

## Cross-Continental Dialogues: Analyzing the Dichotomy of Social Media Discourse in Ethiopian Social Movement #Nomore

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### Abstract

*Recognizing cross-boundary disparities in discussing topics and emotional responses within social networks is pivotal for enhancing problem-solving strategies and adapting location-specific solutions accordingly. We leveraged machine learning models to analyze 1,036,111 public tweets from the Nomore movement containing #NoMore, #EthiopiaPrevails, or #SayNoMore. Our analysis explored the differences in the content, emotional responses, and user influence in tweets, comparing tweets from Ethiopia to the United States. It aims to examine the perspectives of the local communities and expand the relatively limited body of comparative analyses between users from Ethiopia and the United States, thus enriching the body of knowledge related to Africa. Our in-depth public opinion analysis revealed the divergence in societal viewpoints and sentiments across users from different locations on the same subject. This offers an opportunity to extract unique region-specific perspectives leading to more inclusive and effective solutions for societal issues.*

**Keywords:** Ethiopia, #Nomore movement, Natural language processing, decolonization, Topic and sentiment analysis, Opinion leaders

### 1. Introduction

In the current information age, the contestation of knowledge should extend to a wider scale, involving viewpoints from grassroots levels outside of the mainstream media. Such an approach would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of diverse perspectives, enhance the accuracy of information by facilitating fact-checking and verification through users' firsthand experiences, and also aid in reducing

misinformation by offering alternative perspectives and counterarguments (Carilli, 2021). For instance, during the Syrian conflict, the public opinion among displaced Syrians in Lebanon suggests that the majority of Syrian refugees support the opposition, a large minority sympathizes with the government, and large numbers of Sunni Arabs also side with the government, challenging the narratives of the war from sectarians (Corstange, 2019). Similarly, Ezzina (2021) explored linguistic approaches in news discourse on the decade-long Palestine-Israel conflict. The analysis reveals ideological practices in prominent media news coverage, and the media constructs reality through opinions and propositions rather than facts.

Social media platforms have become popular arenas for discussions and information seeking, functioning as central hubs for knowledge exchange and sharing (Meilian et al., 2022). Numerous studies have been conducted to understand users based on their posts on social media, a field often referred to as opinion mining (Dave et al., 2003). While social media users are not necessarily representative of the whole population of a country's citizens, understanding the perspective and sentiments of those engaged participants is increasingly instrumental as it impacts the political landscape within and outside a country (Elefeliou et al., 2020). Examining their opinions through various lenses is vital to achieving a comprehensive understanding and providing valuable insights into users' experiences and interactions with social media platforms. This includes comparing and contrasting their viewpoints based on different background variables.

Some comparative studies have been done, but few focus on African issues. Several African nations encounter difficulties concerning political instability, violence, and ethnic tensions. International

organizations and external countries actively engage in addressing these issues. Nevertheless, there is frequently a lack of awareness regarding the viewpoint of the local grassroots population on ongoing matters. Understanding African people's unique contexts and perspectives can pave the way for their voices to be represented in global discussion and shape decisions.

For African issues, some propose to include a form of knowledge from Africa rather than relying solely on perspectives from the "West," which normally denotes the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and European countries (Kurth, 2003). They seek to critically engage with the worldviews of those being studied, alongside the researcher's perspective, fostering our comprehension of users from diverse perspectives without disregarding their information as irrelevant in epistemic decoloniality (Moyo and Mutsvairo, 2018; Pohjonen, 2022). Although the concept of epistemic decolonization is complex and varies across disciplines (Long, 2023), the core idea entails challenging the colonial influence in knowledge production and academic research, highlighting the importance of inclusive perspectives and preserving diversity within the universal knowledge framework (Knobloch, 2020; Patin et al., 2020). It involves unlearning and dismantling unjust practices, assumptions, and institutions while simultaneously fostering positive actions and developing alternative ways of understanding (Mohamed et al., 2020; Squire and Alozie, 2023). One approach to reshaping this dynamic is by amplifying the voices of marginalized communities on the global stage, developing theories rooted in their experiences, documenting their perspectives, and ensuring their voices are heard (Duarte and Belarde-Lewis, 2015).

