Politically Initiative Personal Names and Naming Practices in Eastern Wollega

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Abstract

The study was carried out at Naqamte town Administrative and Giddaa Ayyaanaa district in Eastern Wollega of Oromia National Regional state. The study describes how politically initiated personal names are given and explores the connotations and social realities that are reflected in those names. To this effect, the research employed descriptive analysis research design in qualitative methods to collect and analyze data. The data were collected through interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. The data collected through these instruments were analyzed and interpreted qualitatively using Onomastic theory. The theory is used to glean the intended and implied meaning(s) of various personal names. The analysis of data revealed that parents' life experiences, the circumstances happening during pregnancy and child birth and the socio-political dynamics at the country level determine the names to be given to their children. Moreover, the family's attitudes towards politics, challenges they come across and their future aspirations and hopes about the politics also govern the naming practices of the people. These happens to express the revival of nationalism, self-discovery and parents' political devotions and assertiveness in different aspects of life such as political and identity issues as a description of Oromummaa and Saboonummaa. Thus, for the Oromoo people of Eastern Wollega, their personal names are an instance of language use for specific purposes which represent an important part in the people's life.

Keywords: Personal Names, Naming Practices, Eastern Wollega, Political, Innitiative

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Axareeraa

Qorannoon kun kan geggeeffame Naannoo Oromiyaa, Godina Wallagga Bahaatti, Bulchiinsa Magaalaa Naqamteefi aanaa Giddaa Ayyaanaatti. Kaayyoon qorannoo kanaa hiikaafi ergaa siyaasaa maqaaleen Oromoo qabaniifi dhugaa hawaasa keessa jiru mul'isuu keessatti qaban ibsuufiidha. Kaayyoo kana galmaan ga'uuf saxaxi qorannoo ibsaafi malli qorannoo akamtaa hojiirra ooleera. Meeshaaleen funaansa ragaalee gargaarame afgaaffii, marii garee xiyyeeffannoofi sakatta'aa dokumentiiti. Ragaaleen meeshaalee kunneeniin funaanaman yaadiddama 'Onomastic' jedhamuun hiikni, ergaafi dhimmootni hawaasaa karaa maqaalee darban xiinxaluuf fayyadameera. Raagaaleen xiinxalaman akka mul'isanitti dhimmoonni kanneen akka muuxannoo maatii, ta'insoota yeroo ulfaafi da'umsaa raawwataniifi jijjiirama hawaas-siyaasummaa akka biyyaattis ta'e akka naannootti jiran maqaalee mogaafaman kan murteessan ta'uun ibsameera. Akkasumas, ilaalcha maatiin siyaasaaf qaban, rakkooleefi danqaalee jiruufi jireenya isaanii keessatti isaan mudatan akkasumas hawwiifi abdii egeree uummanni jijjiirama siyaasaaf qaban kanneenis mogaasa maqaa daa'immanii akka murteessan ragaaleen mirkaneessaniiru. Maqaaleen xiinxalaman akka ibsanitti ilaalchi uummanni abbaa biyyummaaf qabu jijjiiramuu, of baruufi beekumsaafi hubannoon siyaasaa dabaluun Oromummaafi Saboonummaa isaanii akka cimsedha. Kanaaf, uummata Godina Wollaggaa Bahaaf maqaaleen dhimma jirruufi jireenya isaanii keessatti isaan mudatu ibsuuf isaan fayyada jechuun nidanda'ama.

Keywords: Maqaalee Dhuunfaa, Gochaalee Moggaasa Maqaqa, Wollagga Bahaa, Siyaasa, Dammaqiinsa

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1. Introduction

Ethiopia is a country of various nations and nationalities with varied languages, cultures and life styles. Yet, there are different forms of contacts among the nations and nationalities that influence each other. Moreover, the past systems of the government had a negative impact on the indigenous names of the marginalized nations and nationalities because the system tried to assimilate all nations and nationalities to convey a national identity. One language, culture and society dominated other languages, cultures and nations and nationalities. In Ethiopia, for historical and political reasons, one ethnic group attained political, economic, educational and cultural domination over the others. This simply means that ethnicity as well as ethnic domination is a social phenomenon (Jeylan, 2006, p. 272).

