



SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

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A Study on the Independence of Journalists in Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC)

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DECLARATIONS

I EDEN WAKTOLE, do hereby declare that this Thesis is my original work and that it has not been submitted partially; or in full, by any other person for an award of a degree in any other university/institution.

Name.....Signaturedate

ENDORSEMENT

This thesis has been submitted to **Addis Ababa University**, College of Humanity Language Studies, Journalism and Communication Studies for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Eden Waktole, entitled **Challenges to the Independence of Journalists in Ethiopian Media: The Case of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC)** submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulations of the University and notes the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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ACRONYMS

EBC: Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation

ENA: Ethiopian News Agency

TPLF: Tigray Peoples Liberation Front

ABSTRACT

Journalist independence is critical element to the media's fruitfulness and efficient service to the public. However, journalists independence is influenced by several things in Ethiopia's media landscape. This

study is aimed to study the challenges to the independence of journalists in Ethiopian media: The Case of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC). Three main research questions were developed in order to achieve the study's objective. What are factors that frontier the independence of journalists, which elements of this Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation to restrain journalists, how the news media influenced the professional freedoms and autonomy of journalists. In this study, a qualitative research approach is employed, using in-depth interviews as a data collection tool. 15 journalists from the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation were selected as a sample to have an interview with. The interview's datum was analyzed qualitatively based on the questionnaire for respondents, which was prepared to answer the objective of the study. Ethiopian broadcasting as the government media institution; there are directions from the government side to exert pressure; journalists are not free to choose their own stories, especially on hard news and its sources; criteria for news and source selection are guided by an institution's editorial policy; and there are personal, organizational, and unwritten guidelines. Journalists encounter things like officials' unwillingness to provide information and self-censorship. Generally, journalists at the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation is not professionally independent. By looking at the overall findings, the study also sketches out the likely useful and theoretical suggestions in the Ethiopian media and journalists' independence.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

As principles of journalistic ethics indicate and most educators agree journalistic integrity requires the media and journalists to maintain their independence, which is crucial for their ability to perform their role effectively. Therefore, the media and journalists should be free from any kind of influences so that they can practice to broadcast variety of opinions and ideas (Retief et al., 2001). As Journalism is supposed to be a public service, it should be guided by a code of ethics. Otherwise, journalists face a variety of conflicts of interest including their own self-interest, as well as the interest of their relatives that affect their integrity, independence and credibility (Kruger, 2004). As Forbes notes, having a code of ethics is important for journalism to protect themselves from questionable practices like “cheque book journalism, the brown envelope and the use of deception” (2005 p55).

Some scholars argue that the level of media independence is influenced by the type of government and media model in addition to the necessity of a code of ethics (Retief 2001, Kruger 2004, Hyden et al 2002). This research has conducted on federal public media organization Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC). EBC is government owned media which was initially established during Haile Silassie reign era in 1962 with assistance from the British firm, Thomson. Regular transmission began on 2 November 1964. It was created to highlight the organization of African Unity (OAU) meeting that took place in Addis Ababa the same year. The current structure and goals were established in 1987 with proclamation 114/87 in 1995 ERTA (Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency) was created in as the result of the merge between Ethiopian Radio and Ethiopian Television (ETV). In 2014, the channel changed the name from ETV to EBC, also changed its logo in the process. EBC plays a crucial role in disseminating news and information to the public.

As the cornerstone of mass media in Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinion and disseminating information to the nation. Through the lens of EBC, this study seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on press freedom, journalistic independence and the pivotal role of media in shaping public opinion, by delving into the intricacies of challenges faced by journalists within EBC.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The public media organization, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), serves as a critical platform for information dissemination and public discourse within Ethiopia. However, the independence of journalists within the EBC is traversed by a complex interplay of institutional, political, and societal challenges, as articulated by notable scholars and researchers. Fisseha (2019), in his seminal work on Ethiopian media, has underscored the influence of political dynamics on journalistic autonomy, noting how political pressures may encroach upon the editorial independence of journalists operating within state-affiliated media organizations like the EBC. Furthermore, the economic and sociocultural pressures that impact the journalistic landscape have been highlighted by Sivertsen (2017), emphasizing the need to critically scrutinize the multifaceted challenges faced by journalists within specific media institutions. Sivertsen's insights are particularly relevant to the EBC, where economic constraints and sociopolitical influences may intertwine to shape the professional autonomy and integrity of journalists.

Drawing from a broader discourse on media independence Schudson (2005) has illuminated the struggle faced by journalists in reconciling commercial imperatives and democratic responsibilities. Within the specific context of state-affiliated media, Schudson's insights resonate as journalists at the EBC may grapple with aligning their professional ethics with the institutional and external demands placed upon them.

Therefore, this study aims to address the challenges to journalistic independence within the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, guided by the insights of these and other scholars. By delving into the intricate dynamics at play within the EBC and leveraging the broader scholarly discourse on media independence, this research seeks to foster a deeper understanding of the multifaceted challenges encountered by journalists in upholding their professional autonomy, ethical standards, and societal obligations within the state-affiliated media ecosystem of Ethiopia.

The society of American newspaper editors stated, independence is one of the canons of journalism and is defined as “ Freedom from all obligations except that of the fidelity of the public interest” (Ahuja 2001:4). Journalism is guided by four fundamental principles with independence is one of them (Kovach 2001). The Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) is a media outlet that operates under government control and delivers news on various topics including social, economic and political issues. Despite this control the journalists in this outlet perform their daily news reporting as they have done in the past. As kruger (2004) and Retief (2002) note, certain conditions constrain journalists from practicing as independent professionals. These conditions amount to a conflict of interest that includes accepting gifts, family relationships, the influence of friends, self-interest, personal beliefs, financial interest political interference and owners interest (Retief 2002:123-13) These impacts journalists’ independence and credibility. As a result, audiences cannot get accurate, fair and balanced information. The research aims to explore the extent of journalistic independence practiced in this media and how it contributes to addressing public concerns and promoting freedom of expression. In particular the researcher will examine the factors challenges independence of journalists.

Objectives of the study

1.2.1. General objective: The general objective of the study is assessing the Independence of journalists in Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation.

1.2.2. Specific objectives

- To analyze the various factors impact journalists’ onto stifling, decision-making process and independence in their work.

- To evaluate how factors such as media ownership, political pressure, financial incentives, and editorial policies influence journalistic independence at EBC

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the factors that frontier the independence of journalism at EBC?
2. Which elements of this specific media (EBC) likely to restrain journalists?

1.4. Significance of the study

This study is useful for those who want to understand the importance of journalistic independence and its necessity for enhancing freedom of expression. The study on challenges to journalistic independence in federal public media organization which is EBC is significant as it provides insights into the factors that affect the ability of journalists to report independently in Ethiopia. This study will contribute to the existing literature on media freedom and independence in Africa, particularly in Ethiopia, where press freedom is limited. According to scholars, the Ethiopian government has been criticized for its control over the media, which has resulted in limited freedom of expression and a lack of independent reporting. The findings of this study will shed light on the challenges faced by journalists working in federal public media organizations, such as the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, and how these challenges impact their ability to report independently.

The study also provide recommendations for improving the state of press freedom and independence in Ethiopia. This research is relevant to scholars of media studies, journalism, and political science, as well as policymakers and media practitioners who are interested in promoting press freedom and independence. Moreover, this research may provide information to journalists the federal government and others about journalistic independence and the factors that compromise their independence, integrity and credibility.

The significance of the study lies in its contribution to the understanding of challenges to journalistic independence within federal public media organizations, specifically the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation. This study will add to the existing body of literature on press freedom and independence by examining the unique challenges faced by journalists working within a government-controlled media

environment. Scholars such as McChesney (2008) and Curran (2011) have highlighted the importance of independent journalism in a democratic society, and this study will provide valuable insights into the specific obstacles that journalists encounter in upholding their independence within a state-run media organization.

1.5. Limitations of the study

The researcher will attempt at its best to fully organize, collect, analyze and present the research data but there might be uncontrollable limitations by the researcher side including time, resource constraint and access to participants who are willing to be involved in the research due to:

-Obtaining comprehensive access to the internal operations and decision-making processes within the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation may present a limitation. Certain operational aspects, organizational policies, and decision-making dynamics might not be fully transparent or easily accessible to external researchers.

This could impact the ability to fully capture the intricacies of how journalistic independence is upheld or challenged within the organization. Also The EBC, as a federal public media organization, may be governed by specific editorial guidelines, regulations, or constraints that could impact the candidness of journalistic staff members.

The organization's adherence to professional standards and editorial policies, as well as their potential impact on journalistic autonomy, may present challenges in obtaining unfiltered insights from EBC journalists. Given the sensitive nature of media-related research within the Ethiopian context, the study may encounter limitations regarding the open discussion of certain sociopolitical issues, especially those related to media freedom and journalistic autonomy. This may influence the willingness of EBC journalists and staff to express their perspectives freely, potentially impacting the depth of insights obtained. Thus, this research is done based on interviews that has been done on 15 journalists of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation(EBC).

Scope of the study

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

In this chapter, we will explore the theoretical dimensions of the study and investigate the relevant related literature pertaining to journalistic independence. This literature review will encompass the pivotal concepts and theories associated with independence in journalism, as well as the various factors that influence it. These influential factors may include censorship, freedom of expression and other conflicts of interest. Throughout the chapter, we will delve into different perspectives and approaches concerning these aspects, offering diverse insights into the topic at hand.

2.1. Independence in Journalism

Independence is a fundamental principle in journalism. According to American society of newspaper editors', independence is one of the canons to journalism and is defined as, "Freedom from all obligations except that of the fidelity of the public interest" (Ahuja, 2001:4). It is regarded as one of the fundamental values that guide the practice of journalism (Kruger 2004, Retief 2002, Kovach 2001). The principle holds immense importance as it directly impacts the credibility of journalists, which is the foundation of their role in a democratic society. Any perceived or actual conflict of interest can compromise this credibility (Kruger, 2004:13).

In order to protect and promote journalistic independence and freedom of expression, journalists are encouraged to abide by code of ethics (Kruger 2004, Retief 2002). While journalists have work to inform and educate the public, they must adhere to ethical principles that allow them to serve their communities with responsibility. Journalists are unable to work if audiences discount or reporting because they see it as influenced by considerations outside of journalism, such as personal, commercial or political motives." (Kruger 2004:13). The problems are seen as a struggle of interests that obstructs the media's effectiveness.

(Kruger 2004). Independence is one of the fundamental principles of journalism ethics because it sets up a defense against conflict of interest and competing loyalties. It says publicly that journalistic work is guided by no allegiance except that to professional standards and the audiences. (Kruger, 2004:95). Considering this, the true social responsibility of journalists is to deliver trustworthy and impartial coverage of happenings (Kruger, 2004:99). While fulfilling their duties, journalists must refrain from engaging in any affiliations or actions that could jeopardize their integrity or impede their independence, as well as their credibility obligations (Kruger, 2004:95).

The key factor in achieving truthfulness and serving the public through journalism is not neutrality, but independence. Therefore, journalists must remain free from any personal interests that conflict with the greater good of society, in order to maintain their autonomy from the subjects they report on (Kovach, 2001:97). Moreover, as the public expects journalists to report the truth as fully as possible, they should portray as many as sides of a story as possible, and let the public decide its own view of the matter (Retief, 2002:95).

Despite the importance of journalistic independence, it is not always easy for journalists to maintain their professional autonomy. One major challenge they face is threat of their safety and even their lives, as noted by Kofi Annan during his remarks on World Press Freedom Day in 2006. The threats to life and safety faced by journalists includes: Better to avoid (or paraphrase in a short sentence) the direct quote.

In 2003, there were 136 journalists who were imprisoned solely because of their occupation. This means that they were detained and held in custody due to their work as journalists, without any other valid reason. These journalists were not accused of any crime or wrongdoing, but were simply targeted for their profession. It is a concerning fact that so many journalists were deprived of their freedom for doing their job of reporting and informing the public (

<http://www.u.org./News/Press/docs/2006/sgsm10436.doc.htm>).

In 2003, more than 36 journalists lost their lives in the line of duty to report and inform the world. These courageous journalists put their lives at risk to provide us with facts and perspectives on important issues, but unfortunately, they paid a high price for their work. In 2004 alone, at least 17 journalists were murdered in the first 3 months alone. Some journalists were targeted for their reporting or because they belonged to a news organization. This highlights the dangerous and sometimes life-threatening work of journalists. Without proper respect and protection of journalists and the work they do, there is no guarantee that we will have a free and impartial media. This situation highlights the importance of attention and support for journalists. Their safety and freedom is essential to the credibility of the profession. If we don't prioritize journalists' well being and their rights, we run the risk of losing access to truthful and impartial information that is vital to a healthy democracy. Journalism faces ongoing threats to personal and professional integrity, impacting our reliance on the media for free expression and conscience-stirring. Let's recommit to media freedom for a better world and pledge to safeguard journalists' safety and fearlessness in their crucial work. (UNESCO).