The #NoMore initiative, as a global social movement addressing issues relevant to Africa, offers a unique opportunity to investigate the Ethiopian perspective on the issue, compare it with the US users' viewpoints, and explore the decolonization of knowledge. #Nomore movement emerged as a global social movement first organized in November 2021 by African organizers, primarily from the Horn of Africa to raise awareness, advocate for an end to foreign interference, and bring an end to the conflict in Ethiopia (Borkena, 2021). Like the digital activism of the #OccupyWallStreet and #BlackLivesMatter movements (Freelon et al., 2016; Wang and Caskey, 2016), the #NoMore movement utilizes social media platforms to disseminate information and rally global support.

Taken together, this study aims to understand the perspectives of African users and their differences from the viewpoint of the "West," particularly by comparing

the opinions and emotions expressed by individuals in Ethiopia with those in the United States (US), frequently regarded as prominent examples of western Viewpoints and use the #Nomore movement as an observing window. Users in the US were chosen not only because they represent a prime example of Western perspectives but also due to the country's historical and active engagement in the region (Abbink, 2021), as well as the significant influence of the Ethiopian diaspora based in the United States on Ethiopian politics (Gagliardone et al., 2016). Specifically, this study focuses on the following questions:

RQ1: What are the differences in focused topics between users from Ethiopia and the United States?

RQ2: What are the differences in emotions expressed in topics between users from Ethiopia and the United States?

RQ3: What are the differences in the influence of users and the opinions of leaders in Ethiopia and those in the United States?

Our in-depth analysis of an African political movement through tracking global and local narratives and identifying discrepancies in the movement's core discussion topics and sentiments serves two critical purposes in decolonization efforts. First, it fosters the inclusion of the African perspective in global political discourse. Second, it documents and preserves the views, knowledge, and strategies of local people, ensuring these are accessible for future studies and contributing to global knowledge production.

The study has the following contributions: First, it expands the decolonization of knowledge in communication concepts by leveraging new dataset analysis. Building upon existing frameworks and methodologies, our research seeks to incorporate fresh data to enhance understanding of African people's unique perspectives. Second, this study applies social identity theory to understand differences in viewpoints between users from different regions, offering an understanding of the viewpoints of local users on African conflicts that may have been overlooked in mainstream media. This enables local users' voices to be heard in political decision-making, conflict resolution, and long-term peace-building efforts.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. #Nomore social movement

Ethiopia was ruled by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a coalition of regional parties dominated by the TPLF, which ruled the Tigray region and influenced Ethiopian politics from

1991 until 2018 (Getachew and Beshah, 2019). On November 3, 2020, the Ethiopian federal government accused the TPLF of attacking an army base in Tigray, prompting to launch a military offensive. The conflict continued until a ceasefire was signed on November 2, 2022. In November 2021, organizers from the Horn of Africa launched a social movement using hashtags #NoMore and #SayNoMore to oppose foreign interference, and #EthiopiaPrevails to highlight Ethiopia's resilience and sovereignty (Korybko, 2022). The #NoMore movement leverages social media platforms. Facebook primarily serves for personalized interactions and news updates, whereas Twitter plays a pivotal role in political discourse in Ethiopia. Twitter has become the central platform for hashtag activism, as evidenced by previous local movements like #OromoProtests and #FreeZone9Bloggers (Gagliardone and Pohjonen, 2016).

## **2.2. Using social media data to study social movements**

The influence of social media on political discussions has increased since its inception. Social media platforms have become essential tools for facilitating the exchange of information, the influence of opinions, and decision-making processes. With more than 368 million active users in 2022 (Statista, 2023), X (formerly Twitter) is one of the most influential social media networks in the world, particularly when it comes to political discourse. Numerous studies have analyzed political discourse by using data from Twitter. The #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo, #BringBackOurGirls, and #IceBucketChallenge movements serve as prominent illustrations of how social media has evolved into a vital platform for political and social discourse (Schwörer and Fernández-García, 2021; Yu et al., 2022). Our study analyzes the #Nomore movement, which originated in Ethiopia and aims to raise awareness of African issues.

## **2.3. User engagement in social movements across diverse backgrounds**

National boundaries and linguistic constraints do not appear to obstruct public online collective engagement on social media. Studies have compared the differences in the communication and engagement of users based on their locations (Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2015; Jackson and Wang, 2013). A comparison between US and South Korean social media users showed that ethical culture positively influences information-sharing behavior but negatively impacts concerns about information privacy (Chai, 2020). Tsai and Clobert (2019) demonstrated that culture shapes emotional life, and many assumptions

derived from Western views of emotion may not fully apply to East Asian contexts. For example, Western cultures prioritize maximizing positive emotions and minimizing negative ones more than East Asian cultures do. In our study, we used location-related variables to investigate variations in content, sentiments, and emotional responses in tweets from Ethiopia versus the US on the same topics.

