



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

**The Involvement of Women Journalists in Reporting Hard News
Stories: A case Study of Amharic News Department of the Ethiopian
Broadcasting Corporation.**

(June to August 2018)

By:-

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND
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JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**

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This is to certify that this thesis is prepared by Emawaysh Girma Nebro, entitled *the Involvement of Women Journalists in Reporting Hard News Stories: A Case Study of Amharic News Department of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation* and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Abstract

This study aims to examining the participation of women journalists in reporting hard news stories with particular reference to the Amharic News Department of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, EBC. To find out the available data, two qualitative data instruments, in-depth interview and focus group discussions are employed. Permanent employees in the department are targeted for the research. They are selected purposely. Sixteen individuals are selected for the in-depth interview and seven participants for focus group discussion. The focus group discussion lasted for a length of one hour and each in-depth interview required 30 to 40 minutes. As data gathered from the focus group discussion and in-depth interview confirms that the participation of female journalists in hard news stories in the department is unsatisfactory. Based on the findings, majority of the participants believe wrong perception towards female journalists has resulted in low engagement of female reporters in hard news productions. Most of the participants consider opportunities weren't given to women to do hard and priority given stories as there is a perception that women aren't capable of covering such stories. The findings show that female journalists are associated with what is called soft-news stories. Though the stereotypical perception has a lot to play for the low women engagement in covering hard news stories, interest and personal capacity cannot be undermined. Majority of the participants argue that male journalists dominated the Amharic News Department, finding themselves busy in covering hard news stories, reporting from the field, news breaking, anchoring and even in managerial position. Based on the findings, key actions were recommended, i.e. transparent procedures in regards to improving women's participation in hard news productions. The need to institute measures and mechanisms to counter or minimize the effects of negative gender-based assignments when it comes to giving opportunities to women journalists, were also recommended. In addition, providing short and long term trainings to advance women journalists' capacity should also be given utmost emphasis. And providing the possibility of systematic and structural adjustments in work schedules to women journalists were also pointed out as recommendation.

Acronyms

AAU	Addis Ababa University
AIDS	Acquired immune Deficiency syndrome
ASNE	American Society of Newspaper Editors
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
EAJA	Eastern Africa Journalists' Association
EBC	Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation
EBS	Ethiopian Broadcasting Service
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
ETV	Ethiopian Television
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GMMP	Global Media Monitoring Project
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
I	Interview
IFJ	International Federation of Journalists
ILO	International Labor Organization

Conceptual Definition

Hard news: -

Political, social, economic or serious environmental news of a highly significant nature that needs to be reported as soon as possible due to its immediate influence or ramifications on the public and surrounding world and breaking, surprising event of great import on most of the public and/or the environment (e.g. epidemic, natural disaster, terror attack); also new findings, discovery or report regarding a continuing story of great significance for most of the public and/or the environment.

Soft news

Soft news is reports on light topics like fashion, sports, lifestyle, human interest, tourism, food, health, celebrities, education, entertainment and culture that can be reported at a later time or not all; because it has no impact on people.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

The journalism definition of hard news indicates news and events that require immediate reporting distinguished from routine news items, feature news or human-interest stories is hard news story. Subject matter that is usually considered hard news includes: Politics, war, economics, and crime. In the 21st century media world out of the several events some selected newsworthy event considered to be relevant as hard news story is seen to be covered in broadcasting outlets. Hard news reporting has been and is still highly related to men, reporters as clearly been witnessed in the modern journalism. (Suzanne Franks, women and journalism, 2013).

Women journalists initially had difficulty breaking into the broadcast news field and did not begin to make real strides towards equality until the 1960s and 1970s (Hosley& Yamada, 1987). However, today women still struggle to earn the same advantages men are granted in the newsroom. Women reporters are frequently consigned to soft news stories, like health and entertainment news, whereas their male counterparts are given stories of political and international importance. Supposedly, this is because “the nature of the genre . . . allows for a masculine or feminine style of journalism,” but that should not be a permitted excuse to prevent women from being assigned the same, important stories that men are assigned (Carter, 1998, p. 14).

In many countries, the majority of high-profile journalists and editors remain male. Although there have been considerable changes in the prospects for women working in the media in the past few decades, women are still noticeably in the minority in the top journalistic roles, despite making up the majority of journalism students (Suzanne Franks, women and journalism, 2013).

The link between representation and recruitment of women in the media as well as their level of participation in news production send important messages about their place, roles and their lives in society. Successive studies have mapped and analyzed ways in which women are portrayed in factual media showing as it does a pattern of marginal presence on the one hand and stereotyping on the other (Allan, 2005:288). The debate and discussion into the persistent misrepresentation of

women, in the recent past revolved around male dominance over the media industries and few women in the decision-making positions (Gallagher, 1987).

Today, different scholars talk of a 'gender switch', acknowledging the increasing number of women joining journalism training institutions and being absorbed into media industries as professional journalists (Van Zoonen, 1994). There are considerably more women than previous decades—a revolution in journalism practice that has been brought about by developments in media and communication technology and the increasing nature of mainstream media that have forced a reconsideration of the relationship of news to gender (Allan, 2005).

Research efforts on media and gender in Ethiopia have tended to concentrate on media portrayal of women. Little attention has been paid to the originators of media output. An in-depth examination and understanding of the people involved in the image-making in the media themselves is necessary to understand why news appear the way it is. In this context, women's access to and participation in media work become a crucial issue, which this study takes up. Specifically, when it comes to hard news reporting the area is largely confined to male journalists and we see fewer female journalists engaging in hard news story reporting. Hard news stories mostly associated with male journalists; because male considered courageous and strong. Whereas females considered soft as a result they cover soft news stories.

In Ethiopian media, these days one can observe a handful of broadcast agencies, public and privately owned, compared with the past era. From the starting point of journalism in the country the participation and the role female journalists underrated but very significant. According to Alemseged (1999) for centuries Ethiopian women have been brought up in settings that back the idea that 'women should rather be seen than heard'. The study also indicates the current media ideologies that exist in national or private media institutions are male stressed where overwhelming collective social attitudes harmful to women are mirrored in the mass media and information industries. Females are described primarily associated with things that have to do with beauty and their relationship to men and their role as home makers whereas males are defined by their accomplishments.

The study indicates female journalist do not feature much in newsroom specially reporting that of hard news stories; Politics, war, economics and crime stories. Since the newsroom is dominated by

males and patriarchal structures, it is characterized by male values, culture, and norms. And mostly female journalists given to cover soft news stories and male do hard stories. It goes like this since media emerges in Ethiopia. In addition, female journalists' representation in the media is low. According to Agaredech (1994) women are victims of pigeon-holing than men, which are often held against them to disregard them from certain activities. Labeling people as this and that is done everywhere but it is resilient in media. The distortion in representation and lack of representation of women in the media has undesirable effects on development process. In general, even in subjects that seem insignificant, the representation of women in the media fashion intentionally or otherwise project negative images; which leads to witness no role models in Ethiopian media that the young female journalists to follow suit with.

Thus, the researcher motivated to study the reason behind female journalists' low engagement in reporting hard news stories and leading role. Therefore, a study that addresses and defines the involvement of women journalists in reporting hard news stories: in the case of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, is important for several reasons. First, it brings clear image on the involvement of women in reporting hard news. Second, if found lower in number, the study would examine why the involvement of women in hard news reporting is limited. This would have broader institutional and media policy implications in terms of creating a gender fairer context for women journalists.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

It is not hidden that gender equality has nowadays become a major issue in many countries triggering women to participate in any field of work, any time, any place. Journalism being one professional field sees a considerable number of female journalists joining the sector.

Suzanne Franks (2013) states women substantially outnumber men in journalism training and enter the profession in (slightly) greater number but still today relatively few are rising to senior jobs and in part as a result the pay gap between male and female journalists remains a stubbornly wide one. In fact the number of female journalists wider in the case of western journalism but it still has shown progress in the case of the third world countries that of Africa too. It is since the early 1990th that gender equality and women empowerment gained momentum in Ethiopia and the issue has been a top political agenda ever since. Mengistu Dargie (2007). Apparently, in Ethiopian

media female journalists has seen in private and government owned media organizations in number compared with journalism in ten years ago. Higher institutions and universities have played their pivotal role in producing skilled human power.

Agaredech (2003) cited even though they are devoted and effective in their career, there are a lot of obstacles which affect their performance. Lack of professional skill and other managerial problems can be mentioned among those challenges. The study also indicates on the corner of women participation in mass media, their involvement in the profession is encouraging but challenges which they face affect their competitions and makes them to lag from their career. Though the number of female journalists is increasing at an unprecedented rate their involvement in reporting hard news stories remains to be investigated.

Yet, beyond gender statistics in hard news journalism, it would be crucial to know more about relevant practical problems female news journalists face and the sources of the problems. Moreover, it would be of paramount importance to assess the positions women journalists have in news media houses in Ethiopia more particularly in news journalism. As females share half of the society their presence is far from half in the media industry. Their representation in newsrooms is still needs attention. Because the portrayal of female journalists in the media is given less attention sometimes it seen as a gender role rather that a right to female journalists to work in the media if she works in a certain media house. Therefore, females have less role in editorial decision and high media management positions. They have far from leading any role in the media.

The link between representation and recruitment of women in the media as well as their level of participation in news production send important messages about their place, roles and their lives in society. Successive studies have mapped and analyzed ways in which women are portrayed in factual media showing as it does a pattern of marginal presence on the one hand and stereotyping on the other (Allan, 2005:288). The debate and discussion into the persistent misrepresentation of women, in the recent past revolved around male dominance over the media industries and few women in the decision-making positions (Gallagher, 1987).Some studies indicated that female media employee's perception of herself and of her working relationships; her expectations and plans; her attitude to the organization for which she works and on her male colleagues; and how she judges herself in individual social terms minimize their participation in the media. Human

beings are greatly influenced by their perceptions of how others assess their performance (Gallagher, 1987:46).

Different researches carried out in status and gender representation in the world, including Ethiopian media. But most of them focus on print media and their representation in media contents. As far as the researcher's knowledge in relation to female journalist's assignment to hard news stories particularly and their position in the media houses in Ethiopia, studies are still scarce. The researcher finds a study conducted on "Work Allocation of Women Journalists in Amharic News Coverage: The Case of ETV" which is conducted in the year of 2014 by Frehiwot Kassa which is by far the one research related to this topic. According to the study there is no regular system in ETV in 2014 helps to assign journalists without discrimination and there was a dependency of few male journalists. The study shows the problems women journalists were facing in ETV in story distribution in general.

Since broadcast media are more accessible and reachable to the society it shaped one's country people positively. In this regard, ETV is more accessible in Ethiopia which is government owned and the only national media in the country. The company is expected to do more in assuring women rights and benefits, besides numerical participation of women journalists. So, it would be very essential to know more about women journalists' involvement in reporting hard news stories, their role in editorial decisions, the story assignment distribution, male journalists view towards women journalists, their perception to story allocation and practical challenges women journalists facing in Amharic News Department of EBC (if any). Therefore, the researcher was motivated to examine and assess the actual situation of female journalists' participation in reporting hard news stories taking the case of EBC. The study also assesses the portrayal of female journalists in the newsroom. The study could shed light on the importance of giving due emphasis to female journalists to participate in reporting hard news stories. Because ensuring women's participation in reporting hard news stories is empowering women and this means empowering half of the population of Ethiopia which also empower the country. Frehiwot (2014)

1.3. Objective of the Study

General objective: -

The main objective of this study was to find out the participation of women journalists in reporting hard news stories taking the case of Amharic News Department of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation.

Specific objective: -

- Examine the degree female journalists' involvement in news reportage
- Find out how story assignments distribute to journalists
- Get perception from journalists toward story distribution particularly that of hard news stories
- Examine women journalist's performance compared with their counterparts
- Find out the role of females in editorial decisions
- Document the challenges female journalists face in their professional work.

1.4. Research Questions

The study seeks answers to the following questions

So, the general question of the study is: -

- How much involved are women journalists in reporting hard news stories in the case of Amharic Service of EBC?

From the preceding, the following specific research questions could be posed:

- What is the degree of involvement of women in had news reportage?
- How do female journalists access Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation in terms of recruitment?
- How are hard news reporting assignments made?
- What are, if at all, gender-related factors considered in the assignment of reporters in hard news journalism?
- What are women journalists' perceptions of the fairness of the assignments?

- Where is the status of female journalists' relevant reportorial performance compared to their male colleagues?
- How much females involved in editorial decisions?
- What are the challenges female journalists facing in their professional work?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The study helps concerned stakeholders uncover critical areas regarding hard news reporting that many researchers; in the case of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (**EBC**), were not able to explore. The findings of this study contribute to the benefit of the society considering that the more the role of women in various sector strengthens, the society strengths. Moreover, the findings would make stakeholders take a better look from the vantage point of gender fairness and make a difference in disparities that may be observed among men and women in reporting hard news. Thus, media organizations that apply the recommendation approach derived from the results of this study benefited to train and capacitate women journalists. Likewise, it contributes to other researchers who conduct a research on same area as a site. As mentioned in the problem section there isn't enough research in the area so that this research paper would be a literature for a research on women and journalism. It also be one add up literature for the Addis Ababa school of journalism and communications conducted on females' participation in reporting hard news stories.

1.6.Delimitation of the Study

This study was limited to assess the involvement of women in reporting hard news stories in the case of Amharic News Department of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, EBC. The target data source or research area of the study is Amharic News Department of EBC. All female and some male journalists who work in the department would have a greater chance of being included in the study. The study assessed female journalists' participation in hard news coverage in the last two years from 2016 to 2018 of August.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

Assembling the respondents into one place for the sake of focus group discussion would not be an easy job. Each of the respondents were engaged on their own duty and they failed to pay due attention for their participation initially. As a result, the researcher experienced challenges to set

appropriate time for each of them. Moreover, the key informants were not available in a fixed time and the researcher couldn't to get the respondents and interview each of them. After establishing rapport and being flexible on schedule, the researcher was able to conduct focus group discussion and interview with the respondents. This was possible through conducting frequent phone calls to all participants until she got confirmations.

1.8. Organization of the thesis

The first chapter presents the introduction to the study which entails the purpose, objectives, research questions, the scope, limitation and significance of the study. In chapter two, the researcher presents an analysis of the international and specific country research about women in the media including the situation of women journalists in Ethiopian media and the theoretical framework. Chapter three presents the methodology of data collection and analysis while chapter four presents and discusses data collected. And chapter five gives the conclusions, summary and commendations.

Chapter Two

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This section mainly deals with the literature written on female journalists in general and their participation in reporting hard news stories and their representation in the newsroom. Feminist theory is a fundamental theory for this study with direct relevance to women participation in reporting hard news stories and their representation in media.

The first section of this chapter is concerned with the history of women and journalism. Depicting women's involvement in the male owned journalism world is given priority. The representation of female journalists in the media and their participation in reporting hard news stories comes next. Female journalists' participation in the newsroom is mostly intact with soft news whereas their male colleagues are entitled to hard news stories. These issues are well discussed in this section. The subsequent section looks at the contribution of female journalists in Ethiopian media arena. The fourth section of the study discusses the guiding theoretical framework of this study.

2.1 The history of women in media

According to the world survey in the late 1970s and early 1980s, only 13% of reporters were women, whereas today about half of reporters around the world are women. However, women are still far from equal treatment in so many terms as they face professional barriers of appearance and age. Weibel, Wissmath, & Groner (2008) stated that although female reporters presenting news stories were perceived as being more credible than male reporters presenting similar stories, male reporters were seen as being more credible persons overall. However, the gender of the news viewer also has to be considered; generally, recipients find reporters of his or her same gender to be credible. Another noticeable finding from this study was that, although young reporters' credibility was not influenced by age, the older, male reporters were considered to be the most credible reporters.