But, as noted before Journalistic independence can be compromised due to various factors. Tuchman's (2002) analysis highlights the evolution of research on news production, from early gate-keeping studies to more recent investigations into the underlying structural and organizational factors that influence news reporting (Curran, 2000). While I am mindful of these different approaches to the factors that shape the production of news, this study considers news production from the perspective of gate keeping, as the existence of gatekeepers is seen as a major factor that affects the performance of reporters (Fourie 2004). They influence the original message of the media as they modify the content (Fourie, 2004:205). In all cases of in-text citation please strictly follow the APA manual by making for example (Fourie, 2004, p. 205) Gate keeping is defined as follows:

The gate keepers are individuals or groups who are responsible for overseeing this process and have a significant impact on which stories are ultimately selected and presented to the public. Essentially, gate keeping involves a complex process of decision-making that determines what information is deemed newsworthy and how it is presented to the public (Fourie 2004:97).

The gate keeping can be either internal within the newsroom or external by external entities. Internally, gatekeepers such as directors, editors, and department heads are responsible for handpicking, verifying, and approving specific types of news stories. These gatekeepers may also meddle with the content of the news before it is broadcasted. This practice often curbs the independence of journalists and hinders their ability to fulfill their democratic role.(Shoemaker, P. J., & Vos, T. P. 2009).

The main role of reporters is story production (Fourie, 2004). Their scope of power does not extend to determining the category of news, aside from offering recommendations on potential news topics. Editors have multiple gate keeping responsibilities that can impede the effectiveness of reporters, the journalists may be motivated to practice self-censorship (Ray and Taylor, 1988:29). Editors have a significant role in determining what content gets published, which can sometimes hinder the reporters' ability to convey their ideas effectively. As a result, reporters may feel compelled to alter their content to meet the expectations of their editors and superiors. Sometimes the editors discourage reporters by not publishing their work (Ray and Taylor,1988:30). In addition to the role of editors in determining what content gets published, journalists also play a part in the gate keeping effect by self-censoring their work. This is often driven by their desire for career advancement and job security. As a result, they may alter or withhold information that they believe could be controversial or unpopular with their superiors or audience. Even if the journalists want to report their findings, they are afraid to do so, lest they get into trouble with their editors or managers (Ray and Taylor, 1988 and Fourie, 2004).

The gatekeepers in the media industry are bound by various guidelines and policies that dictate what content can be published or broadcasted. These rules and regulations help to ensure that the information presented is accurate, fair, and unbiased. Journalists must adhere to ethical standards and codes of conduct that govern their profession, such as avoiding conflicts of interest and protecting sources.

Additionally, media outlets may have their own specific policies regarding the types of stories they cover, the tone of their reporting, and the editorial stance they take on certain issues. All of these factors contribute to the gate keeping effect in the media industry. At times, journalists' decision-making can be influenced by external frameworks, such as the intervention of authoritative bodies. Moreover, these authoritative bodies play a gate keeping role either directly or indirectly to shape the content of the news

to suit their interests. In the case of broadcasting, this may be done by appointing board managers from the cabinet (Fourie 2004:199).

2.2. Limitations to journalists' independence

According to Kruger (2004) and Retief (2002), journalists face a range of obstacles that can impede their ability to operate as independent professionals. These obstacles often create conflicts of interest which can stem from a variety of sources such as receiving gifts familial connections, influence from personal acquaintances, personal biases financial interests, political interference, and the interests of media owners. These factors can potentially compromise the objectivity and impartiality of journalism, thereby undermining its role as a watchdog of society.

According to recent researches, there are concerns about the state of media freedom and freedom of expression in Ethiopia. The government has been accused of using the law to suppress dissenting voices, including journalists and media outlets. The EBC (Radio and Television), as , national public broadcaster of Ethiopia have been criticized for their lack of independence and impartiality, and for serving as a mouthpiece for the government.

In 2020, the Ethiopian government passed a new law aimed at regulating the media and ensuring the independence of journalists.(CPJ "Ethiopia: Media under Siege").

However, some critics argue that the law still gives the government too much power to control the media and restrict freedom of expression. Overall, while there have been some positive developments in recent years, there are still concerns about media freedom and freedom of expression in Ethiopia, including the role of the EBC as a state-owned broadcaster. (RSF "Ethiopia: Press Freedom Under Threat").

On World Press Freedom Day, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan acknowledged that information is a powerful source of power. People who have unfettered access to an independent media have more opportunities and are better prepared with the information needed to make wise judgments.

Freedom of expression is also one of the important elements for an independent media in a country. (Dahl, 1998: 90-92). Kovach and Rosenstiel also confirm the importance of freedom of the press, noting that; the concept of press freedom is deeply intertwined with the idea of independence. It is widely believed that the only a press that is free from government censorship can report the truth without any bias or interference. As times have changed, this freedom has been extended to include such as political parties, advertisers and businesses. However, the rise of media conglomerates has put the independence of the press at risk. With journalism being subsumed within larger corporations that prioritize their own business goals, the survival of independent journalism has become increasingly uncertain (2002:32)

In addition to this, freedom of expression enables the development of a democratic state in various ways: it enhances the public's understanding possible government policies, and it enables the public to participate effectively, to acquire civic competence, to express themselves freely, to learn from one another, and to engage in discussion and deliberation without any influence. When people lack these freedoms, they lose their capacity to participate effectively in their countries political, social, and economical activities.

2.2.2 Censorship

There is no legal censorship in Ethiopia, as it has been illegal since 1991. However, gatekeepers and fear still play a role in compromising journalists' professional independence. This can lead to self-censorship among journalists due to concerns about repercussions or pressure from authorities.

Censorship is a serious concern when it comes to media outlets like EBC. In the past, these state-owned media outlets have been accused of censorship, bias, and lack of independence in their reporting. For example, during the 2016 protests in Ethiopia, the government was accused of censoring coverage of the demonstrations by blocking social media sites and shutting down internet access. The EBC was also criticized for its coverage of the protests, which was seen as biased in favor of the government. Similarly, during the conflict in Tigray in 2020, there were reports of censorship by the government, including restrictions on journalists' access to the region and the shutdown of telecommunications services. It is

important for media outlets like the EBC to operate independently and without censorship, in order to provide accurate and unbiased information to the public. The government should work towards ensuring that these media outlets are free from political interference and able to report on issues without fear of reprisals. (BBC Ethiopia Tigray Crisis:How conflict destabilize its neighbour 2020).

Rowman and Littlefield (1978) defines censorship as a tool utilized by government officials or politicians to regulate and manipulate media content that is disseminated within society. The primary goal of censorship is typically to suppress information or ideas that are deemed objectionable by those in positions of power. This can be achieved through direct or indirect means, with the ultimate aim of controlling the flow of information to the public.

Censorship practices in Africa are widespread, leading to lack of access to crucial information for the public. The absence of open debates on public issues leaves citizens with limited knowledge and understanding of the current state of affairs. On the other hand, censorship in western countries is more prevalent in authoritarian regimes than in democratic ones. This is because democratic nations have fewer institutionalized censorship policies, allowing for more freedom of expression and access to information.

Solomon (2008) emphasizes the prevalence of censorship in two forms, Government censorship and external censorship. According to Sydney (2008), External censorship occurs when authoritative bodies aim to regulate the views and suppress the ideas of reporters to make their own lives easier. In contrast, Solomon highlights the concept of direct censorship, which can take two forms: prepublication censorship or prior restraint, and post-publication/ broadcasting censorship. Prepublication censorship refers to the act of preventing journalists from publishing information that authorities do not approve of post-publication/ broadcasting censorship, on the other hand, involves punishing journalists or media houses for broadcasting or withholding information that authorities deem inappropriate.

Direct censorship manifests in diverse ways, with the most prevalent being the restriction of information by authorities or the imposition of directives on journalists regarding what to broadcast or not. These forms censorship are commonly associated with authoritarian governments (Mwara, 1994). Even in democratic societies where media ownership is government-controlled, traditional forms of censorship persist, particularly in Africa. The situation is especially evident in broadcasting media, where government

ownership is dominant Bakhsh (2005, p.21), as cited by Solomon, notes this observation “the majority of journalists in Africa are government employees and most stories are screened by government appointed editors before publication.”

The other one is indirect self-censorship, it's a form of censorship where journalists limit their own reporting due to fear of repercussions from authorities. This can result in biased reporting as journalists may prioritize the interests of the authorities over important news stories. Solomon (2005) explains that self-censorship occurs when journalists are caught in a dilemma of what to report and what to not to report, ultimately leading to them favoring the authorities. This type of censorship is often a consequence of direct censorship, where journalists feel compelled to government directives or face negative consequences. Indirect self-censorship can have a detrimental impact on the accuracy and quality of news reporting, as significant stories may be overlooked or underreported due to fear of retaliation.

In Ethiopia, censorship is expressly forbidden by the government's ratified laws, which aim to ensure freedom of the media and prevent any form of censorship. The legislation justifies this by emphasizing the media's crucial role in the country's democratization process. According to article 29(4) of the Ethiopian constitution, the press is granted legal protection to safeguard its independence and ability to present a wide range of opinions, promoting a free flow of information and ideas vital for a democratic society. This not only prohibits censorship but also obligates the government to collaborate with the press to uphold its independence.

2.2.3 Lack of journalistic skills

It is crucial for journalists to possess the necessary skills to fulfill their watchdog role and remain independent from any form of influence. In today's society, ethical considerations must be at the forefront of a journalist's mind when preparing fair, unbiased and comprehensive reports for the public (Ahuja, 2001; Retief, 2001; Kruger, 2004).

Despite this, both governmental and non-governmental journalists in Africa have faced accusations of professional misconduct from both ordinary citizens and their peers (Nyamnjoh, 2005:60). Ahuja outlines the fundamental principles that journalists must adhere to in order maintain their professionalism.

Journalists are therefore supposed to possess a good deal of intelligence, knowledge, experience as well as natural and trained powers of observation and reasoning. A journalist has the same obligation as a teacher or interpreter as an educationist has. (2001:2). In addition to concerns about censorship and bias, there have also been criticisms of the journalistic skills and standards of the EBC. Some have argued that these state-owned media outlets lack the necessary training and expertise to provide high-quality journalism. For example, there have been complaints about poor writing, editing, and fact-checking in the reporting of these outlets. Some have also criticized the lack of diversity in their coverage, with a focus on government officials and events rather than a range of voices and perspectives. Improving the journalistic skills of media professionals in Ethiopia is crucial for ensuring that the public receives accurate and reliable information. This can be achieved through training programs, mentorship opportunities, and investments in journalism education. By supporting the development of a strong and independent media sector, Ethiopia can promote transparency, accountability, and democratic values.

According to Nymojah's research conducted in Botswana, a significant issue in many African countries is the absence of adequate journalist training, which has been identified as a contributing factor to the lack of professionalism within the industry (Nymojah,2005:63). There is a general consensus among critics of the media in Botswana that the standard of professionalism and ethical conduct among journalists is quite low. Many journalists in the country are reported to have limited qualifications, with some only possessing a high school diploma or a university degree in a field other than journalism. This lack of proper training and education in journalism is seen as a significant factor contributing to the subpar quality of journalism in Botswana.

Despite this view, other critics have testified the existence of qualified journalists. For example, as Rying (1994) et. Al. (cited in Nyamnjoh 2005:65) argue that in many countries journalists are aware that they have to practice journalism according to the rule book, publishing only verified facts, shunning

rumors and respecting ethical prescription. In addition, Adam Mike confirms that there are journalists who are devoted to their profession and work forth interest of the public.

2.2.4 Conflict of interest

Journalism is not always a well-paid profession, and as a result, some journalists may seek additional sources of income to improve their financial situation and personal security. (kruger 2004:100) This can lead to some journalists leaving the field altogether to pursue other opportunities where they believe they may receive more recognition. However, this trend can have negative consequences for the quality of journalism in the country. As Nymojah (200:74) notes, when journalists leave the profession, it can lead to loss on expertise and experience, which can ultimately impact the overall standard of journalism in the country:

...financially lucrative jobs either overseas or in other employment in the country. ... In general, poor salaries throughout the continent have made many of the experienced journalists have left the profession for more 'the profession less attractive to highly- qualified people', and 'media workers susceptible to compromise, bribery and corruption'.

