Public Engagement in Strengthening Parliamentary Representation and Deepening Democracy

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Abstract

Public engagement is believed to improve the relationship between people and parliament and thereby the participatory democracy. On the basis of this premises, the objective of this research was to contribute to our knowledge of the relation between the people and parliament through investigation of public engagement mechanisms, inclusiveness of public engagement from gender and ethnic perspectives and level of public trust in Parliament and to suggest what change is desired for combining public engagement in representative democracy in Ethiopia.

To meet these objectives, the study employed a mixed-research approach. Desk review, Questionnaire, Key Informant Interview and Focus Group Discussion were used to collect data from diverse group of people including the residents in two constituencies in Addis Ababa, members of parliamentarians, chairpersons of parliamentary standing committees, higher officials of the secretariat, leaders of civil society organizations and political parties.

The findings of the study shows existence of limitations in institutional capacity to engage with people due to absence of specifically responsible body assigned to manage public engagement with adequate budget. Although federal House of People's Representatives (HoPR) of Ethiopia has a constitutional responsibility to engage with the people in undertaking its functions, the level of public engagement is limited only to occasional dissemination of information and occasional consultation; while there is no practice of effective deliberation and collaboration. Even the dissemination and consultation mechanisms used by HoPR have challenged by lack of accessibility, time constraints, low coverage and one-language policy of the parliament. Parliamentary public engagement strategy of the HoPR is not effective in creating public awareness, in bringing the parliament close to the people and creating public trust.

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I.   Introduction

1.1.   Background of the Study

As indicators of political apathy have increased and trust in politics has fallen (Dalton, 2004; Stoker, 2006; Hay, 2007), efforts to engage citizens in to politics have become a standard theme of modern democracy and a central activity for parliament. Leston-Bandeira, (2016) has shown that the environment of the modern parliament is characterized by a questioning of traditional forms of representative democracy, expanding forms of participatory and advocacy types of democracy, as well as an informed and critical citizenry which encompasses both apolitically disengaged public and a highly participative one; crucially, this is an environment where interaction between the legislature and citizens can take place every day, not just every five years. He also observed steady declining levels of trust on political institutions. In this context, public engagement plays an important role in democratization process as it increases the interface between the people and the parliament, not just every election year but every day.

Among parliamentary democracies, there is a widespread belief that above and beyond the occasional opportunity to vote, citizens should be allowed to participate in decisions that affect their daily life. Governments at all levels are now going further and supporting more active forms of citizenship in which various decision processes are open to more public participation. This belief is enshrined in Article 21 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) and is espoused by governments of most political persuasions (Paul, 2009).

However, despite its importance for deepening democracy, governments in undemocratic system are found to be reluctant to seize the opportunities that public engagement will create. When government fail to introduce effective parliamentary public engagement, the relationship between the people and parliament get weaken and the parliament lose its role as mediator between the people and the government.

In other words, it is believed that in order to improve the public trust in parliament, it is vital to know perception of the people of different age, class, gender and ethnic group on effectiveness of public engagement. Therefore, this research will contribute to our knowledge of the relation between the people and parliament which are reflected through representation, public engagement, trust and desired combination of participatory and representative democracy.

1.2.   Statement of the Problem

While research on parliamentary public engagement is generally scarce (Leston-Bandeira, 2016), the existing studies themselves are culturally limited to the experiences of the western countries, which cannot be generalized to the different context of developing countries. While most of the existing empirical studies were based on experiences of democratized countries like UK and Europe, no adequate research has been conducted on the role of introducing parliamentary public engagement with in representative democracy in Ethiopia.

Leston-Bandeira (2016) explores the role that public engagement plays in the relationship between parliament and public in UK, reflecting in particular on its elements of symbolic representation. But, his study did not address how people respond to public engagement activities as it only investigated the supply side, and explored the UK Parliament's engagement strategy and officials' narratives in shaping the purposes of parliamentary engagement, through elite interviews and documentary analysis. Leston-Bandeira (2016) suggested further studies to explore how the public does indeed receive public engagement and whether multiple representative claims do take place, on one hand, and on the other, whether this has any effect on the public's perception of the institution.

Paul (2009) also recognized the importance of public engagement beyond occasional participation in voting. He noted that while public engagement is widely accepted, the practice has remained remarkably free from empirical scrutiny. Paul (2009) addressed four sets of questions: what are the apparent benefits of participation; who gets to participate; what is the scope of decision-making that the public is to participate in; and what the terms of participation are. But, the aforementioned article did not address the relation of Public engagement with response of government to peoples' demand, the relationship between public engagement and trust in government and how public engagement may help strengthening inclusive government along gender and ethnic lines.

Christopher (2006) has a view that engagement has received much attention in the popular press, while also scholarly work has lagged behind. Following a review of extant literature, his study offers an operational definition of work engagement as a situation-activated psychological state,

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and develops a new measurement scale. However, his study was concerned with employees work engagement rather than parliamentary public engagement.

In response to scarcity of research works on democracy and parliamentary public engagement, this research has aimed at to contribution to our understanding of the relationship between Parliaments and People in Ethiopia; with objective to identify desired changes required for combining participatory democracy with representative democracy. In order to deepen democracy in Ethiopia, the relationships between parliament and people in terms of improvement of inclusive public engagement must be understood. Based on investigation of engagement strategies, inclusiveness and public trust, the study has arrived on the importance of desired changes in Ethiopian political landscape by combining representative democracy and participatory democracy.

1.3. Basic Research Questions

This research project tries to address the following critical research questions;

1. What public engagement mechanisms are set in place by parliament of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to strengthen Parliamentary Representation and participatory democracy?

2. How the existing form of public engagement is effective in creating public trust?

3. How inclusiveness of public engagement is associated with public Trust in the parliament?

4. How gender and ethnicity will affect the inclusion/marginalization in parliamentary public engagement?

1.4. Objectives of the Research project

The overall objective of this research is to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between Parliaments and people in Ethiopia and based on which to investigate the contribution of inclusive parliamentary public engagement in promoting public trust in the parliament and in Deepening Democracy.

 The specific objectives of the research were:

1. To assess the public Engagement mechanisms being employed by the parliament in order to strengthen Parliamentary Representation and participatory democracy?

2. To identify the relationships between public engagement and public Trust in the parliament;

3. To assess the improvements of parliamentary public engagement efforts of the House of Peoples' Representative;

4. To identify the Inclusiveness of parliamentary public engagement in terms of gender and Ethnicity;

1.5. Significance of the Research Project

As a true democracy develops with the emergence of demand from organized people who are capable to actively engage in public affairs and who have skills to influence their representatives, this research serves as seeds to instigate the people for participating and taking actions that are required to strength participatory and representative democracy. The research also has contribution in changing our knowledge of; the importance of combining public engagement with representative democracy, which is very crucial to deepen democratization in Ethiopia.

In addition, the study has important contribution with respect to promoting gender equality by identifying how and what mechanisms are employed by representatives of the people to encourage women to equally involve in the decisions of the parliamentary decision making process in Ethiopia

1.6. Scope of the research Project

The study is limited to public engagement mechanisms employed, its role in strengthening parliamentary representation and Deeping participatory democracy, taking the case of only one of the two Houses of the EFDR Government.

1.7. Organization of the Research project

The research project has five parts. The first section is the introduction part of the paper. The second part is about related literature with regard to parliamentary public engagement

mechanisms and its importance in promoting public trust in parliament as well as in strengthening parliamentary representation and deepening democracy. The third part deals with methodology used and fourth part is concerned with findings and discussion. The last part is about conclusions and implication.

II. Related Literatures

2.1 Meaning of Public Engagement

Public participation/involvement is the process by which Parliament and provincial legislatures consult with the people and interested or affected individuals, organizations and government entities before making a decision. Public participation is a two-way communication and collaborative problem solving mechanism with the goal of achieving representative and more acceptable decisions (South Africa Legislative Sector, 2013). The term "public engagement" can also cover a wide range of communication activities: from straightforward awareness raising, providing information, visits programs, and education initiatives; through two-way consultation activities; to more empowering citizen participation and decision-making opportunities. In parliamentary terms, this can mean anything from reading a leaflet explaining how laws are made, through submitting a petition to parliament or giving views to a committee inquiry, to having direct input to bills being passed (Walker, 2017).

2.2 Purposes of Parliamentary Public Engagement

There are a variety of reasons for Parliament seeking to engage with the public, including increasing public understanding of Parliament and its work, to broaden the range of voices heard by Parliament, and potentially to enhance legitimacy. In addition, individual services and structures within Parliament may have their own, sometimes different (and multiple), motivations for involving the public. For example, for some services, the concern may be to increase the number and diversity of people who engage with Parliament, and/or to enhance what the public can gain from their involvement, perhaps through learning about how Parliament works, or its history, through watching committees and debates, taking part in workshops, tours, events and exhibitions; for others the potential benefits might be seen as being more about what the service can gain from the public, perhaps in order to help scrutinize and hold to account the

government, or to help bring about policy change, including through encouraging the public to provide formal or informal evidence to select committees, or to take part in a digital debate (Kelly and Bochel, 2018).

Public engagement is said to be essential to a healthy democracy, to greater participation in democratic processes, to better understanding of the role of parliament and members of parliament and, by extension, to greater trust that the parliament and the people's representatives will better represent the public's interest (PNSW, 2017). Strengthening citizen involvement in parliament is a desirable democratic goal in and of itself. It improves the quality of legislative decision-making, links citizens to their government and provides legitimacy to democratic institutions (Kurtz, 1997).

According to Walker (2017), at a fundamental level, there are three reasons why parliaments are wise to develop strategies to engage effectively with their citizens between elections.

Firstly: the legitimacy of any parliament depends on the support and engagement of its electorate. Representation of the people is the basis of a parliamentary system. If people feel disconnection from parliament, or simply fail to see that it is at all relevant to their lives, why would they bother to vote at elections? Low voter turnout and skepticism towards politics generally, are part of a general trend of decline in confidence and trust in political institutions.

Secondly: the quality of legislation and policy is improved if it is informed by citizens' concerns, experiences, and views. The scrutiny role of parliaments – tracking and challenging the executive's performance – can positively influence national policies, priorities and development goals, and ensure that they meet the needs of the people.