As a result, one of the dominated nations was the Oromoo people whose language, culture and identity were seriously suppressed. These were directly reflected in their personal names and naming practices. However, currently Oromoo personal names seems reviving and coming back to their origin with different styles and complexity, unlike place names which came back to their original names such as Nazireth to Adaamaa, Debrezeith to Bishooftuu, Asebe Teferi to Ciroo and the like. Therefore, it is significant to investigate the

socio-political issues and meanings of Oromoo personal names in general and current naming trends in particular.

2. Literature Review

Though Ethiopia is one of the African countries which was not colonized, it had been a country where one language and one society played a dominant role over the others because of the governmental system of the country at the time (Asafa, 2012; Baye, 2006 and Baxter, Hultin & Triulzi, 1996). Consequently, the Oromoo people and their language, Afaan Oromoo, were among the most dominated people and languages in Ethiopia. However, this was the past history and the Oromoo people have recently started using their language for different purposes including naming their children. Through the names of their children, the Oromoo people express their cultural values, traditions and their political attitudes and aspirations.

The Oromoo are among the indigenous people in the horn of Africa with an indigenous socio-political organization. The people are one of the major linguistic groups in Ethiopia. The Oromoo live over a large area, (Gragg, 1982, p. xiii). Baxter, Hultin and Triulzi (1996, p. 1) explained that the Oromoo are one of the most numerous people occupying Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa at large. Furthermore, Gadaa (1988, p.1) stated that the Oromoo are one of the most numerous nations in Africa who share a common language, history, descent and one shared common political and legal institution.

Many writers stated that the Oromoo people have been the most front people in the democratic system of their political administrations. For instance, Asmerom (1973 & 2000) stated that the Oromoo people exercised a high degree of democracy in their leadership system called Gadaa. He further described that, "The Oromoo Gadaa system is a uniquely democratic, political and social institution that governed the life of every individual from birth to death" (Asmerom, 1973, p. 8). The Gada system is, therefore, a political organization in which the people exercise their political, economic and social right.

In general, a given language is a manifestation of identity and meanings of life. It carries huge life experiences, meanings and cultural values, philosophy and world views of the owner of that language. Supporting this Asafa (2014, p. 123) explained that *Afaan Oromoo* has remained the blood and sinew of the Oromoo identity, culture and history without having a national institution that can protect it. Today, the survival of this language has enabled all Oromo branches that have been disconnected by conquerors suppression and borrowed religions to be reconnected and revive their national institutions and *Oromummaa.* Asafa added that the Oromoo language, as the gold mine of Oromoo history and culture has remained the main pillar and marker of *Oromummaa.*

Comparing Oromoo's system to that of Amhara's, Baye (2006, pp. 48-49) explained the Amhara has had a dominant role in the political history of the country where their social organization was highly stratified when compared to the Oromoo's. Accordingly, the Oromoo expressed their fate in the dominant system and the suppressions they experienced

in those years through their personal names. Therefore, descriptive analysis of the indigenous personal names of the Oromoo people helps us to understand how the people used language to reflect their dissatisfaction with the administrative system and the people's attitudes to the system of the country.

Nowadays, naming practices of the people in the study areas are changing following the political change that came into being in the early years of the 1990s that has brought basic political changes in the political and linguistic influences on Afaan Oromoo and Oromoo people. Their personal names that the people are currently using are different from the previous ones. In relation to this, Baye (2006, p.37) explained the reasons for the changes in language use as follows:

…change in the perception of nature and culture, which is always additive, leads to corresponding changes in the repertoire of names that language provides for the perceptual change man observes. This implies that there ought to exist a one-to-one relation between perceptual change and linguistic change.

The above quotation showed that the change in people's perception about the world and knowledge of their language changes language use which results in new trends in naming and naming practices of the society. In this regard, I observed that most people are naming their children in more complex and coined names that are blended from two or more words than the one word names they had used before. This was one of the points that attracted my attention. As an insider person of the study areas, I observed that the names the people were giving their children were different from the names that had been in use in the previous times. Thus, I was interested in exploring the political implications of the new blended names in the study area. I was also attracted to describing the political meanings and values of the current personal names and naming practices in the areas.