## **2.4. Social Identity theory**

The place where an individual resides is an important factor that shapes individual or collective identity. This study applies social identity theory to understand differences in viewpoints between users from different regions. Social identity theory is a psychological theory that explores how individuals identify themselves and others based on group membership (Tajfel, 1978). It is a valuable framework for comprehending various social phenomena, encompassing inter-group conflicts, prejudice, discrimination, nationalism, and group behavior. For instance, Korte (2007) employed the theoretical framework and discovered that individuals' thought processes and sense of belonging to social groups significantly impact their subsequent behavior and attitudes within social systems. Users' decisions to engage in specific discussion topics within a social movement, the emotions expressed in their texts, and their retweeting behavior are influenced by their social identity (Reyes-Menendez et al., 2020).

## **3. Data collection and methods**

### **3.1. Data collection**

We gathered a dataset comprising 1,036,111 tweets by conducting searches using the hashtags #NoMore, #EthiopiaPrevails, and #SayNoMore. We collected the data using the Twitter (X) API for free, but shortly after completing our data collection, Twitter (X) announced the end of free API access. This data collection spanned from November 21, 2021, to August 21, 2022, encompassing the initial phase of the conflict in Ethiopia. These were among the most prevalent hashtags used in the #Nomore movement. We utilized the Tweepy package in Python to gather tweets (Wisdom and Gupta, 2016). The dataset consisted of tweets written in different languages, with 78% in English, 12% in Amharic (the official language of Ethiopia), 7% in unspecified languages, and 3% in other languages. To facilitate comparative analysis, we used English tweets for this study. We removed tweets from bots (Yang et al., 2022) and mainstream media accounts, and their retweets to have a more focused study on individual

users. We further processed the resulting data set to remove punctuation, contractions, links (i.e., URLs), and stop words and next lemmatized the data.

### 3.2. Location of users

Following Lyu et al. (2021), we used the location information in each user's profile to identify their location. Geopy was used to convert location data into the geocoded city, state, and country locations. Noisy location information such as "My parent's basement" was given a null value. Of the 351,882 tweets, 47.23% indicated African countries, primarily Ethiopia (87.58%=146,213), as their location; 48.80% indicated countries in the Western world, primarily the US (73.27%=125,838 ), Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and countries in Europe; and the other 3.75% indicated countries in Asia. It is plausible to assume that among these participants outside of Ethiopia are Ethiopian immigrants residing in different parts of the world interested in the situations unfolding in their home country. Furthermore, this may encompass citizens of other countries, activists, researchers, and organizations actively involved in addressing societal issues worldwide.

Our geolocation-based comparative analysis enables people in the US to access information from diverse perspectives rather than relying solely on mainstream media. Without this geolocation analysis, we would miss the differing perceptions of the movement, leading to a biased understanding of how people view issues in Ethiopia. This influence is reciprocal; African immigrants, shaped by their experiences in the host country, also have their voices heard by local people, thus impacting local decision-making and perceptions.

### 3.3. Topic and sentiment analysis

BERTopic was used to extract topics and important words describing topics (Grootendorst, 2022). It used the sentence-transformers DistilBERT package with default parameters. To detect the emotions from tweets, we used a pre-trained deep learning model built on the DistilRoBERTa architecture that is designed to classify text into 7 emotion categories. This distilled and efficient version of RoBERTa features 6 transformer layers with 768 hidden units and 12 attention heads, totaling around 66 million parameters, pre-trained on a dataset with texts from Twitter and Reddit, the model effectively detects emotions in tweets (Hartmann, n.d.; Sanh et al., 2019). The emotion category is based on Ekman's definitions of the six basic emotions, including Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear, Surprise, and Disgust (Ekman, 1992).

We manually assessed the accuracy of emotion detection by having two student assistants label emotions in a random sample of 500 tweets. The agreement rate of the labeling is 89%, and the Cohens' kappa is 0.77, which indicates a substantial agreement. Although the accuracy of emotion detection was not ideal, in the aggregated analysis, it may not heavily affect the comparative analysis, considering that the errors might be evenly distributed.