According to Nymojah (2004:7), financial constraints can severely impact newsroom operations, leading to skeletal staff and forcing individuals to take on multiple roles. This can compromise the quality of journalism produced and ultimately undermine the trust of the readership. Furthermore, scholars have warned that journalists who accept payment for their work risk sacrificing their independence and credibility, which can have serious consequences for the integrity of the profession.

Kruger (2004:97) writes A journalist could make a lot of money on the side by buying shares and the reporting in a way that pushes their value up and some have done so. Alternatively, reporters sometimes get information which is not yet in the public domain and which could help them make a minute in a form of insider trader. Clearly, that kind of profiteering is completely unacceptable.

According to Hyden et al. (2002:12), it is not uncommon for some government officials to provide confidential information to journalists in exchange for payment. Additionally (Keble 2001:39) notes that journalists may resort to paying sources for hard-to-obtain information. However, (Hyden et al) caution that if the editorial oversight and accountability within a news organization is inadequate, journalists may resort to paying sources for information as a routine practice.

The act of paying sources for information in exchange for confidential details can pose a significant threat to the democratic process, as highlighted by Hyden et al (2002:12). This is because such practices can undermine the credibility and independence of journalists ultimately leading to a compromised integrity of news production. As a result, it is crucial for news organizations to maintain strict editorial oversight and accountability to prevent the normalization of paying sources of information, which could have severe implications for the credibility of the media (Hyden et al 2002, pp. 2-13).

At present, there are instances where certain broadcast and print journalists prioritize financial gain over upholding their professional ethics. This conduct is widely criticized by media educators, such as Retief, who firmly believe that journalists should not accept any gifts, favors, free travel, or special treatment that could potentially compromise their integrity. In fact, they advocate for complete disclosure of any such offers to maintain transparency and accountability (Retief 2002:42). He also emphasizes that journalists must prioritize their professional ethics over financial gain. He asserts that accepting gifts, favors, free travel, or special treatment that may compromise their integrity is unacceptable. Instead he advocates for complete disclosure of any such offers to ensure transparency and accountability.

Moreover, Retief (2002:42) warns against accepting money or gifts from individuals or organizations that may benefit from enriching them, emphasizing the importance of maintaining impartiality and avoiding conflicts of interest.

If the journalists and their organizations pursue only business interests, instead of respecting their ethical issues, journalistic independence and credibility will be compromised (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2005:58). For example, if the editors and owners of the organization focus on economic interest, they may allow their newspaper to be used by individuals or interest groups to blackmail other institutions, individuals or interest groups. According to Nyamnjoh, (2005:77),

focusing on economic issues motivates the press “to kill stories for bribes, to sell entire print runs to corrupt people anxious to cover their tracks, use intimidation to extort money from prominent politicians and businessmen, or allow their pages to be used by traders and politicians to teach their rivals a lesson.”

also explains that if journalists focus on money, they will not remain free and independent of the owners influence. In another hand, Friendship in the profession of journalism may have its own impact on the gathering and dissemination of news, and thus has to be handled wisely (Retief 2001, Kruger 2004, and Ahuja2001).

According to Ahuja (2001:69), it is preferable for journalists to have the correct kind of friendship with their sources because it may have an impact on their independence. To put it briefly, journalists ought to avoid getting too close to their sources (Ahuja 2001:69). Since that both EBC and ENA are state-owned media organizations under direct government control, questions have been raised regarding potential conflicts of interest. This has given rise to complaints that their reporting isn't always neutral or objective and may be swayed by political interests.

For example, in the context of Ethiopia's recent political developments, some have accused EBC of biased reporting in favor of the ruling party, and of downplaying or ignoring opposition voices and perspectives. Additionally, there have been concerns that the government may use these media outlets to disseminate propaganda or misinformation, or to suppress dissenting views.

Overall, it is important for media outlets to maintain independence and impartiality in their reporting, and to avoid any conflicts of interest that could compromise their journalistic integrity. This is essential for ensuring that the public has access to accurate and reliable information, and for promoting transparency and accountability in government and society.

Retief highlights the significance of establishing boundaries to prevent journalists from jeopardizing their relationships and credibility. He asserts that it can be challenging to report negative information about friends and acquaintances, as it may stain their personal connections and professional obligations. Additionally, Retief cautions that publishing without consent may lead to losing a friend. Therefore,

maintaining a suitable distance is crucial. When friends or family members intervene in journalist's communication with sources, it can impede their ability to fulfill their watchdog role (Nymojah 2002:138)

As members of the public, journalists share the same needs and aspirations as other people. But in order to guarantee that they can remain impartial and make their own decisions, they must keep a certain amount of personal distance. Several academics have drawn attention to this, including Retief (2001), Kruger (2004), and Kovach and Rosensetiel (2002). Theoretical discussions have also recognized a number of variables, including media ownership, financial interests, censorship, limited freedom of expression, and a lack of skills, that might affect the independence and credibility of journalists. In conclusion, in order to properly carry out their watchdog function, journalists must strike a balance between their personal ties and the requirement to uphold professional boundaries.

2.2.5 Partisanship

In a multi-party political system, it is essential for journalists to navigate issues without showing bias towards any particular party. By taking sides, they risk undermining their credibility.

Two things are likely to happen to a journalist if he or she is involved with a political party. Firstly, the journalist becomes friendly with politicians-and certain politicians (from a specific party) at that. That journalist will then rightly be seen by others political parties as partisan. Goodbye to credibility (Retief, 2002:137).

In contrast, Kruger (2004:98) contends that journalists have the right to participate in the political process by voting, joining political parties, and even standing for election. However, he advises that they should refrain from becoming overly politically involved, as excessive partisanship could jeopardize their independence and credibility. Ahuja also emphasizes that taking sides could compromise the core principles of journalism (200:4). Without considering the ramifications of partisanship, journalists may inadequately become the mouthpiece for specific interest groups or politicians. Therefore, unless

journalists maintain their independence, they may struggle to produce news that is fair and balanced (Kovach and Rosenstiel 2002:96-97).

Ahuja (2001) emphasizes that editorial comments based on falsehoods undermine the integrity of journalism. On the other hand, Khan(1998) acknowledges that journalists may feel compelled to distort the truth due to conflicts of interest, such as in times of war. He highlights examples of biased reporting, including the use of negative language, unbalanced airtime for different factions, and skewed news selection to serve government interests. Khan warns that engaging in this practices jeopardizes the integrity and credibility of journalists.(Retief 2002:99) further stresses the importance of journalists upholding their social responsibility by providing trustworthy and independent accounts for the public interest.

There have been concerns about partisanship in the reporting of EBC, particularly in relation to their coverage of political issues and events. Some critics have accused of being biased in favor of the ruling party, and of promoting its agenda at the expense of opposing viewpoints.

For example, during Ethiopia's recent political crisis, there were allegations that EBC failed to provide balanced coverage of the protests and unrest that occurred in various parts of the country. Instead, they were accused of downplaying the severity of the situation, and of portraying the protesters as violent and disruptive. Additionally, there have been concerns that EBC may be used by the government to promote its own interests and suppress dissenting voices. This could include censoring or limiting coverage of opposition parties or critical voices in the media.

Overall, it is important for media outlets to maintain impartiality and objectivity in their reporting particularly when it comes to political issues. This helps to ensure that all voices are heard, and that the public has access to a diverse range of perspectives and viewpoints.

2.2.6 Media Ownership

EBC are both owned and operated by the government, and their funding comes from public sources, such as taxes. As state-owned media, EBC are expected to operate in the public interest, providing unbiased

and accurate information to citizens. However, there have been concerns that the government may use these media outlets to promote its own agenda or suppress dissenting voices. It is worth noting that while EBC are state-owned, there are also privately-owned media outlets in Ethiopia. However, the government has been accused of restricting press freedom and cracking down on independent media in recent years. Overall, media ownership is an important factor in determining the independence and objectivity of media outlets. When media outlets are owned by the state or by powerful individuals or groups with their own interests, there is a risk that they may be used to advance those interests at the expense of impartial reporting.

A structural factor which might impact on the independence of journalists is media ownership. Before the 1990s, much of the African media was owned by the state and served as instrument for propaganda (Hyden et al 2002:18). These media have not played a significant role in the democratization process. However, the private media played a great role by probing government politics and behavior (Hyden, Leslie, and Ogundimu, 2002:12). But, as Kruger (2004:104) argues, all forms of media ownership, both government and private, have an impact on media independence. There are various forms of influence that affect journalists' integrity, independence and credibility based on the type of ownership. For instance, if owners select editors who uphold their policies, the editors may feel obligated to oversee the content prepared by reporters. Conversely, they could face dismissal (Kruger 2004:104). When journalists are questioned about their allegiance or who they serve, they must assert their loyalty to the audience that consumes their news (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2005:52).

2.3.Theoretical Framework

In the realm of journalism, correspondents are typically the ones who facilitate communication among journalists. When examining journalists through empirical research, multiple theories come into play, but two in particular are relevant to the question of journalistic independence: social responsibility theory and gate keeping theory.

2.3.1 The Social Responsibility Theory

The mass media have a responsibility to serve the public interest by keeping the government accountable through informing citizens about its actions and policies (Owens, 1994). This helps to ensure that the government operates within ethical and legal boundaries. Owens (1994) contended that the media should not only hold the government accountable but also facilitate conversations about ideas and beliefs to improve society.

Essentially, the media should serve as a platform for information dissemination, accurately reflecting the society and its inhabitants, and bringing to light both admirable and reprehensible individuals. This approach fosters a more knowledgeable and engaged populace, resulting in a fairer and more equitable society. The social responsibility theory was initially limited by the findings of the Hutchins Commission's report in 1947, also known as the Commission on Freedom of the Press. This commission was established during World War II at the request of Henry Luce, the publisher of Time and Life magazines, and tasked Robert Maynard Hutchins, then-president of the University of Chicago, with forming a committee to examine the appropriate role of media in contemporary society.

As Nerone (2006) notes, commission on Freedom of the Press, which produced the influential Hutchins report in 1947, was composed of a diverse group of individuals from various sectors of society. This included prominent figures from academia, politics, and social organizations, who came together to examine the appropriate role of media in modern society. As Baran and Davis (2012) note, the commission's findings had a significant impact on the development of the social responsibility theory mission's report ultimately influenced the development of the social responsibility theory. Nerone (2006, p. 185) suggests that the formation of the commission was prompted by several factors, including the intense scrutiny of the press in recent years, concerns about propaganda and totalitarianism, the onset of World War II, and anticipation of new media technologies in the post-war era.

After conducting interviews with individuals from the media, government, and academia, the commission spent four years deliberating before releasing their report in 1947. This report has

since been regarded as a reference point for the social responsibility theory of the press. The commission has identified five crucial necessities for society, as follows:

- 1, a reliable and comprehensive coverage of events that is presented in an intelligent manner;
- 2, a platform for exchanging comments and criticisms;
- 3, a means of communicating the opinions and attitudes of various social groups to each other;
- 4, A method for presenting and clarifying the values and goals of society; and
- 5, a way to reach every member of society through the information, thoughts, and emotions that are conveyed through the press (Commission on Freedom of the Press, 1947).

The report has highlighted the importance of having a press that is independent and capable of examining other social institutions while delivering unbiased and precise news reports that cater to the requirements of society (Dagem, 2012, p. 66). McQuail (1983) has identified the fundamental principles of the social responsibility theory of the media as follows:

...An assumption that the media do serve essential functions in society, especially in relation to democratic politics; a view that the media should accept an obligation to fulfill these functions—mainly in the sphere of information, and the provision of a platform for diverse views; an emphasis on maximum independence on media, consistent with their obligations to society; an acceptance of the view that there are certain standards of performance in media work that can be started and should be followed. (p.94)

Middleton (2009) has noted that the social responsibility theory of the press was formally established by Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm in 1956, about a decade after the Hutchins Commission's initiative. The authors were influenced by the American Commission on Media's report in 1947, which made a clear connection between the media and its social responsibility to

provide trustworthy and relevant news and information, as well as opportunities for diverse perspectives.

The commission's report even suggested that government intervention might be necessary to ensure the quality of news and information if the media fails in this duty (Siebert et al., 1956). In Middleton's (2009) perspective, a key aspect of their viewpoint is the importance placed on the media's duty to utilize its influential position in ensuring the accurate and responsible dissemination of information to its audience. Additionally, Middleton (2009) as cited in Siebert (1956) suggests that if the media neglects this responsibility, it may be necessary for regulatory bodies to enforce it.