Oromoo personal names and naming practices were negatively affected by these religious practices and the past political system of the country. For instance, king Kumsaa, who ruled Eastern Wollega in the early 19th century, had changed his native name to Gebrehigzabiher and his son's Hambis Kumsaa to Habtemariam for the purpose of increasing Christianity in the area. One of informants states that these individuals' names were changed for the reason that the kings at that time should be baptized and given Christian names. This is also expressed in the society's folktale which says "Hintaane Kiristinaan Badhaasaa, irra deebi'aa kaasaa". It depicts that /baɗa:sa:/ was named wrongly so that he should be baptized again. This is because, /baɗa:sa:/, which is Oromoo name, is not a Christian name. Moreover, there were internal influences from the dominant governmental system within the country. In this case, the Oromoo naming practices were affected by internal pressure of the past government system. As a result, many Oromoo people were given non-Oromoo names without their willingness.

One cannot deny that the vital activity of a society depends on the existing socio-political situation of a country. Recently, there have been changes in naming practices of Oromoo people in Eastern Wollega which prompt them to express their attitudes about what is going

on and to imagine a new reality. Consequently, it is possible to explore the socio-political concerns of the society by analyzing the messages contained in their personal names. This means that one of the means of expressing feelings about the political issues in the country is by the names of their children. Thus, one of the primary objectives of the study is to describe Afaan Oromoo personal names in current socio-political environments of the people. Thus, the study helps the government and the administrators to correct administrative faults the people imply through personal names. This helps to improve the management systems and to bring peace and security in the country.

Onomastic theory is used to analyze and interpret the data in this study. This is because the theory is an inclusive and appropriate approach used to analyze and interpret vast and immense meanings of personal names. Accordingly, the data from the interviews were integrated with the data from the focus group discussions, document analysis and field notes. Using onomastic theory, the whole data were associated with each other and then analyzed and interpreted.

As the current research focused on the current naming trends, there was a gap in literature that addressed these naming practices in the area. The issue of emerging new trends in naming and naming practices vi-sa-vis changing socio-political issues. Therefore, the study attempted to address the following questions:

1. What do the Oromoo people in the study areas express through the names of their children?

2. What are the linguistic descriptions and purposes of the emerging trends of personal names in the areas?

3. Research Methodology

This study was conducted on Oromoo personal names and naming practices in their natural settings and cultural set-up. For this reason, the research approach used was social constructivist in interpretive paradigm. According to social constructivist theory, knowledge is socially constructed by people and a researcher attempts to understand the complex world of lived experiences from the point of view of those who live it (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Creswell, 2003). The constructivist approach emphasizes that research is a product of the values of researchers. Research cannot be independent of the researchers because knowledge is constructed and knowing is active. Thus, the researcher's goal is to understand the multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge by going one step further and rejecting the notion that there is an objective reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 48).

I purposively selected Naqamte town Administrative and Giddaa Ayyaanaa District from the 18 districts found in Eastern Wollega Zone of Oromia National Regional State. This helped me to get rich and in-depth data by selecting more appropriate and knowledgeable participants for the study.

As studying personal names require generating rich qualitative data that describe experiences, realities and meanings of the names, the qualitative research method suites the analysis and interpretation of the data thoroughly. Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p.15) stated that qualitative research aims at providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the environment in which the research participants live. It also helps researchers to understand about the research participants' social and material circumstances, experiences and histories by understanding the social phenomena in their contexts (Stake, 2010, p. 88; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 17 & Berg, 2001, p. 8). Thus, data collected from interviews, focus group discussions and documents were analyzed and interpreted qualitatively to enrich and illustrate a qualitative conclusion.

4. Politically Initiative Oromoo Names

Language is used to express basic human experiences and world views of a society. The words we use play an important role in expressing these views and our understanding of the world. Names are important part of our language and used as a means of expressing internal feelings and attitudes to politics and the ruling system in the country. In the study area, many names are created to indicate the parents' political intention and concerns. The people use names to comment on and transfer their messages about the system and other administrative issues in the society. All research participants explained politics as one of the factors that determine names to be given to children. For instance, one of the interviewees remarked that:

Parents give names which reflect the political and other views of a society. For example, names like /bilisummaa, lammiijaad, firaafool" which mean 'freedom, think for your nations and help your relatives' respectively are given to display the political stand of the parents. Such names are popular and common in this area, (IG 03, *Translations*).