### 3.4. Temporal analysis

We utilized 39 consecutive weeks of data from November 2021 to August 2022 to analyze the temporal dynamics of topics. The trend analysis is expected to uncover the dominant topics discussed by users from different geographic locations over time, as well as the gradual decline or increase in user participation in particular topics and their emotional responses.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Descriptive statistics and topic analysis

Between November 2021 and August 2022, the number of tweets per month fluctuated from 7,411 to 466,068, presumably in reflection of the intensity of the conflict on the ground. The number of tweets was high in November and December 2021 as the TPLF advanced from the Tigray region to the capital city of Addis Ababa, approximately 580 miles away. However, in late December 2021, the federal government forced the TPLF to retreat to the Tigray region (Figure 1).

We have found that 77.31 % of the users have specified their location as either Ethiopia or the US. This significant proportion provides ample data to achieve our stated research objective and conduct a reliable and substantive comparative analysis between tweets from these two locations. After the BERTopic analysis, we manually aggregated topics with high similarities. Two research assistants reviewed the topics generated by BERTopic and selected the main themes. We ended up with ten main themes.

**Topic 1 (The cause of the war: 38,557 tweets)** restate and discuss how the war between TPLF and the federal government started on November 3, 2020. This seems to clarify who initiated the conflict amidst counterarguments.

**Topic 2 (The implication of external influence: 62,544 tweets)** encompasses the implications of external influence within Ethiopia and the continent of Africa. Tweets disapprove of the action of countries outside Africa on Ethiopia and criticizes foreign economic and political sanctions against Ethiopia, such as H.R.6600

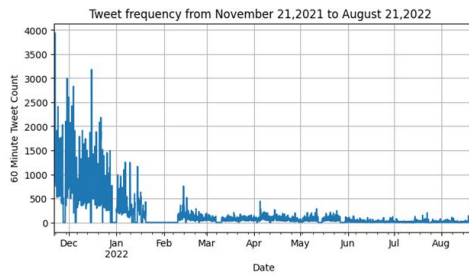


Figure 1: Frequency of tweets

(Peace and of, 2022).

**Topic 3 (Atrocities 18,361 tweets)** focuses on atrocities committed in Uganda and conflict zones in Ethiopia. Tweets also note that the media communicates that the war is in the Tigray region, whereas the conflict was in the bordering regions.

**Topic 4 (Human rights abuse and fake news: 16,258 tweets)** represents a discussion of human rights violations, killings, and crimes committed against humanity in various parts of Ethiopia due to the conflict and in Uganda. Tweets also pointed out fake news by individuals and mass media about human rights abuse and killings to influence the international community.

**Topic 5 (The capital city, and war crime: 6,449 tweets)** discusses the various challenges the country Ethiopia encounters in socio-political environments, such as the diversity of the Ethiopian population. It rebukes the claim that the conflict happened because of the population’s diverse identity.

**Topic 6 (Killings in Uganda: 9,612 tweets)** This topic discusses killings and abuse of innocent civilians in Uganda. Although the issue in Uganda has no link with the war in Ethiopia, users started to use #NoMore to reveal issues in their respective countries.

**Topic 7 (Outsider intervention:29,819 tweets)** represents tweets focused on protesting countries outside the African continent interfering and meddling in Ethiopia’s internal affairs.

**Topic 8 (Misinformation: 10,593 tweets)** focuses on the disinformation propagated by mainstream media and some organizations about the conflict. The media was criticized discussing the conflict in a biased manner.

**Topic 9 (Sovereignty: 47,996 tweets)** focuses on defending and safeguarding the sovereignty of Ethiopia from foreign aggression and incursion as an independent ancient state.

**Topic 10 (Unity of Ethiopia: 31,862 tweets)** advocates for country unity since there are several ethnic-based tensions in Ethiopia. Tweets also appreciated users supporting #NoMore movement.

## 4.2. Differences in focused Topics

Tweets from Ethiopia and the US showed a comparable level of engagement in many topics, as shown in Figure 2. Reports by Borkena (2021) have shown that global protests advocating the #Nomore movement were organized by Ethiopian and Eritrean communities or diasporas and delineated the active involvement of immigrants globally. The US users involved in the #Nomore movement were highly likely to be originally from Africa, particularly Ethiopia. Numerous studies highlight the active role of diaspora immigrants in their home countries’ politics. Lyons et al. (2007) explored the influence of the Ethiopian diaspora in the U.S. during the 2005 political crisis. Alebachew (2018) advocated for extending voting rights to Ethiopians abroad, citing their historical involvement and political and economic reasons.