Thirdly: a parliament that is seen by its citizens to be connected and responsive to their concerns is more likely to earn the trust of the people. If citizens understand the vital role the legislature plays in representing and championing citizens' rights and concerns, they will be more likely to value the institution and its work. When policy decisions incorporate the perspectives of those affected, they can capture a wider range of inputs, and in doing so they can secure public legitimacy (Dryzek, 2010) and relatively improve trust in the performance of public institutions (Newton and Norris, 2000).

2.3   Public Participation Framework

According to Public Policy Forum (2009), Thomson-Senanayake (2012) and Richard and Catherine (2018), we can use the term public participation processes for any process that directly involves the public in government planning and decision making. There are a number of recognized levels of public participation internationally which includes, inform, consult, involve/deliberation and engage/collaborate.

The first level of public participation is to "Inform" the public (e.g., of the status of the proposed project or the relevant process). This level provides the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions. Individuals and stakeholders are then able to properly assess and evaluate the impacts of policies and initiatives proposed by government.

The second level is to "Consult". At this level, the public is invited to provide feedback, input or comment on analyses, alternatives and/or decisions. This allows the public to have an opportunity to provide input on policies and initiatives before they are finalized.

The third level is to "Involve/deliberation". At this level, the public is provided with opportunity for dialogue and interaction. This could also be described as direct public participation throughout the process to ensure that issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered. However, it is the understanding that the legislature is still the decision maker.

The fourth level is to "Collaborate/engage". At this level, the public is provided with opportunity to partner or work jointly in active development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

The goal each level of participation and strategies used is different that has summarized as follows:

Table: 1. Form of Engagement

Form of Engagement	Purpose	Tools
Inform Providing the public with the information required to understand the issue	To facilitate increased knowledge of the issue and the decisions concerning it	Fact sheets, web sites, open houses, pamphlets, social media

Consult Providing the public with clear and coherent information regarding the issue, welcome the public's thoughts on the topic, and indicate how their input affected the outcome	To obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives or decisions	Public comment, focus groups, questionnaires, public meetings, Twitter town halls, online idea forums
Deliberate Engaging with the public in two-way conversation to make certain that the public's thoughts and concerns are factored into proposed solutions/decisions	Greater level of participation by stakeholders as they assist in idea generation	Workshops, deliberative polling, advisory committees
Collaborate/Engage Relying on relevant stakeholders input in combination with organizational expertise to incorporate recommendations into decisions to the maximum extent possible	Shared ownership between the organization and the stakeholders as the community is involved in each aspect (and the outcomes) of the decision	Consensus-building, participatory decision-making, panels, formal partnerships, informal coalitions, alliances, networks

Source: PPF,2009

As indicated above, public engagement/collaboration which is the concern of the study is the highest level of participation. Because, achieving goals like a healthy population or a highly skilled labor force requires even more than public deliberation. It requires collaboration between government(s), stakeholders, communities and citizens. Public engagement processes are designed to help all these parties work together more effectively to find and implement solutions to complex problems or achieve complex goals. Public engagement processes are also about building the machinery, skills, and culture that will make that possible. They do this by treating the public and government as partners in the exercise (PPF, 2009).

A fully Public Engagement process moves through four stages which can be represented on a continuum as follows:

Views ⟶ **Deliberation** ⟶ ...ction ⟶ ...aluation

Public/Government ⟶
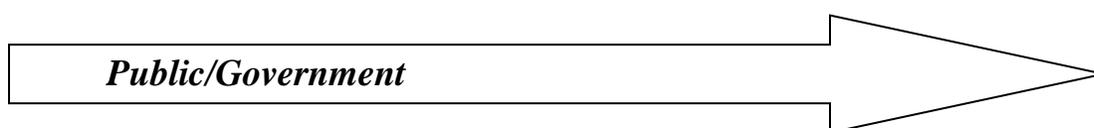
Views- In this stage, task is to get all the participants to state their views of the problem—to tell us, in effect, how they would frame the issue. In contrast to consultation and involvement, collaboration/engagement thus treats issues holistically from the start. It allows participants to propose new connections between issues and puts the challenge of reframing front and centre. Moreover, note that there is no wrong answer to the question: 'How do you see the issue?' In asking people to state their views, we are simply asking them to report on what they think. No one is passing judgment on it and everyone is entitled to their view. By giving them a chance to get it on the table, we ensure that everyone feels included and we have identified everyone's point of departure for the dialogue that is to come.

Involvement/Deliberation- Once all the views are on the table, the facilitator moves the discussion to the second stage. This stage asks the public to do more than just give their views. They must go another step to engage one another in a dialogue where they work through the issues together, weighing evidence for competing claims, seeking compromises and trade-offs to deal with competing values and priorities, and arriving at strategies for how to proceed. In the end, however, the ultimate authority on which new connections matter most—and, ultimately, to reframing the issue—is the participants' actual experience. It serves as the surest guide to new and important ways of looking at issues and the best standard for ranking them. Government is unlikely to know these things beforehand and, for its part, must guard against assuming it does.

The basic idea here is that involving the public in the deliberative stage of the policy process will lead to a more transparent, accountable and responsive outcome. Ultimately, the public should be more willing to accept the results because they've played a key role in the deliberations.

Action- it is a stage where each of the participants must be ready and willing to propose specific actions they (or their organizations) can take to move the strategy forward. A strategy that no one is willing to contribute to is of little use. This, then, is where the rubber hits the road. Participants must be willing to demonstrate real ownership of the issue by taking responsibility for some part of the solutions.

Evaluation- Finally, the group must arrive at a set of indicators to assess their progress. These indicators should not focus exclusively on the effectiveness of the proposed strategies and action plan. They must also help the group assess the effectiveness of the process, that is, their effort to build new relationships. This, in turn, should lead to refinements of the strategies, new commitments in the action plan, and ways to strengthen the process.

2.4   Parliamentary Public Engagement Mechanisms

The push for parliaments to engage with the public is consistent with a broader participatory trend in contemporary governance (Fung and Wright, 2003; Newman, 2005). Increasingly, decision makers, public agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and corporations are seeking novel ways to engage with their constituents in response to perceived failings in legitimacy (Bingham et al., 2005) and an observed decline in trust in the institutions of representative politics (Tormey, 2015). In the particular context of legislatures, the drive to 'connect' with the public is an attempt to make parliaments more relevant and accessible to citizens at a time when there is low public trust in politics (Leston-Bandeira, 2014).

Parliaments around the world are experimenting with new forms of public communication and engagement. We can witness, for example, legislatures taking an active approach to communicating with the public through websites, Blogs, YouTube and social media platforms, such as Twitter and Facbook. Some parliaments have experimented with novel participatory mechanisms, for example e-Petitions and innovative consultative forums to engage with 'hard to reach' publics (Carolyn, 2016). Parliament of New South Wales currently employs the following methods of engaging the public which includes comprehensive publication, House in Review, Running the Record, Education and Outreach, School tours, school outreach, community workshop, providing parliament and democracy courses, Conducting public sector seminars, encouraging the public to visit the parliament, Open days, public tours, comprehensive website, Using social media such as Twitter, facebook and others (PNSW, 2017)..

According to David (2006), there are a number of different ways in which parliaments are working to involve citizens in the legislative process, both through contributions to work on bills in progress and through suggestions for new or amended legislation. These may involve: open invitations to citizens to make submissions on bills; invitations to specified NGOs and social

movements; ongoing arrangements for collaboration between parliamentary committees and citizen groups and experts; special forums or chambers for civil society, whether meeting independently or jointly with parliamentarians; procedures for citizens' initiatives and referendums; or some combination of a number of these modes.

2.5   Public Engagement and Public Trust in the Parliament

According to Petts (2008), Public engagement through deliberative processes is promoted in both academic and policy circles as a potential means to build public trust in risk decisions and decision-makers. Governments in general and the institution of the parliament in particular seem to optimistically take a positive relationship between public engagement and trust almost for granted.

Trust literature has grown a pace to the extent that in one review (Kramer and Tyler, 1996 as cited in Petts, 2008) no less than 16 definitions were accessible. For instance, according to the American psychologist Julian Rotter (1971), trust is the expectation that the promise of an individual or group can be relied upon. Trust in government also refers to one's perceptions regarding the integrity and ability of the public agency to provide the expected service (Welch, Hinnant, & Moon, 2005).

Lö¨fstedt (2005) argues trust in favour of confidence in the outcome as well as the decision process itself, contending that the public can in some circumstances trust a regulator even if they do not agree with the decision as long as the process by which it was reached was credible. Lö¨fstedt (2006) in his work also favours dealing with a decline in trust through a focus on perception of competency, fairness or efficiency of government including the institution of the parliament. Hence, he contends that distrust caused by a lack of fairness should be attacked through public engagement, whereas if it is caused by perceived incompetence, greater involvement of experts in the decision may be required. However, this raises questions as to whether these dimensions are discrete and unrelated and certainly in public engagement, it is debatable whether a focus on optimizing one (e.g., fairness) to the detriment of another (e.g., competence) would be wise.

In her Reith lectures, O'Neill (2002) observed 'well placed trust grows out of active inquiry rather than blind acceptance'. In other words, complete openness does not guarantee trust; rather

it is built when specific elements of information can be traced to particular sources whose reliability can be tested. This suggests that in order to enhance or build trust, it is necessary to find ways in which people can actively check one another's claims. 'It is not sufficient to gather all interested parties around a table and merely hope for the catharsis effect to emerge spontaneously' (IGRC, 2007). Rather a deliberative engagement process has to engender the confidence and competence that allows all participants to generate a common framing and understanding of the risks and the management options through an equal opportunity to express opinions which are open to challenge and debate.

Most theoretical discussions of trust stress its multidimensionality, with elements of Renn and Levine's (1991) five dimensions – **competence, objectivity, fairness, consistency, empathy – consistently supported** (Johnson 1999; Peters, Covello, and McCallum, 1997) and tested (e.g., Jungermann, Pfister, and Fisher, 1996; Mishra 1999; Poortinga and Pidgeon, 2003). When individuals go through processes of claims checking, these elements underpin to varying degrees how they respond. On the other hand, for building and maintaining trust, (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2004) suggested six guidelines such as **communication, support, respect, fairness, predictability and competence**. Trust need to be earned; it cannot be demanded. They also developed measure of trustworthiness and provided norms for trustworthiness scale. According to this norm, the level of trust could be 'high', 'moderate' or 'low' depending on the score obtained and this study measure public trust in the institution of the parliament based on these dimensions.