As cited Armstrong (2004) in many countries women are strongly represented in newsrooms but the mass media is still very male dominated when the top positions are examined. Women are marginalized in the news both in the content of the jobs they do and in the opportunities they have

to make their way in the profession. Fair gender portrayal is a professional and ethical aspiration, similar to respect for accuracy, fairness and honesty. It is the other side of the coin that says women need to be more represented at higher levels of the news business at work. In a world where hard news is still mainly reported and presented by men journalists, women need to stand up for their gender equality at work. A majority of studies showed that women are generally considered less capable of communicating hard news and events than their male equals. A landmark survey in 2011 of more than 500 media companies worldwide found that women made only about one-third of hard news events. Personal views are continually shaped through consumption of mass media, which could lead one to assume that society will reinforce a "lower public status for women relative to men" Armstrong(2004, p. 140) as fewer women journalists or sources are shown in news coverage.

As cited above women journalists should not be judged of their gender rather their capacity and responsibility in appropriately executing their assignment should be the major criteria. Journalism by itself should treat everyone equally as it is expected to entertain the idea of ability. According to Allan (2005) the ways in which women are represented in news media can project their place, role and lives in a positive or negative light to the public. Often media allies argue that one of the main reasons for women to have less representation than men in news is because they do not occupy high status positions in society as men. Allan (2005) reiterates that women parliamentarians for example do manage to attract media attention, but often it is for their sartorial style and domestic arrangements rather than their policy positions- 'ordinary' women are denied a voice as well. Where women should, in principle, have the same opportunity of speaking as men, for example, in vox pop (voice of the people) during elections, they are still much less likely to be asked their views than men, Allan (2005)

In 1995, the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) was launched to map the representation of women in the media and to create media awareness. According to the GMMP, the global percentage of female journalists rose from 25% in 1995 to 37% in 2005; however, from 2005 to 2010 the percentage of female reporters stagnated at 37% (Global Media Monitoring Project [GMMP], 1995: 24; GMMP, 2010: 2). The recently published 2015 GMMP showed again that

women make up 37% of professional employees in the newsrooms, which indicates a declining effort for gender balance and equity in the newsrooms.

According to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) there are some exceptions in countries like Russia and Sweden where more women than ever are working in media. They form most of the journalism workforce. But they do not play an equal role in the reporting process. The study conducted by GMMP in 2005 showed 57% of all television news presenters were women, yet only 29% of news items were written by female reporters. Meanwhile only 32% of “hard” news was written or covered by women. Women are more often found reporting on “soft” subjects, such as social issues i.e. family, or arts and “living” (up to 40% women). While the GMMP statistics show that more and more women are training and entering the field, the number of women producers, executives, chief editors, and publishers remains shockingly low. In 2002 the Canadian Newspaper Association report stated that only 8% of the editors-in-chief positions and 12% of publishers were women. The Eastern Africa Journalists’ Association (EAJA) on the other hand reported in 2008 that less than 20% of editorial places were filled by women in the region.

There are many reasons for the change. For instance, Creedon, (1993:87) argues that the developments in media and information technology, the international and regional legal points such as Affirmative Action policies and Equal Employment opportunities are factors attributed to the increasing visibility of women in the media that have lessened discrimination basing on gender.

As a matter of fact, other studies suggest that female journalists are often more educated than men. Indiana University Scholar Christine Logan (1983) found from men and women newspaper managers that female managers were more likely than male managers to have a college education. On the same token, a 1988 study of daily newspaper journalist by the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE), found that women had more education and better academic records than men Stinnet & Henry, 1989 cited in Creedon (1993). Part of this difference stems from the fact that young journalists are more likely than older journalists to have earned a college degree, and female journalists tend to be younger than male journalists Creedon (1993: 94).

Over the last decade women are increasingly becoming active in African politics, but often their voices and stories are missing in the media. Even where attempts are made by editors and journalist to mainstream women's voices and to use women as source, women are sometimes reluctant to speak publicly for a host of reasons ranging from lack of confidence to a lack of trust or experience with the media.

2.2. What is News?

News has been defined differently by different experts. Some say news is anything out of the ordinary and is the unusual picture of live. And others defined news as anything that people talk about; more it excites the greater its value and consider as a hot cake coming straight from oven. Whereas journalism defines news, is the factual report of an event. Apparently, in journalism objectivity has given a greater attention to do certain news because objectivity means to report the facts exactly the same as they occurred. It goes against objectivity if the reporter adds something his/ her own imagination.

2.2.1. Types of News

It is a debatable concept that to categories news. There are different disputes about the type of news. Some are classified news by themes, some by sensitivity and others by weightiness and reporting style. Over 30 years, a large body of research on what is often called 'hard' and 'soft news' has accumulated in communication studies. However, there is no consensus about what hard and soft news exactly is, or how it should be defined or measured. The terms have been used to classify both individual news reports and media formats. Very often, the use of these terms goes along with judgments about the quality of journalism and normative assumptions about media functions in democratic societies (Patterson, 2000; Zaller, 2003).

Reinemann (2016) cited the terms 'hard news' and 'soft news' are not scientific by origin. He stated that the two terms were obviously first used by US journalists themselves to categorize different kinds of news. The terms then made their way step by step from journalistic into academic language. In the middle of the last century, Schramm (1949) was one of the first US scholars to reflect on the division between different types of news from the perspective of

audiences. He distinguished between delayed-reward and immediate-reward news and his distinction very much resembles the division between hard and soft news. In addition, he discussed possible motives why people would choose those different kinds of news and what their effects could be.

Despite the relevance of the potential softening of news, many authors comment that hard and soft news are often not clearly defined or not even defined at all. (Reinemann et al). To give an impression of the huge differences in definitions, Shoemaker and Cohen (2006) defined hard and soft news like this:

Hard news items are urgent occurrences that must be reported right away because they become obsolete very quickly. These items are truly 'new'. Whereas Soft news items are usually based on nonscheduled events. The reporter or media organization is under no pressure to publish the news at a certain date or time – soft news stories need not be 'timely'.

As can easily be seen, their definition is quite straightforward because it just uses one single dimension to distinguish between hard and soft news – its topicality or timeliness. At the opposite end of a complexity continuum Patterson (2000) defines the two terms as follows:

Hard news refers to coverage of breaking events involving top leaders, major issues, or significant disruptions in the routines of daily life, such as an earthquake or airline disaster. Information about these events is presumably important to citizens' ability to understand and respond to the world of public affairs. Where soft news has been described as news that typically is more personality-centered, less time-bound, more practical, and more incident-based than other news. Finally, soft news has been described as a change in the vocabulary of news. The news is said to have become more personal and familiar in its form of presentation and less distant and institutional.

From the definition, the researcher understands that the categories Patterson (2000) uses to describe the softening of news clearly show the multi-dimensional character of his understanding.

In fact, he refers to public policy components, sensationalism, human-interest elements, crimes and disasters as news subjects and the use of collectives and self-references as indicators of a softening of news. However, a comparative study by Curran et al. (2010) illustrates the difficulties that researchers encounter when they try to use a seemingly easy and straightforward one-dimensional definition. In the study, hard news is defined as reports about politics, public administration, the economy, science, technology and related topics. Soft news is defined as reports about celebrities, human interest, sport and other entertainment-centered stories. Within the suggested crime category, however, the authors argue, it would be misleading to predetermine the hard or soft character of a report. Therefore, they distinguish different types of crime news like this:

If a crime story was reported in a way that contextualized and linked the issue to the public good – for example, if the report referred to penal policies or to the general causes or consequences of crime – it was judged to be a hard news story assimilated to public affairs. If, however, the main focus of the report was the crime itself, with details concerning the perpetrators and victims, but with no reference to the larger context or implications for public policies, the news item was judged to be soft. Curran et al.(2009: 9–10)

According to this qualification, it is not only the topic of a news item that makes it a ‘hard’ or ‘soft’ one, but also the framing of an event or topic linking it to the public good, to policy issues or to society at large. Obviously, topics here only serve as indicators for political or societal relevance. Therefore, based on the above literature the researcher defines hard news and soft news as follows:

-

Hard news: -

Political, social, economic or serious environmental news of a highly significant nature that needs to be reported as soon as possible due to its immediate influence or ramifications on the public and surrounding world and breaking, surprising event of great import on most of the public and/or the environment (e.g. epidemic, natural disaster, terror attack); also new findings, discovery or report regarding a continuing story of great significance for most of the public and/or the environment.

Soft news

Soft news is reports on light topics like fashion, sports, lifestyle, human interest, tourism, food, health, celebrities, education, entertainment and culture that can be reported at a later time or not all. Because it has no impact on people.

2.3. Women in News

Over the past two decades there have been various studies conducted on the participation of female journalists in reporting hard news. The results speak for themselves: despite female journalists involving in the print media since the 1980s, they are still underrepresented in the newsroom Ross & Carter, (2011); Reed (2002); Meyers & Gayle (2015), Veidt (2003). Statistics from 2009 imply that women accounted for 37% of the workforce in newsrooms in the US, Beam & Di Cicco (2010: 393). As a study by the American Society of News Editors (ASNE) in 2013 showed, this number has not seen any change. In fact, women have been making up approximately 37% of the workforce for the past decade, Meyers & Gayle (2015: 295).

According to GMMP (2005) age has a crucial bearing on women appearance in the news. For women in the profession, a youthful appearance is more highly valued than experience. The GMMP (2005) indicated that up to the age of 34, women are in the majority as both news presenters and reporters. By the age of 50, only 17% of reporters and 7% of presenters are female. Contrary, men go on making news well into their 50s and 60s: nearly half (49%) of all male news subjects are aged 50 or over. But older women are almost invisible: nearly three quarters (72%) of female news subjects are under 50.

The GMMP (1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010) indicated that women are always relegated to covering soft news like environment, education and entertainment as opposed to their male counterparts in favor of hard news such as economy, national defense, international crises, politics and government, while sports news was reported to be the least likely to be reported by women, with just 21% of female reporters. According to the report, although reporters sometimes choose what to cover, in most cases the reporter is assigned by the editor or producer. According to GMMP, (1995, 2000, and 2005) gender was considered among factors during story assignment.

In Norway, Eide (2002) reported that women cluster in the feature and culture sections, while they are poorly represented in sports, photography, business or politics sections. According to Eide (2002) problem was also reflected when it came to salaries. She noted that the most important division of labor was found at the editorial level with only between 7 and 8 percent of Norwegian newspapers having a female editor-in-chief; despite Norwegian female journalists being more educated than their male colleagues. She observed that there is an informal gendered division of beats aligned to an adjustment of serious news values with public sphere events to be of interest to men, whilst the so-called women's issues are more likely to be framed in relation to the 'private as domestic sphere. It is often said that news provides a mirror on the world, but the results from GMMP and other specific country research reveal that the world we see in the news is a world in which women are virtually invisible. This raises the question of what is news, what makes it news and why. Although many soft news stories are important, they are not always perceived as such in the hierarchy of news values. As a result, the work of female journalists is sometimes under-valued, and women reporters are frequently assigned to stories that are downright trivial.

As Frehiwot (2014) stated duties of women journalists are usually associated with "soft stories" that covers life style, fashion, shopping, HIV/AIDS; issues considered natural territories for women journalists (while they can do in hard topics like politics and business). She pointed out that in Ethiopia, the only exception in this case as indicated in a media study done in 2007, has been the government owned Amharic weekly Addis Zemen which uniquely introduced equal representation of men and women in coverage of issues of economy and politics from print media outlets (EAJA 2008 p, 22). This can be evidence for those who thought women have inability to perform in both news categories: hard news and soft news. If they performed well in print media, there is no plausible reason for lagging them to cover hard issues in broadcast outlets.

If media are a mirror of society as they should be, they certainly need to reflect better the fact that gender equality is a fundamental human right. It is about equal treatment of men and women and encompasses issues such as equal pay for equal work, equal access to decision making bodies, employment, pensions, health care, promotions, maternity and paternity leave. In journalism it also means fair gender portrayal in the news, the use of neutral and non-gender specific language, and women not being pigeonholed as 'lifestyle' or 'soft' news reporters.

It is essential that the media promote gender equality, both within the working environment and in the representation of women. Media should open this debate and highlight the issue in the news agenda to better inform society and to overcome gender stereotypes.

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the International Labor Organization (ILO), UNESCO and other United Nations agencies all promote these principles, yet nowhere in the world so far has true and total gender equality been accomplished. The former UN secretary General Ban Ki-Moon said, “We still have a long way to go; women are still severely hampered by discrimination, lack of resources and economic opportunities, by limited access to decision-making and by gender-based violence”.

Journalism is no exception. Inside media and in the work of journalists we see evidence of how much still needs to be done to achieve equal rights for women. This study provides guidelines to journalists and the media organization on ways of bringing gender equality into the mainstream of our profession. Especially on the division the profession has in doing hard news stories and covering events that needs high protocol news coverage.

2.4. Media in Ethiopia

2.4.1. A brief review of Ethiopian media

In this section the study looks at the Ethiopian media history at a glass ceiling approach. The Survey of Culture and the Media conducted by Swedish International development Authority (SIDA) in 2003 indicated that the Press in Ethiopia is believed to have started towards the end of the 19th century by missionaries and trade representatives who had set up weekly and monthly papers in French. *La Semained’Ethiopie* (The Ethiopian Weekly) appeared in French in 1905.

According to the survey, local language press began in the beginning of the 20th century when the weekly *Aemero* (briefly translated as *Intelligence*) appeared in 24 hands written copies in Amharic in 1902. But the first official Amharic newspaper, called *BerhanenaSelam* appeared in print following the establishment of *BerhanenaSelam* in 1923. From 1923–1936, Ethiopia had six publications: *AithiopicosKosmos*(Ethiopian World) in Greek in 1925; *L’EthiopieCommerciale* in

French in 1932, *AtbiaKokab*(*The Morning Star*) in Amharic in 1934, and from 1934–1936, *Ye-Ethiopia Demts*(Voice of Ethiopia) in Amharic which was silenced by the Italian aggression on Ethiopia and was reissued in 1958. (ibid) control of the press. Several state -owned newspapers were launched with the aim of propagating socialist ideology.

According to Mengstu Dargie (2005) press in Ethiopia gained constitutional provision after the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) held power by overthrowing the Dergue regime in 1991. This study also states following the press proclamation in 1992, private newspapers and other journalistic outputs have been published for national and local circulations. The press proclamation states in Paragraph 3 that “1. Freedom of the press is recognized and respected in Ethiopia. 2. Censorship of the press and any restriction of a similar nature are hereby prohibited.” Part 3 further guaranteed the right of access to information: "Any press and its agents shall, without prejudice to rights conformed by other laws, have rights to seek, obtain and report news and information from any government source of news and information."

2.4.2. The Presence of Women Journalists in the Ethiopian Media

These days one can observe a handful of broadcast agencies, public and privately owned, compared with the past era. The Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), Fana Broadcasting Corporate, LTV, EBS, Walta, to mention a few are among the currently airing channels. Since its inception, the media has been broadcasting news, entertainment and programs dealing with different topics with distinct languages. From the starting point of journalism in the country the participation and the role female journalists underrated but very significant. Though their presence in the industry is not visible as expected they have been playing an indispensable role in the challenging media environment in Ethiopia.

The first woman program producer, Roman Worku Kassahun, had worked for more than 25 years starting her career in 1946 for both the print and electronic media. Later, female journalists such as Assgedech Yiberta, Elleni Mocria, Bizu Wondimagegn and Abaynesh Birru became among the senior and well-known female journalists who had been working while facing inconvenient working conditions.

For centuries Ethiopian women have been brought up in settings that back the idea that ‘women should rather be seen than heard’ Alemseged (1999). Alemseged further notes local and indigenous ways were used to carry out discussions and pass on information from the few to the majority. However, women remained neglected in the general process.