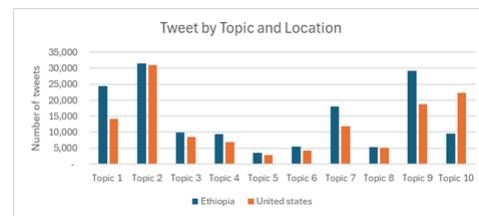


Figure 2: Number of tweets by topic and location

In Topic 1 (The cause of the war), Topic 6 (Killings in Uganda), Topic 7 (Outsider intervention), and Topic 9 (Sovereignty), tweets from Ethiopia, showed higher engagement than those from the US. Those topics focused on Ethiopian and combat-related issues, and Ethiopian users might have been more interested in discussing events they were experiencing and in proximity to (He et al., 2015). By contrast, Topic 10 (Unity of Ethiopia) was more supported by users from the US (Figure 2). That difference shows the inclination and wishes of users in foreign countries to see a unified, peaceful Ethiopia probably because they reside in relatively peaceful countries and experience the benefits of doing so.

Furthermore, a significant difference in user engagement becomes apparent in Topic 2 (The implications of external influence) during specific weeks, as illustrated in Figure 3. Tweets from Ethiopia increased in engagement, specifically in Topic 2, starting in the first week of May 2022, when the U.S. Congress proposed the Ethiopia Peace and Stabilization Act of 2022 bill, S.3199, which would require imposing further sanction on Ethiopia on May 5, 2022 (Peace and of, 2022). Users showed increased engagement in requesting the bill’s cancelation, especially by using

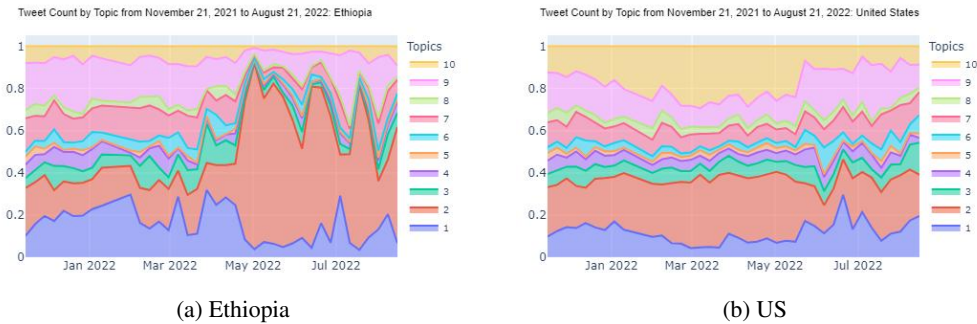


Figure 3: Temporal topic distribution

hashtags such as #CancelHR6600 and #CancelS3199.

### 4.3. Differences in Emotion

Across all topics and times, ‘anger’ and ‘fear’ consistently emerged as the dominant emotions. In contrast, ‘surprise’ and ‘disgust’ were the least frequently expressed (Figure 4). Users from Ethiopia consistently exhibited higher levels of ‘fear’ than their counterparts from the US. Users from the US demonstrated more ‘sadness’ compared to those from Ethiopia. This observed divergence in emotional expression may be attributed to the impact of cultural influences and societal expectations. Individuals may feel an elevated sense of fear, pride, anger, or indignation based on the narratives and interpretations circulated within their social circles. These emotional responses can shape their attitudes, behaviors, and willingness to engage in collective action (Fang et al., 2023). A more comprehensive investigation is needed to analyze the socio-cultural factors influencing emotional expression within the #nomore case.

Ethiopian users displayed a slightly elevated sense of ‘joy’ following the week of the 16th, which coincided with the declaration of a humanitarian truce on March 24, 2022 (Figure 4). This truce reduced violence and crimes on the ground, consequently enhancing positive emotions among Ethiopian users.

There was a noticeable spike in ‘anger’ from users in the US in the week of the 18th (Figure 4). This spike corresponded with a time when the U.S. Congress revisited the agenda of imposing further sanctions on May 5, 2022, through the Ethiopia Peace and Stabilization Act of 2022 (Peace and of, 2022).

