladwell, Malcolm. 2010. Small Change. Why the revolution will not be tweeted. Retrieved February 27, 2022 from : https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/10/04/small-change-malcolm-gladwell.

Hairsne, Kate. 2020. Ethiopias influential diaspora split on Abiy. Retrieved July 17, 2021, from: https://www.dw.com/en/ethiopias-influential-diaspora-split-on-abiy/a-54209290.

Horowitz, Jonathan. 2017. Who is This " We" You Speak of? Grounding Activist Identity in Social Psychology. Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World (3), pp.1-17. https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023117717819

Hwang, Hyesun, og Kee-Ok Kim. 2015. Social Media as a Tool For Social Movements: The Effect of Social Media Usage and Social capital on Intention to participate in social movement. International Journal of Consumer Studies, 39 (5), pp. 478-488.

IOYA. 2015. IOYA expresses concern about brutality against Oromo people. Retrieved March 17, 2020 from: https://oromianeconomist.com/tag/international-oromo-youth-association/.

Irwansyah, Irwannsyah. 2012. Social Media and Political Participation (Youth Activists Perspective). Communicare Journal of Communication studies, 5 (2), July – December, pp. 102-116.

Jalata, Asafa. 2001. Fighting against the Injustices of the State and Globalization : Comparing the African American and Oromo Movement. Palgrave.

Jalata, Asafa. 2000. Two National Liberation Movements Compared: Oromia and the Southern Sudan. Social Justice : Race, Class and State Crime (Spring), Vol 27 (1), pp. 152-174.

Jalata, Asafa. 1995. The Emergence of Oromo Nationalism. Social Justice, Vol.22, No.3 (61), Fall, pp.165-189.

Jalata, Asafa. 2011. The Oromo in Exile: Creating knowledge and Promoting Social Justice. Sociology Publications and Other works. https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_socopubs/72

Jalata, Asafa. 1993. Sociocultural Origins of the Oromo National Movement in Ethiopia. Sociology Publications and Other Works. https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_socopubs/85

Chon, Myoung-Gi and Hyojung Park. 2019. Social Media Activism in the Digital Age: Testing an Integrative model of Activism on Contentious issues. Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 97 (1), pp. 72-97.

Kane, G. C., Alavi, M., Labianca, G. (Joe), & Borgatti, S. P. (2014). What'S Different About Social Media Networks? A Framework and Research Agenda. *MIS Quarterly*, *38*(1), 275–304. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26554878

Khiry, Zora. 2020. WHY IS SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISM IMPORTANT. Retrieved December 27, 2021 from: https://www.onlineoptimism.com/blog/social-media-activism/.

Khoros. 2021. Social media demographics guide. Retrieved December 27, 2021 from: https://khoros.com/resources/social-media-demographics-guide.

Kietzmann, Jan, Bruno Silvestre, Ian Paul McCarthy, and Leyland Pitt. 2012. Unpacking the social media phenomenon: Towards a research agenda. Journal of Public Affairs Volume *12* (2*)*, pp.109-119.

Kirshner, B. (2015). *Youth activism in an era of education inequality.* New York University Press.

Lacetera, Nicole, Mario Macis, and Angelo Mele. 2016. Viral altruism? Charitable giving and social contagion in online networks. Sociological Science,3, pp. 234-70. DOI 10.15195/v3.a12

Lartaud, Derek. 2021. Can Performative Activism Actually Make a difference. Retrieved January 15, 2022 from : https://www.kqed.org/education/535383/can-performative-activism-actually-make-a-difference.

Lievrouw, Leah A. 2011. Alternative and Activist New Media. Malden. Polity Press.

Lozano, Gabby. 2019. Understanding the Trend of Performance Activism. Retrieved April 28, 2022 from: link.gale.com/apps/doc/A603999898/AONE?u=googlescholar&sid=sitemap&xid=59d9d8f.

Malgieri, Francesco. 2016. Social Media and Brand Crisis. Department of Business and Managment, Luiss University.

Marichal, Jose. 2013. Political Facebook Groups: Micro-Activism and the Digital Front Stage. California Lutheran University.

Sandoval-Almazan, R. & Gil-García, J.R (2014). " Towards cyberactivism 2.0?

Understanding the use of social media and other information technologies for political activism and social movements". In Government Information Quarterly, 31 (3), pp. 365-378. London: Elsevier

Valenzuela, S.(2013). Unpacking the Use of Social Media for Protest Behavior. The Roles of Information, Opinion Expression, and Activism. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *57*(7), 920–942. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764213479375.