Alemseged (1999) emphasizes that; mass media is a form of power and often part of a power system designed in such a way to strengthen the status quo supporting the economically and politically powerful. The current media ideologies that exist in national or private media institutions are male stressed where overwhelming collective social attitudes harmful to women are mirrored in the mass media and information industries. (Ibid)

Another study by Tadesse (2004) indicated that, customarily women have not been considered news worthy, even today despite the impact they have made in many aspects their representation is unsatisfactory and often distorted. Females are described primarily associated with things that have to do with beauty and their relationship to men and their role as home makers whereas males are defined by their accomplishments. The study indicates female journalist do not feature much in newsroom specially reporting that of hard news stories; Politics, war, economics and crime stories. According to Tadesse (2004) as country Ethiopian political leaders paid a visit to many countries for many reasons and a male journalist mostly going with the crew in order to cover the story. The study outlined considering female as a journalist needs to be addressed and the quota they have in newsroom should be visible as their counterparts.

Different media publications have been and are still depicting women in traditional and more victimized way. According to Agaredech (1994) women are victims of pigeon-holing than men, which are often held against them in order to disregard them from certain activities. Labeling people as this and that is done everywhere but it is resilient in media. The distortion in representation and lack of representation of women in the media has undesirable effects on development process. In general, even in subjects that seem insignificant, the representation of women in the media fashion intentionally or otherwise project negative images.

Moreover, the Ethiopian media has mostly shied away from representing women as a journalist in news coverage and overall media representations for a long time. Historically when it comes to the

media there were various categories women were placed. Women were needed for the presentation of their faces and voices rather than their professional competency. Women's images and voice were and are still used in advertisement and entertainment programs for sexual appeal while their success as professionals has been given and still given little attention, and is not taken as a subject that would sell, for the market oriented media of the present time Tsehay and Frehiwot(2006).

Suzanne Franks (2013) states journalism is changing, as is the role of women in the workplace, but the two are not always evolving in harmony. The study also indicates women are better educated and encouraged to achieve at work – just as journalism intensifies, jobs become tougher, and the economic pressures become greater. This research shows the unbalanced women's involvement in journalism and the sector's development in the other side. Suzanne Franks (2013) suggests if journalism is a reflection of the world it must show women's share. According to Suzanne Franks (2013) observing female as journalist in newsroom especially in participating hard news stories and high protocol events is still unanswered question; It mainly monopolized by their male counterparts.

Since the newsroom is dominated by males and patriarchal structures, it is characterized by male values, culture, and norms. As Beam and Di Cicco (2010: 403) show, this masculine bias cannot be corrected by simply bringing women into the newsroom and putting some of them in senior positions. While Ethiopia has gender parity in its newsrooms, the news content is still not necessarily more gender sensitive or has changed largely; it is still produced according to masculine news values Tadesse (2004).

The main reason being that is although female journalists do bring new perspectives and angles into the newsroom, they tend to fall in line with the traditional masculine values and norms Cassidy (2008: 115). Some of the female journalists argue that they are exercising their role as “objective” observer and therefore their gendered preferences should not show Bosch (2016: 4). A similar mindset persists in the US; however, scholars have argued that the journalism cornerstone of ‘objectivity’ masculinizes journalism instead of being gender neutral Hardin &Shain (2006: 324).

2.5.Theoretical Framework

2.5.1 The feminist media discourse

In the case of gender representation, the Feminist Media Theory focuses on gender issues, specifically the representation of women and its consequent impact Govender et al (2014). Van Zoonen (1994) as cited in Govender et al (2014) states that the media have always been at the center of feminist critique. In addition, the media have been thought to act as socialization agents. Media are perceived as the main instruments in conveying, respectively, stereotypical, patriarchal and hegemonic values about women and femininity Govender et al (2014). Borzekowski, Robinson and Killen (2000) maintain that when women do get into media space a substantial proportion of it is actually derogatory or focused excessively on physical appearance.

According to Kirby et al. (2000), when it comes to the media, Feminism is concerned with imbalance between how women are portrayed in the media and the real world. Feminists from different philosophical and theoretical scenes have tried to deal with women's problems and solutions with the media by trying to explain how the media is responsible and used to impart women's ideas, beliefs, attitudes and their status in the Society (Steeves 1987) in (Kelta2003).

Feminist scholarship is grounded in women's epistemological framework, which dictates that women have specialized knowledge to interpret experiences from their standpoint. The scholars argue that traditional academic research and writing presents knowledge from men's perspectives. (Carol Ccullagh in Tothand Aldoory, 2001:18)

Feminist epistemological perspectives recognize that all knowledge is partial and incomplete. No single individual's experience explains everyone else's. If one group's knowledge is primarily relied on, then other ways of knowing will be excluded and ignored. (ibid)Moreover, the theory applies to the field of mass communication, where bosses (e.g. editors, managers, executives etc.) usually come from traditional point of view or standpoint, and thus decide the newsworthiness of a story from that standpoint.

Lindsey (2005) also contends that such women's subordinate and minimum influential positions within mass media industries have exacerbated the degrading portrayal of women by the media.

Her argument goes on to say, 'As women gain positions of power and prestige, gender stereotyped images will be altered'. Inadequate representation of different groups in government, which is one of the basic principles of democracy, is argued to be highly applicable to the mass media.

Feminists recognize media as powerful institutions that can help shape identities. Seen as the media through which messages are transmitted (through editorial content, images and adverts) about the gender roles of women and men in any society, feminists note that media messages can either reinforce, or challenge gender stereotypes and sex-based discrimination Creedon and Cramer (2007:263). As news and communications channels, they can put women's rights and gender equality on the agenda of public policymakers. As institutions that practice sex-based discrimination they are also sites where the struggle for gender equality must be confronted.

2.5.1.1. The liberal feminist approach

Liberal feminist approach emphasizes on equal individual rights and liberties for women and men and downplaying sexual differences. Liberal feminism is the most accepted social and political philosophy among feminists. It depends on the equal rationality of the sexes and emphasizes the importance of structuring social, familiar and sexual roles in ways that promotes women's autonomous self-fulfillment. They also emphasize the similarities between men and women rather than the average difference between them attributes most of the personality and character differences between the sexes to the social construction of gender and tend to promote a single set of androgynous virtue for both women and men.

As explained above, gender equality has enormous contribution for social, familiar, and economic development of a country. And it is believed that without the difference of their sex and the social construction of gender women and men are similar. Thus, the two can do whatever they want at anytime anyplace. Since experience, engagements in various responsibilities by itself helps to enhance skill and knowledge, women should give equal opportunity. Liberals agreed on the issue that unless there is mental problems, all human beings born with equal mental capacity.

Liberal feminists believe that women have the same mental capacity as their male counterparts and should be given the same opportunities in political, economic

and social spheres. Women should have the right to choose their life shouldn't chosen by other because of their sex. Essentially women must be like men. Betty Friedan (2010)

For the ongoing achievement of gender equality, a lot of works expected from concerned stakeholders to give equal opportunities to women, to make policies which will assure women's right and equality, to build their capacity with supporting policies until they became equal with men. Nardos (2006) stated:

Liberal theory assumes equal gender relations being achieved by equal opportunities, policies, affirmative action programs. This approach doesn't examine further power system in which male privileged is maintained by excluding and subordinating women

In the newsroom and opportunities in the workplace, we can analyze the positions of women in newsrooms because feminists assert that women often comprise the rank and file of journalists and presenters in media, but few are in the top leadership positions Shivas (2000).

The liberal feminist media theory provides guidelines to journalists and the media organization on ways of bringing gender equality into the mainstream of the profession. Especially on the division the profession has in doing hard news stories and covering events that needs high protocol news coverage.

2.5.1.2. Gender

Feminist researchers see gender as a basic organizing principle that shapes the conditions of women lives-a lens that brings into focus particular questions. As stated earlier in feminist theories male and female are accepted as biological terms that represent physical differences but feminine

and masculine correspond to social, historical and cultural meanings that have been associated with these biological differences varying from culture to culture (Creedon and Cramer, 2007:262). Lorber (2005) wraps the term gender as:

Through the social processes of gendering, gender divisions and their accompanying norms and role expectations are built into the major social institutions of society, such as economy, the family, the state, culture, religion and the law.

This study focuses on gender as an issue for the media by highlighting the ways in which gender inequalities, biases and prejudices manifest themselves in the media. As defined by feminists, this study takes on gender as a way in which society assigns characteristics and social roles to women and men (Shivas, 2000). The roles, functions and characteristics of men according to feminists, have been given greater value than those of women, creating unequal gender power relations which perpetuate discrimination against women in both the public and private spheres.

Sex according to feminists is the basis for discrimination and the violation of the rights of women and girls in all societies (Shivas, 2000). Some of the gender biases and prejudices in the media would be analyzed through the choices media managers, advertisers, and media professionals (editors, journalists, co-editors, etc) make each day. For example, decisions about who will be promoted; who will not; what will make news; what will not; who will be interviewed; who will not; and so on are decisions affected by media professionals-beliefs about where women and men should be in society.

These analyses would reveal the extent to which differences-assumed to be rooted in biology are demonstrated to be cultural. From the wide variety of physical characteristics and personal attributes present or possible in humans, Lorber (2005) argued, cultural groups create order by designing simplifying category systems that are arbitrary assigned, socially enforced and ultimately taken for granted. These systems can be useful or detrimental, rigid or flexible, egalitarian or stratified or binary.

International and specific country studies have shown that more women have joined media institutions and also gained some ground to top editorial posts. Studies also show that the nature of journalism has changed impacting on the role of the media and women participation in them. However, there is persistent differential treatment between men and women in the media. Women are less participated in newsroom than men either as news reporters, are restricted to stories associated with hard news stories. The studies also indicate that women journalists still face problems with access, promotion and career development and they suffer from cultural, sexist attitudes from their communities, families, the media organizations and male colleagues.

Therefore, this study is tries to suggest ways to fill the gaps that women journalist facing problems in the newsroom environment. The above stated theory thus contributes a lot in showing the challenges female journalists facing in the newsroom specially in reporting hard news stories. Most importantly it contributes in predicting the findings of the study and in collecting data. Accordingly, this study will firstly assess the involvement of women in reporting hard news stories taking the case of Amharic News Department of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation. Secondly, it will highlight what type of content female journalists produce and thirdly, how women's voices are featured in the newsroom. To address those gaps, this study will employ interview and focus group discussion as a methodology to conducting an in-depth study.

Chapter Three

3. Methodology of the Study

The study explored how much women journalists were involved in reporting hard news stories taking the case of the Amharic Service of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation. To undertake this study, qualitative approaches have been employed to collect and analyze the data. The chapter discusses the research design, description of the target i.e. Amharic department of EBC, and explanation of the tool used as well as the procedure.

3.1. The Design

A research design is the logic that links the data to be collected to the initial questions of the study. It is a plan that guides the researcher in the process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting data.

For this particular study, the researcher employed qualitative research method. Qualitative research in this study is concerned with analysis at the level of individual words, phrases or even sentences. It analyses broader units of text Howitt & Cramer (2014, p.338). According to Bryman (2004), qualitative research is devoted to perception, opinion, and thoughts etc. from the perspectives of the people who are being studied (p.61). Similarly, Flick (2005) reported “qualitative study provides detailed information of people's points of view and the meaning they attribute to their experiences” (p.7). There were reasons which motivated the researcher to rely on qualitative research method. Primarily in order to investigate the subject matter, the researcher had to see the case from the female journalists’ point of view. How they see their participation in doing hard news stories? How they perceive the fairness in the newsroom in relation to assignments for hard news stories? Are there conditions of newsroom discrimination in covering high protocol stories? How they actually feel about this subject? To answer those questions the researcher found qualitative research as the most appropriate method.

To get the perceptions of journalists on women participation in hard news production, a qualitative case study design was therefore chosen. The design and method that were chosen were the best for answering the research questions to this purpose.

This was a qualitative case study design combined with interviews and focus group discussion. It enabled the researcher to interact with female journalists’ in a bid to get their perception. As Wimmer and Dominick (1994) observed, in addition to its flexibility that allows a researcher to

pursue new areas of interest, qualitative research increases the researcher's depth of understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

Wimmer and Dominick (1994:154) report that case study method is most valuable when the researcher wants wealthy information about the research topic. By adopting this technique, the researcher will be able to generate detailed material. This technique can suggest why something has occurred and thus, affords the researcher the ability to deal with a wide spectrum of evidence through various data sources.

Qualitative case study entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case. The most common use of the term associates the case study with a location, such as a community, or organization where the emphasis tends to be an extensive examination of the setting (Gall et al, 2003; Bryman, 2004)

The phenomenon under this study was “The perceptions of women journalists on their participation in hard news production”. As Gall et al (2003) writes a case is a particular instance of a phenomenon. For purposes of this study, the chosen case was the “*The Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Amharic Department.*”

Based on their background, life style and experience people may have different views and thoughts about an issue and for this effect qualitative research gives a chance to dig out detail information through its enabling nature. Therefore with these points in mind the researcher has employed qualitative research method.

3.2. Target research department of EBC – Amharic News Department

The Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, formerly known as Ethiopian Television and Radio Agency, is dated more than five decades and is the pioneer media institution in Ethiopia. The organization was established at the time of Emperor Hailesilassie with the assistance of British firm, named Thomson. It was created to highlight the Organization of African Unity (OAU) meeting that took place in Addis Ababa in 1964. Leykun(1997)

In 2014 the channel changed its name from Ethiopian Television and Radio Agency (ERTA) to Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC).As part of the reform process EBC upgraded its news

broadcasting studios into a modern and digital one in a bid to meet its goal of becoming a vibrant media house in East Africa by 2025.

Information from the office of EBC's Chief Executive Officer indicated that after the appointment of the CEO in March 2018 the corporation changed the relatively less reputed tag name i.e. EBC to the former one, ETV, thereby shifting its transmission frequency. In doing so ETV made several changes to its structural format. As we speak ETV has three channels, named ETV ZENA (news), ETV Quanguawoch (Languages), and ETV Meznagna (entertainment) under the umbrella of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation. ETV ZENA, considered to be the major outlet, airs 24 hours news in Amharic, focusing on socio-political and economic as well as cultural aspects.

Since its inception the institution has mostly been serving as a mouthpiece to different regimes who ruled the country. But also the media has been serving the people in various ways with the production of multifaceted programs and news in diverse languages.

At the beginning, it only has three departments' namely Amharic news, entertainment and English programs. Children's program, drama, music and the like were labeled as entertainment programs. The English desk was tasked with producing programs and news mostly translated from the Amharic department. As the major audience of the English service is considered to be the diplomatic society residing particularly in Addis Ababa, the department customarily produces image building program and news.

Whereas the Amharic news department has been in the front line of the organization since the commencement and still is. The Amharic department has been the symbol and flag carrier of the organization. As a state broadcaster the department has a lion's share role in informing, educating and providing important information to its audience. The department entertains various contents dealing with soft and hard news stories. The relatively massive desk of the organization, the Amharic department, has loads of staff, both male and female.

As resembled in the motto i.e. *'the voice of diversity and renaissance'*, which is diversity inspired by the noticeable heterogeneity of the people of Ethiopia, that endowed with various cultural and historical aspects and renaissance indicates the rebirth of the country as new, witnessed by the arguably fast economic growth it is registering, ETV has a number of local

language departments. The Amharic news department was selected as a case study of the research as it perfectly fits to showcase the involvement of female journalists' in reporting hard news stories.

According to data gathered from EBC's human resource there are 40 journalists in the department including directors, group leaders, and individuals at the position of editing content. When seen from gender equality perspective the posts of directors, group leaders, including loads of editors in the department are filled by male journalists. There are only two female editors and among the 40 staff and female journalists cover only 10 including the editors.

The 40 journalists involved in the news production are assigned by the editors to cover news from Ethiopia and the rest of the world on a daily basis. Most of the time daily coverage of news contains events happening around the country but also includes contents from the planning desk. Female journalists' participation in production of news may be compromised but their involvement in reporting hard news is doubtfully significant. Their participation is usually limited to covering news labeled as soft dealing with entertainment, lifestyle and art. Most of the time high protocol news stories and news about political situation in the country have always been reported by male staff. In some cases one can observe female journalists covering what we call hard news stories but seen from the wider arena engagement of female journalist is less than satisfactory.