2.6   Parliamentary Public Engagement in terms of Gender and Ethnic Minorities

Parliament is a political institution where both men and women are expected to be equally represented and participated. Parliament that meets the basic premise of gender equality is one where rules are accessible to all Member of Parliaments (MPs), do not exclude, restrict or discriminate against women, and provide for gender neutral language. They are organizations that accept the need to review all policies, laws and practices from a gender perspective, either

through a dedicated committee on gender equality or by sharing that responsibility across all bodies of the parliament (IPU, 2011).

From its very inception, IIDEA (2005) believed that women's political participation was, and remains, central to democratic governance. IIDEA also recognizes that if the world's established and emerging democracies are to be truly democratic, half of the world's population cannot be excluded from either representation or participation in decision making. However, despite the widespread transition to democracy taking place in many regions, 'the popular participation of women in key decision-making as full and equal partners with men, particularly in politics, has not yet been achieved'. Even where representatives are chosen through fair and democratic elections, it is often said that legislative assemblies remain "unrepresentative," and, in particular, that they are under-representative of women as well as ethnic minorities, and the poorer and less educated social classes (Karen, 2003).

In an increasingly diverse society, we need to focus also on the political inclusion of ethnic minority groups as a means to their wider integration into society. Active participation in democracy and decision-making is indeed a paramount, necessary condition for the integration of minority groups and the representation of all citizens in their parliament is at the core of liberal democracy. The argument is that all citizens are of equal status and worth, and consequently all groups of society have the same right to a presence in parliament (ENAR, 2010).

This requires active measures to empower people such as providing information on how they can exercise their voting rights, how to have their voice heard and make them appreciate the power of their vote in society. In addition, the tone and content of any political debate must not undermine this participatory process but should rather ensure that there is a level playing field for all members of society. But, despite advances in the last century; ideas of equality and inclusiveness are far from accomplished. In some places ethnic minority groups remain systematically marginalized (Didier, 2009). So, if governments and institutions of parliaments are to be truly representative, they should reflect the make-up and cultural diversity of society as a whole.

For David (2006) where there is a likelihood that minority communities will not be adequately represented in parliament, a number of different strategies are available, depending on the type of electoral system and the degree of geographical concentration of the minority or minorities concerned which includes;

✓ *Reduced registration or funding or entry requirements*. Entry for smaller groups can be facilitated by reducing the number of statements of support needed to register a political party, or the number of voters to qualify for public funding. Or parties registered as belonging to a national minority may qualify for entry to parliament on a lower threshold of the popular vote.

✓ *Designing constituency boundaries* so as to give representatives from minority communities a better chance of success (so-called 'affirmative gerrymandering'). Or, if minorities are concentrated in a particular region, a more favorable number of parliamentary seats can be assigned to that region.

✓ *Party candidate quotas*, so that in certain regions, a minimum percentage of those on a party list must be drawn from minority communities. For example, in Singapore 14 out of 23 constituencies are Group Representation Constituencies, with a requirement that at least one candidate in each party team must belong to a minority.

✓ *Reserved seats* for representatives of minority communities. This is the most widely used method, currently employed by some 25 countries from every region of the world. India currently reserves 79 of its 543 seats in the Lok Sabha for scheduled castes and 41 for scheduled tribes. Mauritius reserves 8 of its 70 seats for the 'best losers' representing the four constitutionally recognized ethnic communities. Slovenia reserves one each for the Italian and Hungarian 'national communities'.

2.7 Parliamentary Public Engagement and Representative Democracy

David (2006) briefly described democracy as both an ideal and a set of institutions and practices. As an ideal, democracy expresses two very simple principles: first, that the members of any group or association should have the determining influence and control over its rules and policies, through their participation in deliberations about the common interest; second, that in doing so they should treat each other, and be treated, as equals. As a set of institution, one

dimension of democracy consists in the institutions of representative and accountable government, which together determine the laws and policies for society and secure respect for the rule of law.

It seems that whenever issues of democracy are dealt with, they cannot be addressed without referring to representation. In representative democracies, as our political systems are named, questions concerning the quality of democracy are often translated into questions of representation. These include: How well do the members of parliament (MPs) represent? Whom is being represented; whom is not? How well does the decision-making body represent the people in its composition and decisions?

However, in these days, representative democracy has been criticized on a number of grounds which necessitates searching for alternative forms of democracy which is participatory democracy (Maija, 2017). For instance, for Rousseau (1988 as cited in Maij, 2017), democracy through representation was not possible, because will could not be represented in representative democracy. People, for him, were free only on Election Day.

For Arendt (2006 as cited in Maij, 2017), the aim of representative government is to replace hall meetings, popular clubs, societies, and councils which were inclusive, spontaneity, self-selection, discussion and exchange of opinions, as well as their distinctness from parties by their nature. They were places for people that did not belong to any party. In addition, he also deeply suspicious of representative government and the party system it fostered. Because representative government for him was bad since it re-established the division between the rulers and the ruled, making the people simply selectors of their rulers.

As a result, the interest in finding more direct forms of democracy which has emanated from the limitation of representative democracies. The interest towards participatory democracy also emanates from citizenship movements, which seek greater impact on the way policies are formu-lated and implemented, as well as from governments that have sought new ways to understand public opinion and to road-test their proposals and to enhance the connection between the public and public decision-making, allowing a more direct form of public input (Greg and Rebecca, 2012). But, what needs attention is that forms of more direct democracy cannot replicate or

replace the parliamentary process instead it complements by filling the gaps in representative democracy.

In the 21st century, role of parliament as a democratic representative institution is also changed significantly and assumes a key role as mediator between society and governance. They are expected to actively reach out to the public. This leads to the development of the public engagement function, whereby parliament needs to be seen as open and transparent, but also enabling citizens to put forward their views on governance (Leston-Bandeira, 2016). The past few years have witnessed numerous efforts across many parliaments to engage more effectively with the public and to improve the way they work: to become more genuinely representative of their electorates, more accessible and accountable to them, more open and transparent in their procedures, and more effective in their key tasks of legislation and oversight of government (David, 2006).

Modern parliamentary representation should be therefore supplemented by parliamentary Public engagement that helps to perform important functions of representation and connectivity. That means the recent expansion of public engagement activities may in fact contribute towards a shift in the nature of our modern parliamentary representation. This shift does not question the traditional electoral value of representation, but it expands it to a wider and more flexible form of representation, which may be expressed in many more activities than those strictly linked to a formal representation of interests, or indeed beyond the MP-constituency link. This means public engagement has been developed to fill the gap in traditional parliamentary representation **(**Leston-Bandeira, 2016).

III. Research Methodology

3.1. Approaches and Methods

The study employed a mixed-research approach to show the role that public engagement plays for strengthening effectiveness of parliamentary representation and deepening democracy in Ethiopia. Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were employed to undertake this research project. The primary reason for choosing the mixed research approach is that either quantitative approach or qualitative approach alone is not sufficient enough to generate the relevant information pertinent to the relationship between people and parliament. The mixed design is also helpful to triangulate information gathered from several sources..

3.2. Sources of Data

Both secondary sources and primary sources of data were collected to support the finding with rich evidences. The secondary sources of data were legal documents which include the federal and regional constitutions, relevant proclamations and regulations both at federal government and regional state government levels and the ethics and procedural code of conduct of the Parliament. The review of legal documents is helpful to understand the relationships between people and parliament from legal point of view. In addition to legal documents, the existing studies on the relationships between people and the parliament were reviewed to obtain vital information about the practical relationships between the people and parliaments.

The primary sources of data were collected from three different groups of populations. The first group of the study population was the residents in two constituencies in Addis Ababa, who were included in the research to make opinion survey on the level of inclusions in parliamentary engagement and to find out associations of public engagement with gender, ethnicity and with public trust. For this survey 120 respondents were randomly selected from the two constituencies in Addis Ababa and 98 of them were responded.

The second group of population is members of parliament who know the procedures and practices of relations between people and parliament. Eighteen members of parliament from the House of People's representative of Ethiopia were interviewed as key informants. Among these key informants, two of them were member of parliamentarians who were representatives of the tow constituencies being selected for this study and eight respondents were member of different

parliamentary standing committees, two respondents were high-ranking officials at status of state minister, and six officials of the secretariat office of the House of Peoples' representatives. These 18 respondents (10 members of standing committee + 2 Representative of the constituencies being selected + 2 higher management body of the parliament as well as 6 supporting staff) can represent the parliament. In Ethiopia, the MPs do not have advisors and office individually; rather they are supported by the secretariat.

The third group of population composes of representatives of civil society organizations, leaders of community groups, leaders of private sectors, representatives of media organizations and bloggers. Finally validation workshop was conducted and further inputs were incorporated in the final research report.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

Data from secondary sources were collected through document review, whereas the primary sources data for both quantitative and qualitative analyses were collected from people through Key Informant Interview (KII), Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and questionnaire survey. Data used for gathering instruments are further described below.

Document review: This involves identification of written or electronic documents containing information on the people and parliament. The documents include legal documents, research reports, statistical reports and other publications. The research team keep track and cite the information retrieved from these documents. The validity and reliability of documents to be reviewed were carefully checked by the review team. Following full cross-checking of data to assure completeness, accuracy and appropriateness to the research topic, it was further triangulated with other relevant data sources. Other international best practice of public engagement in Parliamentary system was also reviewed and incorporated.

Key Informant Interview (KII): the people and parliament relations assessment was conducted with members of 8 standing committees in the parliament + 2 PMs +6 supporting staff (Secretariats) and 2 members of government whims.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD): was conducted to generate diverse information and data from Members of the parliament, secretariat of the parliament representatives of civil society organizations and political parties.

Questionnaire: quantitative data were collected directly through the use of self-administered questionnaire collected by trained data collector, from samples of residents in the selected two constituencies.

3.4. Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data were presented and analyzed and managed with the support of statistical packages for social science (SPSS) while

Qualitative analyses were used to present the observation and understandings of the researcher on the different qualitative aspects of public engagement in the decision of the parliament through the use of text and narrative techniques.

3.5. Research Ethics

To confirm the ethical procedures, the purpose of this research was informed to the participants and their consents were requested when they take part in the research. In addition, the anonymity and confidentiality of all the participants in the research was strictly preserved. Also, the written consent of all the participants in the entire exercise also sought.