From the above quotation, the names under the following table express the political assertiveness of the parents and the situations in which the names are bestowed. Accordingly, the names are described according to their constituents and circumstances in which they are given. Based on their different parts of the names, they are described below:

Name	constituent 1	constituent 2	circumstance
/bilis-ummaa/	bilis-a	-umma	Expressing parent's
('freedom')	('free')	(derv)	cravings for freedom
/lammii-jaad/	lammii	jaad	Expressing parents'
('think for nation')	('nation')	('think')	attitude to political leaders
/firaafool/	fira-af	ool	Expressing parent's wish for
('help relatives')	('relative')	('help')	their child to be responsible

Table 1: Names Expressing Political Accountability

The Oromoo people in the study area bestow names on their children to describe the existing social and political situation of the country. For example, when one ethnic group is under pressure by another ethnic group, or being intimidated by other group, names which reflect such situation are given to children. This helps the people to educate or pass history to the next generation and transfer their messages to the intended audiences. Thus, the names are used to describe the existing socio-political system, to condemn or praise the past and to refer to the system they wish to have.

Similarly, one of the parents interviewed expressed one of his children's names and the reasons for giving such names as follows:

/firaafool/ which means 'help your relatives' has a political implication. It means 'do not be self-centered'. Stand for your nation; fight for their freedom; help your community; care for your ethnicity. This feelings arose from what happened to our people when my wife was pregnant with this child and at about the time of his birth. I felt so sad about what happened to our nation. I commented based an important issue, i.e., combined forces in politics. In political agendas, one should be on the side of the society, work and struggle for them. (PN 03, *Translations*)

As revealed in the excerpt, the name /firaafool/ has political implication and refers to individuals who have been participating in the political system. The name giver tried to convey his message through his son's name about his nations who are participating in the political system of the country. He advised his people, particularly those who are participating in the political agenda, to work and fight for their people and have national thinking rather than being self-oriented. It implied that those who are participating in the political agenda should serve their people. However, they were making their businesses and benefits. Thus, he strongly commented that they should struggle for their nations, responsible for their ethnicity and be onsiderate of their people. Moreover, the name informed the politicians the importance of collaboration and group effort in a political agenda.

In onomastic analysis of the above data, the name /firaafol/ has both denotative and connotative meanings like many other Oromoo names. The political meaning lies on the connotative meanings of names. As Crystal (1997, pp. 102-104) defined denotation as the objective relationship between a word (in this case a name) and reality to which it refers; that is an individual the name refers to and, connotation is a personal association stimulated by a name. He noted that the association depends on the context in which the name is given. Thus, the connotative meaning of the name "Firaafol" is used to express the political condition of the country. The meanings raised above are, therefore, given based on the political context in which the society was living.

This is also supported by the informant interviewee who explained that name giving is one of the means by which the society expresses its comments about the system in which the people are living. The interviewee explained that: "When most names are analyzed, they

show that there are problems related to different issues such as politics. Most names describe the society's terrible sense of blame on the governmental system," (IG 03, *Translations*). When there are problems of exercising the rights and responsibilities freely, the society tries to express their feelings and attitudes about different socio-political problems that encountered them by the names of their children. On the other way, the names help them to criticize the political system and the administrators covertly.

In the same manner, one interviewed mother stated that her son's name describes the political situations and the manners of the officials as presented next:

/lammiijaad/ *'lammiif' (for nation) and 'jaadi' (think)*; which means 'you should think for your nation'. […] Nowadays, those who are representing the people are selfish. They are not working for the society. They think and worry about their self-development and luxurious life. Hence, we wish our son to be kind to human beings who contemplates for his people, works for his nation and worries for the generation; for his country and for the world in general, (PN 05, *Translations*).

As can be understood from the quoted extract, the name /lammiijaad/ expresses political message in which the selfishness of the administrators is blamed. The name implies that the leaders who are not appropriately serving their country and their nations should act in favour of the rights and justice of their people. The leaders should give up their personal benefits and selfishness. The interviewed parent hoped her son would serve his people and change their life rather than his personal benefits.