Mason, Mark. 2010. Sample Size and saturation in PHD Studies Using Qualitative Interviews. Forum Qualitative SozialForschung.

2020. Masterclass staff. Understanding Cultural Bias: 3 Examples of Cultural Bias. Retrieved April 19, 2022 from: https://www.masterclass.com/articles/understanding-cultural-bias#:~:text=Cultural%20bias%20is%20the%20interpretation,Linguistic%20interpretation.

McAdam, Doug, Robert J Sampson, Simon Weffer, and Heather MacIndoe. 2005. There will be fighting in the streets : The distorting lens of social movement theory. Mobilization : An International Journal, 10 (1), pp.1-18.

McCafferty, Dennis. 2011. Activism vs slacktivism. Communications of the AMC, Vol 54 (12), pp. 17-19.

Mehretu, Assefa. 2022. Ethiopia. Retrieved March 13, 2022 from : https://www.britannica.com/place/Ethiopia.

Melki, Jad, og Sarah Mallat. 2014. Digital Activism: Efficacies and Burdens of social media for Civic Activism. Arab Media & Society, Issue 19 Fall , pp.1-14

Miller, Daniel, Elisabetta Costa, Nell Hayens, McDonald, Razvan Nicolescu, Jolynna Sinana, Juliano Spyer, Shriram Venkatraman, and Xinyuan Wang. 2016. How the World Changed Social Media. UCL Press.

Miller, Shaeleya D, Verta Taylor, and Leila J Rupp. 2016. Social Movements and the Construction of Queer Identity. In Stets, E.Jan and Serp, Richard T (Eds.),New Directions in Identity Theory and Research, pp. 443-469. Oxford University Press

Milligann, Christine, Richard G Kyle, Liz Bondi, Nicolas R Fyfe, A Robin Kearns, and Wendy Larner. 2008. From Placards to Partnership: the changing nature of community activism and infrastructure in Manchester, UK and Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand. Lancaster: Institute for Health Research University of Lancaster.

Morozov, Evgeny. 2009. From slacktivism to activism, Foreign Policy. Retrieved Februar 22, 2022 from : https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/09/05/from-slacktivism-to-activism/.

Moss, Dana M. October 2021. Diaspora activism and the dynamics of voice. Cambridge University Press.

Mundt, Marcia, Karen Ross, and Carla M Burett. 2018. Scaling Social Movements Through Social Media : The Case of Black Lives Matter. Social Media + Society, 4 (4) https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118807911

Ngai, Eric W.T, Tao S.C Spencer, and Kare K.L Moon. 2015. Social media research: Theories, constructs, and conceptual frameworks. International Journal of Information Managment, 35. (1), pp.33-34

Nien, Wei L. 2017. What is the Role of Social media in Establishing a Chain of Equivalence between Activists participating in protest movements? Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies, Volume 7, (3), pp.182-215

Norris, Pippa. 2004. Young People and Political Activism: From the politics of Loyalties to the Politics of Choice? John F. Kennedy School of Government Harvard University.

22. *OYA*. OYA (Oromia Youth Association). Retrieved February 7, 2022, from: https://oromoyouth.weebly.com/mission.html.

Park, Hyojung, and Myong-Gi Chon. 2019. Social Media Activism in the Digital Age: Testing an Integrative model of activism on contentious issues. Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 97 (1) : pp. 72-97.

Pew Research Center. 2018. Public attitudes toward political engagement on social media. Retrieved February 3, 2022 from: https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/07/11/public-attitudes-toward-political-engagement-on-social- media/

Rohlinger, Deana. 2015. From Causes to Cars: Reputation Matters! Retrieved March 19, 2022 from: https://mobilizingideas.wordpress.com/2015/06/10/from-causes-to-cars-reputation-matters/#more-8110.

Sharp, Gene. 1973. Methods of Nonviolent Action. Porter Sargent.

Sherrod, Lonnie R., Flanagan, Constance. A., Kassimir, Ron., & Syvertsen, Amy. K. (Eds.).
2006. Youth activism: An international encyclopedia. Greenwood Press/Greenwood

Sokolov, Alexander, Catherine Olenitskaya, og Yuri Golovin. 2018. Success Factors of Internet- Activism in Social Networks. SHS Web of Conferences, 50, (2), 01175. DOI:10.1051/shsconf/20185001175

Taft, Jessica. K., & Gordon, Hava. R. 2013. Youth activists, youth councils, and constrained
democracy. Education, Citizenship and Social Justice, 8(1), 87–
100. https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197913475765

Terry, Gareth, Nikki Hayfield, Virginia Brauan, and Victoria Clarke. 2017. Thematic Analysis. In Carla Willig and Wendy Rogers (Eds.) The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research in Psychology, pp. 17-36. Sage Publications.