IV. Public Engagement in Strengthening parliamentary Representation and Deepening Democracy in Ethiopia

4.1. Introduction

This section is concerned with the analysis of data collected through KII, questionnaire survey FDG and Document review. KII were conducted with heads of parliamentary standing committees, Whip of the government who were at the rank of State Minister, directors of secretariats of the parliament and other higher officials. FDGs were conducted with the members of Parliamentarians, leaders of civil societies, academicians, activists and community leaders. Questionnaires were distributed to people in selected constituencies.

The data pertains to legal framework and institutional set-up, process of engagement in the three main functions of the parliament as well as the effectiveness and the inclusiveness of the

parliament were obtained through KII and FGD and document review. Questionnaire was employed to collect data pertaining to forms of engagement, improvement in engagement trust and inclusiveness. The data collected through these different methods were triangulated to come up with findings of this study report of parliamentary public engagement in Ethiopia.

4.2. Legal Framework for Parliamentary Public Engagement

As per the FDREs constitution article 35 (6), 43 (2), (58), 89 (6) and 92 (3), House of people's Representatives has a constitutional responsibility to engage the public in undertaking its functions (law making, oversight, representation and parliamentary diplomacy). In the same way, the public have also the constitutional right to participate on decision made by its representatives and to know the working of the parliament (FDRE, 1995).

Article 58 of the FDRE constitution requires the meeting of the House to be public, except when close meeting is required. Where meetings are made public, the people will get information about the debates in the plenary session of the parliament and the act of which will improve public awareness on the legislative process.

Article 35 of the constitution deals with provisions of rights of women, in which the sub article 6 provides "women have the right to full consultation, in the formulation of national development policies and the designing and execution of projects. According to this provision of the constitution, law making and oversight functions should ensure the participation of women at least to the level of consultation. In the same way, sub article 6 of article 89 confirms that "government shall ensure the participation of women in equally with men in all economic and social development endeavors" (FDRE, 1995).

The provisions under article 43 of the constitution are concerned with the right to development. These group rights have recognized for the people of Ethiopia as whole and for each of the nations, nationalities and people of Ethiopia. Accordingly, sub article 2 of this provision stated that "the nationals have the right to participate in national development and, in particular, to be consulted with respect to policies and projects affecting their community. This article ensures the necessity of inclusive decision making in ethnically divided Ethiopia. In other words, the HoPR

has responsibility to ensure its own decision and decision by the executives is made after adequate consultation with nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia (FDRE, 1995).

Article 89 (6) provided that "government shall at all time promote the participation of the people in the formulation of national development policies and programs; it shall also have the duty to support the initiatives of the people in their development endeavors. Regardless of this constitutional provision, information obtained from key informants indicates that the HoPR is not active itself let alone helping people to engage in formulation of economic policies. The House is more active in ensuring the implementation of policies and programs and leave policy formulation responsibility for the party central committees. In the norm of the ruling party of Ethiopia, arguing against a policy proposed by the party by a member of the parliament is considered as opposing a party program; which leads to loss of position both in government and in party structure. Therefore, the member of the parliamentarians neither actively engage in policy formulation process by themselves as well as neither encourage public to engage in policy making process.

Article 92 of the constitution which deals with cultural objectives of Ethiopia is found to be concerned with parliamentary public engagement. Sub Article 3 of this article states that people have the right to full consultation and to the right to expression to enable the people reflect their views in planning and implementation of environmental policies and projects that affect them directly.

4.3. Institutional Set-up for Parliamentary Public Engagement

Despite the fact that FDRE constitution of Ethiopia has well recognized the importance of parliamentary public engagement, as provided in Article 35 (6), 43 (2), (58), 89 (6) and 92(3), that requires the parliament to engage with the people in undertaking its functions, with the exception of Code of Ethics and Procedure of the HoPR Regulation number 6/2008, the federal House of people's Representatives of Ethiopia did not have well developed public engagement guideline and strategy. It was only in 2018 that the federal parliament of Ethiopia in its history adopted public engagement framework and strategy which of course has been on progress during data collection and did not still implemented. The major objective of Public engagement framework is to facilitate and ensure regular parliamentary public engagement in an organized way in the wide areas of parliamentary functions such as Law making. Monitoring of

enforcement of laws, Budget ratification process, Budget utilization, Audit findings, Preparation, implementation and monitoring of government policies and strategies, Field visits during oversight and reporting of the findings, Constituency questions and suggestions, Plan and plan evaluation of the house and Research findings of the house.

As indicated in this engagement framework of HoPR, the parliament is expected to conduct regular meeting with people in every 3 months. The responsibilities of the HoPR according to this engagement framework are: increasing public awareness on parliamentary public engagement, facilitating participation in discussion of draft legislation, setting place; time and agenda for discussion, announcing the agenda of the day and conducting research on parliamentary public engagement. This activity is managed by the secretariat of the HoPR.

The secretariat of the HoPR has a program called parliamentary public wing, which is a common forum of parliament and the people. The participants of the parliamentary public wings are chambers of commerce at national level and Addis Ababa chamber of commerce, women association, youth association, professional associations, political parties and council of political parties, religious organizations, universities, trade unions, journalist association, policy research institutions, and others.

According to our informants, the parliamentary public wing was not effective in promoting participatory democracy due to various factors. One of the challenges of this forum is controlling of agenda by the parliament. The agenda of discussion is unilaterally determined by the parliament; so the participants of the public wing come to the forum without information. The participants of parliamentary public wing do not have enough time for preparation to influence the discussion; the agenda of discussions are not announced to participants prior to the discussion time. Furthermore, most of the groups that were identified by the parliamentary public wing are not independent of the government; and some of them are not well organized to have influence in parliamentary decision making process. The most active civil and political organizations are systematically excluded from participation in the forum.

In addition to the controlling of participation by the government, low level of public awareness on the importance of participation also hinder the effectiveness of parliamentary public

engagement. In the same way, limitation was observed from concerned stakeholders such as civil society in collaborating with and supporting the parliament, according to informants.

Information obtained from informants indicates that Parliamentary public engagement is mainstreamed in the work of some Standing Committees and parliamentary secretariat directorates such as law directorate, communication directorate instead of establishing specific organizational unit or assigning fully and specifically responsible individual for management of engagement of parliament with the people. Since the organizational unit specifically responsible to manage parliamentary public engagement is not in place in parliamentary structure, there is no budget specifically allocated for parliamentary public engagement.

In general, despite positive elements in the legal basis, the practice of parliamentary public engagement is restricted by institutional limitations. Failure of HoPR to develop strategic plan, policies and procedural directives to guide public engagement, lack of strong parliamentary public wing, absence of specifically responsible body assigned to manage engagement and lack of budget specifically allocated for public engagement have deterred technical and infrastructural capacity of the parliament for effective public engagement.

4.4.   Parliamentary Public Engagement Strategies of HoPR of Ethiopia

In our questionnaire survey, eight variables of the study were measured using a five-point likert scales that range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Four of these variables were related to strategies of the HoPR to engage with people through different forms of parliamentary public engagement that include strategies adopted by HoPR to inform, to consult, to deliberate and to collaborate with the public. The fifth variable is about improvement in public engagement as perceived by respondents, while the remaining variables are gender and ethnic inclusiveness as well as public trust.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on the public engagement strategies of HoPR. The views of the respondents show that the Ethiopian parliament's performance in securing public engagement was found unsatisfactory. As shown in the following table, the rating score of all engagement strategies were below average point in the scale that range between 1 and 5. The value below 3 implies that the number of people who disagreed and

strongly disagreed with different level of parliamentary public engagement is higher than the number of people who agreed and strongly agreed with parliamentary public engagement.

Average Engagement strategies, inclusiveness and trust

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	SD	N
Public trust in HoPR	2.8034	1.00908	98
The strategies of HoPR to inform	2.9066	1.01035	98
The strategies of HoPR to consult	2.7781	1.07460	98
The strategies of HoPR to deliberate	2.6570	.98187	98
The strategies of HoPR to collaborate	2.8010	1.05212	98
The effectiveness of engagement strategies of HoPR	2.8655	1.01075	98
HoPR Inclusiveness gender wise	3.1922	1.04484	98
HoPR Inclusiveness ethnic wise	2.7747	.99887	98

Source: Computed from Questionnaire Survey, 2019

As far as parliamentary engagement with public is concerned, the first thing expected from parliament is sharing information regarding its decisions, working procedures, functions and services. Sharing of information is a necessary step to ensure transparency and accountability to electorate and to create a fertile ground for enhancing democracy. Thus, five statements were used to assess the strategies of HoPR to inform the people regarding the parliamentary decisions and functions. These statements were availability of parliamentary publications in the form of posters, leaflets, guides, and, research briefings to disseminate basic information, availability and accessibility of records of committee meeting and plenary secessions, the supports of civic education in schools by the parliament, the practice of tours to visit the parliament and broadcasting of legislative sessions that can be viewed on television without edition. In the view

of the majority of respondents (mean 2.9), the HoPR did not put sufficient efforts to use the above strategies of making information accessible to the people.

The score of the assessment of strategies of the HoPR to engage with people for consultation in undertaking its functions was even lower than its score in sharing information (Mean 2.78). The strategies to consult the concerned people in decisions that affect them requires arrangement of face-to-face meetings, using traditional consultation forums, conducting workshops, conferences or panel discussions with expert or focus groups and aggressively seeking public inputs by means of public hearings. The data obtained from respondents through questionnaire show that all the efforts of the HoPR to make consultation were not adequate to meet the demand for participation.

The participants of interviews and FGD unanimously agreed that the house did not establish any regular program for traditional consultation for example with village councils, with tribal leaders and religious leader which is expected to play a crucial role on public engagement. Similarly, the house did not use citizen advisory councils and citizens cards.

Where the parliament fails to inform the people and to consult the people to generate inputs for policy decisions, it is not expected to meet the requirements to give people chance to influence outcomes of parliamentary decisions (i.e., deliberation). Our respondents confirm this fact by ranking deliberating strategies of the HoPR on the lowest score (Mean 2.66) of all forms of engagement. The parliamentary public engagement strategies to deliberate against which the views the respondents' collected includes timely response to public problems, people's influence of the outcome of legislative decisions, involvements of people in designing and evaluation of programs, conducting deliberative polling and working with advisory committee for deliberation. Data gathered from respondents with this respect shows that the parliamentary public engagement in Ethiopia did not reach at the level of deliberation and as a consequence, the people have insignificant influence on policy outputs.