The mother of the child has observed and experienced administrative faults and discriminations that happened to her and others for many years. When she was pregnant with her son, */lammiiyaad/*, she asked for transfer from one rural school to a nearby town because she had taught at the rural school for many years. However, she could not get transferred though there were many teachers who got transferred with fewer years of services. She heard that those who got transferred got it through corruption. As a result, she quarreled with the officers who were also corrupted in their offices.

The main attentions of those officers are not ruling the society fairly; but, they were concerned on collecting money and other personal benefits for themselves. The people expected that the political leaders were assigned to manage and rule the people fairly. But, the rulers have forgotten the promises and responsibilities given to them and started searching for means of corrupting the people. Thus, the mother hopes that her son */lammiiyaad/*, will be 'one who shows concerns about his people and who will be responsible for his nation. In relation to this, Raj (2015, p.307) stated that "politically inspired names are given in relation to the politics of the day based on the incidents or the activities of the politicians."

Hence, name giving is a means by which the people are exercising their rights and conveying their messages to the concerned bodies such as the administrators and the ruling classes. The following names are some examples which are selected from the documents consulted for this study.

Name	constituent 1	constituent 2	circumstance
/atimoʔi/	ati	moʔi	Parent's political feelings
('you win')	('you')	('win')	and desires
/filiimoʔi/	filii	moʔi	Refers to parent's political
('pick and win')	('pick')	('win')	assertiveness
/moʔiboon/	moʔi	boon	Expressing parents wishes
('win to be proud of')	('win')	('proud of')	to exercise in politics

Table 2: Names Expressing Parent's Political Assertiveness

As can be seen from the above table, names such as /atimoʔi, filiimoʔi, moʔiboon and falmataa/ are some of the current names from the document analysis that reveal parents' political feelings, attitudes and wishes for the comprehensive betterment of their society in their socio-political life. Most of the time, such names are given by parents who are politically assertive though they can also be given for their being attractive, modern and unique. Pfukwa (2008, p. 59) supported that one of the uses of personal names is to express the political systems of a country.

In general, most currently appearing names express the political intentions and attitudes of parents. In relation to this, FGD participants confirmed that names can be associated with political or economic situation of the country. In this era, the name /bilisummaa/ (M/F) and /bilisee/ (F) which stand for 'freedom' are commonly given to children. The names show that the communities are eager for freedom. The names express the people's assertiveness in politics to exercise their rights and responsibilities in the political system of their country. One of the FGD participants explained: "the main concept is that the parents give the name /bilisee/ showing their need/ wish for freedom. It could be freedom of possession and/or thinking." (FGDG, *Translations*). Thus, parents who bestow /bilisee/ on their child express their need for different rights they want to possess. The name indicates that they want to have a freedom of possession and thinking. They need to be free, to govern, to own, to speak, etc. As citizens of a country, they want to equally participate in different economic and money raising activities such as trade and industry. It also specifies the people's need to express their thinking freely and their need to have the right to speak their feelings and attitudes openly in mass. As can be understood from the data, such freedoms are not practically there. In addition, those who are openly speaking and expressing their feelings have been suffering and being criticized as opponents.

For instance, a family who name their daughter /iftijoom/- a name composed of two words: /ifti/ means 'light' and /joom/ means 'when' to describe 'when will there be light/ liberty?' expresses their attitude to the system of the government at the time the child was born. The name describes that the family is not satisfied in what is there and hoping better changes to

come in the near future. Therefore, he is requesting for better changes to come soon in the government system of the country.

Names like /bilisee, bilisummaa and walabummaa/ are used to show the wish of the society to live without restrictions since all people in this world want to live in freedom. This generation wants to express its idea freely and wants to live in free society with liberty. **The generation expresses its desire for fair participation in the trade in the issues of its country and reflects** its eagerness for liberty through names of its children. Likewise, it is also a question of identity since everybody wants to be him/herself. Everybody wants to express his/herself in his/her own language as one's identity is expressed in one's language. The people also want to name their children in their own language. This also helps them to describe their identity.

Similarly, Oromoo people want to exercise and their own religion and culture in their own language. They also have their own administrative system called 'Gadaa. Hence, they give a name "*Gadaa*" to their children to express their democratic system of administration to the world. In the same manner, a name 'Odaa' is also given to children, which represents the democratic administration system of the Oromoo people. These signify the question of nationalism and democratic system which also expresses the political assertiveness of the people. Names "*Gadaa* and *Odaa*" are, therefore, used to explain Oromoo's political system which is the most known in democratic administration. A name used as a political statement has its effect on the name bearer. Unique and politically impressing names, specifically names given to prove a political or social point of views of the name givers, are currently created names. The following names are stated during FGDs.