The power and near monopoly position of the media impose on them an obligation to be socially responsible, to see that all sides are fairly presented and that the public has enough information to decide; and that if the media do not take on themselves such responsibility it may be necessary for some other agency of the public enforce it (p.4)

The Hutchins Commission report and Siebert et al. theory both imply that the idea of public interest is essential to defining social responsibility. This underscores the crucial role that the communications sector plays in influencing societal processes, including the creation of public opinion and civil society movements, as well as patterns of social and political development. This includes concrete processes such as the impact of election campaigns on their results.

Social responsibility theory emphasizes the importance of journalistic independence from political systems and the need to meet the needs of society. To achieve this, journalists should not be swayed by the increasing commercialization of news and other media, nor should they rely solely on negative freedom resulting from an unregulated press. Instead, they should prioritize their responsibility to inform the public in a fair, accurate, and unbiased manner, while also being accountable for their actions and decisions. This requires a commitment to ethical journalism and a willingness to engage in constructive dialogue with stakeholders, including audiences, sources,

and regulatory bodies. Ultimately, the goal of social responsibility theory is to ensure that journalism serves the public interest and contributes to a healthy and vibrant democracy.

According to McQuail (1983, p.92) interpretation of the social responsibility theory of the press, media has a responsibility to society that requires them to maintain high professional standards in terms of providing accurate and objective information. This means that media should regulate themselves within the boundaries of the law and established institutions, while also being pluralistic and reflecting the diversity of their society. They should provide access to different viewpoints and allow for the right to reply. The public has the right to expect high standards from media, and intervention can be justified if it serves a public good. In summary, media has a duty to society to uphold ethical standards and provide information that is truthful, balanced, and objective, while also being accountable to the public they serve.

According to Ford (1999), the social responsibility theory emphasizes the importance of journalists prioritizing the interests of society. This can be viewed as a shared responsibility or a responsibility to the public interest. In this study, the social responsibility theory is considered, which suggests that journalists have a responsibility to act in a responsible manner for the betterment of society and to protect their independence from any external interference.

2.3.2 Gate keeping Theory

Gate keeping theory is understood differently by scholars. For instance, Shoemaker (2009, 515) defines gate keeping theory as the process through which countless messages available in the world are filtered and condensed into a few that an individual receives on a particular day. This means that gate keeping theory involves the selective process of determining which messages are worthy of being disseminated to the public. According to Shoemaker et al. (2001), gate keeping theory encompasses more than just selecting which stories to report. It involves the decision-making process of why certain stories are chosen while others are not. In other words, gate keeping is the practice of determining the newsworthiness of a story and its relevance to the audience. As Bruns

(2006) explains, gate keeping is not merely about story selection, but also about the reasons behind those choices.

Gate keeping refers to the series of checkpoints or gates that news information must pass through before being considered as newsworthy. Gatekeepers, who are individuals or groups within a news organization, play a crucial role in this process. They not only identify and gather news but also have a significant influence on the final publication of news stories. Their impact can extend beyond their daily tasks and shape the overall news agenda (Fourie, 2004, p.45). The gatekeeping theory is centered on the process of choosing which news stories are deemed newsworthy. It involves analyzing how news is selected by individuals and media outlets over time, and identifying patterns in news selection. This theory has proven to be highly effective in understanding the broader trends in news selection.

In addition, gatekeeping theory is a valuable method for evaluating how news is created. According to Gaye (2002), this theory has evolved over time, from the initial functionalist approach to a more contemporary examination of the factors that influence news production, as outlined in Curran (2000). The term 'gatekeeping' was originally coined by social psychologist Kurt Lewin, who likened it to a mother who controls what food is served at a family meal (Lewin, 1947). Gatekeeping theory has been a useful tool in understanding the process of news creation. It originated from Kurt Lewin's analogy of a mother controlling what food is served at a family meal. White later applied the idea to journalism, and McCombs and Shaw further developed it by linking it to agenda setting. Recently, Fourie summarized the theory, stating that the gatekeeper concept has been widely adopted across various disciplines, including organizations. Overall, gatekeeping theory has evolved over the past 50 years and continues to be relevant in analyzing news production.

In journalism, gatekeepers have the power to decide which stories are deemed newsworthy and therefore published for the public to consume. This control over news selection ultimately shapes the public's understanding of events. As Berger (1995) explains, gate keeping theory highlights that the news we receive is a reflection of someone's perspective on what constitutes important

information or what will capture and maintain audience interest, rather than solely based on the actual significance of the news itself.

According to Bruns (2005, p. 120), there are three stages of the gate keeping process:

News gathering as it were by staff writers closed publication progression. At the input organize, writers themselves chose news stories to be secured. At the output arrange, editors make the ultimate choice and select from journalists' fabric stories to be detailed and distributed.

On the one hand, the process of gate keeping can be carried out internally within the newsroom or externally. Within the newsroom, gatekeepers such as directors, editors, and department heads often have the responsibility of selecting, reviewing, and approving specific types of news stories before they are aired. This practice may impede the independence of journalists in fulfilling their role. On the other hand, external gate keeping is evident when the state restricts media coverage of issues that may threaten its economic interests or societal needs (Fourie, 2004).

According to Fourie (2004), reporters primarily play a role in story production and do not have the authority to select news types, aside from suggesting possible news items. As editors take on multiple gate keeping roles that hinder reporters' performance, journalists may feel compelled to engage in self-censorship (Ray and Taylor, 1988). Consequently, reporters may be motivated to omit certain ideas and alter content to appease their superiors. At times, editors discourage reporters from publishing their work (Ray and Taylor, 1988).

Gate keeping can be influenced by a multitude of factors. Research suggests that events are more likely to make it through the media gates if they align with preconceived expectations, fit within the publication time frame, and bring an element of unpredictability (Singer, 1998; Snider, 1967; White, 1950). The values held by both gatekeepers and their audience play a significant role in shaping the selection of stories (Beard & Olsen, 1999; DeFleur, 1966; Singer, 1998). These values can influence the decision-making process when it comes to which events or issues are given coverage. Once an event or issue successfully passes through the gate, it is more likely to do so

again in the future (Singer, 1998). This suggests that initial acceptance can lead to a pattern of continued inclusion. In the realm of daily news coverage, some issues or events are included simply because they deviate from the norm (Singer, 1998).

This highlights the influence of novelty and differentiation in the selection process. Various variables can impact the choices made by gatekeepers, including expert judgment and motivation (Berkowitz, 1997), political ideology (Chang & Lee, 1992), educational and background experiences (Peterson, 1979), as well as class position and career pressures (Gans, 1979). These factors can all play a role in shaping the media's coverage decisions.

There is some indication that journalists perceive their gate keeping role as evolving and adapting, rather than disappearing altogether. Within media newsrooms, the definition of gate keeping has expanded to encompass both quality control and sense-making (Singer, 1997). In his work "The Power of News," Schudson (1995) encourages readers to imagine a world where every individual has the capacity to distribute news to others via computers. He envisions an ecosystem in which anyone can act as their own journalist. However, Schudson argues that people would quickly become overwhelmed trying to discern which sources are relevant and accurate. As a result, someone would need to sort out the legitimate information. Furthermore, when seeking the best content, audiences tend to prefer trusted and impartial sources such as media organizations over other options.

Schudson's (1995) vision of a world where everyone can distribute news through computers is not far from our current reality, which raises questions about the traditional role of gatekeeper-journalists. However, despite the rise of social media and citizen journalism, there are still major reasons for gatekeeping in the media industry. These include the need for quality control, sense-making, and the preference of audiences for trusted and impartial sources such as media organizations. Therefore, while the role of gatekeeper-journalists may be evolving, it is not disappearing altogether.

A major reason for gate keeping includes:

- In exercising its “Surveillance” function, every news medium has a very large number of stories brought to its attention daily by reporters, wire services, and a variety of other sources.
- Due to a number of practical considerations, only a limited amount of time or space is available in any medium for its daily presentations of the news to its audience. The remaining space must be devoted to advertising and other content.
- Within any organization there exists news perspective, a subculture that includes a complex set of criteria for judging a particular news story – criteria based on economic needs of the medium, organizational policy, definitions of newsworthiness, conceptions of the nature of relevant audience, and beliefs about fourth estate obligations of journalists.
- This news perspective and its complex criteria are used by editors, news directors, and other personnel who select a limited number of news stories for presentation to the public and encode them in ways such that the requirements of the medium and the tastes of the audience are met.

Gate keeping is a common practice in news reporting where personnel in news organizations selectively choose which stories to publish and which ones to exclude, thereby limiting, controlling, and shaping the public's knowledge of actual events occurring in reality. However, journalists themselves also contribute to the gate keeping effect by self-censoring their work due to their desire for job security and promotion. Even if they wish to report their findings, they may fear their editors or managers (Ray and Taylor, 1989; Fourie, 2004). Furthermore, gatekeepers are bound by various rules and regulations within their media outlets, which can influence journalists' decision-making processes.

These rules and regulations may also be guided by external frameworks, such as authoritative bodies, which play a direct or indirect gate keeping role to shape the content of the news to suit

their interests. For instance, in broadcasting, board managers may be appointed from the cabinet (Fourie, 2004). To provide accurate and diverse information to the public, it is crucial for media outlets to maintain their independence and impartiality. This can be achieved by ensuring editorial independence, promoting diversity in newsrooms, and providing training and support for journalists to resist external pressures and maintain ethical standards.

Bass (1969) has put forward a model of gate keeping that highlights the crucial role played by journalists in news gathering and processing. According to this model, journalists are the gate keepers who select events, choose details, and supervise publication, thereby imposing their newsroom's values on the news produced. This suggests that individual preferences of journalists are significant in gate keeping. Nebiyu (2008) also acknowledges the importance of gate keeping in news production, but emphasizes that it should not be used to obscure facts or bias the reader's perception. Thus, gate keeping should be seen as a necessity only if it does not compromise journalistic independence. Furthermore, gate keeping theory suggests that journalists' individual preferences can have a significant impact on the news produced. This can affect the performance of reporters and the independence of journalism as a profession (Fourie, 2004). To ensure journalistic independence and impartiality, media outlets should prioritize editorial independence, diversity in newsrooms, and training and support for journalists to resist external pressures and maintain ethical standards. This will help to ensure that gate keeping is used responsibly and does not compromise the accuracy and diversity of news reporting.

2.4. Factors of news selection process

Journalists and media organizations consider various factors when selecting news stories. Temesgen (2013) emphasizes that the process of news selection requires a solid understanding of the fundamental principles of journalism. However, the constantly changing nature of news can also influence the selection process, leading to variations in the content and format of news across different contexts. Therefore, news is not simply reported as it is, but rather it is the outcome of multiple processes. MacDougail (1968) explains this complex process of news production:

At any given moment billions of simultaneous events occur throughout the world. All of these occurrences are potentially news. They do not become so until some purveyor of news gives an account. There are several factors that influence the news selection process, and scholars have identified various criteria that journalists and media organizations use to determine which stories to cover. Here are some examples:

1. **News values:** News values refer to the characteristics that make a story newsworthy. These include factors such as timeliness, proximity, impact, conflict, novelty, and human interest. Galtung and Ruge (1965) were among the first scholars to identify news values as a key factor in news selection.

2. **Audience interest:** Journalists and media organizations also consider the interests and preferences of their target audience when selecting news stories. This can include factors such as demographics, geographic location, and cultural background. McQuail (1992) argues that audience interest is a crucial factor in determining the news agenda.

3. **Editorial policy:** Media organizations often have specific editorial policies that guide their news selection process. These policies may be based on political ideology, corporate interests, or ethical considerations. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) suggest that editorial policy is a significant factor in shaping the news agenda.

4. **Availability of sources:** Journalists rely on sources to provide information for their stories, and the availability of sources can influence the selection of news stories. If sources are difficult to access or unwilling to speak, a story may not be covered. Tuchman (1978) highlights the importance of sources in the news selection process.

5. **Resource constraints:** Journalists and media organizations are often limited by resource constraints such as time, budget, and personnel. This can affect the amount and type of news coverage they are able to provide. Schudson (1978) argues that resource constraints are a significant factor in determining the news agenda. Overall, the news selection process is complex and multifaceted, and involves a range of factors that can vary depending on the context and the media organization involved account of the event, not something intrinsic in the event itself.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Introduction

The focus of the study is to examine the challenges to independence of journalists working in specifically in the news room. As learnt from other countries and our own experiences media independence plays a vibrant role in the overall development of the media industry and safe guarding the journalistic independence. This chapter of the study discusses the methodology in the study.