The final form of parliamentary public engagement is the strategy intended to collaborate in program designing, implementation and evaluation. Engagement strategy to collaborate includes but not limited to invitation to specified civil society organizations and social movements for working together, ongoing arrangements for collaboration between HoPR and people, setting

procedures for citizens' initiatives and referendums, work jointly with people in active development of alternatives and opening for public to actively engage in monitoring and evaluation of policies. But, again these strategies are not adapted by the HoPR, to a satisfactory level (Mean 2.8)as per the view of the respondents.

Non-parametric **Mann-Whitney U Test** was conducted to see the differences in the perception of the female and male respondents with regards to the public engagement strategies of the HoPR. Accordingly, as it has shown below, the result of the test statistics indicates that p-value or Exact. sig. (2-tailed) in all forms of public engagement strategies were above 5%, which indicates that there is no significant difference with this respect between male and female at 5 % level of significance.

Test Statistics^a

	Strategies of HoPR to inform	Strategies of HoPR to consult	Strategies of HoPR to deliberate	Strategies of HoPR to collaborate
Mann-Whitney U	330.000	233.000	281.000	267.500
Wilcoxon W	4425.000	4328.000	4376.000	4362.500
Z	-.390	-1.652	-1.028	-1.202
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.696	.099	.304	.229
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.704	.100	.312	.235
Point Probability	.002	.001	.002	.001

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

In addition to **Mann-Whitney U Test**, non-parametric **Kruskal-Wallis Test** was also conducted to see the difference in the perception of the respondents on the same issues among the different ethnicity groups. As it has shown below, the result of the test statistics indicates that p-value or Asymptotic. sig. (2-tailed) of all variables were equal and above 5% which again, indicates that there is no significant difference with regard to the public engagement strategies of the HoPR among the ethnic groups of the respondents at 5 % level of significance.

Test Statistics[a,b]

	Strategies of HoPR to inform	Strategies of HoPR to consult	Strategies of HoPR to deliberate	Strategies of HoPR to collaborate
Chi-Square	3.830	.870	.968	.122
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.050	.351	.325	.727

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

4.5. The Practice of Public Engagement in the Main Functions of the HoPR

HoPR has a constitutional responsibility to engage the public in undertaking its major functions, while the public have also the constitutional right to participate on decision made by its representatives and the right to know the working of the parliament. In this section, the review of the practice of parliamentary public engagement in three functions such as law making, oversight and representation are presented.

4.5.1. Parliamentary Public Engagement in Law Making Process

The procedure of law making in Ethiopia customarily begins by the initiation of the idea, in the executive branch of government. The initiation for producing new law or amendment in existing proclamation first sent to the Council of Ministers, for endorsement before it is sent to the parliament for final ratification. The draft legislation being sent to the parliament is seen in plenary session, by legal affairs standing committee and in some cases by other additional concerned standing committee. The committees who take responsibility to review the draft legislation in detail conduct public hearing in which interested individuals and concerned

stakeholders are invited to participate in the debate, and make a report to the plenary section with proposal for ratification or rejection.

Public hearing is used as public engagement tool to monitor and disseminate information in the law making process. The arrangement for public hearing is announced through mass media, mainly radio and TV, to invite stakeholders to take part in the debate. The announcement for public hearing is made before 20 days with information regarding the issue of discussion, time and place of public hearing; so that the people who are expected to be affected by the legislation will get opportunity to take part in the open discussions on draft legislation. Public hearing is useful as mechanisms for both informing and consulting people.In addition to the public hearing, telephone and e-mail are alternatively used to collect inputs from those who cannot directly raise their concerns during public hearings. Recently, the parliament has also started using parliamentary call center, website and social Medias such as facebook, Twitter and Youtube for disseminating information and collecting opinions from the people. On time of data collection, the parliament has introduced other public engagement mechanisms such as video conference, free call service (8557); while it was on the way to open new TV channel, and to digitize archives. The objective of digitization process was saving the data from loss and to make parliamentary archives easily accessible to the people.

The existence of forum for public wing, public hearing, and other mechanisms of public engagement have not promote direct democracy in Ethiopia at significant level because their existence are only in form than in reality. In the first place, mechanisms employed by HoPR to disseminate information on draft law legislations have limitations in terms of accessibility, time, coverage and language.

The print media used by the House is not widely accessible for the general public, the proclamation itself is not published timely; the website of the Parliament is at infant stage and has been visited only by very few people. The data on the website is not updated regularly and it was not user friendly. Government report (2018) on performance of parliamentary public engagement confirms the existence of wide gaps in creating public forum to engage with the people in the process of law making. The document also shows the existence of weakness in

dissemination of information about the ratification of proclamations and on delay in publishing the ratified proclamation in the official legal notice.

People living in regional towns/cities are disadvantaged to take part in the discussion; as public hearings are always conducted in Addis Ababa. The HoPR do not monitor whether the distribution of participants are fair and acceptable in terms of region, nationalities and gender. In view of informants, since all face to face meetings are conducted in its office only at Addis Ababa, it is inconvenient for the people outside of Addis Ababa and these people rarely take part in the public hearings because of distance barrier.

The time constraint is the other challenge of public engagement in the legislation process. As stated above, the HoPR has rule to endorse new proclamation within 20 days, but this rule do not allow entertaining enough public participation by concerned stakeholders. There is usually very limited time for the public to forward their suggestion on the draft legislation, for instance, the HoPR ratified 18 proclamations in its regular meeting conducted on February 6, 2018, where it is not imagined to make enough discussions.

The language policy of the house is also other challenge that hinders participation in the legislation process. All information is disclosed in one language, hearings are conducted only in one language, and information services in website is provided only to people who can able speak language of the parliament. In Ethiopia, there is no single majority language (spoken by more than half) and as such the communication between the House and the people is visibly exclusive. If the HoPR able to disclose information in 5 languages, it can reach more than 75 percent of the people of Ethiopia, and if it able to use 10 languages, it can address about 90% of the population of the country (CSA, 2008). However, the parliament prefers to use a single language.

The other problem that challenged effectiveness of parliamentary public engagement in Ethiopia is the fact that the incorporation of the public inputs depends only on the blessing of the ruling party who controls all the seats of the parliament and all the standing committees of the parliament. The views of the people are not systematically organized, analyzed and interpreted. As there is no control over the parliament to participate people, there is also no control to consider the views rose during public hearings. **Civil society law** which was promulgated at the

time of data collection can be taken as a good example of the case where the public inputs and suggestions were undermined and the participants unable to influence the content of the final legislation. On the other hand, the inputs of the public in the **Food and drug controlling** proclamation were well acknowledged in final result. On the other hand, ignorance and lack of interest from the government to incorporate input comes from the public. The urgency in law making does not only affect the public engagement, but it also put constraint on due process of law.

4.5.2. Public Engagement in the Oversight function

The HoPR has a constitutional responsibility to use input of the public in the process of oversight function, which involves evaluating the executive plan, evaluating performance in the implementation of plans and evaluating reports of the executives. The involvement of the public is very important during field visit, because without the participation of the people, the aim of parliamentary oversight cannot be attained. In practice however, the participation of the public in supporting the oversight functions of HoPR is not satisfactory.

Among many cause of unsatisfactory public engagement in oversight, the incapability of member of the parliament in seeking public support and inputs is the challenging issues, according to informants. Even where little participations are secured, the parliament usually fails to incorporate public input. On top of this, the influences of the executives over the parliament are also a factor for low performance of the parliament in undertaking its oversight functions. In addition, data also shows that the involvements of the Medias in exposing wrong action are not up to the expectation. The Medias are also vulnerable to biases and sometimes they are prone to lack of ethical standards. As a result, what has supposed to be reported are not report and reached to the people.

4.5.3. Public Engagement in the Representation function of HoPR

The research team also observed that the parliament constituency relation through the member of representative at the current stage is not productive to promote parliamentary democracy as peoples' question are not satisfactory answered through this mechanism and as this mechanism did not create public trust in parliament. The failure of the parliament to effectively answer the

constituency questions particularly related to lack of good governance and lagging of infrastructural projects erode public trust in parliament.

Members of the parliamentarians have direct contact with the electorate twice each year, according to parliamentary procedure and code of ethics. During these contacts with the electorate, the member of parliamentarian reports the annual activities of the parliament to their representative. In return, the people in the constituency are given chance to raise questions, to demand clarifications for various activities of the parliament and rise especially problems in relation to their specific constituency, according to respondents. After hearing and collecting issues and problems raised by the public, questions are sorted and the questions that are expected to be answered by regional government will be forwarded to the concerned regional government and public questions expected to be answered by the federal government will be reported to the HoPR.

Even though this type of direct relationship between member of the parliamentarians and the constituency is a good option to exercise parliamentary democracy, but in Ethiopia, the relation with the constituency is limited by many factors. The government report document (2018/2019) shows that from all the activities, of the House in the year 2017/18, the lowest performance was recorded in parliamentary constituency relations.

The parliament has no outreach services through which the people can have contact with their representative as the representatives have no office in their constituency as well as within the parliament itself. This situation created time and space barriers for parliamentary public engagement through the contacts between member of the parliament and the constituency.

The chance of meeting representative is restricted to only two occasions in a year when parliament is closed in the summer and in February. But, there is no guarantee for constituency to have direct meeting with the representative, because in some cases, members of parliamentarians do not make a visit of respective constituency; particularly in a time of public protests. It is unlikely for many people to have contact with their representative, even where the two times schedule is respected because of problem of coverage. One of the informant from members of parliamentarians disclosed that his constituency has 42 rural kebeles and 2 urban

kebeles (districts), out of which he usually makes meeting with 2 to 3 kebeles at one period. This implies that if he will have meeting with 3 districts in one period, 6 districts will be covered in a year and 30 districts will be covered in one term of election, while the remaining 14 districts will not be covered in the five years term of office.

When direct face-to-face contact is difficult, technology base information exchange is a good alternative of enhancing parliamentary public engagement. However, despite the importance of information technologies, the representatives are not available in twitter, facebook, email and other technology based channels.

Apart from restrictions in the channel of communication between the constituency and the representative and limitation in getting the chance to meet the representative, the public engagement itself is not effective due to long and unreliable procedure to respond to public questions. As indicated in the government report (2018/2019), from those members of parliamentarians who visited their constituency, some of them did not fully report the situation in their constituency to the parliament. The public questions are suppressed due to failure of the Representative to report the concerns.