3.3 Population and sampling

In terms of drawing sample non probability sampling was employed. Frankfort & Nachmias (1996) states that in the case of non-probability sampling there is no way of specifying the probability of each unit inclusion in the sample and there is no assurance that every unit has some chance of being included. This implies that the sample size is restricted to a limited number. Here one of the types of non-probability sampling known as purposive sampling was applied. "Purposive sampling is recruiting specified types of people because they have characteristics of interest to the theoretical concerns of the researcher" Howitt & Cramer (2014, p.271).

Based on the above mentioned definition, for the purpose of individual in depth interview and focus group discussion, the researcher purposefully selected the candidates. The nature of this research method also allows the researcher to apply her own subjective judgments to select the

samples. Frankfort & Nachmias (1996) also elaborates this fact as follows. “Researchers select sampling units subjectively in an attempt to obtain a sample that appears to be representative of the population” (pp 36). This type of sampling gives an absolute freedom for the researcher to choose subjects that are knowledgeable about the research issue. Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to get in depth and informative data. Though there are different kinds of purposive sampling, the researcher chosen to employ maximum variation or heterogeneous purposive sampling. This type of sampling is used to provide as much insight as possible in to the event or phenomenon under examination. It is a search for variation in perspectives. The basic principle behind maximum variation sampling is to gain greater insights in to phenomenon by looking at it from all angles and this help the researcher to identify common themes. “Purposive sampling” (2012), this technique is more appropriate to speak with many different kinds of people in order to build a strong view of the issue from the diverse public’s perspective.

"This sampling method is based on the “law of requisite variety,” which says that any research study should represent the variety of characteristics present in the population”(Gallardo, p.170). Based on this argument, the respondents were selected from diversified groups. In terms of age, position, years of experience, and educational status from college diploma to MA degrees were selected.

The samples were twenty three and they were permanent employees Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation from the Amharic news department including the ten female permanent journalists who were part of the sample. Despite their position and age differences these journalists are actively involved in news production. Since factors such as age, experience, and educational background affects the way how journalists perceive things, the idea of hard news reporting were considered. Having done this, ten female journalists of the Amharic news department of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation were sampled for in-depth interview. The researcher tried to have more female journalists to participate in the interview but the limited number of female journalists in the selected department was a hindrance; so ten female respondents and six male informants including the head of the department were participated in an in-depth interview. Each interview lasted from 30 to 40 minutes. And a group of seven members- four male and three female journalists participated in the focus group discussion. The FGD lasted one hour.

3.3.1 Sample Size

To draw the sample size the researcher considered theoretical saturation. What sample size will reach redundancy and how many samples are needed to represent varieties of people are the main questions to be considered to determine the sample size.

Qualitative research by its own nature is not to make generalization instead its aim is to get quality information and in-depth understanding regarding the subject matter which is under investigation. At this juncture the binding rule is theoretical saturation. When the researcher is no longer receiving new ideas from the respondents, it is possible to say the data reaches has reached a saturation point. "Purposive sample sizes are often determined on the basis of theoretical saturation, when new data no longer bring additional insights to the research question" Family Health International(2005).

Therefore, the researcher recruited ten female and six male journalists, two editors, two group leaders and the director of Amharic news department of EBC for the purpose of in-depth interview. One group containing seven members- four male and three female journalists was also employed for the purpose of focus group discussion. Generally a total of 23 respondents included as a sample population for the study.

3.4 Methods of data collection

3.4.1 In-depth Interview

For this particular study in-depth interview was used as a data collection method. According to Johnson(2002, p.106)in-depth interviewing begins with commonsense perceptions, explanations, and understandings of some lived cultural experience...and aim to explore the contextual boundaries of that experience or perception, to uncover what is usually hidden from ordinary view or reflection or to penetrate to more reflective understandings about the nature of that experience".

In addition Marvasti, (2004) elaborate that in depth interview allowed suppressed feelings through the interview process. Additionally the researcher also gains knowledge of his or her own hidden or conflicting emotions. Johnson (2002) also stated that an in depth interview is not limiting respondents to a fixed set of answers instead it has the potential to reveal multiple, and sometimes conflicting attitudes about a given topic. So to understand female journalists' opinion

towards reporting hard news stories based on their life experience and perceptions, applying semi structured format of in depth interview is appropriate and essential.

3.4.2 Focus group discussion

On the basis of purposive sampling method the researcher purposefully selected participants who are active enough in making strong arguments. In order to collect data from variety of group discussions the researcher organized one homogeneous and heterogeneous group at the same time. The members were homogeneous in terms of their academic status and they all are professionals. It is due to the need to gain insight in to their professional perspectives. The group is also heterogeneous in terms of experience and sexes. To get conflicting ideas in a certain point it is recommended to use heterogeneous group in some point. So the researcher purposively selected the participants from different year of experience and sexes. Ryman (2008, p.36) define focus group discussion as ‘A form of group interview in which there are several participants in addition to the moderator; there is an emphasis in the questioning on a particular fairly and tightly defined topic, and the access upon interaction within the group, and the joint construction of meaning.’ In focus group discussion, a researcher or a moderator and a number of participants meet together as a group to discuss a particular research topic and it has several advantages. Family Health International (2005p.51) describes some of the advantages of focus group discussion as follows. Focus group discussion yields a large amount of information over a relatively short period of time. It is also effective for accessing a broad range of views on a specific topic, as opposed to achieving group consensus.

3.5. Procedures in conducting the interview and focus group discussions

The medium of communication was Amharic which is commonly spoken and understood by all members of the group. The data was transcribed in to English. The questions which were expected to be answered by the participants were relied on the research questions. The researcher used an interview guide which helped to keep the discussion relevant to the issue under study. And to make sure that it was followed consistently through all in-depth interview and focus group discussions. Here all the discussions remained tape recorded. The interview guide assisted the researcher to follow the sequences of the questions for both semi structured interview and focus group discussions. But it doesn't mean that the researcher was restricted to raise follow up

questions. In order to get relevant information and clarifications, follow up questions which were not on the list of interview guide were raised. Before the interview started the purpose of conducting the particular interview was mentioned and explained for participants. The participants determined the locations for the semi- structured interview. It was conducted at places where the interviewees were working. Regarding the venue for the focus group discussion the researcher selected a setting which was quiet and comfortable to the participants.

The place was the researcher's office. Then the discussion began thanking participants for coming, introducing each other and creating the enabling environment to speak out. As a facilitator the researcher raised questions for participants and encouraged them to give their views. In addition the researcher took the notes.

3.6 Data analysis technique

The researcher has considered the content analysis strategy to analyze the collected data. Since the data is collected through interview, and focus group discussion, to make sense of the data collected and to highlight the important messages, features or findings content analysis have been applied. According to literatures Content analysis is a procedure for the categorization of verbal or behavioral data, for purposes of classification, summarization and tabulation. Mostly it is used to make replicable and valid inferences by interpreting and coding textual material. Content analysis is divided as formal, thematic, textual and audience analysis. The researcher relied on thematic analysis guided by Boyatzis (1998). Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (Themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in rich detail. However, it also often goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic". Based on the thematic analysis procedure, the collected data was coded and categorized. Then it would be analyzed in interpretative way. Here in thematic analysis there are procedures that the researcher should follow. The initial procedure in thematic analysis is about the researcher's familiarization with the collected data. This familiarization already occurred when the interview was conducted. The researcher also required to read and read again the recorded data

"In thematic analysis the transcription is a literal transcription of the text, much as a secretary would do" Howitt & Cramer (2014, pp380). The word by word transcription helped the researcher

to be more familiar with the research data. After the completion of transcription the researcher worked on initial coding. In this process themes are generated. It is not a sophisticated analysis of the data but it seems like jottings or notes which are intended to capture the essence of each sentence of the text. At this stage the researcher followed the data led approach. That means the coding was dominated by the characteristics of the data and it was led by what was in the data. This process is very helpful to summarize the key things.

Having done this based on the initial coding, searching for themes continue. The themes obtained by joining together several coding methods in a meaning full way. Howitt& Cramer (2014) puts the meaning of themes as a coding of coding. It is a sorting or grouping process of the initial coding. Then review of themes would be the next procedure. On this case the researcher tried to check either the themes are refined or not. In the theme definition and labeling step, the researcher identified the essence of what each and overall theme is about. After all these done report writing continues. On this stage the researcher reflects on one's data and analysis was done by using extracts from the collected data. Here different literatures are used to justify why the researcher have chosen to research a particular research question. The analysis have also related with other findings.

Chapter Four

4. Result and Discussion

This chapter discusses findings on the participation of women journalists in hard news production in the case of EBC's Amharic News Department. The results and analysis have been

presented addressing the main research question, ‘How much involved are women journalists in reporting hard news stories in the case of Amharic Service of EBC?’ following the question, six main themes were developed from the findings.

The first theme of this chapter presents the demographic data of the informants. This was divided into six parts namely: name, sex, age, experience in journalism, academic and professional qualifications.

The second theme gives an account of how women access the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation in terms of recruitment.

The third theme presents and discusses the employment status of women in the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation of Amharic News Department under which, promotion, professional advancement, and other entitlements.

The fourth theme is on women participation in hard news production. It looks into types of stories female journalists cover or edit and the perceived reasons for gender divide in beats. These include high competition in the media, cultural and feminine attitudes, gender as a factor during story assignment, and editorial policy. This theme also presents the types of sources in terms of gender more easily accessible to female journalists.

Theme five presents and discusses the perceptions of journalists on women journalists’ news coverage in Amharic News Department, and their visibility in the newsroom.

Finally, theme six presents challenges facing female journalists. These include women as double workers, sexual harassment, male attitudes towards females, the sum-up perception of female journalists to themselves and journalism itself as a challenge.

These findings were obtained through in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. Responses were collected from sixteen journalists of whom ten are females and six are males in in-depth interview. A group of seven journalists participated in the focus group discussion, four males and three females. The researcher was guided by the facts which were presented on the literature review section. And the interpretation and discussions of the findings were presented based on the objectives of the study and theoretical considerations in Chapter Two and Three. To meet the above-mentioned objectives of the study, the data obtained through focus group discussion and

in-depth interview have been used together. Here the acronym I refer to the term In-depth Interview.

4.1 Results of In-depth Individual Interviews and Focus Group discussions

4.1.1. Theme one: Demographic data of the journalists

This theme presents the demographic data of the informants. The total number of journalists interviewed was sixteen-ten women and six men. And seven-four males and three females participated in the focus group discussion. Their background varied in terms of sex, age, positions held, experience in journalism, duration at Amharic News Department, academic and professional qualifications.

The journalists revealed their chronological ages freely ranging between 24 and 38 years. All the informants were permanent employees of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation. The informants also held different positions that represented all kinds of positions in the Amharic news department.

All the informants had an experience in journalism of at least two years with the most experienced having twelve years. The least experienced woman reported two years while the most experienced woman reported eleven years. For the males, the least experienced was three years and the most experienced was twelve years. All the informants had their experiences at The Amharic News Department except one who joined recently the news department from other media organization.

Findings from the background information reveal that men had more job experiences than females. This concurs with cotemporary studies on the gender gap in experience which indicated that woman journalists since the early 1980s have tended to be younger with less professional experience than men, unlike the previous decades when women tended to be older and less experienced than men (Creedon, 1993: 95). This has been attributed to the fact that women are more likely to drop out of journalism and return, or they drop out of journalism more often than men (Creedon, 1989:188).

In regard to the educational background, all the female journalists had acquired university degree in journalism and other related fields from different universities in Ethiopia. Many of them have

only first degree where male journalists acquired MA degree too. Most of the journalists chose journalism because they are interested in journalism and few of them joined by chance. As a country Ethiopia works hard to have more females in the universities and in the recent years' women are flocking in journalism and mass communication institutions. The platform called Affirmative Action plan which helped women to join universities with a lower point than men's is an added reason for the increasing number of females in higher institutions.

Age remains an important aspect of women active participation in news media. Unlike men, young women in Amharic News Department were active in the field of reporting but as they aged, they tended to settle down for editing or leave the profession. As argued by Creedon (1993: 94), it seems likely that many of the new female majority in journalism opt for public relations instead of acquiring new editorial skills. As such, there is no doubt that there is a big gap between the least and most experienced journalists along gender lines in Amharic News Department of EBC.

From the literature review and findings, we can say that this is a common trend illustrated by a very small percentage of female journalists with ten or more years of experience and the existence of an age gap between men and women involved in active journalism. This can be explained by what Creedon and Cramer (2007) observed-the diminishing sense of reward, work-family balance and unmanageable newsroom conditions for women. Several female journalists' expressed uncertainty and conflict between demands of their journalism career and their social life as can be seen from II words; she is a senior reporter in Amharic News Department and worked for five years. She said:

The problem is that you sacrifice a lot of your social life to be a journalist. You usually reach home late and miss out your child's presence because at the time you reached home your baby will fall sleep, I come at eight thirty in the morning and leave late at eight (II).

Although the company grants the journalists some two days off, for most of the females it wasn't enough to have time with their family and for social life. Despite this, a number of women were joining the profession unlike the past. We take a look at how women join the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation.

4.1.2. Theme two: Women Access to the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation.

This theme tells how women journalists find their way in to the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation. It presents accounts of how female and male journalists are recruited into the institution. Results showed that there was only one avenue for recruitment; that is direct recruitment through interviews and written exams. According to the findings, the company hired journalists through following the right way. I2 he has twelve years' experience in EBC. He is former Amharic News Head and now he is head of the company's Assignment Desk. He said there is equal opportunity to both genders; even sometimes points added to female journalists if they have same result with men journalists. Yet he said when it comes to employment they are few in number:

There is equal employment opportunity for female journalists, but the problem is at application stage. Few female journalists apply for any kind of journalism positions. And it is obvious in the employment stage their number is little. It is because of the perception they have.

The other respondent I3 is also agreed with the idea of I2. I3 is a reporter in EBC. He joined EBC three years before. He remembered how EBC hired him and his friends. He said the job opportunity for male and female journalists is equal but if both have same result females' given priority. Similarly, I4 has the same idea with I2 and I3. I4 is recently joined Amharic News Department but he has 5 years' experience in another media organization. He is one of the best hard news stories reporters. He said;

EBC gives equal opportunity to women and men journalists but if women and men journalist score same result there supposed to be three points added for the female.

In the same vein, I5 agreed with the above idea. He is Amharic News Department Head. He has eleven years' experience in EBC. He is one of the journalists exhaustively produced hard news stories. He said EBC is working hard to have more female journalists by providing equal opportunity with men journalists. He added the country's policy oblige the house to do it. He said the opportunity of for both female and male journalists is equivalent. I16 also seconded the above idea. He is editor in the department and has five and a half years' experience. He said:

As to my experience I see the phrase 'females are encouraged to apply' whenever there is a vacancy. Though I remember when I got hired there were only two women out of eight of us.

From the above points one can say that EBC is giving equal chances to female journalists. Even though there is enabling environment to female journalists to join EBC, their numbers is few in getting the jobs. But some argued that the recruitment approach is problematic as it depended on personal connections and emotions. According to I6 posts were advertised and those who applied who has someone in the house shortlisted and subjected to oral and written exams as a procedure. I6 is a vice head and team leader of Political and Good Governance team in Amharic news Department. He said;

Regarding job employment opportunities aren't equal for male and female. Sometimes for a certain job position the application favors male and vice versa. There is pre-judgment and biasness in any kind of job posts. If you know someone in the department whether you have the ability or not you will definitely get the job directly. You sit in oral and written exams for formality. I am not confident about the recruitment approach.