This researcher used qualitative research methods to collect data. Kruger (2003) notes that such methods create openness and allow subjects to discuss patient issues, clarifying ambiguity or confusion (2003: 18-19). He cites (2003) the advantages of qualitative over quantities research, noting “it certainly seems reasonable to suggest that one may have a better understanding of community members’ situation by reading a descriptive passage than just looking at demographic statistics” (2003: 18-19). This researcher conducted in-depth interview as interviewer.

Based on purposive sampling, 15 journalists and reporters who worked at EBC more than 6 years were selected. This sampling method helped to identify those with long and rich experience and to obtain detailed data. Selecting appropriate informants/interviewees presupposes that the researcher has knowledge of the situation to be researched/ investigated (Von Kardoff, 2004, 169 et. Al.).

3.2 Research design

Every research study has a design, whether implicit or explicit. Researchers seek to use strong designs to strengthen the validity of their studies and to ensure that the data to be collected properly addresses the research topic being studied (Yin, 2011) as it mentioned In the first chapter, The main objective of the research is to investigate the factors that impede their ability to act independently specifically in EBC. To meet this objective this study will use qualitative content analysis method. Content analysis is appropriate for investigating media message such as print, broadcast, and online media content analysis provides an efficient ways to study the message contained in mass media (Riffle, et al 2005). Content analysis is appropriate to study media message. "Content analysis cannot to research technique for making reliable and valid inferences from the text or other meaningful matters to the context of their use. Content analysis cannot be restrict to written materials it included works of art, images, maps, sounds, signs, symbols and other recorded materials"(dorff 2004, p 18-19). The qualitative approach will employ methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, and content analysis to capture the multifaceted dimensions of the challenges encountered by journalists within the EBC.

Through in-depth interviews with journalists, editors, and other relevant stakeholders within the EBC, you can gain firsthand insights into the specific pressures, influences, and professional dilemmas that impact their independence and integrity as journalists. Furthermore, the use of focus groups can provide a platform for collective discussions and insights, potentially unveiling shared experiences, contrasting viewpoints, and nuances that may not emerge through individual interviews alone. This method can offer a richer understanding of how institutional, societal, and professional factors intersect to influence journalistic autonomy within the EBC.

In this research, descriptive methodology was utilized to gather detailed information from participants and analyze the phenomena effectively. This approach was chosen for its ability to provide comprehensive data.

for example, Babbie (1990) as mentioned in Cresswell (2003, p. 154). Having explored different perspectives on the cornerstone of journalistic integrity, namely journalistic independence, we will now delve into the methodology employed in conducting our research in this chapter.

In order to thoroughly analyze the issue at hand and propose meaningful recommendations, the researcher has utilized a combination of primary and secondary sources within the media sector. Primary sources consist of interviews conducted with journalists and editors from the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation and Ethiopian News Agency, as well as discussions with public relations officers from different Bureaus and board members of the Medias. Secondary sources encompass documents such as editorial policies and codes of ethics for journalists in the media industry.

3.2. Research Approach

Qualitative research is distinct method employed in research used, setting it apart from quantitative approaches. This methodology involves studying individuals in their natural social environments, enabling a deeper comprehension of their motivations, attitudes and behaviors. Qualitative research was chosen for its benefits, as highlighted by Store et al. (1999), as it is better suited for exploring concepts and narratives rather than focusing solely on numerical data. This approach was employed to delve into the complexities surrounding journalists' independence at EBC, aiming to grasp and elucidate the various factors influencing this crucial aspect of journalism As part of the research framework.

This research delves into the examination of whether the ethical principle of independence is adequately upheld in the news reporting practices of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) by using qualitative method of data gathering. method of subjective assessment of opinions, behavior and attitudes.

According to (Creswell, 2009) qualitative is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation.

3.3. Data Collection instrument

In-depth interviews were held with the news department personnel at EBC to gain valuable insights into their editorial processes and decision-making. Furthermore, a comprehensive document review was undertaken to meticulously analyze the editorial policy, which was retrieved from the organization's extensive library sources. This methodological approach was strategically chosen to effectively address the research inquiries by combining firsthand perspectives from key stakeholders within the news department with a thorough examination of the official guidelines and protocols that govern journalistic practices at EBC.

3.5 Subject of the Study

The study is focused on broadcast media in Ethiopia, which is in the capital city of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The researcher would like to mainly focus on Social media platforms, the one which is Government-owned media, Ethiopia Broadcasting Corporation EBC.

Choosing the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) as a research media for investigating challenges to journalistic independence in public media is beneficial due to its historical significance as the first media outlet in Ethiopia and its status as a public media organization. Studying EBC can provide insights into the development of public media in the country, the challenges it faces in maintaining independence, and its role in the evolving political context of Ethiopia. Additionally, EBC's public ownership may offer researcher easier access to information and key stakeholders for data collection and interviews, making it a valuable case study for understanding the dynamics of public media and journalistic independence.

3.5 Sample of the study

If you want to get information about a large group of people or organizations, it is normally impossible to get all of them to answer your questions – it would take much too long and be far too expensive. The solution is to just ask some of them and hope that the answers they give are representative (or typical) of the ones the rest would give. If their answers really are the same as the others would give, then you need not bother to ask the rest; rather, you can draw conclusions from those answers which you can then relate to the whole group. This process of selecting just a small group of people from a large group is called sampling (Walliman, 2006).

Recognizing the sampling method is a crucial aspect of research (Deacon, 1999). Deacon categorizes sampling techniques into two main types: random and non-random sampling (1999). For this study, the researcher employs purposive sampling to choose participants.

This approach is chosen as overall 15 journalists and editors in EBC Radio and Television are included in the study.

Furthermore, the management team from News room specifically selected based on their respective roles purposively.

Having this concept the researcher will select a suitable sampling technique to investigating the effect of fake news on Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporate social media news reporting. For this reason purposive sampling is preferable because of its nature (Walliman, 2006) to give the chance for the researchers to select what he/she thinks is a 'typical' sample based on specialist knowledge or selection criteria.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

Qualitative analysis is a methodology used to analyze social phenomena that is qualitative, interpretive, and constructionist (Gunter, 2000). The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with 15 Journalists and editors. The time each interview took covered at least 30 minutes minimum, and 50 minutes maximum. The interviewee's remarks and ideas are taken into consideration by the debates that arose during the interview.

As mentioned in the methodology part, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with journalists (reporters and editors) for the data collection method. In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation. For example, we might ask participants, staff, and others associated with a program about their experiences and expectations related to the program, the thoughts they have concerning program operations, processes, and outcomes, and about any changes they perceive in themselves as a result of their involvement in the program (Boyce, C., & Neale, P. 2006). Based on the interview questions, the data analysis is presented here below. The researcher tried to avoid idea redundancies by merging the main points discussed by the respondents. When we discuss independence we can understand the concept from the following definition;

4.2. Data Analysis

4.2.1. Sources of information

The standard model of professional journalism includes the disciplines of accuracy, disinterestedness in reporting, independence from the people and organizations reported upon or affected by the report, a mode of presentation sometimes called objective or neutral, and the clear labeling of what is fact and what is opinion (Fuller, 2010)

Based on the question, **“What are the sources of information in your media institution?”** Respondents respond that, like any other media, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporations get their news from other international news sources and the Ethiopian News Agency in Ethiopia. And also, project news is common in the institution, as long as it is government-owned media. News tips may come from officials, events, the public, and other media outlets, as well as editorial directions.

Like any other medium, government officials, scholars, and that the public people are the media's sources, according to a respond from the Respondent 10. A difference could arise when choosing those individuals based on their connection and areas of interest inside the corporation. Respondent 1, discussed the organization's sources, particularly the journalists and institutions that gathered information based on the plan. She went on to say that the organization gets its news source selection accordingly with the editorial's guidelines.

According to Respondent 8, also indicated that the source was initiated from the plan and scheduled events, thus they can identify it based on the plans and the issue. Generally, the source can be determined based on the plan.

Journalists are bombarded with information from the Internet, newspapers, television and radio news, news magazines, and their sources their job of selecting and shaping the small amount of information that becomes news would be impossible without gate keeping.

(Pamela J. Shoemaker, Tim P. Vos, and Stephen D. Reese, 2009) Another, respondent, the respondent 3, at Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation elaborated on the editorial strategy of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation news sources. In the event of a vox pop, select people at random from among government officials based on their expertise or appropriateness for the topic matter. Source selection is the key factor in journalism, basically related to the independence of media since, as (Berkowitz, 2009) argues. The study of reporters and their news sources stems from concerns about bias, power, and influence.

Respondent 11; explains the sources of the news in the organization as; there are clear criteria but people who are appropriate for the issue will be selected. As we can understand from the respondent, the source selection depends on the appropriateness of the source. Here, Appropriateness may be evaluated in different ways, like expertise, being a responsible body for some incidents, and being official too.

Much of journalism is the routine gathering of information, most of it predictable and based around such events as court hearings, council meetings, sporting events and parliament. These days, with the pursuit of media consumers more crucial than ever before, the journalist has to become an entertainer, finding stories and features that will delight the audience rather than inform, titillate rather than educate. With ever-increasing media output from a huge growth of sources tempting audiences to spend less and less time with any individual provider, persuading readers to spend a little longer with your news outlet has become one of the critical performance measures for the media (Frost, 2010).

Respondent 6, News can be getting from the journalist plan in which areas she/he wants to cover, or the editorial can give a direction on which issues should be addressed. Therefore, according to the issue they

select the appropriate source. He explains, there are do this don't this from the editorial on the issue but the journalist can select their sources independently.

Similarly, the respondent 7, at EBC mentioned, project news is mostly planned with editors, to decide how to frame, who going to be an interviewee, which issues are incorporated and how to make it balanced. The same is true for event-based news stories the journalist comes up with a story idea then how we are going to organize is decided together with the editor.

Seek out sources that strive to present information in a fair, balanced, and impartial manner. Avoiding sources that exhibit overt political or ideological bias and prioritizing sensationalism over substance is the journalist's mandate.

News is, after all, not what journalists think, but what their sources say, and is mediated by news organizations, journalistic routines and conventions, which screen out many of the personal predilections of individual journalists (Berkowitz, 2009)

Shortly in the discussion of source of news in Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, news sources are the public, the government officials and scholar's which selected according to their suitability, which can be assessed in terms of authority, accountability, or official standing. Project news and event-driven stories are utilized to find sources.

4.2.2. Criteria are to determine the news and source Selection

The researcher discussed the criteria for news source and story selection with the respondents, and they replied with almost the same points. According to the respondents, the criteria for news source and story selection are the basic newsworthy elements. But some cases push beyond the professional standard of the news criterion. Such as editorial policy and other national legislation, the aforementioned criteria may be suppressed at times.

Journalism is suspect if its editorial judgments are not made freely and independently by individual journalists 'on the ground', by editorial teams, or by trusted editors (Wilson, 1996).

Respondent 1, expressed her opinion "Following the house style and editorial policy, we select news stories and sources." The respondent describes, just an editorial policy is a collection of standards that governs how the news company operates. It reflects the news organization's feelings toward its community and helps editors make editorial decisions.

She extends, "The source selection is determined based on the appropriateness of the journalist's plan or script, finding sources, and also getting tips from different areas of the institution." In this case, the source's suitability might be determined by sources that are frequently included in news reports because they have some type of expertise related to the issue. Expertise is simply defined as competence or understanding of a specific subject.

It is appropriate to. Journalistic stories typically include the skills and viewpoints of numerous sources. Therefore, there are cases where journalists work according to the professional principles, and there are cases where that is not allowed. This may be determined by the issue they bring up. It is critical to analyze how each source adds to various perspectives of the story. Reich argues (2011) one key determinant of who becomes a news source and thus acquires voice and involvement in news content is the extent to which different agents are perceived by journalists as credible.

Respondent 2, from EBC, a news producer in the news department, mentioned ways of selecting news based on the plan from the institution, journalists, and also from different outlets. As far as the media is concerned, public media information may come to the institutions in different ways, so in this case, by analyzing and considering the editorial policies as a weighing mechanism, we can use them as a source.