Name	constituent 1	constituent 2	circumstance
/marsiimoʔi/	mars-ii	moʔi	Conflict and unfavourable
('win by surrounding')	('surrounding')	('win')	political situation
/diinkolaas/	diin-aa	kolaas	Conflict and unfavourable
('attack the enemies')	('enemy')	('attack')	political situation
/diinaaʔol/	diina-a	ol	Conflict and unfavourable
('above the enemy')	('enemy')	('above')	political situation
/diinaraas/	diina	raas	Conflict and unfavourable
('shake the enemy')	('enemy')	('shake')	political situation
/diinadiig/	diina	diig	Conflict and unfavourable
('collapse the enemy')	('enemy')	('collapse')	political situation
/diinajjees/	diin-a	ajjees	Conflict and unfavourable
('kill the enemy')	('enemy')	('kill')	political situation

Tabe 3: Names Expressing Unfavourable Political Condition

Names listed in the above table may impress an added pressure on the names bearing children to carry out the parents' wishes. Some of the FGD participants warned that such names should not be given to children since they may affect them. The name bearers may try to be/ do what their name demands them to be/ do.

However, all the FGD participants agreed that such personal names describe the parents' wish for freedom, self-governance and self-rule. The names for instance, /mooneet, niimoonaa, marsiimoʔi and moʔiiboon/ express the people's aspirations and rights to get political power and the desire to take part in deciding on their own opportunities and privileges through liberty and freedom as a nation of a country. To achieve victory, the people understood the need to struggle and fight. From my field notes, names like *diinadiig, diinajjees and diinaraas* and the like approve the current situation of the country. These names are the people's motto which they think and believe will lead them to freedom.

Moreover, the names */numarsan/* blended from 'nu' (we) and 'mars-an' (surrounding) means 'we are surrounded and */simarsan/* formed from 'si' (you) and 'mars-an' (surrounding) which means 'you are surrounded' respectively. They mean 'watch out! The enemies are around. Get ready to…'. The names described the current act that shows the people are surrounded by soldiers. There are also names, listed below, from the field notes that show the people have braves who protect them from enemies.

Name	constituent 1	constituent 2	circumstance
/jajjabee/	jaj-jabee	-	War and conflict
('braves')	('braves')	-	
/singitan/	si	hi-n-git-an	War and conflict
(no one equates with you)	('you')	('they cannot equate')	
/keeyeroon/	kee	yeroon	War and conflict
('the time is yours')	('yours')	('time')	
/raajan/	raaj-	-an	War and conflict
('they predict')	('predict')	('they')	
/olbiraat/	ol	biraa-ti	War and conflict
('it is from above')	('above')	('from')	

Table 4: Names Expressing Hopes during Conflict

From the above table, names such as /*jajjabee, singitan, keeyeroon/* from the table above are currently given to express hardship situations in the area. Names like /*raajan, olbiraati/* also show the people's hope that they forecast for sovereignty and power in the near future.

Thus, the people believe that the freedom they predict will come in the near future since it is decided from God, which is expressed by the name */olbiraati/.*

Another factor that determines the name giving practice is the people's concern to express feelings of nationalism and their favorable attitude towards it. The following quote was taken from one of the interviewees. See below:

Nowadays, you can observe that people are expressing feelings of nationalism by the names of their children. This is part of a pride. This is the pride an individual can have in his/her society. WhenI give a name to my child, I feel a sense of pride because it is my nationality. Currently, Oromoo names indicate that the future will be bright and full of hope, (IG 01, *Translations*).