### 4.4. Differences in Influence

As retweeting continues to play a crucial role in the distribution of information through social media, we employed an analysis of retweet counts as a key

metric to gauge the extent of information dissemination and engagement (Firdaus et al., 2021). We focused on retweets as it is a more active form of engagement, indicating a user’s intent to amplify a message to their own network or group. While ‘likes’ indicate approval and comments provide qualitative feedback, ‘retweets’ contribute directly to the spread and visibility of content across the platform. Focusing on individual users’ retweet counts allows us to directly measure the influence and reach of specific content and users.

We examined the volume of retweets received by specific tweets and the associated users responsible for originating those tweets. There were notable differences in information diffusion between the Ethiopian and the US. Ethiopian tweets received 624,245 retweets, while US tweets surpassed this with 1,280,697 retweets. Given the long-tail distribution, where few tweets receive many retweets, and most receive none or few, we used the Wilcoxon rank-sum test. Tweets from the US ( $n=125,835$ ) had more retweets than those from Ethiopia ( $n=146,213$ ), with  $p=0.00$ . This shows that tweets from the US have more influence on the movement in English communication.

we generated the ECDF plot for retweet counts of fewer than 50 and those more than 50 (Figure 5). For retweet counts under 50, there’s little difference between tweets from Ethiopia and the US. Yet, there are more US tweets with counts surpassing 50, suggesting more influential voices are from the US than Ethiopia. We further investigate the influential users in the movement. Here we adopted the h-index, a metric that has been commonly used to measure the impact of academic scholars in their publications. A user has an h-index of  $n$  if he has at most  $n$  tweets that have been retweeted at least  $n$  times. Figure 6 shows the graph of the h-index of users from Ethiopia and the US. Both groups possess influential users with an h-index larger than 100. However, users from the US group seem to have a higher h-index. This further implies the dominant

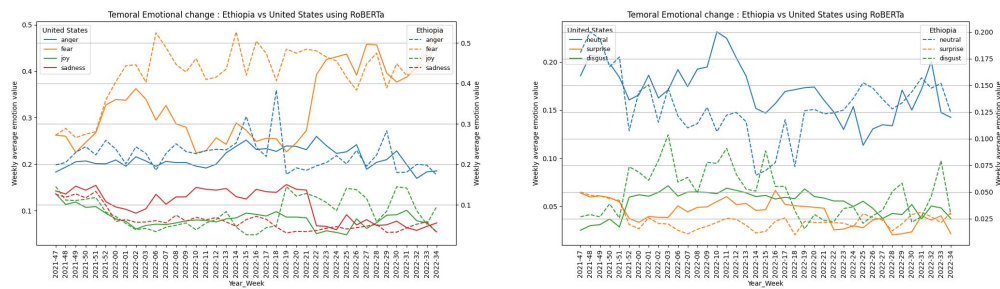


Figure 4: Temporal emotional change

influence of voices from the US in English-based communications in the Ethiopian #NoMore movement. The higher h-index of influence in US users may reflect the systematic inequalities and biases of social media representations of US and Indigenous users. Potentially due to US users with better economic resources and higher digital literacy to speak, with collaborative networks and language advantages to spread their words and algorithmic dominance on the platform (Campos-Castillo and Laestadius, 2020; Hale, 2014).

When it comes to user influence, both Ethiopian and US groups have influential users, but there's a distinction: Ethiopia's top users include political figures like Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali (@AbiyAhmedAli), Press Secretary Billene Seyoum (@BilleneSeyoum), and Ambassador Fitsum Arega (@fitsumaregaa). In contrast, the US group features journalists and activists like Hermela Aregawi (@HermelaTV), @mamamesay, @EdenCheckol, @wyattreed13, @NeaminZelege, and @EADevCouncil, who are key figures in the #NoMore movement.

## 5. Discussion

We analyzed differences in online engagement between tweets from Ethiopia and the US within the #NoMore movement. This analysis revealed a spectrum of opinions shaped by users' geographical locations, broadening the understanding of knowledge originating from Africa in this context.