When the public questions are reported to the parliament by a representative, still there is high probability of distortion of the questions as the report go from member of parliamentarians to the parliament who merge and it to the concerned executive body. .

Since, the parliament did not establish a mechanism to follow-up on the actions taken by the executive in response of public questions; no one will give feedback to the constituency who has brought the questions. As a result, the people lost hope that parliament can not solve their problem. The member of parliaments' report of the constituency relation indicates that they are visiting their constituency without any change in the questions they were asked in their previous constituency meeting. Members of the parliament did not able to answer question repetitively asked by the communities in their constituency. Some questions raised by the constituency are directed to the concerned executive bodies but the response of the executives is not monitored and the people who have the question will not get the answer and surprisingly there is no

accountability for not responding to the public questions directed to the executives, as in shown in the document.

4.6.   The Effectiveness Public Engagement of Federal Parliament of Ethiopia

The linkage between citizens and their government is obviously strengthened when the public has ample opportunity to have their concerns heard by the representatives. Even in countries with weak legislatures, subservient to a strong executive, parliaments may play an important role by voicing the concerns of diverse elements of the population. This role of linking citizens and their government is closely related to the complicated concept of legitimacy. Citizens who regard their government as legitimate are more likely to obey laws, support the regime and accommodate diverse points of view. Citizen participation in the legislative process is vital to creating this sense of legitimacy and build public trust in the parliament (Copeland and Patterson, 1994).

The effectiveness of parliamentary public engagement could be measured based the level of achievement of basic goals of parliamentary public engagement. The goals of public engagement may include creation of public awareness, improving consciousness of the people on the importance of engagement and the readiness of the public to seek and provide information on decisions that affect their life. Strong coordination and closely working with the people as well as the gradual increase of the public trust on the parliament and parliamentary legitimacy are also indicators of parliamentary effectiveness.

In addition, the effectiveness of public engagement could also be evaluated based on the level of participation it able to attained. Engagement "to inform" is basic foundation of parliamentary public engagement, while engagement to consult is the next higher level as it involves collecting inputs from people in the parliamentary decisions. In engagement to deliberate and to collaborate, the people have more influence in program planning, program implementation and program evaluation. In Ethiopian context, data obtained from informants indicates that the engagement to inform is relatively better with all its limitation in terms of access and coverage, when compared with other forms of engagement.

In consultative decision making, the people are allowed taking part in defining policy problems, prioritizing policy options, designing public services, in program evaluation, public expenditure monitoring and audit follow-up. But, data obtained from key informants shows that there is

limitation in taking input from the public (consultation) by the Ethiopian parliament. Even where people participate to provide inputs, there is problem in using the input from the public by the government in its decision making process. According to the information obtained from the informants, there is also big drawback in conducting deliberation (two-way communication, live dialogue and interaction) as well as in collaboration with the people.

Based on the discussions held with key informants, it is possible to generalize that public engagement effort of HoPR still is at infant stage and public engagement does not effective in bringing the parliament close to the people and securing public trust in the parliament. As a result, it needs more and continuous work to bring the public on board and increase its awareness on importance of their participation in decisions that affect their life.

Our discussions with informants indicate that public engagement in the country is limited only to dissemination of information and somehow taking information. Even sharing of information (engagement to inform) is not effective in terms of creating awareness and trust. The HoPR do not regularly conduct survey on citizen satisfaction on information sharing and the effectiveness of channel used for consultation, deliberation and collaborations are almost absent.

4.7. Improvements of Parliamentary Public Engagement

Considering the changes going on in the country as whole as well as in the parliament itself, we assessed perceptions of respondents on improvement of parliamentary public engagement in Ethiopia. This parliamentary public engagement improvements was rated by respondents in terms of easily accessibility of the parliament, public understanding and awareness about the roles of the parliament and its work, range of voices heard by Parliament, number and diversity of people who engage with Parliament, public involvement in policy making process, scrutiny role of the parliament over executive, relationship and connection between the public and parliament and overall legitimacy of the parliament. The average rating of improvement of parliamentary public engagement in this line is still below the midpoint 3 at five-point rating scale ranging from 1 to 5.

Following leadership changes in ruling party in March 2018, many changes were introduced in government in Ethiopia. In HoPR, the speaker were changed twice in a period of less than one year in 2018, the parliamentary standing committee was restructured, all parliamentary

government whims were changed, call center was established, relationship with privately owned media were started, written performance contract agreement with executive body was introduced, digitization of parliamentary archives were started. All these changes in the parliament in the year 2018, created expectation whether the parliamentary public engagement was improved in perception of the respondents. Unfortunately, the views collected show that the improvement was not rated good. One reason for such rating may be due to the fact that the respondents of the questionnaire may not be aware of changes going on the working of the parliament, while other possible reason is that the changes may require time to bring about visible outcomes and impacts. Whatever the reason could be, the respondents rated poorly the improvement of public engagement in the parliament.

Non-parametric **Mann-Whitney Test** was conducted to see the difference of perceptions with regards to the improvements of public engagement of the HoPR gender wise. Accordingly, as it has shown below, the result of the test statistics indicates that p-value or Exact. sig. (2-tailed) is 0.072 which indicates that there is no significant difference with regard to the improvements of public engagement effort of the parliament based on the perception of the respondents between male and female at 5 % level.

Test Statistics[a]

	The effectiveness of engagement strategies of HoPR
Mann-Whitney U	221.500
	4316.500
Z	-1.798
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.072
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.072
Point Probability	.001

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Kruskal-Wallis Test was also conducted to see the difference in the perception of the respondents on the same issues among the different respondents with different ethnicity groups

of the respondents. Accordingly, as it has shown below, the result of the test statistics indicates that p-value or Asymptotic. sig. (2-tailed) is 0.495 which again, indicates that there is no significant difference with regard to improvements in the public engagement of the HoPR among the different ethnic groups of the respondents at 5 % level.

Test Statistics[a,b]

	Improvement of engagement strategies of HoPR
Chi-Square	.465
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.495

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

4.8. The Inclusiveness of public Engagement in terms of gender and Ethnicity

Inclusiveness in Parliamentary public engagement was assessed from gender aspects and ethnic aspects. The result of our analysis shows that while the inclusiveness from gender aspect was at average positively rated, inclusiveness from ethnic perspective was at average negatively rated.

The review of documents shows that the constitution has provisions that protect the rights of women. For example, Article 35 deals with provisions of rights of women, in which the sub article 6 provides "women have the right to full consultation, in the formulation of national development policies and the designing and execution of projects. According to this provision, law making and oversight functions should ensure the participation of women at least to the level of consultation. In the same way, sub article 6 of article 89 states "government shall ensure the participation of women in equally with men in all economic and social development endeavors" (FDRE, 1995).

Data being obtained from key informants on women participation, confirms that the existing practice also do not exclude specifically women or men from participation. Informants also added that when compared with previous time, there has been change and progress in women participation in decision making. But, as women have been historically marginalized for a long period, affirmative actions are desirable to continually improve the role of women and to ensure gender equality in participation in parliament.

This finding is similar with results of other researches. For Example, (Meheret, 2019) argues that Ethiopia has attained relative success by encouraging women to serve as parliamentarian. The proportion of elected women representative in the parliament has improved through time and currently reached about 39 percent; taking 212 seat from 547 members of the parliament. Women are also actively involving in parliamentary standing committees. In view of majority of respondents, the parliament of Ethiopia gives appropriate emphasis to concerns of both male and female in line with constitutional provisions.

Respondents of the questionnaire were also asked their level of agreement with statements: whether laws and policies enacted by the parliament ensure gender equality, HoPR shows willingness to review policies, laws and practices from a gender perspective, HoPR takes in to consideration gender issues in its oversight function and whether there is special support system by the parliament to engage women. The average rating of gender inclusiveness by the questionnaire respondents was found positive showing that the respondents have a perception that female or male citizens are not marginalized on the basis of gender.

Ethnic

In Ethiopian politics, ethnicity is as important as gender. Ethiopia is assumed to be constituted on the basis of free will of ethnic groups who have unlimited constitutional right of self-determination. The constitution has well recognized the right of ethnic group, who are commonly known as nations, nationalities and peoples. Meheret, (2019) also argues that ethnicity and language are important features shaping national politics in Ethiopia.

The view of the respondents whether public engagements effort by HoPR are inclusive or not along ethnic line were assessed based on the following statements:

- Ethnic minorities are fairly represented in the parliament

- There is parliamentary procedures to empower all ethnic groups to have their voice heard

- Information is released in diverse languages spoken by different ethnic groups

- The parliament set procedure to engage socio-economically disadvantaged ethnic group

But, with regard to the differences in parliamentary engagement among ethnic groups, the questionnaire respondents were not satisfied with inclusion of ethnic groups as result of which the cumulative responses outweigh towards disagreement with these statements.

Mann-Whitney Test was also conducted to see in the perception of the respondents between male and female with regards to the inclusiveness of public engagement effort of the federal parliament of Ethiopia in terms of gender and ethnicity. Accordingly, as it has shown below, the result of the test statistics indicates that p-value or Exact. sig. (2-tailed) is .039 and .095 respectively, which indicates that there is significant difference with regard to the inclusiveness of public engagement of the HoPR gender wise but, no significant different among the different ethnic groups of the respondents at 5 % level.

Test Statistics[a]

	HoPR Inclusiveness gender wise	HoPR Inclusiveness ethnic wise
Mann-Whitney U	198.000	226.000
Wilcoxon W	4114.000	4142.000
Z	-2.048	-1.676
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.041	.094
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.039	.095
Point Probability	.000	.001

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Kruskal-Wallis Test was also conducted to see the difference in the perception of the respondents on the same issues among the different ethnicity groups of the respondents. Accordingly, as it has shown below, the result of the test statistics indicates that p-value or

Asymp. sig. (2-tailed) is .020 and.006 respectively which indicates that there is significant difference with regard to the inclusiveness of public engagement efforts of the federal parliament of Ethiopia among the respondents with different ethnic groups at 5 % level.

Test Statistics[a,b]

	HoPR Inclusivenes gender wise	HoPR Inclusivenes ethnic wise
Chi-Square	5.290	7.607
df	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.021	.006

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

4.9. Public Trust in the Parliament

Respondents were asked to rank the overall public trust in the HoPR of Ethiopia based on 10 survey items (see Appendix -IIB). The aggregate response indicates that the public did not have as such trust in their representatives. This response is expected, because the parliament lacks pluralism as all the seat in the parliament is completely occupied by a single party. Furthermore trust is expected to be low where the parliament performed poorly in engagement with the people and in situation where the interests of ethnic groups are not well represented.