The data reported above show the current Oromoo names that describe the society's nationalist feelings that depcted the Oromoo pride in its national identiy.. The following names listed in the table below are some of the examples which show national pride feelings as follows:

Name	constituent 1	constituent 2	circumstance
/boonaa/ ('proud')	boon- ('proud')	-aa (case-gender)	There is feelings of nationalism
/boontuu/ ('proud')	boon- ('proud')	-tuu ('case-gender')	There is feelings of nationalism
/firaanboon/ ('proud of relative')	fira-an ('by relative')	boon ('proud')	Expressing comfort with relatives
/lammiinboon/ ('Proud of nation')	lammii-n ('nation')	boon ('proud')	Expressing comfort with nation

Table 5: Names Expressing Natioalism Feelings

Oromoo names such as */boonaa/* (M) and */boontuu/ (*F*)*, */firaanboon/, /lammiinboon/* and so on are indicators of the society's feelings about themselves and their nation. The '…boon' combined names which means 'have proud in …' asserts that the people are proud of their nation. Such feelings describe not only '*Oromummaa'* but also '*Sabboonummaa'* of the name bearers as well as their parents.

Accordingly, from the document analysis, names such as /moʔiiboon, marsiimoʔi, atimoʔi and bijjanʃee/ which mean 'win and be proud, win by surrounding, you win, and the country is hers' respectively express the society's eagerness to nationalism and self-governance and self-rule. From the field notes, there are names that strongly approve the people's feelings of

nationalism and self-assertiveness. For instance, names like /eeṇummaa, Oromoo, sabboon/ which mean 'identity, Oromoo (his/her nation) and having proud in oneself from 'sab-' 'nation' and '-boon' proud' respectively describe the people's confidence and nationalist expression about themselves and their nation.

The current Oromoo generations are following optimistic philosophy in their naming practices. This means that the philosophy that the Oromoo are following in naming their children is optimistic: being hopeful about the future and expression of wishes and successes for the future to be bright and successful. Names such as /hawwiibilisummaa/ (hawwii- 'wish' and -bilisummaa 'freedom'), /booribsaa/ (boor- 'tomorrow' and -ibsaa 'make light'), /bulchaa/ and which mean 'wish for freedom, he will make tomorrow bright, governor' respectively indicate that the future will be bright and hopeful.

In the same view, the political system of the country in the past, aimed at unity by dominating other languages and cultures in Ethiopia. Oromoo language and culture were also not an exceptional. To oppose the dominance and detestation the dominant group had on Afaan Oromoo and Oromoo culture, one of the informant interviewees named his daughter to express his love for his language, Afaan Oromoo and his culture. The following remark by the informant interviewee confirmed this:

/hindaadaa/ which means 'base of culture' is created from 'hundee or hidda' which means 'base or root' and 'aadaa' 'culture'. I gave my daughter this name because I like my culture very much. Oromoo culture was under pressure for centuries. Our language, Afaan Oromoo, was also suppressed and discriminated. We were subjugated and down trodden. We were forbidden to speak our language. I was so annoyed at that time since our language and our culture were so victimized and mistreated, (IN 05, *Translations*).

The data show that the Oromoo people were forced to speak another language, copy others' culture and live others' life styles. The interviewee was questioning why these all discriminations occurred to the Oromoo people. Thus, the name 'Hindaadaa' is a response to those who were dominating the people and their language. It is another instance of resistance and an act of defiance.

The name was formed by coining two different words in order to transfer the message that confirms that the people like their culture and language. Therefore, the people have to get the right to speak their language, to exercise their culture and live according to their life styles without interference and dominations of others.

In a name giving culture in the study areas, the people described the political system of the country. One of the parents interviewed said that:

I named my son who was born during the past regime /*diigaჯaaraa*/ in which case diigaa is 'deconstruct' and i-ჯaaraara 'construct'. That means deconstructing the old and re-constructing a new one. I did this to express my internal feelings. This is because in this country's political system, the old political system should vanish and a new system should replace, (IN 05, *Translations*).

The child the above name was given was born in the Dergue regime. The name expresses the name giver's wish for a new system to be reconstructed and the old one to be ruined. The name giver wishes for the old to disappear and the new to come with new things, new governance and new administrations. It implies that the change must come in the political system of the country.

Currently, naming is broadly based on the political attitude of the people as a means of expression since it is challenging to say political feelings openly in public. When parents are under pressure or when they are not free to say political issues explicitly, they express their political matters by the names of their children in a hidden form. They express their internal feelings, wishes and attitudes to their political concerns through the names of their children. Such politically sensitive names load burden on children which the parents cannot perform by themselves. The parents should be conscious that such politically sensitive names might hurt children.