Tjora, Aksel. 2012. Kvalitative forskningsmetoder i praksis. Gyldendahl.

Trend Micro. 2015. Hacktivism 101: A Brief History and Timeline of Notable Incidents. Retrieved February 17, 2022 from: :https://www.trendmicro.com/vinfo/gb/security/news/cyber-attacks/hacktivism-101-a-brief-history-of-notable-incidents.

Tufekci, Zeynep. 2013. Not This One Social Movements, the Attention, Economy, and Microcelebrity Networked Activism. American Behavioral Scientists 57 (7), pp. 848-870.

Twitter.2022. Abou Twitter.Retrieved February 2, 2022, from: https://about.twitter.com/en/who-we-are/our-company

Underwood, Alexia. 2018. The sudden end of the Ethiopia-Eritrea war, explained. Retrieved March 24, 2022 from : https://www.vox.com/2018/7/31/17595988/ethiopia-eritrea-peace-abiy-ahmed.

Van der Wolf, Marthe. 2020. From Outside, Ethiopias Diaspora Pushes for Change. Retrieved March 30, 2022, from: https://www.voanews.com/a/africa_outside-ethiopias-diaspora-pushes-change/6193643.html.

Van Dijck, Jose, and Thomas Poell. 2015. Social Media and Activist Communication. In Atton, Chris (Ed.). The Routledge Companion to Alternative and Community Media, pp. 527-537. Routledge.

Vargas, Kelly. 2013. The Online Activism Feedback Loop: A Case Study of SOPA/PIPPA. The University of Michigan: The Department of Political Science. Retrieved January 6, 2022 from: https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/98854/kvarg.pdf?sequence=1

Wallis, Cara. 2011. New Media Practices in China: Youth Patterns, Processes and Politics. International Journal of Communication, Vol 5, pp. 406-436.

Walter, Mead. 2013. Social Media Endangers and Empowers Chinas Activists. Retrieved January 5, 2022 from : https://www.the-american-interest.com/2013/03/05/social-media-endangers-and-empowers-chinas-activists/.

Wise, Lise. 2016. Relax! It´s Only Social Media: A no-nonsense guide to social networking for you and your business. CreateSpace Independent Publishing platform.

World Population Review. 2022. Ethiopian Population. Retrieved April 22, from: https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/ethiopia-population.

Yared, Ephrem. 2016. ETHIOPIAN-SOMALI WAR OVER THE OGADEN REGION (1977–1978). Retrieved March 22, 2022 from :https://www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/ethiopian-somali-war-over-ogaden-region-1977-1978/.

Østebø, Terje. 2020. Analysis: The role of the Qeerroo in future Oromo politic. Retrieved January 22, 2022 from : https://addisstandard.com/analysis-the-role-of-the-qeerroo-in-future-oromo-politics/.

Østebø, Terje, and Terje Tronvoll. 2020. Interpreting contemporary Oromo politics in Ethiopia: an ethnographic approach. Retrieved January 17, 2022 from: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17531055.2020.1796255?casa_token=JB4mP-PFaHsAAAAA%3A5PNmuCu3MLT_Ht8U487dDVHjsDNX2QTzPd-Jy3Jn_5DloH0Ewc-jM_V_Qqw0lp-Vx1NT_WsMJw53WQ9l.

Yin, Robert. K. (2012). Case study methods. In Cooper, Harris. Camic, Paul M, Long, Debra L, Panter, A. T, RindsKopf, David & K. J. Sher (Eds.). A handbook of research methods in psychology, Vol. 2. Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and *biological* (pp. 141–155). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/13620-009

Yukich, Grace. 2015. Who Gets Left Out When We Talk About Activism. Retrieved February 2, 2022 from: https://mobilizingideas.wordpress.com/2015/09/02/who-gets-left-out-when-we-talk-about-activism/.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview guide

General Information:

Name, age, occupation

What types of social media platforms do you use?

How often do you use social media?

Why do you think young people get involved with activism?

How did you become involved with OYAs activism?

1. **Social media activism and traditional activism**

2. What are your thoughts on social media activism?

3. What do you perceive as the biggest difference between social media activism and traditional activism i.e., offline initiatives to create change?

4. Has social media been used in any offline activities you have attended? If so, how?

5. Do you think social media in some cases makes people think they are making a difference when they are not? If so, how/why?