Likewise, I7 has attributed the way EBC recruits journalists. She said:

I don't think the editorial policy encourages women and push them forward. I sometimes see the phrase 'women are encouraged to apply' whenever there is an internal or external vacancy, but I doubt they really mean it. At the end of the day it's the men that are going through the tests and filling the position. No one had encouraged me to be strong and I never gained anything because I am woman at ETV, rather I lost so many things.

The interview system implied that recruitment was based on competitive performance. This was because the company believed it is the only transparent way to employ journalists. There is also a belief that when the company loosens up the system in an environment and culture like Ethiopia where there is a lot of manipulation and corruption and where everyone thinks there is no transparency in recruitment, they may face a lot of problems.

All the informants had that chance to be recruited by taking all the recruitment procedures that are oral and written exams whereas some directly enrolled from universities with their high grade. According to the findings, since 2008 the organization recruited journalists with high grade from well-known universities in the country. I3 is one of the journalists who were enrolled directly to the company with his high point. He said:

I was the second highest point holder in the university and I directly got the job from there. All the then students have 3.5 GPA and above had recruited among which five were females. I remember one of the female has the same GPA with a male student and because of her gender she directly got the priority.

I7 has a same story with I13. She has three years' experience in Amharic News Department. She is a reporter. She is one of among the outstanding female journalists. She joined the journalism world by chance. She said:

It's right after university that I joined the Ethiopian Television, ETV Amharic News Department. It is because I scored high in the university. There is no written and oral exam that we took that I remembered. For us it was easy getting the job.

Similarly, I8 is hired in Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation directly from university. She is the only female journalist in the department has MA in journalism. She works for Amharic News Department about two years. She said journalism is her dream job and fortunately she scored high in the university and had a chance to get the job in the pioneer media organization. In addition, she said though EBC employ journalists through evaluating by interview and written exams she wasn't passed through this way. She said:

Our case always raised concern with people in the company. Because people think we were favored saying that there must be exams. But for us it was a great opportunity. I think the company did this to minimize the effort it exerts in recruitments. It is easy to recruit journalists with highest points from universities.

Each individual had different experience and sometimes successful stories depending on how they gained access to the company. However, fewer women have had access to Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation because of many reasons. One of the common jokes in company

according to I2 was that it is “a men’s organization”. One of the bases of this joke arose from the fact that men were becoming more visible than women journalists almost in every department except program department. For the case of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, however, affirmative action has a place in the recruitment process fewer female journalists’ access to the organization. According to informants, the sum perception of people has to females in general leads little women journalists’ application to any kind of journalism posts. As he said:

Few female journalists apply for a certain journalism post. And when it comes to getting the job they are few in number. It is expected that they dominated in the organization by their counterparts. Females themselves sometimes lack confidence to apply for a post because the perception people has to them makes them don’t believe in their capacity. Though there is enabling environment in the recruitment process.

In Ethiopia, equal employment opportunities are a constitutional provision, but it does not spell out the percentage of men and women to be employed besides lack of enforcement mechanism to follow up what is happening in different institutions (Ethiopia Constitution1995). I2 noted in the case of EBC, attention doesn’t give to such provisions and intentionally and unintentionally the human resource excludes potential women applicants. According to the findings, informal recruitment procedures based on GPA also plays a vital role for the decreasing number of female journalists’ employment.

As argued by Creedon (1993) and Van Zoonen(1994) in a system where, recruitment can be based on personal judgment and contacts, females are more exposed than men to manipulations by those in power and decision-making post as they can decide who is to be recruited. Women as they asserted are more vulnerable than men to suffer from societal discrimination because of sex role socialization in homes and workforce that perpetuate the belief that some work is appropriate for females irrespective of their productivity and qualification.

As seen from the expressions of I6 above, there was lack of confidence in the recruitment process pointing to structural loop holes. I6 suggested that the recruitment department should allow in journalists as interns so that those who exceed a certain mark could be put on staff. This,

he said, would reduce discrimination arising from personal judgments and manipulations that at times leaves out potential applicants.

According to I9, the domestic and parental responsibilities of working women have been proved as a big obstacle for the entrance of women in EBC. She is a reporter at the department. She said one can simply observe that the number of female journalists in the department is few. As she said:

Journalism is a deadline job and needs availability all the time. For a woman has a child is very hard to be a journalist and mother at the same time. And to avoid such problem the organization prefers to hire men journalists rather than women.

Creedon, (1993:53); Ross and Byerly, (2004:136) noted media work presupposes production of work on deadlines and a round clock availability of the journalists and abrupt travelling in response to news. As surveys into attitudes of men communicators towards females indicated, most men would prefer male colleagues and distrust women as colleagues, feeling that their workload increase while working with women (Van Zoonen, 1994:52). Journalists in this study acknowledged that it was indeed hard to combine journalism and motherhood (details discussed under theme six on challenges facing female journalists).

This is not to suggest that female journalists, she should not fulfill their reproductive role, but rather to highlight the impact of this as one of the consideration for any employer who would want to maximize profit, as hindrance for women to enjoy equal employment opportunities in the media industry with their male counterparts. Many women of productive age have made it to EBC but narrations of their experiences as mothers and workers showed continuous impact of family duties on their access, work assignments and professional advancement.

4.1.3. Theme Three: Women Journalists Employment Status

This theme discussed about the status of female journalists in EBC particularly in Amharic News Department. The theme was concerned about female journalists' career advancement. Under this theme promotions and professional advancement were discussed. Generally, results indicate sometimes unclear promotional criteria overtook in EBC. Professional advancement was spelled out as an important aspect for the staff in the EBC human resource manual. However, the

conditions attached, and the selection criterion benefited those on top posts. The company was commended in terms of fulfilling other employee entitlements like leave and funeral benefits rights among others.

- **Promotions in EBC Amharic News Department**

The impression from the data collected on promotions was that although there were presumed steps to the top ranks in the newsroom, most of the promotions depended on personal decisions on the top hierarchy and employee intimacy with those on top and sometimes political view.

When asked about promotions, journalists had mixed reactions. One version was that, one begun from a reporter and then after working for two years she assigned to be editor even though she was a junior. At the time she was a reporter in position but do editors job. According to I10, depending on the career path and section a journalist has proved good, the company appointed somebody deemed an authority in that beat. She said:

I was a reporter and excellent in story writing with quality. And in the department, there were lack of editors. Then they assigned me as an editor. They said it was because I was so effective in my job and responsible. I remembered it was a tough work to do when you are still junior, but I did it best. Then after a few years I get the post.

The same opinion was expressed by I11 she said as I10 she assigned to be editor by chance when there was lack of editor in the department. These two female editors are the only female editors in the department. Though they are very few compared with their counterparts she said there was no discrimination based on gender. As she noted:

It is competence, the moment you show competency, then; you are in for it. Though I haven't passed through the posts one by one it is my competency that enabled me to be editor when I was a reporter. Individuals have decided my fate me to be promoted. But gradually I got the post. While getting the job no one cares about my gender.

The second thought was that promotion made by merit and journalists pass through all the posts turn by turn. According to I6 the promotion was on merit and only possible when an employee

met the targets in terms of qualities, story count, efficiency and time keeping. He said he started as a reporter, then senior reporter and editor, finally vice head of the department. He said:

Each post made accordingly with the merits. There is professional way of career advancement in the company. Gender has no place here. If you have the capacity and competent in the exams you will get the post. And I passed through all the career paths and became here now.

I2 agree with the above-mentioned opinion but he said regarding promotion most of the time male journalists promoted in advance and as one can observe there is only two female editors in the department. He said:

EBC promote journalists with professional approach. For every post there is written exam. If you fulfill the criteria for that post, you will sit on the exam. Then if you scored best you will get the post. But if you see in the department there are few female editors. The first reason is because they are few as a reporter and the second they sometimes aren't competent enough for editor post. But there is equally opportunity for both genders.

From the expressions in this theme, we can say that opportunities for women to them to be editors in EBC have opened up and could open up further. According to the findings the company had done little to hire and promote women and that very few held the top positions. At the time of this study, the researcher observed; the editor-in-chief, the deputy-editor-in-chief, the deputy-news-editor, most features editor and circulations manager were all men. Females had some features editing positions than top managerial positions. I16 noted the number of women juniors' reporters, seniors and editors at the Amharic news department of ETV is very few. If there are more junior reporters there could have been more seniors. He added:

When it comes to higher positions, women are more communicative than men, at least to my experience. They are disciplined, committed and decision makers. When men take their positions for granted women tend to play by the Turks and get along with everyone in a good manner. But they hadn't given opportunities in EBC. I personally wish to have more females in top positions.

Some informants point out that top managerial positions filled by men. I7 noted it is because there are no female role models that others to follow and most importantly the board directors don't believe in women's capacity in higher positions. She added:

If we look at back and see how many women made it to the top its only few who have managed to do so. It's a male dominated sector and women are not encouraged to follow suit. You can only mention very few women journalists in ETV's history that can be mentioned as prominent ones in managerial positions. Though females are more responsible and hard working in their works opportunities weren't given to females.

From the above point, females hadn't been given chance to involve in the decision-making process. It has been a sought truth in EBC that women aren't holding the top editorial posts. It determined the low women presence on the top hierarchy. The findings show that the stereotypes perception about women as weaker in incompetent and lack managerial skill is still affecting women involvement in top posts in the company. I12 said:

The society believes women can't manage. I totally disagree with people who say women can't. Because I strongly believe women can do anything. Women can do things in a very responsible manner. We can do better when it comes to leading a position. Women are good at making decisions. We should be given the opportunity.

I13 is a reporter. She said there is wrong perception towards women's managerial skill in the society but the reality is females are better than males

Regarding managerial skills women are better than men because they are gifted in nature. For example, in family the woman is the leader. So, the stereotypical perception people have towards women's management skill as incompetent is wrong. When it comes to our department context women are creative and strong in leading the groups they manage.

In the same vein, many informants believe that women do best in managerial positions than men. The problem was giving opportunities to them. I6 said the company has reservation about female's capacity in general and they didn't allow females' to take over higher positions. As he said:

There is no female in high positions, it tells how the organization don't believe in females' capacity. Though they are good at communication and hardworking they don't get opportunities. We can see who manage our home, it is females but in EBC it is the opposite.

The findings show women empowerment is not addressed adequately and needs attention in EBC. There is no woman in editor-in-chief and other high ranking management positions than script editor. All the top posts were monopolized by men and women have less editorial decision. Despite the fact that it takes years for one get to the top editorial pyramid, the involvement of women in top managerial posts in the company is less this means that the people at the top were men who make decisions about what kinds of news, information and entertainment get produced in EBC. Media ownership, mission and values as well as policies also come into considerations when looking at the issue of gender and the media. Creedon and Cramer (2007:36) advised that media have a responsibility to address diversity and discrimination because diversity in those companies helps to ensure that news content is more relevant to viewers and that companies have more innovative and adaptive norms.

- **Professional advancement**

According to the findings women journalists are facing hardships in their career advancement in EBC. Although EBC's human resource policies had professional development, there was dissatisfaction with journalists. The organization had given opportunities to some journalists to enrolling Addis Ababa University in Master's degree. To be granted to a study one should at least have worked for four and above years. Journalists had concerns over the selection of beneficiaries, the requirements that one must have worked with the company for at least four and

five years, after graduation one must work for two years and not getting career promotion while studying were seen as discouraging.

Journalists were asked to express their views on professional advancement. Here, professional advancement as used in this study referred to the opportunities under the organizational setting that allowed or facilitated journalists to go for further studies or training within the organization, country or abroad. The company recognizes training and development as an important activity in improving the skills and knowledge of individual employees to improve productivity, enhance organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

A significant number of the journalists acknowledged the existence of this, under the human resource personnel policy. Some of them were beneficiaries and even those who had not benefited knew about it. The organization has some understanding with Addis Ababa University for senior journalists and other employees who apply for master's courses. The company covers all the courses cost and the university accepted those who have passed the entrance exams. The company also has some connections with international media organizations as France 24, BBC and Aljazeera for both long and short-term trainings for all journalists.

According to the journalists, the policy was that you could only go for further studies with the support of management and if you have worked with the organization for at least five years. There were also routine in-house training on all issues like teamwork, editing, picture use, and computer packages among others.

Despite the fact that EBC states clearly this provision, the informants' expressed concern over the procedure of selecting who was to be taken for training. They implicated the organization for sometimes holding double standards. On hand, the organization specified its will for staff career development but on the other, the conditions attached were discouraging.

If you want to go for further studies, you should at least work for about four and above years. If the organization considers career development as a mandatory thing experience should never get a place. Because what matter is journalists' advancement. And if you are lucky and there are no competent journalists as such you might get the chance. Here your chance is in the hand of the managements. Me with three years' experience getting this chance is unthinkable. (17)

Although the procedure affected both women and men, women were more likely than men to miss out these opportunities. The above concerns about professional advancement in EBC conform to some extent female journalists involved yet it isn't satisfactory. Besides the obvious impact of social and domestic duties on women's career development, the organizational condition that one must have worked for at least five years to be granted a study, observed few number of female selectees, unable to get special support and not getting career promotion while studying were more of a discouragement than a motivation hence, made the whole scheme unrealistic for female journalists. Women were more likely than men to be constrained either by their family obligations and spouses or to be segregated upon basing on the excuse that they cannot combine motherhood and training as pointed out informant I6.

I am among the beneficiaries that obtained my Master's degree in journalism and communications two years before. At the time there were some female journalists who have been granted to study. But in the middle of the study they withdraw because of pregnancy and come back again later. Sometimes the opportunity by itself isn't women friendly. Imagine how they will be effective and develop their career in this regard. It isn't an easy task to maneuver it is so complicated.

I15 is one of the female journalists granted to study her MA in multimedia journalism last year at AAU. She works in EBC for about eight years. She is editor in Amharic news department. She is one of the outstanding female journalist, live reporter and news anchor. She said after a long wait she got the chance to enroll in AAU. She said:

Female journalists are less experienced in Amharic News Department and are few in number. And when it comes to education opportunities these two points are matters. In every chances male dominates females at large. Generally, no one cares about women's capacity building or performing well. Even outstanding journalists like me don't get appreciation from the department. But there are so many fault finders. Because of my gender editors tries to demoralize me so many times instead of encouraging me to do more and support me with career advancements.

I14 have almost similar idea with the above point. She said though people say there is career development approach in the company; there is nothing special support for female journalists that can help to advance their capacity. She is a least experienced female journalist in Amharic News Department. She also said no one encourages you to upgrade the capacity it is you who is responsible for it. All the journalists are responsible to advance their career including the female journalists.

The other concern raised by informants is training opportunities that favor people on top of the institutions; which are more likely to leave out women on the bottom of the hierarchy and in this case, the junior female reporters affected at large. As stated in theme one, female journalists are less experienced and had less representation in top hierarchy. I11 is an editor in the department and has eleven years' experience. She said journalists with her experiences are lucky because they got a chance to a certain trainings and courses. But young women of less than five years' experience and those not holding editorial posts had limited opportunities for career development. As she said:

As an editor I always tried to upgrade myself to be one step ahead from reporters. And they have positive feedback towards my editing and coaching ability. This is because of my personal commitment it isn't because of the company provides me career development. I luckily got some training from the BBC but it isn't enough for editors. Even for junior reporter it is hard to them to upgrade their career because everything lies on experience.

Therefore, there were limited chances for career development for female reporters and editors and those who haven't been elevated to the top posts.

4.1.4. Theme four: Women participation in hard news production

This theme answers the main research question of the study how much female journalists were involved in covering hard news stories. Under this theme, women's participation was analyzed at three levels namely: the posts they held, the kind of stories they report and edit, and the sources the female reporters interact with in terms of gender.

It was found out that men dominated the middle and top editorial posts and in real active reporting as well. More women than men edited and reported soft news and more men journalists edited and covered hard news stories. Most soft news stories' sources were more accessible to women and women encountered negative attitudes from male interviewees in reporting hard news stories. Details follow in sub themes.