Non-parametric **Mann-Whitney U Test** was conducted to see the differences in perception of the respondents with regards to the public trust HoPR gender wise. As it is shown below, the result of the test statistics indicates that p-value or Exact. sig. (2-tailed) is .092 which indicates that there is no significant difference with regard to public trust in the HoPR between male and female respondents at 5 % level.

Test Statistics[a]

	Public trust in HoPR
Mann-Whitney U	224.500
Wilcoxon W	4140.500
Z	-1.692
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.091
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.092
Point Probability	.001

In the same way, **Kruskal-Wallis Test** was also conducted to see the difference in the perception of the respondents on the same issues among the different ethnicity groups of the respondents. Accordingly, as it has shown below, the result of the test statistics indicates that p-value or Asymptotic. sig. (2-tailed) is 0.212 which indicates that there is no significant difference with regard to public trust in the HoPR among the respondents with different ethnic groups at 5 % level.

Test Statistics[a,b]

	Public trust in HoPR
Chi-Square	1.556
Df	1

Asymp. Sig.	.212

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

According to our interview respondents, the relationship between parliament and the public in Ethiopian needs improvement. Almost all informants unanimously agreed that there has been a lack of interest toward the parliament by the public and public trust in the parliament has been declined due to various reasons. The public has been gradually lost confidence in the parliament by assuming that they have no capacity as well as interest to address public issues.

There is also reservation by informants that majority of the people of the country do not know the work and responsibilities of the parliament. This is due to limited effort made by the parliament in creating awareness about the importance of public engagement.

According to respondents, the perception of the public towards the parliament as a rubberstamp to endorse all decision required by the party leaders who controls key positions in the executive branch of government leads to the belief that suggestions do not make a difference, according to the informants. Parliamentarians are also criticized to have "the party knows better than me" attitude. Informants also confirm that the parliament fails to deliver the promise of the people in oversight of the approved budget utilization, mega project performance and combating corruption in the eyes of the public. The parliament reserved from taking measures despite various mal operations have been done by the executives. As a result, people consider the parliament as a 'lion without teeth', according respondents.

4.10. The associations between Forms of Engagement, Inclusiveness and Trust

Non-parametric Spearman correlation coefficient was conducted to see the association among the four forms of engagement, inclusiveness and trust and the result of test statistics shows that there are positive and strong relationships among all variables: informing, consulting, deliberation, collaboration, improvement in public engagement, Gender inclusiveness, Ethnic inclusiveness and trust (see appendix-IId).

Improvement in the relationship between the people and the parliament has positive association with informing, consulting, deliberating and collaboration. It has also positive and strong association with trust, (correlation Coefficient 0.806), with gender inclusiveness (correlation Coefficient 0.524) and with ethnic inclusiveness (correlation Coefficient 0.611). Similarly, trust has positive association with all forms of engagement (to inform 0.44, to consult 0.596, to deliberate 0.608 and to collaborate 0.66). This means that improvement in engagement will have association with improvement in public trust in the House of Peoples' Representatives of Ethiopia.

V.   Conclusions and Implications

5.1. Conclusions

From the research processes and ultimate findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn;

The practice of parliamentary public engagement of the HoPR is restricted by institutional limitations. Failure of HoPR to develop strategic plan, policies and procedural directives to guide public engagement, absence of specifically responsible body assigned to manage public engagement and lack of budget (financial, human and infrastructure) specifically allocated for public engagement have deterred technical and infrastructural capacity of the parliament for effective public engagement.

With respect to public engagement mechanisms, the results of the study indicates that though HoPR has a constitutional responsibility to engage the public in undertaking its functions, the level of public engagement is limited only to dissemination of information (Inform) and taking input (consultation and there is no practice of effective deliberation and collaboration.. Even the dissemination and consultation mechanisms used by HoPR have challenged by lack of

accessibility of information, time constraints, low geographical coverage and single language policy of the house.

With respect to the effectiveness of public engagement efforts of HoPR, the findings of the study indicates that public engagement does not effective in creating public awareness on the importance of engagement as well was the readiness of the public to seek and provide information on decisions that affect their life. Again, it did not bringing the parliament close to the people and securing public trust in the parliament as a very important institution for exercising democracy.

The findings of the study also indicate that there has been a lack of interest toward the parliament by the public and trust and confidence in the parliament by public has been low because the people feel that the parliament has no capacity as well as interest to address public issues.

With Respect the inclusiveness of engagement from women perspective, the results of the study confirms that the existing practice do not exclude specifically women or men from participation. Even when compared with previous time, there has been change and progress in women participation in decision making. But, level of engagement from ethnic line shows the opposite results.

5.2. **Implications**

From findings and conclusions of this research, the following research implications were drawn for policy makers and other concerned bodies;

It is good for the HoPR to have independent office that deals specifically with public engagement. Again, it is better for house to allocate the necessary resources (Financial, human and infrastructure) for public engagement, if it needs to improve commitment for engaging with the people.

From the findings of the study, it is also possible to infer that a lot of job is expected from all concerned stakeholder to bring public engagement in the country at the level of deliberation and

collaboration and it needs more and continuous work to bring the public on board and increase their awareness to achieve the desired change that people expects from the house.

It is better for the house to rethink of its language policy of dealing and communicating with the public to be more inclusive.

To buy the trust of the public and regain its legitimacy, more jobs are expected from the HoPR to improve its relationship with the public.

More jobs are also expected from the government to ensure fair participation of ethnic minorities and bring them on board with others.

VI.   Suggestions for Further studies

Any interested researchers can conduct research on the public engagement efforts of the Federal house of federation of Ethiopia since it is not covered in this study. In the same, the efforts and level of public engagement of the nine regional councils and the two city administrations were not covered in this study. So, this is also an area where we recommend for further study.

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Appendix –I

A-Survey Questionnaire

PARLIAMENTS AND PEOPLE PROGRAMME (P4P)

Questionnaire Survey to be filled by "People"

This survey is designed for conducting a research study entitled **Public Engagement for Strengthening Parliamentary Representation and Deepening Democracy in Ethiopia,** by a team of Researchers in Addis Ababa University, Department of Public Administration and Development Management in collaboration with Global Research Networks on Parliaments and People. The survey is designed to gather opinion about Parliamentary Public Engagement in Ethiopia. Filling the survey approximately takes about 20 minutes to complete. You are kindly requested to voluntarily participate in the research. Results of your participation are anonymous.

Please contact any of the following members of the research team, if you have any question.

DeferrewKebebe, Tell: +251 910 081200

AkliluWubet, Tell: +251 911 124763

ChallaAmdissa, Tell: +251 911 753919

Thank you for your time and consideration.
The Research Team

I. Demographics
Please provide the following information which will be used only for classification purposes.

1. Age in years: 18- 30☐   31 - 43☐   44 60 ☐   above 60 ☐

2. Gender: Male☐   Female☐

3. Place of birth Region: _____ zone_____

4. Ethnicity: _____

5. Mother tongue language: _____

7. Highest level of education attained:

  i.   Primary school ☐   ii.   Secondary School ☐

iii.   TVET or college diploma ☐

iv.   University or college degree ☐

v.   Masters degree and above ☐

8. Marital status: Single ☐   Married ☐   Divorced ☐   Widowed ☐

10. Please indicate your work: _____

11. Do you have any affiliation with political parties?

   Yes I am member of the ruling party ☐

   Yes I am member of the opposition /competing party ☐

   No I am not a member of any political party ☐

II. Questions about Parliamentary Public Engagement Strategies

Please indicate your level of agreement with statements about parliamentary public engagement strategies/mechanisms of the House of Peoples' Representative of Ethiopia by putting tick mark (√) against each statement.

1 represents "**Strongly Disagree**", 2 represents "**Disagree**", 3 represents **"neutral/ indifferent",** 4 represents "A**gree",** and 5 represents "**Strongly Agree**"

1. **Informing strategies**	1	2	3	4	5
a) Information shared by the House of Peoples' representative through social media is credible.					
b) The House of Peoples' representative publishes (Posters, Leaflets, Guides, and, Research briefings) to disseminate basic information about the legislative process and distributes it to the public, media and libraries.					
c) Records of committee meetings and plenary sessions are available to the public and distributed to libraries or other public facilities.					
d) Parliamentary Archives are accessible for me to see audio and recordings of historic events					
e) House of Peoples' Representative share up to date information through Parliamentary website					
f) The legislature supports civic education in schools and provides curriculum materials to help children learn about the legislative process.					
g) The parliament encourages tours to visit the parliament.					
h) Legislative sessions can be viewed on television or heard on radio broadcasting or via the Internet in unedited form					
2. **Consultation Strategies**					
a) House of Peoples' representative is accessible for Face-to-face meetings (town halls, etc.)					
b) House of Peoples' representative is accessible for Traditional consultation form (e.g. village councils, tribal leadership, etc.)					

c) House of Peoples' representative arranges Expert focus groups for consultations					
d) House of Peoples' representative conducts Citizens' panels					
e) House of Peoples' representative is accessible on Online idea forums					
f) Committee meetings are open to the public with adequate notice of meeting times and agendas.					
g) Committees aggressively seek public input by such means as holding hearings inside and outside the capital and utilizing remote conferencing technology.					
3. **Deliberation**					
a) The legislature responds to public problems in a timely manner and operates in a well-mannered way.					
b) People can influence the outcome of legislative decisions.					
c) The parliament involve the public in defining problems and prioritizing policy options					
d) The parliament involves the public in designing and evaluation of programs.					
e) The parliament involves the public in deliberative polling.					
f) The House of Peoples' representative establishes advisory committee for deliberation.					
4. **Collaboration/Engagement**					
a) Open invitations to citizens to make submissions on bill					
b) Invitations to specified civil society organizations and social movements in implementation of decisions.					
c) House of Peoples' representative conducts ongoing arrangements for collaboration between parliamentary committees and citizen groups and experts					
d) House of Peoples' representative undertake special forums or chambers for civil society, whether meeting independently or jointly with parliamentarians					
e) There is procedures for citizens' initiatives and referendums					
f) The public is provided with opportunity to partner or work jointly in active development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.					
g) The parliament is open for public to actively engage in monitoring and evaluation of policies.					