To this end, in personal names, we can observe the people's wishes and attitudes in economy, politics, culture and other state of affairs. Names which are related to politics express the society's stand point about their nations, language and culture. They also express their grievance about the political system of the country. From such politically sensitive names, the society's nationalism feelings and their desire for self-rule and self-governance are strongly recognized. In describing and expressing political issues, optimistic philosophy of naming is strongly observed.

In the study areas, therefore, the given names are created newly to specify the parents' political intention and their desire to comment on and transfer their messages about the system and other administrative issues related to political affairs. When the pragmatic meanings of these names are described, most names are, therefore, given based on the context in which the people are living and their experience in political system. Moreover, when there is problem of exercising the rights and responsibilities freely, they try to express their feelings and attitudes by the names of their children. Their children's names also help them to criticize the administrators and the governing system. Thus, most of the time, names given inspired by these circumstances are given by parents who are politically assertive and who are aware of their identity, rights and responsibilities.

Most currently appearing names express the political intentions of parents, families and the people at all. They reveal that the people are enthusiastic for freedom and are assertive to exercise their rights. Bruck and Bodenhorn (2006, p. 3) stated that "personal names are a powerful political tool for establishing social identity." It also specifies the people's need to express their thoughts freely and to have the right to speak their feelings and attitudes openly. Naming has become one of the means by which the people express their feelings which they cannot do in public because of the political pressure. The other factor that determines the name giving practice is expression of nationalist feelings and the people's attitude to self-rule and independence. Studying different names closely shows that the names describe the nationalist feelings of the people for independence.

Lastly, the Oromoo are optimists in their naming practices. The philosophy the Oromoo people pursue in naming their children shows hope for the future to be bright and successful. This is because personal names mirror how language is used as cultural practices and as a powerful tool to view and understand the world view of a particular society such as the political views of the society (Rosenhouse, 2002). Therefore, personal names are used as a powerful political tool for the Oromoo people like other African people.

5. Conclusion

Dramatic shifts in naming patterns in Eastern Wollega represent a possible strategy employed by the society to affirm the revival of Oromoo nationalism. This was done not only by bestowing names that belong to Oromoo, but also by words that express the feelings of nationalism. For this purpose, the society use new trends of personal names which are formed by blending two or more words in order to express their internal feelings about political outlooks and desires, identities, economic and cultural issues and other related concerns of the Oromoo people.

> ➢ The Oromoo people in the study area bestow names on their children based on different factors. For example, factors such as parents' life experiences, the circumstances that happen during pregnancy and child birth and situations of life and living in their family, society and at the country level determine the names. Moreover, the day, time and condition of birth of the child, the family's economic conditions and attitudes towards politics, social and cultural issues, their wishes, hopes, beliefs, successes and challenges they come across and their future aspirations and hopes are also factors that influence the name to be given to a child.

> ➢ Currently, the naming trend of the Oromoo in Eastern Wollega has varied from simple and one word names to more complex phrases and sentences. Apparently, this has happened following the regional political system of the country that has been established. The other factor for the current naming practice is the revival of nationalism, self-discovery, self-rule and the people's improvement in education. All these are the result of the enhanced parents' knowledge about their language and language use, culture and identity. As a result, the people create complex names, which help the parents' to express their political, economic and social feelings and attitudes in a more expressive way.

> ➢ Depending on the meanings they convey in social, political and cultural agenda, the current Oromoo personal names express the people's optimistic feelings. The philosophy that the Oromoo follows in naming their children is optimistic; which shows hopeful and bright future. For instance, names such as */hawwiibilisummaa/, /booribsaa/, /marsiimoʔi/* and the like mean 'wish for freedom, will make tomorrow bright, rule by surrounding' respectively point toward the name givers' hope for the future to be bright and hopeful. Thus, the people are using names as instrument of resistance and protest.

> ➢ Most of currently coined names indicate parents' political intentions and their sentiments. The parents comment on and convey their messages about the administrative and other political issues via the names of their children. For example, names like */bilisummaa/, /lammiijaad/,* /firaafool/ which means 'freedom, think for your nations and help your relatives' respectively are popular and very common in the research area. Hence, these names are used for parents as a means of exercising their rights freely and making their wishes public. They also describe the importance of solidarity to bring liberty not only to the family and the society but also for the whole nations.

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