6. Do you think that social media has changed activism? If so how/why?

7. **Social media as a strategy in activism**

8. How did using social media as strategy emerge for the OYAs and how was the process?

9. What were the reasons behind using social media?

10. In what ways did the OYAs use social media platform?

11. What do you perceive as the benefits of using social media in activism?

12. Has OYA used social media to facilitate groundwork?

13. **Social media tools**

14. What online platforms were used and why were this/these chosen?

15. Has OYA used any of the following resources online?

- *Sharing/liking online?* - How was the process of sharing content online?

- Discussions/Conversations online? – How were the communication processes on social media?

- *Group?* – How would you describe the OYAs online groups?

- *Presence?* - How present /available were the OYAs on social media?

- *Relationship?* - Were you able to form relationships through social media interactions?

- *Reputation?* - How does social media use relate to the OYAs reputation?
- Identity – Did you reveal any personal information to engage in OYAs activism?

- Were there some tools that were more used than others?

  Is there anything you would like to add? Do you have any questions?

Appendix 2. Consent form

Are you interested in taking part in the research project?

The role of social media in activism:

A case study of Oromo youth associations in the diaspora

This is an inquiry to participate in a research project where the main purpose is to investigate and create knowledge about social media activism through a case study on Oromo youth associations (OYA) in the diaspora. This letter will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

This project is a Master thesis, and the student is enrolled in the program Masters of Global Development Studies at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) Ås. The project aims to investigate and explore social media activism through a case study on Oromo youths in the diaspora. **The overarching objective is to explore how social media impacts and is used in activism and why this is so.** By focusing on four Oromo youth associations (OYA) in the diaspora: Oslo, Kansas, Melbourne, and Adelaide, it seeks to understand how activist's appropriate social media resources, strategies, and platforms to suit their needs and purpose. The project focuses on three areas, *first* is how social media activism relates to traditional activism, including if it changes the way protests organize and/or creates new kinds of activism. *Second,* is how social media is used for activism, this includes purposes, strategies, and reasons for using social media platforms and *third,* the resources activists use online and rationales behind their choices.

Who is responsible for the research project?

Norwegian university of life sciences (NMBU) is responsible for the project

Why are you being asked to participate?

Activism has drastically changed with the rise of social media. This has raised an interest to as how and why activist use social media in activism. Pew Research Center found that ethnic minorities and 18–30-year-olds are most likely to use social media for activism, and that they see online platforms as an essential tool for their political expression and activism. This project seeks to understand how this occurs, both privately and within an association/organization (OYA).

Invitation to participate in the project is sent through the social media channels of OYA as listed on Facebook. The goal is to have 10-15 participants in the project

What does participation involve for you?

The project is based on interviews with participants. For you, this means that if you choose to participate in the project, you will be invited to an interview. The interview is individual and will take between 30-45 minutes through Microsoft Teams or Zoom, according to your preference. The interview will be semi-structured and will give you the opportunity to highlight and talk about what is important and relevant within the topics that will be addressed. The themes will focus on your experiences with Oromo youth association (OYA), the use of social media for activism and how this relates to traditional forms of activism. During the interview, information related to your personal perceptions, political and philosophical beliefs might be obtained, possibly through questions related to your understanding and commitment to activism, and how you use this commitment in everyday life. The student will take notes during the interview.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

- Those who can access the data and your information is student and supervisor for the project
- No unauthorized person will have access to your data
- Information about you will be stored, analysed, and processed in the student's user at NMBUs cloud service (NMBU OneDrive, Office 365) The documents will be classified to ensure that no one other than student and supervisor of the assignment has access to the documents

After the project is completed, the project will become available at Brage-NMBU institutional open knowledge archive. It will not be possible to recognize you when the thesis is published. Name, gender, and age will not be published. Membership with activist organization will be published, but not your role or position.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

Your personal data will be anonymized once the project has been approved which is according to the project plan late June 2022.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with NMBU Data Protection Services has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- NMBU via Peter Gufu Oba, supervisor for the project (gufu.oba@nmbu.no) or student Zubeida Haji Hassan (zuha@nmbu.no)
- Our Data Protection Officer: Hanne Pernille Gulbrandsen personvernombud@nmbu.no
- Data Protection Services, by email: (personverntjenester@sikt.no) or by telephone: +47 53 21 15 00.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Gufu Oba

Zubeida Haji Hassan (student)

(Researcher/supervisor)

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project *[insert project title]* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- ☐ to participate in interview
- ☐ for information about me/my membership in activist association is published

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. June 2022

(Signed by participant, date)