A comparative analysis of tweets from Ethiopia and the US showed similar engagement levels, likely because over 73% of tweets from outside Ethiopia originated in the US. There is a potential that these users are either Ethiopians or Ethiopian immigrants in the US or have some form of connection to Ethiopia, leading to a comparable level of engagement and participation in each discussion topic. This indicates shared public opinions among Ethiopians globally. Stakeholders,

including embassies, should engage with the diaspora for deeper insights into Ethiopian conditions. The analysis also revealed that communities affected by conflict are more eager to discuss local issues than US users, highlighting the need for targeted strategies that address the specific needs of war-affected communities.

The emotional analysis revealed that "anger" and "fear" were the dominant emotions in tweets, playing a key role in political and social discussions. Wollebaek (2019) shows that anger drives confirmation-seeking, while fear leads to exploring opposing views. Ethiopian tweets showed higher levels of "fear," likely due to proximity to conflict, while US tweets, possibly from Ethiopian immigrants, expressed more "anger." This contrast may reflect cultural differences, with Ethiopia's collective culture fostering caution and the US's individualistic culture encouraging freer expression.

As retweeting stands as a pivotal avenue for disseminating information through social media, we found notable differences between users from Ethiopia and the US in information dissemination. There is a distinction in influential Twitter user accounts within each group that received a high number of retweets. Influential users from Ethiopia are mostly politicians, while the ones from the US are mainly journalists and activists. This contrast highlights the divergence in societal priorities and interests. Differences in tweet diffusion and sharing paths also indicate variations in social circles between the two user groups.

Our analysis of user participation across topics, sentiments, and retweet patterns from two locations reveals differences in knowledge formation based on location. These findings highlight the importance of capturing and preserving local perspectives during global movements or issues.

## 6. Conclusion

Our study involved analyzing 1,036,111 tweets with the hashtags #NoMore, #EthiopiaPrevails, and #SayNoMore to answer the difference in online

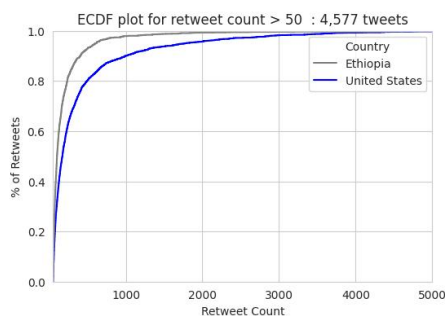
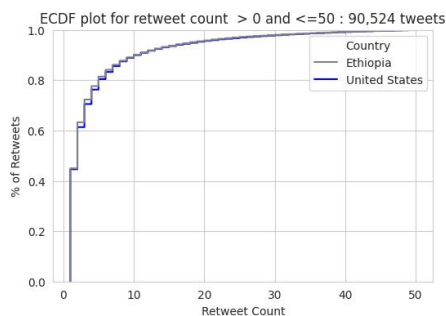


Figure 5: Retweet ECDF plot: Ethiopia vs US

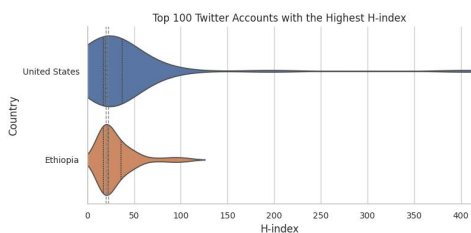


Figure 6: Twitter accounts with the highest H-Index

collective engagement between users from Ethiopia and the US. Leveraging new datasets generated by African users, this research broadens the understanding of African issues from a local community viewpoint. This approach not only enhances the representation of African perspectives in global discussions but also provides valuable context and depth to the analysis of societal issues affecting the continent. Based on the results, such social movements attract users from different locations, with similar engagement levels across most topics. Ethiopian users exhibited higher engagement with topics closely related to their proximity, while US users resonated with peace and unity advocacy. Both groups primarily expressed “anger” and “fear,” with Ethiopian tweets showing higher “fear” levels. Ethiopian users also displayed more “joy” in response to the news, while US users had spikes in “anger” during certain weeks. Notable differences in retweeting patterns were also observed between the two groups.

Our findings are limited by the focus on English-language tweets, the small number of geo-tagged user data, and the unverifiability of users’ location profiles. However, we believe the dataset is sufficient to minimize inaccuracies for an initial study. Future research should compare social media opinions with corresponding news reports and interviews for better context, and exploring information flow through network mapping could offer insights into

group dynamics. Additionally, fine-tuning pre-trained machine learning models with African-specific datasets could improve their accuracy and relevance.

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