4.1.4.1 Women posts in EBC Amharic News Department

Many women were invisible on the top management posts and at the editorial level as was shown in the discussion of the preceding theme three. Most of the informants pointed out that men monopolized the high hierarchical positions and editorial level. There are only two female editors among the many editors in Amharic news department. The proportion as editor and reporter wasn't equal, men dominated the department. According to I15 the employees' structure in EBC is designed to have predominantly male journalists in the department and female journalists cover only one third of the employees' number. As she said:

Female journalists are few in number in the department and in positions like editors and top posts obviously take by males.

I7 has similar idea with I15:

When it comes to managerial positions it's in a very massive way male dominated. I know for a fact that women are more responsible and decision makers than male in management but we see less of us in the position. Priority has been given to men in contrary to the fact that it should be given to us. Our culture, the society and all the system tend to favour to men and this makes you accept that you are less capable than men.

The findings show there was gender inequality on the top editorial and editing positions. When a why? question asked to the informants both males and females explained this scenario. Most of them said the organization didn't give opportunities to females and it didn't believe in women's capacity. Secondly, though women qualify and are competitive in managerial skills most of them hadn't been encouraged to run around.

On the other hand some informants pointed out that the country's value towards women in general hinders them to involve in high managerial position. According to I13 there is stereotypical perception towards women's management skill which is wrong. She added in the department women are creative and strong in leading the group they manage but the perception holds back females engagement in high positions. I14 has the same idea with I13. She joined EBC two years' before. She is a reporter. She said since then she observed less female managers in the company. As she said:

Females are more responsible to their work than male in management. They are best managers compared with their counterparts. But when you see their involvement in high positions it is low. Doubting about females' capacity came from the society and it is continuing here.

I1 has somehow related idea with the above point she said women are too much responsible for their work and this make them sometime lack decision making skill and people perceive it as laziness; but it is nothing related with capacity in management.

Most of the respondents admit women's engagement in higher managerial and editorial positions were invisible. Less opportunities given to females, the house's wrong perception towards women which emanates from the society had pointed out as a very reason for the low engagement. Though some of them preferred to see more females in the positions because of credibility the truth is male dominated the position and the company didn't encourage women to involve in such work.

4.1.4.2 Types of stories female journalists cover or edit

Findings under this theme revealed gender divide in beats between men and women. Thus, females were more engaged in the production of soft news while men engaged more in hard news reporting.

The majority of the informants concurred that women were more cover soft news like features, lifestyle, food, education, fashion, children and women issues. It was also revealed that the male journalists liked to go for the hard news staff like war reporting, crime, protocol news, accidents,

protests, parliamentary news and other priority given stories in the department. The informants said in Amharic News Department hard news stories associated with male journalists and soft news with females. The department assigned the hard news reporting coverage according to gender rather than capacity.

I11 supported the above point. She is editor. She said:

As a belief woman related to soft and easy works. In the department soft news stories always covered by female journalists and when it comes to script editing hard stories usually given to male editors than female. The organization has doubt about women editor's capacity.

She added being a female editor in the department is sometimes challenging because the middle management tries to interfere in the works. In her experience, she faced such challenge but she refused their interference and fought them back. According to her though in female editors' news package every little thing finished early but usually people in the department tried to meddled in the work and give hard news stories to male editors to edit. Similarly I10 is editor in the department. She said women editors are so sensitive, curious, responsible and alert to accomplish their work on time and no fault will be seen in the packages. Even though we work with commitment it is so hard working in the department because there are people who refuse orders from us and hard news stories usually taken from us and given to male editors.

Findings revealed that hard news and priority given stories in Amharic News Department usually edited by male editors. Even, if the duty editor is female the story is taken from her and given to male editors and she edits soft news. The findings show that the organization didn't believe in women editors' capacity. Thus, female journalists associated with soft and entertainment stories. I6 is vice head of the department. He said female journalists' cover and edit stories related with children, women, and social matters and hard news stories were given to male journalists. As he said:

Hard news stories generally associated with male journalists because it perceived as males are strong and females are weak. In the department observed that most editors' attitude to female journalists' capacity towards doing such stories is wrong. But I believe women can do hard news stories. As an editor I sometimes

assigned female journalist to do the stories and they perform well. There are journalists who can do hard news stories and who can't, it is nothing to do with gender rather it is a matter of capacity.

I15 and I7 have the same point here. Both are the outstanding female journalists in the department. Both usually cover hard news stories and their performance observed well. They both are the only two female journalists involved much in covering hard news stories. They said:

When it comes to hard news reporting almost all the time the coverage is done by my male colleagues. No doubt about this. Even when there are few of us who can do it as anyone else the bosses tend to give it away to male journalists. I have covered so many hard news stories but it hasn't been any easy. Sometimes we get used to it and loose interest in doing hard news stories. It hinders you to get competent as male journalists are and you see yourself way below them. (I7)

The people around the department think female can't do such stories and editors give those assignments to our male counterparts. Luckily, I most of the time involved in covering hard news stories and live coverage. It isn't an easy task as I am talking now. There are plenty of challenges. As it has seen in advertisement female wash cloths, change diapers and clean houses hard news is associated with male journalists. And nowadays it has become a gender role. (I15)

I7 added it is fact that if someone look at back and see how many women made it to hard news coverage it's only few of us who have managed to do so. It's a male dominated sector and women are not encouraged to follow suit. There are very few women journalists in ETV's history that can be mentioned as prominent ones. Likewise, I16 supported the above stated idea. He works for EBC for eight years. He said:

My team is good governance and politics and there is only one woman in our team. Of course there are some women who went the highway proving they can do anything. But it's only few of them. That's I think is because their bosses assign them to more or less soft news reports. This doesn't mean they can't because they can, and they proved it.

I1 has similar point of view. She mostly covers issues related with tourism and social issues. Sometimes she also reports hard news stories back when she was junior. She said male journalists predominately report hard news stories. They cover disaster, politics and high protocol news and females do soft news. Same with I1, I9 covers social issues mainly about health, but she also sometimes produces contents deals with good governance and technology but never hard news stories. As she pointed out male journalists whether they are senior or junior they predominately cover hard stories. And editors usually prefer male journalists to assign in such stories than females because editors didn't believe in women journalists' capacity. The other respondent I8 said Amharic News department has four beat reporting groups and she chose the socio-economy group because she prefers to do soft news stories. But she said when it comes to field works she covers other stories like politics and good governance issues. And sometimes she assigned to do hard news stories, the department considered it as hard, i.e. human rights violations, politics and good governance. According to her:

It is hard to observe more female journalists' in covering hard stories because there is no initiative for it. Male journalist dominates it among five or six hard news stories may be only one goes to female. But women can do more than this, but the department's editors haven't given us the stories to cover. It is because they doubt about our capacity in doing such stories.

Alongside with the above point I10 said women journalists cover issues related to health, tourism, motherhood and other soft issues on the contrary male journalists cover political issues like political parties' discussions, international meetings, high protocol news, economy, disaster, and many other priority given news stories in the department. I10 is editor in the Amharic news department. As an editor she also assigns male reporters to cover hard news because of the perception she has towards gender. She thinks male reporters do better than females. When this interview conducted she was a duty editor and there was a story to cover at African Union, it was a high officials' summit. She said the first reporter comes to her mind was a male reporter and she assigned him to work. But she believes this perception is bad and should be demystify. Similarly, most of the focus group discussion participants asserted that opportunities weren't given to female journalists to cover hard news stories. One of the participants said the perception and organization's low effort in assigning female journalists in hard news stories are the major

problem to the low engagement. The other stated that there is no platform that encourages and gives opportunities to female journalists to involve in such stories.

I13 is a reporter in the department. She produces stories related to infrastructure and social issues and never hard news stories. She said there are two female journalists who are sometimes involving in hard news stories. It happens by chance and these are the only journalists assigned to hard news stories. According to her:

The department doesn't give opportunity to me and my fellow female colleagues. There was an incident I remember one time the editor take a story from me and give it to a male journalist. I asked him why he said "it is hard story and you can't do it". It was so embarrassing and discouraging for me. Always we cover stories have low emphasize.

The other respondent I2 also has similar idea. He said the participation of female journalists in the department is very low because of two reasons. As he said:

First, consciously and unconsciously female journalists didn't assign to cover hard news stories because of physical appearance and preferences. When I was editor-in-chief of the department I haven't assigned female journalists in challenging stories like war because I feel I should protect them. I did this as a favor but I believe women can do hard news stories. Second, the number of female journalists in the department is very low and those journalists are covering soft news stories because they prefer to cover soft news stories.

Similarly with I2, I3 also pointed out that the number of female journalists in the department has played its share for the low engagement. As I13 said:

The ratio of female journalists in the department is unbalanced so it is obvious that female journalists' engagement in hard news story is low. And the other reason is most female journalists aren't interested to hard issues like politics and disaster coverage. So, whether the journalist is experience or junior hard news stories always covered by male.

I5 has similar idea with I3, he said the number of female journalists in the department is few and it leads to low engagement in reporting hard news stories. And most of the time male journalists cover hard news stories it is because editors usually rely on them. Participants in the focus group discussion also have the same idea with the above point. Most of them said that their engagement is low because they are few in the department. One of the participants said the number of female journalists in the department is few and those journalists choose social beat reporting group which mostly they cover soft news. The other participant added that most female journalists are in program department than news desk. “On top of this there are no role model female journalists can follow suit; and these two reasons play a lion share for the low participation of female journalists.”

The other participant pointed out that there is no outshined female journalist with hard news stories compared with males. Because there is no enabling environment to assign women journalist in those stories and sure their performance is stumpy. He said there was a time few female journalists do more hard news stories but even at that time it was few. He thinks it is because editors give more hard news assignments to male journalists besides with them being few in the department. According to him it isn't only low in reporting but also in presenting and anchoring news male journalists monopolized the department.

Regarding news anchoring some respondents said people's reaction to female anchors is unprofessional even though they are few. I15 is one of the female anchors in the department. She remembered how she turns out to be an anchor; it was a long way because the department hasn't believed in her and she fought back hard then now she became one of the best news casters in EBC. But she said there is problem regarding giving her prime times and breaking news addressing. The reason is she said they still believe female can't do. She said there are many female journalists can perform well in live coverage, but the chance isn't given to them. She added:

In the studio the directors, cameramen's, and other personnel unethically put female anchors in pressure because of gender. I faced this all the times. No one cares. This is unprofessional.

I3 is a reporter. He said he observed in news casting that there is no female anchor address breaking news; even, if the duty anchor is female and if breaking news break male news anchor called to read the news instead of her. I10 is a victim of this act. She is an experienced news anchor. She said there was a time that on her duty a male anchor called and covered breaking news. I5 is head of the department. When he asked why female anchors weren't allowed to cover breaking news. He said:

In breaking news and live coverage usually as a head of the department I assigned male journalists because female journalists are physically thin and it isn't recommended for this kind of productions.

I3 disagreed with the above point. He said once the organization hired them it obliged to assign them to whatever the program is what matters is their capacity. He added that male news casters in EBC are greater than females. He said research show that people prefer to hear news from female anchors more than males because they considered honest. According to him the organization isn't benefited from this. He added:

There is a program called "Tena Yistilin". It is designed to be hosted by two presenters' female and male. And mainly male presenters talk too much in the program. This trend should be reversed at least they should talk equal but I prefer the females to talk much.

The other respondent I5 supported I3. He said the department has various one to one interview programs and programs hosted by male and female journalists; and their involvement is very low. He thinks it is because editors biasness and their perception towards them. Likewise, I8 expressed:

Performance is evaluated depend on the work you have done but priority given stories is always given to male journalists, so it is clear men journalists perform well than us. In journalism covering interesting stories gives you an opportunity to seen but the chance isn't given to female journalists.

The findings show that women's involvement in reporting hard news stories is very low. Female journalists involved less not only in reporting hard news but also addressing breaking news as

anchor and live coverage. Most of the respondents said it is because of gender but I12 disagreed with this. She said gender isn't the problem for female journalists' low engagement in this news. But she does believe that women cover less hard news stories than male journalists. She said:

Speaking for the department or the organization I work for, the trend is a bit different. Usually male journalists have more opportunities to be assigned to cover hard news stories. The editors usually tend to put more trust on male journalists than us. But I don't think this is because of gender bias rather the number of women reporters is less. There were few mentionable women reporters who have been doing hard news stories.

According to the findings gender determined the type of stories female journalists covered. Most of the informants said gender has a big role in story distribution. This happened when the editors had to consider the type of assignment, the time of the day and the event. Gender also considered in terms of leading roles in news production; meaning when editors assign journalists to cover prior given stories and hard news in the department. Most editors participated in the interview and focus group discussion said they do consider gender while assigning reporters in news production especially for that of hard news story. One of the participants in the FGD said when it comes to challenging situations he considers gender to assign journalists. "Nature became a barrier to female journalists to cover war or conflict stories though the principle says journalists are journalists to all kind of stories." The other participant pointed out that some works enforced him to think about gender while assigning journalists to stories. "For example, if there is technology assignment female journalist comes into my mind because I believe women do best; but if there is a hard news story I immediately assign male journalist."

On the contrary, the other participant in the group discussion disagreed with the above idea. He is a deputy head of the Amharic News Department and editor. As an editor he assigned female journalists to cover hard news stories like war and according to him there are some journalists who like to cover. But the problem is he said they favored and give priority to male journalists. He believes woman can do what the male journalists do but the house doesn't allow them to do. He said even the leaders' feedback to female journalists' work is worse. The leaders' perception needs to be shaped and there must be gab analysis. He added as a media it should play a lion share to change this perception. "In the community we live females seen as a housewife so the

only way to solve this gender based perception is through awareness creation and the role of the media is immense.”

I9 is a reporter. According to her gender is the key factor to assign reporters than capacity. She said:

The assignment distribution isn't fair because male journalists always given priority. We have the capacity to do everything, but editors haven't given us opportunities. In the department women and men haven't treated equal. No editor prefers woman journalist to cover a certain story because he/she thinks she can't do it well. It is unfair.

I6 supports I9's idea. He believes regarding story assignment gender has a role because many well-performing male journalists are many than females in the department then editors forced to give priority to men. Similarly, I14 also thinks gender considered in story distributions. As she said:

The deputy CEO of the organization sometimes come and assigns journalists. While doing so, he has never considered female journalists in his lists, so I totally believe that gender has a big role in story assignment and it is unfair and unprofessional.

Likewise, I15 said it is bad to know that gender given priority than capacity in story distribution. According to her:

Editors consider gender when assigning journalists to do any kind of stories. The ability of female journalists fighting for themselves has decreased through time because of the corrupted system in the department. And it has a lion share for the journalists' low performance besides with the other factors. One can see how the female journalists' performance is from the news coverage; male journalists cover most of the prime news than female journalist.

Most of the informants pointed out that gender has a big role in assignment distribution than capacity. Most of them agreed that female journalists' participation is low because of the unfair story distribution in the department. The findings revealed that EBC's story assignment desk is

biased because editors usually give female journalists less task and mostly soft news than male journalists. Thus, it made female journalists to stay quit instead of fighting for their right.

On the contrary, some informants and participants in the focus group discussion stated that gender has no place in story distribution. They attributed that it is the informal system that the organization follows caused unfairness in the department. As I3 said:

Editors' give each assignment with their emotional preference rather than considering capacity with system. And most of the time editors pick male journalists and it brought discrimination; even within female journalists' editors discriminate. The organization should give attention to this kind of unprofessional activities to minimize biasness.

I1 is a senior reporter. She said:

The assignment is fair and gender has no role to it. There is this trend which editors assign a reporter because he/she thinks that the reporter is good at it. But if the editor observes mistake once she/he always considers that reporter always do the same. And the assignment desk does according to this approach which is unprofessional.