In the media landscape, editorial policies serve as litmus tests for determining the worth of news if they are well-designed and enforced. Most of the time, media policies are designed to protect the interests of groups or owners; in this situation, the media policy or editorial policy serves the interests of groups rather than professionalism. Here it needs to be considered each media house has its own unique media policy. Breed (1955) cited in (Harrison, 2006), argues that news journalists understand a news organization's news policy and news values by consuming the output provided by their organization, and this helps them to copy the techniques and styles and to understand what is newsworthy and (Harrison, 2006). The news values of different news organizations differ. News selection and presentation are adapted according to

the designated style of each organization and represent only one way of doing the job. In another expression, the reporting style is not universal.

Respondent 7, the basic criteria for news selection for the institution is "whether it can be on the agenda of the country and the public or not." The national interest should come first. The inclusiveness of the issue matters; the impact of the story can be newsworthy for the institution. Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation is a well-known government media institution as the organization claims itself as a "public media" concern about the national agenda is expected. The issue of national interest might be defined in a common definition. The national interest refers to a sovereign state's goals and ambitions (economic, military, cultural, or others), which are regarded as the purpose of governance.

Here are some points to be discussed: The concept of national interest may be defined differently by different bodies. In the name of national interest, there may be suppression of ideas, like different ideological differences. As it clearly states from respondents, news sources that criticize the government have no place to be included. Rather, they stick with those who praise the government's reputation. Discuss the evaluation of the project news, including the frame before production and post-production assessments, with the executive producer at Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporate,

The respondents stated that there are no precise written standards for choosing news stories; nonetheless, the editor can choose which news stories to choose by taking editorial policy narratives into account.

Speaking about the criteria used to choose news,) respondent 4, explained that as the institution is a government media outlet, "sometimes it doesn't follow the professional standards" and that news stories that adhere to these standards are occasionally taken off the air. This idea tends to say that there are obvious professional standards to guide the journalist, but in this case, regarding the ownership of the media, the government has limitations on being free and acting professionally.

According to Respondent 5, sources were selected based on criteria according to the house style. For the issue of who can be the right fit, sources should get decisions from the reporter, the editors, and the editor as well. Editors oversee the news side, editing all incoming items from reporters and wire agencies, based on the statement above. Different editors are employed by media companies. Copy editors, for instance,

edit articles for length, correctness, style, and clarity while seated at the copy desk. They also develop headlines that summarize each story.

Respondent 6, the profession by itself has its standards, like balance and objectivity. The concept of objectivity is concerned with the way news is created and reported in the selection of facts, their arrangement, their framing and formation on the public agenda with or without relationship to values. Objectivity is generally defined as the view that one can and should separate facts from values. Facts are assertions about the world open to independent validation; they are statements that stand beyond the distorting influences of any individual's personal preferences (Cohen-Almagor, 2001)

The respondent gives an example: if there is a grievance, the news should incorporate the cause and the response for balance. On such hard issues as what is happening in the country, a journalist needs editorial direction to cover. Beyond political issues like social issues, journalists are freer to cover in their news. While respondent 2 argues editors have used professional standards to approve news stories, including time management and content.

The above discussion can be put in a precise manner as follows, when choosing news articles and sources, the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) adheres to an editorial guideline. The policy aids in decision-making for editors and represents the organization's beliefs the selection of news is done with the national interest in mind. Here the point can be clarified: in the professional standard, there are ethical considerations not to report issues that are against national security and national interest. But in the sense of this data, national interest is just a cover to deny professional freedoms. Even if professional standards are not compromised, the interests of the government are covered in the name of national interest. By itself, the journalist is not accepted to serve the national interest, but which one is the national interest is the blurry line that creates a difference between the journalists and the officials who are working for the government.

Because EBC is a government-affiliated media institution, it may not always follow professional standards in order to serve the government's interests.

Respondent 9, also discusses the criteria for news selection; he stated that there are issues to be selected based on professional standards, and some are not. He elaborates that the content of the news that the journalist is going to produce determines whether it follows professional standards or not. If the issue and source are pro-government, there is no influence, but if they are on the contrary, there are limitations and interference. In other words, as long as the professional criteria don't go against the interests of the government, journalists are free to follow these standards; in

this case, they can get their freedom. Unless you use professional freedom as a principle and follow it in any situation, whatever the issue may cause trouble, this is the tendency to use professional standards for the purpose of government propaganda, as long as it works for the government. Otherwise, the officials use other criteria to deny journalists professional independence.

Including individuals, activists, and scholars who are labeled as oppositions, he said that even though there are preferences for oppositions over oppositions, they cannot be recommended as sources, and journalists are aware of that.

Like other respondents, respondent 10, said that the new selection's sources are determined by the individuals involved in the story; these individuals may include victims, eyewitnesses, incident participants, and so on. In this situation, journalists are aware of the government's interests, so they can simply choose which sources to include in the report and which not. As the respondents explained above, it is not always the case that the source is from the opposition political party; rather, the issue highlighted by the source should not be detrimental to the political system. News outlets should be avoided not just for their portrayal of the evil side of the administration, but also for the party. On news story and source selection, another assistant editor clarified that decisions on news story approval and selection are made by individuals in a higher position beyond the editor-in-chief. Respondent 12 notes that the first thing to look for when choosing news sources is their suitability and reliability in relation to the editorial philosophy.

Regarding the topic of news selection, Respondent 12, replies that the news issue itself is the determining factor in choosing news sources. For a particular story, who is the best source, is the fundamental query while choosing sources.

4.2.3. Processes to determine which news stories are broadcast or published

Under the issue of determining the new story broadcasting process, the respondents point out the process by which stories are going to be published. Of course, there is no unfamiliar process in Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporations to decide which news stories should be broadcast; it follows the common path in any media. That is, everything begins with the idea, and after having the script approval from the editorial in the briefing or editors, the information gathered, responsible personnel decide which stories shall pass to the transmission stage with which angle. These simple, common steps are familiar, but the process of filtration may vary from institution to institution depending on the policy, the ownership, and the political inclination of the learning.

Respondent 1, from Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation reflect on her experience regarding the process of news story selection to be broadcasted, in the morning briefings they decide the appropriateness of the issues and evaluate and discuss the script from each journalist; after that, the production gets evaluated.

This could be the process of verifying the news stories to be broadcast. This is a common trend in most media institutions worldwide. In this process, based on the values of the stories, the hierarchy was formed.

Most mainstream news organizations will have something like a daily – sometimes twice or thrice daily – news meeting. Most working journalists and editors would recognize the vital role that these meetings play not merely on a daily, operational level, but also in giving a news culture to their organization, giving its distinctive news value system that sets it apart from its rivals (Foy, 2007)

A journalist from the Respondent 10, discusses the rough process of new story selection and the process of production as follows: the journalist came up with the plan, and the plan gets evaluated considering the impact or importance of the issue. If it's believed to have value and is approved, the next step goes to resource allocation like camera, transport, shooting list preparation, interviewee selection and interview questions, format selection, script writing, production, editing, and broadcast.

News reports originate from editorial direction, according to the managing editor of EBC. Whether they are stories focused on events or project news.

The process of choosing which news articles to air in Ethiopian media outlets is discussed. Approval of the script, information collection, and story selection according to the institution's political stance and policies are all part of the process. In the process of news story approvals, there is no professional fairness because the institutional political stance and policies designed according to the government's interests may interrupt the fairness of the processes. Therefore, through the process, professional journalist's independence could be attacked.

4.2.4. Challenges that journalists encountered during news source selection

The profession of journalism by itself is full of challenges besides the worth for society. Especially for developing countries like Ethiopia, the challenges may get manifold.

The first challenge mentioned by the respondents in the study is the institution's framing. As (Karin Wahl-Jorgensen & Thomas Hanitzsch, 2009) mention framing is arguably a victim of its success, Of course, framing is an individual psychological process, but it is also an organizational process and product, and a political strategic tool.

According to Respondent 1, the common challenge is how to frame the news gathered from different sources. The rules and regulations of the country, including the constitution, are the benchmark for any activity as a government-owned media institution, in addition to the different regulations of the organization. Media framing can be understood simply as the process by which the media places the events and topics they report from a certain perspective or certain angles. Therefore, media framing in and of itself is not problematic; but, journalists may feel challenged when pressure is applied to alter their framing.

The above statement about framing tries to elaborate that farming by itself is not a problem, but sometimes the selection of angles may favor the specific body. The element of subjectivity of the journalist or the organization may apply in such cases. Moreover, the selection of angles or framing should be decided according to professional measurements. Like the respondents discuss, they are obligated to change the framing of news stories. This is one indication of interference in a professional journalist's independence. In which framing the story should be narrated is the first task of the journalist, and if there are comments, there are organizational hierarchical orders to check. In the process, if it is necessary to change the angle of the story, there should be professional reactions. The reason is from the perspective of political or ideological views that going to defiance of professional independence.

Framing in communication texts arises from networks of professional communicators who engage in framing, defined as selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and constructing messages that highlight connections among them in ways that promote a particular interpretation. ... Of course, framing is an individual psychological process, but it is also an organizational process and product, and a political strategic tool (Robert M. 2009 et. Al.)

The respondents also highlighted the effect of social media, which has become a problem and an obstacle in news reporting from several angles since it became a mainstream media. The impact of social media on traditional journalism has grown significantly in recent years. (Hall, 2001) Explains that mainstream media reporting has its conventional journalistic principles to follow professionally, but after the emergence of new media, many things have changed. Respondent 2, reflects on the difficulties facing journalists in social media, stating that it is difficult to sift through false information on these platforms. It has become accustomed to the challenge of social media in mainstream media from different perspectives. In this discussion, the point that is mentioned

here is from the perspective of disseminating false information. By the nature of the platform, anonymity is one characteristic, and it leads to the publication of information without responsibility. On the contrary, mainstream media should follow steps for production and verification. In between this, the mainstream media could be challenged to be the first to inform and also to use credible information.

The current political crisis in the country is mentioned as another challenge for the respondent is the sensitivity of ethnic and religious issues, which can be a hindrance to the journalist's ability to be balanced. From this statement, it's understood that the profession of journalism has always been challenged by crises. Especially in the Ethiopian case, there are many sensitive issues that could be addressed in a balanced manner. Beyond the skill of journalists to report a balanced story on such issues, the political crisis is a potential challenge for the media organization, specifically the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, which is expected to work respecting all identities as equal.

When journalists attempt to address grievances, government organizations or officials frequently restrict them from looking into topics like good governance. But this is the main job of the journalist as Frost (2010) argues; a good reporter is unavoidably linked with what society sees as important about journalism.

Without good reporters to investigate and point the spotlight of truth into the dark recesses of business corruption, political double-dealing or government incompetence, ordinary citizens would find it much more difficult to influence their world and would have limited opportunities to understand and make decisions on such important issues as how to vote, where to live, what career path to follow, how to invest their life savings, and how to bring up their children. We need good quality, up-to-date information if we are going to be well enough informed to make the best of our opportunities, and we rely on journalism to get us that information.

The initial concept of journalism Teaches that journalism has a watchdog function. This watchdog job is to investigate such wrongdoings for the sake of the public good. Most of these wrongdoings were done by government officials. In this scenario, journalists are supposed to dig up material to ensure the government's accountability and openness. However, this is only possible if the government allows journalists to gather the necessary information based on their vocation. Working in this field is difficult, as evidenced by the above respondent's discussion.

Respondent 8: There are two ways that news can appear: through invitations or project news. By issuing an official letter, institutions or organizations can invite the media to cover their stories. As half of the report has already been completed there, there is less of a challenge here. For instance, if it's a meeting, officials can be easily reached and event sources or interviews are available.

However, there is another problem with project news: if the plan or project places the public's inquiry at the feet of the responsible body, authorities or the institution could not tend to respond

to the public's queries. In this instance, private entities might decline to respond in like to government institutions or organizations.

An organization might not be willing to accept responsibility or even speak with the media if it is asked about its impact on society and the journalists intend to address the matter after learning about the public's complaints. Another issue is a lack of resources, particularly in nations like this one.

Respondent 3, mentioned personal challenges like debating with one-self to cover the issues, and similarly, the other respondent mentioned self-censorship as a challenge. In addition, officials may be refused responses because of these public issues, which may delay getting responses. Like what the respondent discussed, self-censorship is a potential challenge in media practice. Such challenges may be high in developing nations and media landscapes, but there are external influences following the political economy of the country. Such challenges hold the journalist back from working as expected.

Respondent 11 shortly describes the challenges as “የመረጥኋን ሃሳብ አንስተን የምንሰራበት ቤት አይደለም” “It's not a House where we pick up ideas and work on them” (Translation mine). It is not a media house where we work with the stories we select From the above expression, it can be understood that, even if the selection of stories is up to the journalist based on professional journalistic criteria, there are other hindrances to not being free for story selection. There are professionally accepted newsworthy elements to select which story should get attention and be selected for the use of the public. When there is interference, journalists are obligated to change the story that is in hand, which is professionally selected in the interest of the media organization, following the interest of the government.