III. Questions about the effectiveness of the Public Engagement efforts of the Parliament

Please indicate your level of agreement with the improvement in the public engagement performances of the House of Peoples' representative of Ethiopia as per the indicators below and put a tick mark (√) against each statement.

1 represents "**Strongly Disagree**", 2 represents "**Disagree**", 3 represents **"neutral/ indifferent",** 4 represents "A**gree",** and 5 represents "**Strongly Agree**"

Indicators	1	2	3	4	5
a) The public engagement strategies employed by the parliament to disseminate information are easily accessible to majority of citizens.					
b) Public understanding and awareness about the values, process of the parliament and its work is increased.					
c) The range of voices heard by Parliament has broadened.					
d) The number and diversity of people who engage with Parliament is increased					
e) Public involvement in policy making process is encouraging and has been improved from time to time					
f) The scrutiny role of the parliament over executive is improved as a result of public support and participation.					
g) The relationship and connection between the public and parliament is improved					
h) The overall legitimacy of the parliament is improved as a result of close linkage with the public					

IV. Questions about Public Trust in the Parliament
Put a tick mark (√) under appropriate choice based on your experience and rate each statement as
1 represents "Strongly Disagree", 2 represents "Disagree", 3 represents "neutral/ indifferent", 4 represents "Agree", and 5 represents "Strongly Agree"

Items	1	2	3	4	5
a) I can expect the House of Peoples Representative to play fair.					
b) I can expect the House of Peoples Representative to tell the truth.					
c) The House of Peoples Representative takes time to listen to people's problem and worries.					
d) I have confident in the quality of policies enacted by the parliament					
e) I have confident in the competency of the Members of the parliament in formulation of policies.					
f) Information released by the parliament is objective and consistent					
g) In my view, the law made by House of People's Representative is legitimate and I always bind with it.					
h) The House of Peoples Representative would never intentionally misrepresent the view of the peoples.					
i) The House of Peoples Representative responds constructively and caringly to problems of electorates.					
j) If in the House of Peoples Representatives promised to do a favor, it would carry out that promise.					

V. Questions about the Inclusiveness of public engagement in terms of gender and Ethnicity

Put a tick mark (√) under appropriate choice based on your experience and rate each statement as
1 represents "**Strongly Disagree**", 2 represents "**Disagree**", 3 represents **"neutral/ indifferent"**, 4 represents "**Agree**",** and 5 represents "**Strongly Agree**"

Items	1	2	3	4	5
A. Engagement from gender perspective					
a) The laws and policies enacted by the parliament ensure gender equality.					
b) The parliament is always show willingness to review all policies, laws and practices from a gender perspective.					
c) Parliament take in to consideration gender issues in its oversight function					
d) There are special strategies and support system by the parliament to engage women					
B. Engagement from Ethnic Minorities perspective					
a) In my opinion, ethnic minorities are fairly represented in the parliament					
b) There is a parliamentary procedure to empower all ethnic groups to have their voice heard.					
c) Information and decisions of the parliament is released/disseminated in diverse languages spoken by different ethnic groups					
d) The parliament set procedure to engage socio-economically disadvantaged ethnic groups					

B-Interview Guide with Members of the parliament

1. Is there department/unit or office dealing with public engagement related issues in the parliament? If your answer is yes, what is its mandate, and its strategy?
2. How do HoPR disseminate information to enable the concerned people understand about legislative process, decisions, policies programs and other important information?
3. What are consultation mechanisms and in what decisions the HoPR makes consultations with people to solicit inputs in decision making process?
4. How do people participate in decision making and influence the outcomes of decisions of House of people representatives?
5. Do House of Peoples representative involve concerned stakeholders for joint implementation of decisions?
6. What can we say about the relationship between the parliament and the people? What strategies had HoPR designed to seek public trust and support?

7. How do you evaluate the overall effectiveness of parliamentary public engagement in Ethiopia?
8. How do HoPR ensure the engagement of women and all ethnic groups of Ethiopia?
9. What challenges are faced by the HoPR in undertaking public engagement responsibility?
10. What level of participation do you desire in order to deepening democracy?

B-FGD Guideline

1. How do people participate in decision making and influence the outcomes of decisions of House of people representatives?
2. Do House of Peoples representative involve concerned stakeholders for joint implementation of decisions?
3. What can we say about the relationship between the parliament and the people?
   What strategies had HoPR designed to seek public trust and support?
4. How do you evaluate the overall effectiveness of parliamentary public engagement in Ethiopia?
5. How do HoPR ensure the engagement of women and all ethnic groups of Ethiopia?
6. What challenges are faced by the HoPR in undertaking public engagement responsibility?

Appendix-II

A- The effectiveness of the Public Engagement efforts of the Parliament

S.N	Items	1		2		3		4		5	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	The public engagement strategies employed by the parliament to disseminate information are easily accessible to majority of citizens.	26	26.3	24	24.2	16	16.2	21	21.2	12	12.1
2	Public understanding and awareness about the values, process of the parliament and its work is increased.	15	15	23	23	19	19	34	34	9	9
3	The range of voices heard by Parliament has broadened.	17	17	20	20	21	21	27	27	12	12
4	The number and diversity of people who engage with Parliament is increased	14	14	18	18.2	23	23.2	29	29.3	15	15
5	Public involvement in policy making process is encouraging and has been improved from time to time	23	23.2	19	19.2	13	13.1	31.3	13	13	13.1
6	The scrutiny role of the parliament over executive is improved as a result of public support and participation.	19	19.4	18	18.4	26	26.5	23	23.5	12	12.2
7	The relationship and connection between the public and parliament is improved	23	23.2	23	23.2	20	20.2	21	21.2	12	12.1
8	The overall legitimacy of the parliament is improved as a result of close linkage with the public	25	25.3	23	23.2	17	17.2	23	23.2	11	11.1

B-Public Trust in the Parliament

S.N	Items	1		2		3		4		5	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	I can expect the House of Peoples Representative to play fair.	25	25.5	23	23.5	15	15.3	25	25.5	10	10.1
2	I can expect the House of Peoples Representative to tell the truth.	15	15.2	28	28.6	19	19.4	21	21.4	15	15.3
3	The House of Peoples Representative takes time to listen to people's problem and worries.	20	20.4	27	27.6	19	19.4	17	17.3	15	15.3
4	I have confident in the quality of policies enacted by the parliament	25	26	23	24	29	19.8	14	14.6	15	15.6
5	I have confident in the competency of the Members of the parliament in formulation of polcies.	23	23.5	30	30.6	13	13.3	18	18.4	14	14.3
6	Information released by the parliament is objective and consistent	18	18.4	23	23.5	24	24.5	19	19.4	14	14.3
7	In my view, the law made by House of People's Representative is legitimate and I always bind with it.	15	15.5	21	21.6	18	18.6	32	33	11	11.3
8	The House of Peoples Representative would never intentionally misrepresent the view of the peoples.	15	15.3	30	30.6	16	16.3	30	30.6	7	7.1
9	The House of Peoples Representative responds constructively and caringly to problems of electorates.	26	26.8	21	21.6	19	19.6	22	22.7	9	9.3
10	If in the House of Peoples Representatives promised to do a favor, it would carry out that promise.	21	21.4	20	20.4	23	23.5	25	25.5	9	9.2

C. the Inclusiveness of public engagement in terms of gender and Ethnicity

Items		1		2		3		4		5	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
A. Engagement from gender perspective											
1	The laws and policies enacted by the parliament ensure gender equality.	14	14.4	16	16.5	20	20.6	32	33	15	15.5
2	The parliament is always show willingness to review all policies, laws and practices from a gender perspective.	13	13.7	18	18.9	19	20	34	35.8	11	11.6
3	Parliament take in to consideration gender issues in its oversight function	11	11.2	20	20.4	23	23.5	33	33.7	11	11.2
4	There are special strategies and support system by the parliament to engage women	14	14.3	14	14.3	17	17.3	32	32.7	21	21.4
B. Engagement from Ethnic Minorities perspective											
1	In my opinion, ethnic minorities are fairly represented in the parliament	25	25.8	18	18.6	22	22.7	21	21.6	11	11.3
2	There is a parliamentary procedure to empower all ethnic groups to have their voice heard.	26	26.5	23	23.5	16	16.3	22	22.4	11	11.2
3	Information and decisions of the parliament is released/disseminated in diverse languages spoken by different ethnic groups	24	24.5	15	15.3	24	24.5	28	28.6	7	7.1
4	The parliament set procedure to engage socio-economically disadvantaged ethnic groups	17	17.5	17	17.5	34	35.1	20	20.6	9	9.3

D-The associations between Forms of Engagement, Inclusiveness and Trust

Correlations

		strategies of HoPR to inform	strategies of HoPR to consult	strategies of HoPR to deliberate	strategies of HoPR to collaborate	improvement in the R/P b/n people & parliament	Public trust in HoPR	Inclusiveness gender wise	Inclusiveness ethnic wise
Spearman's rho	strategies of HoPR to inform	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.660**	.603**	.605**	.520**	.439**	.318**	.424**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000
		N	100	100	100	100	100	98	98	98
	strategies of HoPR to consult	Correlation Coefficient	.660**	1.000	.725**	.784**	.726**	.596**	.371**	.528**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	100	100	100	100	100	98	98	98
	strategies of HoPR to deliberate	Correlation Coefficient	.603**	.725**	1.000	.865**	.705**	.608**	.459**	.426**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	100	100	100	100	100	98	98	98
	strategies of HoPR to collaborate	Correlation Coefficient	.605**	.784**	.865**	1.000	.790**	.660**	.392**	.518**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	100	100	100	100	100	98	98	98

Note: The table uses a leading column grouping all rows under "Spearman's rho", followed by the variable name, the statistic label (Correlation Coefficient, Sig. (2-tailed), N), and the values for each column header.

improvement in the R/P b/n people & parliament	Correlation Coefficient	.520**	.726**	.705**	.790**	1.000	.806**	.524**	.611**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100	98	98	98
Public trust in HoPR	Correlation Coefficient	.439**	.596**	.608**	.660**	.806**	1.000	.580**	.665**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98
Inclusiveness gender wise	Correlation Coefficient	.318**	.371**	.459**	.392**	.524**	.580**	1.000	.560**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98
Inclusiveness ethnic wise	Correlation Coefficient	.424**	.528**	.426**	.518**	.611**	.665**	.560**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
	N	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).