Similarly with I1, I5 said assignment distributed with considering beat reporting and gender has nothing to do with assignments. But he agreed that male journalists cover more stories than females' especially hard news. I4 is a senior reporter. He said journalists' interest given attention in story assignment than gender. According to him:

I think in story assignment interest matters most instead of gender; the assignment done according to the journalists' interest. But editors assigned men journalist as a preference than females. It is because we are living in a community that believes in man's power than female and the organization is a replica of this society.

I16 also connected the biasness reason with the society. He said:

When it comes to assignments I think there is some kind of unfairness. Particularly field works and hard stories the ones responsible for assigning usually prefer to assign men to women thinking they can't handle the hardship. I think the unfairness emanates from the society.

Generally, according to the findings the assignment desk favored male journalists to any kind of stories and when it comes to hard news coverage male journalists dominated it. And female journalists' participation evaluated according to the stories they covered which is less and mostly soft stories. Most of the informants said that Amharic News Department's evaluation made with the hard news stories that one journalist covered and most of the time female journalists' performance is low. Therefore, their performance is low compared with their male counterparts. The findings show that female journalists are invisible and covered by male journalists and their work given less attention than male journalists.

Moreover, though the editor's wrong perception towards female journalists' capacity and lack of opportunities to female journalists are cited as the bigger problem to female journalists' low engagement in hard news reporting, them being family person pointed out as another reason. On top of these points the psychological readiness of female journalists is also mentioned. As I4 said:

Female journalists aren't involved to these stories because they have a lot of responsibilities at home and other social activities. And this kind of stories need full attention, more time and extra commitment therefore female journalists prefer to do soft news because of the commitment they have back home.

I3 argument relies on psychological readiness. He said female journalists' involvement in those stories is low because of psychological effects. As he said:

Psychological effect plays the lion share for the low participation of female journalists in hard news stories; meaning women emotionally prefer to talk about social matters in their gatherings rather than the country's politics when it comes to men it's the opposite. It is because of the societal belief. The means speak the result therefore it's obvious that their participation is low in such stories.

Some respondents said there is another reason for females participated less in hard news reporting. That is criticism. According to I4 most of the time female journalists criticized more while doing hard stories than males. He said news that done by female journalist always criticized more because people doubt about female journalists work. In the FGD, one of the participates attributed that the involvement of female journalists in covering hard news stories is low because of fearing feedbacks. She added feedbacks from people to females and male who did same kind of story is very different female journalists more criticized and no one try to give comment on male's work. Unless there is an equal ground to both genders, capacity can't develop and seen.

The findings show that women participation in Amharic News Department in general and in hard news stories in particular is very low compared with their male counterparts. Lack of opportunities and believing in women's capacity has pointed out as bigger problems. Besides with these points, the lowest number of female journalists in the department, their interest to cover hard issues and fearing criticism also mentioned as another reasons for their low engagement. In general, females are hidden in the department.

- **Cultural attitude towards Female journalists participation**

Although some women attributed their beat specialties according to their interests' women were naturally termed as people who like small easy things than hard issues. The reason that women shunning away from politics, business and other hard news was that women want to cover events, file a story, hand in quickly and go back home to meet their families. War and investigative reporting require at times travelling and extra commitment then females avoid it and preferred to go with soft issues.

The cultural aspect is deeply entrenched in the Ethiopian society extending beyond the family confines to political and social institutions the media inclusive. It has inculcated that the society sometimes bulling female journalists who have done hard issues. And to avoid such feedbacks from the public they rather cover soft stories. Informant I16 said:

The society by itself has somewhat an unbalanced view of gender equality. So when women go out for hard news reporting the society will not accept them or

give respect to them as it gives to men reporters. I don't think content and gender relate they can do hard news items with a better content as do most men.

Sections of reporting like war and disaster stories were viewed as jobs for men. And if female journalist covers the stories she wouldn't be praised as her male counterpart. I16 added:

Our institution is a reflection of the society; how our society works. There is clear and visible institutionalized unfairness where men are seen as heroes but not women. Some women did very amazing jobs but they're unsung heroines.

- **EBC's editorial policy in a way supporting female journalists**

Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation though supported by the government, has been credited for its objective and balanced reporting. All the productions done under the house is done according to the editorial policy.

However, when male and female journalists were asked whether the editorial policy aids or hinders them from covering certain beats, the responses were that to a more extent it favors them in covering certain beats.

On one hand, the editorial policy helps journalists to know that they were working with a public media involving government officials that they have to be extra careful. The policy helped them to make sure that they acquire all documents, carry out necessary interviews not to step on people's feet. So it kept them in check to ensure they have the right information.

According to the findings EBC's editorial policy has various enabling policies to cover stories though some of the informants didn't know it in details. Female and male journalists alike revealed that there is no specific policy that supports female journalists. According to I7, employing the editorial policy properly is a big problem. She said some of the journalists including the higher level managers don't know the details of the editorial policy; not only the editorial policy but the professional discipline is being used unlawfully. She added:

I don't think the editorial policy encourages women and push them forward. I sometimes see the phrase 'women are encouraged to apply' whenever there is an internal or external vacancy but I doubt they really mean it. At the end of the day

it's the men that are going through the tests and filling the position. No one had encouraged me to be strong and I never gained anything because I am woman at ETV, rather I lost so many things.

I16 also said;

Our editorial policy is there but we're not using it properly or it's not being employed. I don't think the editorial policy by itself has a space for women to shine out. We have to give opportunities for women and let them prove it to everybody. And women should prove everyone wrong that they can't do.

I13 also said there is no support for women journalists' the editorial policy to upgrade their capacity or encourage them to cover certain news. She added she has never witnessed any support for women journalists to involve in reporting hard news stories. Likewise I1 said she read the editorial policy but she wasn't found any special support for female journalists at all. As she said the department engaged in routine activities and doesn't give attention to capacity building in general and concerned to have something in the editorial policy; she said female journalists swallowed in this approach. In the focus group discussion participants expressed that there is no encouraging policy to female journalists to excel in their works. But one participant said that there is no enabling environment for all journalists in the department. She added best journalists became best by their own work and by chance however when it comes to female it is worse.

I11 is editor in the department. She is well experienced. And she said since she joined the organization there is no special support provided for female journalists. And mostly female journalists lose something than getting extra support. As she said:

There is no supporting policy in the editorial policy particularly to female journalists in EBC; no prior opportunity is given to female journalists rather they consider as second employee.

According to the findings of course there is editorial policy in EBC which mainly focuses on guidelines that show how to produce news and programs in proper way. It enables the journalists to understand how to treat certain story and aids the editors and journalists in doing the stories. In

doing so the policy has no place to women. There is no special support provided in the editorial policy that encourages them to involve in hard news reporting. In addition, most of the informants said that women journalists lose more than getting support from EBC. The findings revealed that there is no policy in EBC that favored female journalists to shine out and prove they can specially in hard news reporting. Thus, female journalists swallowed under the informal system EBC has.

4.1.4.3 Types of sources accessible to female journalists

Men remain dominant reaching news sources compared with women journalists. As stated earlier male journalists get priority in every circumstances and they have a space to access political and other hard ideas with the help of editors. Whereas female journalists usually access soft issues like health, motherhood, entertainment, tourism and many other soft issues because of gender. The findings revealed that the interviewees in hard news stories usually exacerbates women journalists job because they refuse to give interview to them. On the contrary, they usually say okay to male journalists. As I9 expressed:

Most of the time soft news stories are more reachable to female journalists. Hard news stories sometimes hard to cover by female journalists because people around the issues make it tough. Thus females stick with soft news stories rather than the hard ones.

I8 is also agreed with I9. She said as the assignment related soft story to female journalists soft news stories are more accessible to females. She added hard news goes to male and other stories related to women and soft areas covers by female journalists. Therefore, it is clear that soft news more accessible to female journalists.

Most of the informants have the same idea regarding female journalists' accessibility to certain news. According to them it was clear that soft news stories are more accessible to females to cover than hard news. As stated earlier female journalists were associated with soft news then whether editors assign them or not they more likely interested to cover soft stories and the interviewees are easily can be reachable. The findings show that though there were some female

journalists who are interested to cover hard news stories it was usually hard for them to cover because of their gender. This meant that gender was not the only factor that determines news. The respondents pointed out that it is the societal perception that still plays its lion share.

4.1.5. Theme Five: Perceptions of journalists on women performance and their visibility

This theme focused on the perceptions of journalists on women journalists' news coverage and their visibility in the Amharic News Department. Results showed women journalists' news coverage is low in general but the performance they have was evaluated well. According to the informants though they usually involves in soft stories they still were performing good.

Participants in the focus group discussion asserted that women are doing well in the work they were assigned. According to them women journalists have a capacity to do every kind of story but the problem is they weren't getting opportunities. They know how to tell a story in a very journalism way said I6. As he said:

From the feedback we are getting from the audiences they wishes to hear from female journalists because they considered female journalists honest and credible. Even I believe female editors are better than male editors because they are devoted and effective in their works.

He added as a media the organization most of the time covers stories related to gender sensitivity but inside the compound it is the opposite. I3 is a reporter. He is one of the outstanding male journalists in the department. He expressed:

I remember when I first joined the organization my editor was female. She shaped and coached me well. I am who I am now because of her. For me female editors are better than male editors, they are caring, welcoming and good at coaching. But when it comes to content editing and creativity they lack some capacity. Generally, regarding creativity and decision making female journalists are weak compared with their male counterparts even though there is creativity gab in the department.

Likewise, I5 said women are better than men in journalism because they are disciplined, responsible, committed, good in team work, meet deadline, technically rich and free from corruption. I5 added:

In many ways female journalists are good in journalism but they lack courage to do hard news stories indeed they waited to you to give them instead of them to ask to do it. But I have no doubt about female journalists' capacity. As the head of the department I know their capacity well even audiences feedback for their works is nice and encouraging.

I4 also has similar idea with I5. He said women lack self-assertiveness and don't believe in themselves in doing hard news stories. They lack "I kin I will" approach but they are responsible, trusted and managed. Journalism is usually corrupted, but females aren't. I16 is editor. In his experience in EBC mostly he worked with females. He said no one is a witness more than him to talk about female journalists' performance. He said:

I believe women are competent enough as men. I can name women who defeated the hardship and proved they can do anything men can do. They did amazing documentaries, shows and are still doing it. And audiences' feedback is good for women journalists work. And this is why I say we need more women in the news department. Not only where I work but also in the country's media arena. I strongly believe women are more responsible than men, what they need is the opportunity.

I5 has many positive perceptions towards female journalists' capacity but as a problem he mentioned females lack confidence to stand out by themselves, which he thinks there is a reason behind and can be fixed.

According to the findings male journalists in the department has positive perception towards women journalists' performance though it somehow contradicts with the ideas mentioned in theme four. Under theme four editors doubt about female journalists capacity and didn't believe in them. Thus, editors preferred male journalists to cover priority given and hard news stories which made female journalists' unseen. The findings revealed that women journalists weren't visible in the department because they did soft stories which didn't enable one to get attention.

Mostly women journalists associated with stories than need less effort thus this kind of story in the department haven't called journalists as best performer. Journalists who covered hard news stories like politics, high protocol news, disaster, war and many other hard news stories praised and seen as best performer. And male journalists do these stories so females were invisible and covered by male journalists.

Most of the respondents pointed out that it is opportunity that needed to see women journalists' capacity at the higher level; because they have the capacity that journalism needs at large. According to them Ethiopian media isn't benefited from women's ability as the western media did. The other problem that mentioned as an umbrella is the perception that emanates from the society.

4.1.6. Theme six: Challenges facing female journalists in Amharic News Department

This theme mainly discussed about female journalists face in EBC. Several challenges were expressed. However, balancing between work and family affairs, sexual harassment, the nature of journalism were the biggest challenges facing women in Amharic News Department. Details follow:

- **Women as double workers**

As mothers and workers, it did not only impact on their performance, but also women lost opportunities like going for further studies because they had to see their family close. There were many female journalists who struggle to work as a mother. Journalism needs one's full attention, commitment, time and observation without distraction. But as a mother it is very difficult to do all these because at the moment their mind will be divided.

I1 narrates her experience:

As a female journalist I see journalism into two ways before marriage and after marriage. It is hard to be a journalists and mom at the same time because the responsibility is big. But before marriage journalism is easily and fun for me to do. But after I got married I started living for others and I prefer to cover soft issues rather than engaging myself in challenging situation; because if something happens to me there is someone who will get hurt.

She though proud working under this challenge and performing well in the department. Similarly with I1, I9 said journalism isn't a job go with female when became a mother. Being mom affects her job and hinders her not to shine in her work. As she expressed:

Being a female journalist in Amharic news department is very challenging because you need to work late or come early. If you are a mother it is so challenging and is a double job. Thus working in this department as female journalists and a mother is a success and a sign of strength for me. And there are some journalists I knew working here.

As seen from the findings above, one of the continuing challenges for women in journalism like their counterparts in other fields is the struggle to reconcile the conflicting demands of work and family, a clearly universal and existential reality (Creedon, 1989&1993; Eide,(2000); Van Zoonen, 1994; Ross & Byerly, 2004). It is difficult for women journalists to live up to the contradictory expectations challenging them in the exercise of their profession. As mothers and workers, they had to ensure that none of this interfered with the other and at the same time they had to prove that they can as well perform like their male counterparts.

From the findings of this study, being mother and worker at the same time in the journalism world particularly in EBC makes female journalists unseen. Female and male journalists alike acknowledged this challenge as the biggest challenge for females. Most of the informants and participants in the FGD pointed out that female journalists do journalism as a double responsibility.

Creedon (1989:187) identified four areas for amplification in relation to the problems female journalists encounter in combining careers with children. She pointed to the need for women journalists to acquire strong basic writing skills, have suitable role models, learn how to persuade employers of their worth so they are not forced to settle for less prestige and four, plan how to combine family responsibilities successfully with their careers. There is need to address work family balance issue by providing more flexible work schedules. News managers too, must come to understand gender and cultural differences as a means of improving the environment of newsrooms and companies and advancement opportunities for women as Ammu (2004:45) pointed out.

I3 has similar idea with the above point. He said:

Female journalists have double responsibility, they take care of their family and at the same time do their job. So the organization should support them well. How? by giving opportunity them to cover hard, protocol and economic news through arranging suitable times for them. And providing related short and long-term trainings for them, EBC can do this by working cooperatively with local and international associations and at the end the benefit is for the organization.

- **Sexual harassment**

The other challenge that female journalists were facing in Amharic News Department is sexual harassment. Both male and female journalists acknowledged that women face sexual harassment both at the work place and in the course of their journalistic work from news sources. However, the harassment they face in the course of their journalistic work is bigger than the one they face in EBC.

I8 is a reporter. She shared her experience:

I remember when I joined EBC. I was assigned to cover certain story. The person that I reached out to interview has harassed me. He even said if you need information from me you should sleep with me. I was so upset. I told my editor about the issue and we dropped the story. It is embarrassment an interviewee see a female journalist as a sex object. This is the bad fact of journalism.

I15 has similar story. She is a victim of sexual harassment. She said:

Physical abuse and bullying in the department is sometimes common. And no one gives attention to it. It is the ugly truth that most of the time we harassed by our editors and interviewees. I most of the time faced these problems I tried to fight them back but usually I ignored it. Because I know I can't change it all the people has deaf ears.

Sexual harassment at work was an important issue for women in EBC. The personal suffering and injury resulting from harassment was an aspect of working life that women in EBC hardly

shared with men or fellow women. There was increasing concern not only about ways of tackling individual cases when they arise, but also over how to challenge traditional working relationships which foster sexism and harassment of women.