She expands on her idea; understandably, the country's situation and some issues that are not liked by the government may get suppressed. She exemplifies her idea. In the current situation, particular regions of the country are clearly in crisis, and while we can have information from them, we are unable to address them.

She states that the credibility of the organization is eroded in such a case, but we can do nothing. Simply a bit of institutional freedom will help change the landscape of the media to overcome journalistic challenges. This assertion bravely explains the extent to which journalists' independence has been undermined.

There are certain takeaways from the respondent's expression: the country is currently dealing with a variety of crises from all throughout the country. Of course, physical limitations make it difficult to collect information from the grassroots level on the spot. Even if the journalist employs various methods to get information and generate tales, it is acceptable to the house. That is clear: the media, including journalists, is not free.

Respondent 5 addresses the difficulties journalists face when choosing stories to cover. According to him, journalists must conduct a study before gathering and publishing any news because they might not have access to enough facilities or resources. This might be the first obstacle. In addition, he emphasized that accountable entities might not consent to an interview.

Like the above respondent, respondent 6, "As far as we are government media journalists, we can't cover all issues that you believe should be covered." He extends his ideas, like security issues, displacements, harm, etc.; if we tried to work to get a responsible stakeholder, it wouldn't happen. There are many challenges. He tells the researcher that there was an attempt to cover the issue of victims to get a response from the responsible body, but it was not successful.

In media functionality, who owns the media organizations determines which interests should be prioritized. As the answer points out, in terms of government-owned media, the government's interests take precedence over all other professional norms and criteria. Harms from various areas arise, and journalists are not permitted to cover them if it is deemed that doing so may affect the government's prestige. The answer emphasizes that journalists are attempting various approaches to address, but they have not received responses from the relevant organization.

In the other way, the denial of information from officials is an unsolved problem. Once in the public domain, news is free for all. No one owns publicly known facts or has an exclusive right over them. No matter how long, hard, and expensive it has been for a news organization to secure information before anyone else, it ceases to be exclusive once published or broadcast (Wilson, 1996) and different external interests and pressures are common challenges faced by journalists, according to the respondents. On the other side, self-censorship and sometimes the inability of journalists by themselves have their role as challenges.

Respondent 9; claims that the primary obstacle facing journalists when choosing news stories and sources is how the political climate currently limits their freedom. Because there is neither independence nor freedom, the media's watchdog duty is denied. We are in a good position to probe the numerous issues that need to be looked into in the nation.

He expands, challenges are from internally and externally, and editors and the management are not strong enough to decision. The security issues, the current situation and other human made problems are challenging. And journalist is targeted as the mouth piece of the party.

Respondent 7, mentions that there may be a shortage of resource allocation; beyond this, there is no such challenge in social issues to select news. She extends her opinion; this may be quite another story in the political current affairs department. She believes that there is still a doubt about working in the interest of the public, but the agenda is more likely to come from the government. Even covering social issues can cause conflict with different stakeholders. She delivers her story; once she produces a news story on private school fee increments, she faces many phone call

intimidations from owners of the schools. She added that in such a case, the journalist fears for life and cannot move freely. From the respondent's story, it's understandable that the problem is not always raised from the government side. You can imagine how much journalists who work on political and current affairs will suffer if social issues can cause this much mess.

Respondent 4; responds that the challenge of journalistic independence happens when journalists come up with an issue that contradicts the issues of government and officials. Verbally, the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation is mentioned as a public medium that works for the public, but practically, it is not. Especially on political issues, she believes, like other respondents, there are clear interventions. In her words, the intervention begins with officials from the organization reaching out to higher government officials. Through all these government changes, the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation stayed the same. Being owned by the government influences the media to not serve the public as expected, she believes. In her opinion, the issue of self-censorship arises from this: "We skip wrong doings".

Like other respondents, the Respondent 12, explains journalistic challenges in the media. The issue he mentioned is lack of sources, which means people are not willing to give information, bureaucratic systems, instability of the country, and resource shortages. Beyond this, journalists have no professional associations, which can struggle for the rights of journalists, and this can be a challenge to go further and work. And again, there are intimidations; furthermore, the editorial policy by itself is a binding rule to not work freely.

Respondent 13, explains the challenges somehow from a different perspective; in his words, the challenge may arise from the journalist herself/himself. Being unplanned by the journalists is mentioned as a challenge by the respondent. On the other side, what he shares with other respondents is that sources are not always okay to give information. After news gathering is in the process of editing, there may be disruptions and interventions. He argues that, beyond all these limitations, journalists are not free from their personal bias. As far as the media is the bridge between the public and the government, the government has the right to use the media for public interest, which does not mean the institution is not free.

In summary of the above discussion, the respondents emphasized how challenging it may be to deliver news from a variety of sources, how social media has affected traditional journalism, and how delicate issues including ethnicity and religion can be. They also note that it is common for government institutions to prohibit the media from reporting on specific topics and that it can be challenging for reporters to resist pressure to alter their framing. Self-censorship and a lack of resources are challenges for journalists also.

4.2.5. Journalists' independence in selecting sources and stories

Like what Wilson (1996) says, It is simple to argue that editorial judgments should be based solely on legitimate journalistic imperatives, and that blandishments, pressures, and threats should be avoided. The dilemma is that, while some pressures—euphemistically dubbed representations—make valid points, surrendering to a fair argument can appear to be a craven compromise, whilst rejecting a point for the sake of it can be a shortcut to unreliability and unfairness. Because pressure is frequently involved with judgment, rather than mere truth, there is always opportunity for disagreement, with one journalist viewing the point as unreasonable and another as fair.

The interviewee states that journalists are obliged to work concerning such regulations and the editorial policy of the media; working against such regulations or contradictions is not tolerable. She extends her idea, as there might be influences, and the official can deal with them. She elaborates; she says that we, the journalists, are not the sole decision-makers on what should be reported and what shouldn't be. There is no absolute freedom in this regard, which is the theme of her idea Political influences are here through their rules and regulations.

(Turow, 2009) He mentioned different factors of influence, like political influences, economic influences, and cultural influences, and **political influences defined as** the types of power that government officials have to impose their will over the nation's institutions, including the media. He discusses that when we talk about the regulation of mass media, we mean laws and guidelines that influence the way media companies produce, distribute or exhibit materials for audiences. Government regulation of mass media covers a wide range of territory

Respondent 8, covering the event News There may not be a full challenge to journalist independence, but in project news, there may be reservations. The main challenge that may arise for journalists is self-censorship. In different cases, external and internal pressures may occur.

Respondent 5 expressed his opinion as follows: As long as the media maintains its editorial policy, journalists know exactly which stories to choose and cover. This may prevent them from experiencing further problems. He clarifies that while there are interests, there are any obvious government pressures. Organizations may file complaints, but defense is viable as long as journalists use the evidence. However, Respondent 2, contends that journalists are not independent when choosing stories particularly when it comes to political matters. It is challenging to cover the journalist's interest in this situation, even though

she acknowledged that other concerns, such as social aspects, may have political connotations in one way or another. Editors are not allowed to produce news stories if they think the government may take displeasure.

Respondent 9, mentioned that journalists are not independent in the news production process. As he stated above, one challenge for journalists is the political situation. He elaborates on how politics influences the independence of journalists. Politics doesn't allow the media to be free; even the members of the management of the organizations are not politically assigned. In this case, the organization leans toward working in the favor of the party. This challenges journalistic freedom because there are political interferences.

The respondent elaborates how they influence the freedom of the journalist; they select the angle of the story; stories may get cut out after production; beyond that, they even select their story to be produced. This exercise leads the journalists to be self-censored; he exemplifies one incident that vividly expresses the issue discussed here, and there was a news story on a manufacturing industry in one of the Ethiopian regional government states about the misconduct of the institution. After the news broadcasts, he remembers that there was a great grievance in the region. Even EBC was not allowed to go to the region for news gathering and reporting. He added that it was not allowed to produce news on the capital city, Addis Ababa. From the respondent's story, it is easy to understand that there is no independence for the journalist. The respondent says that the media is not an agenda setter; rather, it is the government. “ኣብዛኛው ኣጀንዳ የሚመነጨው ከሚዲያው ሳይሆን ከመንግስት ነው፤ የመንግስት ሚዲያዎችን በመጠርነፍ ኣጀንዳ የሚሰጠው ደግሞ የመንግስት ኮሙኒኬሽን ኣገልግሎት ነው፡፡” Most of the agenda does not come from the media, but from the government, and the one that gives the agenda is the government communication service) translation mine. The respondent expresses why all government-owned media have the same contents because the agenda setter is the same. Here, the government's political power can be the source of the agenda; this discussion is not denying that, but if the government sets directives, that would be the challenge. In this case, the media became the agenda receiver in this case; the media became the agenda receiver. It clearly shows how the independence of journalists is denied in the process.

Agenda setting is the process of the mass media presenting certain issues frequently and prominently with the result that large segments of the public come to perceive those issues as more important than others. Simply put, the more coverage an issue receives, the more important it is to people.

Since this first simple definition of the phenomenon, agenda setting has expanded from a theory describing the transfer of issue salience from the news media to the public to a broader theory that includes a “second-level” describing the transfer of attribute salience for those issues and many other “objects” such as political figures.

Also, inter-media agenda setting explains how elite media transmit their agenda of important issues to other media (Renita Coleman, 2009)

Respondent 10, tells how they are not independent and objective in their news. In stories, she reminds us of the recent conflict between the federal government and the TPLF. She admits the reports were in favor of the federal government. The respondent mentions the issue of conflict of interest, like sponsor institutions or organizations cannot be on the news for whatever wrongdoing they commit. Only their success stories are getting covered. Of course, this is not professional. The interference is in numerous ways; theoretically, officials say to be free and to act independently, but systematically, it is not practical. Anybody could direct a simple phone call. The pressure comes mostly from external government officials, and internally, officials from the organization prevent journalists.

The respondent expresses why all government-owned media have the same contents because the agenda setter is the same. In the discipline of journalism, agenda setting is the role of the media; in this case, the media became the agenda receiver. It clearly shows how the independence of journalists is denied in the process.

Respondent 11 explains the issue of journalistic independence, which is not working. Not only journalists are not independent, but also the institution itself, for different reasons. She mentions that the interest of affiliation is the one that challenges the freedom of the media and its personnel. She supports her idea with recent happenings about the commercial Bank of Ethiopia money fraud. In her opinion, it needs a detailed investigation into what people want to know.

But the institution was limited by echoing the press releases of the institution only without further questioning. And this is because of the inter connectedness of interests. Journalists can't do something personally; there are stages to pass through. She extends her example, there is no stories to be covered about Addis Ababa city 'reconstruction' except echoing the official statements. But there are issues people demand to know about.

"Currently, people are being held hostages, displaced, dead, and money problems happen from different corners of the country, but we are not free to cover such issues" the respondent said. a senior journalist from EBC mentioned how journalists are not independent; journalists are not independent to select news. "መረጃ ስላገኘሽ ብቻ ዜና አትሰሪም፡ አለቆችም ስለሚፈሩ ይከለከላሉ እና የአለቆች ፈቃድ ካልታከለሽ የፈለግሽውን አትሰሪም፡፡" (You don't make news just because you have information, and the bosses forbid it because they are afraid, and you don't do what you want without the permission of the bosses) Translation mine. It just flaunts public media, not practically working on that; it is working for the government, he added. And it caused to lose reputation from the public. According to the respondent, journalists face being demoted from their position and being fired from the organization because of their report.

According to Respondent 9, a journalist's low income can affect their confidence to challenge for their professional freedom. Whenever the journalists are weak economically, they become vulnerable, like in investigation reports.

To recapitulate the discussion on the independence of journalists in selecting news stories, the interviewee highlights the significance of journalists abiding by editorial principles and media regulations, while taking into account the possibility of outside influences. Journalists may face difficulties due to self-censorship and pressure from both the inside and outside, especially while covering politics. Reporters steer clear of writing news articles that could annoy the authorities.

4.2.6. The general evaluation of the organization in a media-independent

The general evaluation of the respondents about the independence of the media as well as the journalist tries to look from different perspectives. Some of the respondents answered, "There is no freedom." Others put freedom as a relative concept. According to those respondents, there must be elements to be

considered. Like the issue of ownership, as a government media institution, it's expected to echo the interests of the government in priority.

Here the paper can support the idea with the following thought; naturally, the degree to which democracy is practiced in the nation is reflected in the state of media freedom. As Graber (1989: 27) cited in Nigussie (2004) Reviews "In democratic societies official control of the content of mass media is deemed unnecessary." This is because it is believed that tight control of the media can deter the freedom of expression which is the key to the flourishing of democracy. Thus, "Entry to the mass media business is open to people representing a wide spectrum of political views" accepting that the mass media becomes the fountain of ideas and enables public participation. This enhances competition among the channels, that is, newspapers, magazines, radio and television where each media generates various viewpoints. "If some media attack the government, other media will support it. Positive and negative as well as right and wrong information will somehow balance out". This implies that "government by the people" is the function of the right to make one voice heard.

It is evident that not every incident, problem, or person makes it into a newspaper article or airs on television as news. The many possibilities for news stories that are available on any given day are chosen through a selection procedure before they are written about or photographed. One of the gatekeepers oversees the implementation of that selection process. The decision of how best to cover an event and the details to highlight might be made by the reporter or the assignment editor.

It could be the sources who decide what to tell the reporter, how to tell it, and what to withhold; or it could be the producer or the city editor who decides whether the finished story is worth airing or publishing (Willis, 2007)

Let's see some points separately from the respondent's perspective. According to the Respondent 2 , media freedom is a relative concept; he states that naturally, media institutions have their limitations, and the priority is the national interest. The media framing of each media institution varies because of their national interests and agendas. He exemplifies his explanation by mentioning different international media. In this regard, EBC is working to bring the public and the government together. He believes there is no absolute media freedom. This idea may put to the debate of the attainability of Objectivity in the

media. However, the Respondent 8, claims that there are restrictions on the media independence issue; certain topics are permitted to be discussed while others are not. Only abiding by the government's interests

As respondent 5, when discussing the independence of the media, Ethiopian broadcast media has unique characteristics as a government-affiliated media. All public interests may not be entertained in this case. He argues that all public interests may not be valuable; other elements should be considered. According to the respondent, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation is free media. He explains that, accordingly, the objective of the organization EBC is working respect the stance of the institution. As per the respondents' opinion, freedom should be evaluated accordingly In this regard, the freedom of the media and the independence of the journalist should be evaluated relatively; the concept of relativity works here.

On the contrary, a Respondent 6, says that as far as the media is owned by the government, it's not independent or independence is limited. "The media mostly works for the government, specifically the ruling party."

Respondent 11, claims that there is no independence or media freedom for journalists. Because of their work, some journalists have experienced harassment at the organization and have left. Conversely, a seasoned journalist feels that journalistic independence has improved throughout the past few years.

Additionally, Respondent 9, expresses his thoughts regarding EBC's assessment of media freedom, which is under threat.

In summary, the respondents asked about the experience of anyone who fired or any administrative extenuation of journalists in the organizations; they said there was an incident of firing formally following the disciplinary regulations. The overall evaluation of the independence of the journalist in EBC is stated as "It is hard to say it's fully free" but as much as possible, we as an organization try to address issues from any corner of the country. She elaborates that we can report different issues, including conflicts, from any corner of the country, but not freely. "Sometimes we report the resolution, skipping the cause."

From the general evaluation of the organization in a media-independent we can round out, the respondents stated that the definition of media freedom is a relative one. Because different institutions have different national agendas and interests, their media framing differs. The EBC seeks to bridge the people and the government, however only subjects that support the government's agenda are allowed, and media freedom is restricted. Although the managing editor at EBC maintains that not all public interests can be taken into consideration, the responder contends that media freedom and journalistic independence ought to be assessed on a comparative basis. But according to a senior editor at EBC, as long as the government owns the media, its independence is restricted and it primarily serves the interests of the ruling party. Although it is challenging to evaluate the independence of EBC journalists, the organization makes an effort to cover national concerns. The group sometimes reports on the resolution of conflicts, but not always the cause. Overall, the investigation shows that EBC's journalistic freedom is constrained.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The overall goal of the study was to evaluate the obstacles to the independence of journalists in federal public media organizations, specifically as they relate to the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC). The study looks at the fundamental obstacles to freedom faced by journalists working for Ethiopian television companies. The only method used to collect data for this study was an in-depth interview, and overall, the research style used was qualitative. For the aim of analysis, the researcher attempts to align the notions with literature based on the interview. Thus, the researchers concluded this work after analyzing the data.

5.2. Conclusion

The study discovered that there are various ways in which the pursuit of journalistic independence can be undermined based on the analysis of the interview. The first is source selection, which is made difficult by the fact that journalists are no longer free to choose the news sources they want to use. News about projects, events, and editorial direction can serve as excellent illustrations of this.

In terms of news sources and story selection, journalists may be obliged to go beyond the common professional newsworthy elements of journalism; mainly political preference can be the determinant factor in the process of news story selection. At this time, the professional standards may be disobeyed, and the journalist is expected to accept them. During the briefing time when scripts and production plans are to be decided, such filtration can occur.

In this study, the common challenges of journalists, especially regarding their independence, are figured out. Beyond selecting the sources and stories, the issue of farming the news is predominantly selected by the organizations, mainly in political issues.

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Considering the organization is a government media institution, such interventions are expected. Like any other media professionals understanding this political inclination, journalists' censorship is what we call self-censorship. Through all these challenges, if journalists try to challenge the challenges, they might be challenged by the officials, from warnings to losing their jobs.

Other similar research works on various Ethiopian media organizations reveal the same finding, which supports the findings of this paper. Bakana (2014) from Bahirdar University did a thesis on "factors that affect journalists' independence: the case of Oromia radio and television organizations" and discovered 'no journalistic independence' in the case study area of Oromia radio and television companies. Another article undertaken by Gezahegne (2008), entitled "Challenges to Journalistic Independence: The Case of the Amhara National Regional State Mass Media Agency" concludes that journalists frequently act in behalf of specific individuals, relatives, groups, or parties. Partisanship and censorship are elements that undermine journalists' independence. Journalists' independence is often affected by conflicts of interest within their institution.

Generally, as the government media institution, there are directions from the government side to exert pressure, both internally and externally. Some follow-up news stories may get cut up; sometimes they may report the resolutions, just skipping the cause. The Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation's news sources are similar to those of other media outlets around the world, but journalists are not free to choose their own stories especially on hard news and its sources. The criteria for news and source selection are guided by an institution's editorial policy, and there are personal, organizational, and unwritten guidelines in the news production and broadcasting process. Journalists encounter numerous hurdles, beginning with personal talent limitations, officials' unwillingness to provide information during news gathering, self-censorship, and so on. Journalists at the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation are not professionally independent.

5.3. Recommendations

Using the results above as a point of reference, this paper tries to recommend some points. The independence of the journalist is the pillar of the freedom of the media; as much as possible, journalist independence should be affirmed.

Journalists ought to have the liberty to choose their sources based only on credible and noteworthy information. Instead of focusing on government choices, the assessment method for news source verification should emphasize professional aspects and procedures. When it comes to government-owned media, editorial choices ought to be made carefully for each news item. The organization should make an effort to develop independent journalism as a practice since there is the intent of democratic building exercises.

The same is true for news framing, which should be based on a professional viewpoint that takes into account what the public needs to know rather than what the institutions need to spread. Journalists should, in their opinion, push the boundaries of their professional independence by completely doing away with self-censorship. Additionally, the organization's officials must strive for the freedom of their employees. Insofar as media independence is essential to the nation's democratic process, the government should encourage journalistic freedom through policy.

Editorial policies ought to be reformed rather than serving as a crutch for media independence. The administration will demonstrate to the media its readiness to operate freely.

For the benefit of the media industry, the government should play a leading role in changing the media landscape to be free, just as industry stakeholders should have the freedom and duty to behave according to media expectations.

To overcome the obstacles of journalism, Capacity building for journalists is one approach to assisting them in carrying out their duties properly and eliminating self-censorship. As journalists become more capable, they can have the energy to confront difficulties from various perspectives. On the other hand, political freedom is necessary. Responsible entities, such as the Ethiopian Media Authority, should provide political freedom to the media for it to serve the people. The method in which the institution serves the public should be guided by its editorial policy.

Ethiopian broadcasting corporations must be free of commercial control by establishing revenue-generating entities. This will support the organization's decision to be professional and free of economic dependency. Even the living conditions of a journalist should be deemed safe. Furthermore, the media landscape should be examined and policies changed.

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APPENDIX I : INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This following questions were prepared for media practitioners journalists, editors of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC). The purpose of the study is to identify and analyse the various factors that pose threats to journalistic independence at EBC in focus. Hopefully, you'll give me professional responses; hence your reaction will be a good attempt for my research study. I thank you in advance for your time.

- 1, What is journalistic independence?
- 2, How do you explain transparency and accountability to protect journalistic freedom?
- 3, How do you choose sources of information in your media organization?
- 4, Which processes are followed to determine which news stories are broadcast or published?
- 5, What is your evaluation of EBC journalists' independence in selecting sources and stories?
- 6, (For journalists) Do you need the approval of editors in order to select?
- (For editors) Do you need the approval of your managers in order to select?

7, do you have procedures to select news sources?

What are they?

8, what are the challenges?

9, what challenges journalists to experience their journalistic independence?

10, are journalists free to choose news sources?

If no, how/ why?

11, what do you think are the consequences of journalists in EBC not being free?

-what do you think they could contribute differently or better if they were free?

12, does journalists face challenges because EBC is ruled by the house of parliament?

-If yes, how/ why?

13, how do you solve the challenges faced by journalists during news preparation?

14, are there/were journalists forced to resign from their positions because of the reports they made?

15, how do you believe that the media can be effective and promote greater freedom among journalists?

16, What is your general evaluation of the organization in a media-independence?

APPENDIX II:

1. ለአርሰዎ የጋዜጠኝነት ነፃነት ማለት ምንድነው?
2. የጋዜጠኝነት ነፃነትን ለማስጠበቅ ግልፅነትና ተጠያቂነትን እንዴት ሊያገለግሉ የችላሉ?
3. በኢትዮጵያ ብሮድካስቲንግ ኮርፖሬሽን ውስጥ የመረጃ ምንጮች እንዴት ይመረጣሉ?
4. ምን አይነት የዜና ዘገባዎች እንደሚተላለፉ ለመወሰን ምን አይነት ሂደቶች ይታለፋሉ?

5. ጋዜጠኞች ዜና እና የዜና ምንጮቻቸውን ለመምረጥ ያላቸውን ነፃነት ምን ያክል ነው?
6. ጋዜጠኞች ዜናዎችን ለመምረጥ የአርታኢዎች ይሁንታ ያስፈልጋል? አርታኢዎችስ በራሳቸው መወሰን ይችላሉ?
7. የዜና ምንጮችን ለመምረጥ ያሉት ሂደቶች ምንድን ናቸው? ተግዳሮቶቹስ?
8. ጋዜጠኞች የጋዜጠኝነት ነጻነታቸውን ሊነሳቸው የሚችለው ምንድን ነው?
9. ጋዜጠኞች የዜና ምንጮችን ለመምረጥ ነፃ ናቸው ብለው ያምናሉ? አይደለም ከሆነ፣ እንዴት/ ለምን?
10. ጋዜጠኞች ነፃ አለመሆናቸው ምን በሙያ ላይ ምን አይነት ጠፅዕኖ ይኖረዋል ብለው ያስባሉ ? ነፃ መሆናቸውስ ምን አወንታዊ አስተዋጽኦ ሊኖረው ይችላል?
11. የኢትዮጵያ ብሮድካስቲንግ ኮርፖሬሽን በመንግስት የሚተዳደር መሆኑ ምን አይነት ተጽዕኖ አለው ብለው ያስባሉ?
12. በዜና ዝግጅት ወቅት ጋዜጠኞች የሚያጋጥሟቸውን ተግዳሮቶች ምን ምን ናቸው? መፍትሄውስ?
13. በተቋሙ ውስጥ የሚሰሩ ጋዜጠኞች በሰራቸው ዘገባዎች ምክንያት ችግር ያጋጠማቸው አሉ?
14. መገናኛ ብዙሃን ውጤታማ የሆነ ነጻነትን ለጋዜጠኞች እንዲኖራቸው እንዴት ማድረግ ይችላል ብለው ያሥባሉ?
15. እርስዎ በሚሰሩበት የሚዲያ ተቋም ያለውን የሚዲያ ነጻነት እንዴት ይገመግሙታል?