Sexual harassment reinforces a view of women as playthings and sex objects, creatures which neither the employer nor male worker takes seriously (Hadjifotiou, 1983:2). Hadjifotiou pointed out that unless these attitudes change demands from women for better pay, equal opportunities and positive action programs may fall on deaf ears. I5 said sexual harassment usually don't get attention in the department because of ignorance. He has witnessed sexually harassed female journalist while doing her job. According to him:

I remembered an incident that female journalists sexually harassed by an interviewee while doing good governance news. I was her editor. She amazingly challenged him and done her job. It was an outstanding performance. I am sure mostly female journalists face harassments and disrespecting approach in doing their job particularly hard news stories. But what I would like to say is fighting back with strength is very important to avoid such challenges and to perform well and I know females are strong.

- **Journalism as a challenge**

The researcher solicited views of the journalists on how they felt about being in journalism. Females were asked how they find journalism. Journalism was described as exciting and interesting job but stressful and challenging. Females saw journalism as exciting because it exposed them to a lot of information but at the same time challenging. They described journalism as a tough profession, one that requires, love and passion for it, it requires one to be aggressive and at the same time patience. It was seen as a profession where very few women have been successful in life.

The informant description of journalism as a peculiar job where you have to work 24 hours does not literary mean that one has to be in the newsroom day and night. It referred to the demanding nature of journalism whereby it has unpredictable happenings and journalists maybe called on at any time when events unfold.

In addition, according to the findings in journalism doing hard news stories is more difficult. Most of the informants said doing those stories is so challenging and sometimes feels in danger. For female journalists is more challenging. I15 is most of the time covered hard news stories. She said:

There are plenty of challenges in covering hard news stories; the first is government officials refuse to give information to female journalists because they don't believe in us. And the idea sometimes by itself is challenging to reach out.

I7 supports I15. Alike, I15 she mostly covers hard news stories. She expressed:

I remember doing an investigative report and it wasn't easy at all. I have been followed by people that I don't know and also accused of bribery. This is because I am a woman. But the output has been fruitful and satisfactory.

I12 also said:

I was doing an investigative report about students of a specific college complaining about some mismanagement. I used to receive consecutive calls from the dean of the college trying to denounce the complaint. I tried to explain the caller what's happening but he ignored me started calling my boss who is a male. I face such kind of challenges when doing hard news stories.

The expressions about journalism give the researcher different and contradictory statements. What this implies is that journalism is changing. The field is now open and competitive posing challenges and opportunities. The challenge is on female journalists to learn how to adapt and adopt to the situation because things are not likely to reverse. The question of women defining journalism as a challenging field according to Creedon (1989) arises in connection with the issue of gender. Editors in Amharic News Department perpetuate old stereotypes by assigning women soft stories while grooming males for hard news. The effect has challenges female journalists not to shine and excel in their works specially that of hard news stories. Therefore, female journalists

not had given prime times to covers stories that matter in the department. According to the findings the wrong stereotypical perception towards female journalists plays a lion share to the low presence in EBC's media particularly Amharic News Department.

This marks the end of data presentation and discussion. The next chapter concludes the study by highlighting summary, conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter Five

5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

This study was conducted under the title “The involvement of women in reporting hard news stories with particular reference to Amharic News Department of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation”. As the topic indicates the purpose of the study is to investigate women journalists’

participation in reporting hard news stories in the department. In addition, the study was intended to evaluate the visibility of female journalists in the department.

Since the research was about female journalists it is very important to discuss the history of women and journalism, in the world, Africa and country level. And it is valid to apply feminist theory as the theoretical framework.

For this particular study qualitative research method was employed and the data were collected through two different tools, in depth interview and focus group discussions. Theoretical saturation was considered to draw the sample size. In terms of drawing sample non probability sampling was employed. Here one of the types of non-probability sampling known as purposive sampling was applied.

The respondents were selected from diversified groups. Aged from 24 to 38, and has educational background ranging from degree to MA degrees. The samples were EBC's Amharic News Department permanent employees. In-depth interview involved sixteen participants that were reporter, editors and head of the department. And there were one group formed for the purpose of focus group discussion consisting of seven members. Both in-depth interview and focus group discussions were guided by lists of questions or interview guides.

Each interview lasted for 30 to 40 minutes and the focus group discussion took one hour. Amharic was served as a medium of conversation for both in-depth interview and focus group discussions. All the interview questions were relied on the research questions and remained tape recorded. Both results obtained from focus group discussion and interview confirmed that female journalists' participation in hard news stories is low. Editors' wrong perception towards female journalists' capacity in doing hard news stories was mentioned as a major factor for the low engagement. According to most of the informants opportunities weren't given to women to do hard and priority given stories and usually they considered as they can't do. The findings show that female journalists associated to soft stories whereas males with hard news stories. Though the stereotypical perception has a bigger share for the low women engagement in hard news, being a double worker, interest, gender biasness and lack of confidence also mentioned as major factors for the low women journalists' engagement. The findings revealed that female journalists faced a lot of challenges as sexual harassment, being double worker and journalism as a

challenge. These challenges emanated from female journalists' low engagement in journalism and in hard news stories in particular.

As the findings indicate, female journalists in Amharic News Department are overshadowed by their male counterparts. The majority of the participants agreed that male journalists dominated the department in news reporting, live and breaking coverage, anchoring and even in managerial positions. However, there were only two female reporters who were involved in covering hard news stories and their performance was indeed evaluated well. There were also two female editors in the department who had excelled with their coaching and managing skills. But they became what they are now because of their hard work; no one supported them. But they weren't given opportunities to prove what they have. All the participants agreed that the organization needs to work a lot to empower women journalists because they said female journalists have a lot to share with the community.

5.2 Conclusions

On the basis of the results of this research, it can be concluded that female journalists need attention in Amharic News Department. Many factors hindered them from shining and excelling in the department. The old traditional perception that says women can't perform as men was still affecting them from involving in hard news stories; even though they can do anything that men can do.

The data obtained from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews showed that all the participants agreed that the involvement of women journalists in reporting hard news stories was low. The involvement of female journalists wasn't only low in reporting hard news stories but also in live and breaking news coverage, and managerial positions. In addition, regarding story editing, females edited soft issues and female journalists usually covered soft issues; because soft news stories are associated with them, whereas hard news with male journalists. Most of the informants expressed that the societal perception towards women in general is replicated in the department; then editors doubted about women's capacity. Then they didn't allow female journalists to participate in hard news and priority given stories. They rather prefer to assign men in those stories, whether they are junior or senior. Thus, this tells that the perception that the organization has about female journalists' capacity is wrong.

In general, female journalists were invisible in the department. Though they have something to share to the community they lack opportunities. As the findings indicates that feedbacks for female journalists were more likely bad criticism that were discouraging to them. As a media the organization usually covered stories that are gender sensitive but inside EBC female journalists treated as second employee. Therefore, EBC has needed to work hard in women empowerment and providing supports.

5.3 Recommendations

Many changes with regard to women empowerment and emancipation have happened especially in politics but much remains to be done with regard to women's participation in and access to the media, and its impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women in Ethiopia. For example, the constitution of Ethiopia provides for Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunities in favor of groups marginalized on the basis of gender, age, disability or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom for the purpose of redressing imbalances which exist among them. This would have been more beneficial if there were provisions for monitoring and evaluation to ensure that what is provided for in the constitution is implemented. Without follow up, holding media institutions accountable for its commitments to gender equality is difficult.

Of vital importance for further progress in this respect are more wide spread awareness and acceptance about the relevancy of media as a powerful instrument for women advancement and empowerment and the need for a gender perspective in media matters. This is because the modern journalism characterized by commercialism, technology, the rise of celebrity, lifestyle, tabloidization, freelancing and the columnist is likely to impact on women employment, participation and portrayal and therefore require a renewed mandate for media industries to promote women's interests rather than reactions to competition. Second, the sensitization of media professionals in both public and private sector including those involved in entertainment to gender and other issues might help to tackle the confusing and conflicting signals currently emerging from the media.

The situation of women in journalism requires attention and action from a number of players. With the government share in Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, the potential of governmental

intervention in personnel policies is very high. In any case most journalists of both sexes would balk at the prospect of official interference in media matters that compromise editorial independence. Self-examination and introspection leading to transformation from within would therefore, be a more acceptable route to change. Among the issues that may bear consideration by those who run EBC are:

- the desirability and stated policy and transparent procedures with regard to recruitment, remuneration, promotion, work assignment and other matters that affect professional access, employment and advancement, in keeping with essential principles of gender justice and equity,
- The need to institute measures and mechanisms to counter or minimize the effect of negative gender-based attitudes and behaviors with regard to giving opportunities, undermining and sexual harassment.
- The possibility of systematic and structural adjustments in work schedules not as special concession to women, but in recognition of the need for all human beings to achieve a healthy balance between professional and life, which would, in turn enhance both productivity and creativity.
- The practicability of institutional support to women beyond the mandatory maternity leave during particular periods in their lives when it would make a crucial difference to their ability to cope with the often conflicting demands of work and family. This would help to ensure that women's current and potential contributions to the field are not frittered away through the neglect of their felt needs and real problems since these are not rooted in individual shortcoming but in societal biases and inequalities.
- Providing short and long term trainings to female journalists to advance their capacity by cooperatively working with international and local media organizations that would enable women journalists to be competitive in their works.
- Provide award programs to best female performing journalists to produce role models that would initiate other female journalists to follow suit and contribute their share in shaping the country.

Associations and /or unions representing journalists of both sexes can also play a role in ensuring gender justice and equity within the media organization by advocating or supporting initiatives

and changes in policies and procedures as well as measures and mechanism to ensure elimination of gender based disparities and disadvantages in women's participation in hard news productions.

Organizations, associations and / or networks of women in the media can call attention to the need for change through research and documentation, dissemination of information, discussion and debate, advocacy and lobbying. They can also initiate mutually supportive strategies such as the sharing of resources, training and mentoring to enhance women's confidence, capabilities and potential for advancement within the media.

Media training institutes seem to be appropriate sites for strategies to bring about desirable changes in the media workforce and thereby media workplace, media content, and, eventually even media policy. These institutes can contribute to the process of transformation by sensitizing students to the importance of gender awareness, equality and equity in all aspects of life including professional life in the following ways:

In a conscious effort to sensitize young people undergoing training for careers in the media to important subjects that require but do not always receive media attention, courses that seek to increase students awareness and understanding of a range of issues, including those affecting various disadvantaged sections of society such as women. One of these would be gender premised on the fact that holistic quality coverage of gender related issues is an integral part of media's role in a democratic society and that awareness of gender as a major force in society is a professional asset for all aspiring journalists, irrespective of the branch of journalism they choose. Such courses would help demonstrate that issues of gender-popularly but somewhat inaccurately known as women issues should be a concern to both men and women because they affect everybody. The course would help question the tendency in the media to ghettoize gender and related issues and to highlight the growing recognition that all issues, and that women issues are human issues, and that women's rights are human rights.

The courses would also challenge the traditional, artificial duality of 'hard' and 'soft new stories in the media, which privileges the former and relegates gender, among other equally vital issues to the margins of the latter.

It would seek out to demonstrate that human development in general and women development in particular need to be on the agenda of the media. It would help tackle common myths and misconceptions about gender, patriarchy, feminism and women's movements and the critical analysis of the media and gender.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 - Interview guide for in depth interview

Interview Guide for female reporters

My name is Emawaysh Girma. Currently, I am pursuing a Masters of Journalism and Communications at Addis Ababa University. I am collecting data for my master's thesis. This study seeks to solicit female journalists' perceptions towards their participation in hard news production in the case of Amharic news department of EBC. The purpose is to get the picture of how female journalists are involved in hard news coverage in formally male dominated occupation. The information you will provide in this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please feel free discuss with me.

Background information

Briefly talk about yourself, your name, sex, age and your marital status. What are your academic and professional qualifications? How long have you been in Journalism and at "The Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation" in particular?

1. What motivated you to join journalism?
2. How do you find journalism?
3. How do you feel being a female journalist?
4. What kind of stories do you cover?
5. Who do you think mostly cover hard news stories?
6. Do female journalists participate in reporting hard news stories? If yes how much?
7. Do you cover hard news reportage? If yes, what are the most challenging aspects you face as a female journalist?
8. What is your feeling toward stereotypes that women are incompetent and indecisive that will use informal ways to cover hard news stories?
9. What considerations are made during the hard news story assignment?
10. How do you perceive the fairness of the assignment?
11. How do you find the Amharic Department of EBC's editorial policy?
12. In what ways does it aid or hinder your potential in news coverage particularly in producing hard news stories?
13. Where is the status of female journalists' relevant reportorial performance compared to male journalists?

14. What kinds of news stories in terms of gender are easily accessible to you?
15. How do male journalist and the organization perceive of your performance?
16. How do you feel about the portrayal of women in the Ethiopian media?
17. To what extent can you say that the increasing visibility of women in the newsroom and on top editorial posts has impact on coverage of women?
18. Is there anything more you feel to add or subtract?

Thank you very much for all this information and your time for me, we come to the end of this interview.

Name of interviewee

Place of interview

Time of interview from.....to

Date of Interview.....

Interview questions for female editors

1. How did you become an editor?
2. What is your observation on the recruitment exercise in ETV Amharic news department?
3. How fair is the recruitment exercise?
4. How do you find working as a female editor?
5. What is your opinion about the common stereotypes about women as incompetent, indecisive and lacking managerial skills?
6. What kinds of issues are more likely to be covered by women than men?
7. How do you see/understand women's participation in hard news stories?
8. In your view, what determines the beats that females or males specialize in?
9. As an editor, what do you consider when assigning stories; does gender play part in story assignment?
10. According to your observation, what kinds of news sources in terms of gender are more likely to accessible to females than men?

11. What factors may limit women chances of involvement in covering high protocol events?
12. What is your opinion on the organizational policy on female journalists' advancement regarding reporting hard news stories?
13. How do you find working with female journalists as compared to men and what is good about working with women?
14. What are some of the challenges of working with females?
15. How do you describe your professional relationship with male colleagues?
16. What are challenges that you face as a female editor? How do you cope with these problems?
17. What do you think are the most challenging aspects facing women journalists in ETV Amharic news department?
18. What do you say about the portrayal of women in the department?
19. What chances under the organizational policy do you think are there for your career development?
20. Do you have anything to add subtract?

Thank you for your cooperation, time and answering my questions. We now come to the end of this interview.

Male perceptions on women's participation in hard news stories

1. What do you have to say about the employment opportunities for both men and women in the Ethiopia Broadcasting Corporation of Amharic News Department?
2. On what basis can you say that women and men have equal employment opportunities?
3. In your view, why are there more men than women journalist working as hard news reporters?
4. Are men more competent than women? Please explain.
5. What kinds of issues are likely to be covered by females than men?
6. To what extent can you say that gender plays a role during story assignment?
7. In your opinion what are the major barriers women face in covering hard news stories?

8. The Amharic News Department has a few woman editors. How do you feel working under a female editor?
9. How do you judge their performance?
10. What difference can you tell in the way females do their work from men?
11. What is it that women can do better than men?
12. Where are women weaknesses in relation to the professional performance?
13. What is your comment on the common stereotypes about women as being incompetent, indecisive and lacking leadership skills?
14. How do you judge the editorial policy in reference to female reporters' advancement?
15. Do you have any other information to add or subtract?

Thank you for your cooperation and the time we have been together. This is the end of the interview.

Name of interviewee

Place of interview

Time of interview from.....to

Date of Interview.....

Appendix 2- Interview guide for focus group discussions

Thank you for coming together.

1. How do you observe the participation of female journalists in reporting hard news stories?
2. Do you think their participation is visible in reporting hard news stories in the Amharic department news coverage? If no, what do you think is the reason for the low engagement?
3. Do you believe female journalists are incapable of doing such stories?
4. Do you think that gender plays a role during story assignment?
5. Does the Ethiopian Television editorial policy encourage female journalists to engage in such news stories? How?
6. What do you think should be done to see more female journalists in reporting hard news stories in number with quality?
7. Do you have any other information to add or subtract?

Thank you for your cooperation, time and answering my questions. We now come to the end of the discussion.