



**The Role of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) in Democratizing the
2014/15 National Election.**

BY

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**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Journalism and Communication
Presented In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication**

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Selemone Bekele, entitled the Role of EBC (Ethiopian Broad Casting Corporation) in democratizing the 2014/15(2007) national election, 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 notes the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Abstract

It is known that the government of any country is expected to be democratic. Democracy is very essential for the wellbeing, peace development and stability of citizens. In a democratic set up the role of media is found to be central. Media plays a great role by providing the necessary information in a democratic society. With all this idea, this study focused on the role of EBC in democratizing the 2014/15(2007) national election and also aims at finding out what challenges this media faced to play this important role expected from it. Qualitative research approach was employed to conduct the study. In depth interview and discourse analysis data collection method were used to gather data in order to address the research objective. Social responsibility, the public sphere, framing, discourse analysis theories were used as theoretical framework to inform the study. The final finding of the study indicated that EBC is not properly practiced the democratic roles that are expected to play in the election. For this, internal and external challenges are identified. The internal challenges are poor level of journalistic professionalism, and institutional poor performance. The external challenges are the high influence and interference of government officials. The paper has also tried to see the relationship between EBC and political parties. The paper identifies the relationship is unfriendly. Therefore EBC could not properly cover 2015(2007) national election. Even the time of pre- election process the debate between political parties was not transmitted live. When they were debating the time allocated to opposing political parties was limited. It was not enough to express their idea, so the attempt that EBC tried to make the election democratic was very weak.

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List of Acronyms

AAU Addis Ababa University

AENM All Ethiopian National Movement

AU African Union

AUEOM African Union Election Observation Mission

BBC British Broadcasting Corporation

CEO Chief Executive Officer

CNN Cable News Network

CUD Coalition for Unity and Democracy

EBA Ethiopian Broadcast Authority

EBC Ethiopian Broad Casting Corporation

EDP Ethiopian Democratic Party

EJDF Ethiopian Justice and Democratic Forces Front

EPA Ethiopian Press Agency

EPRDF Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front

ETV Ethiopian Tele-Vision

FDRE Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

LTOs Long-Term Observers

METEC Ethiopian Metals and Engineering Corporation

NEBE National Electoral Board of Ethiopia

OFC Oromo Federalist Congress.

OFDM Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement

TGE Transitional Government of Ethiopia

TPLF Tigrian People's Liberation Front

TV Television

UEDF United Ethiopian Democratic Forces

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Appendices

Appendix I

List of Informants

- 1. Ato Hunachew Taye**, business issues team leader in current affairs department of EBC. interviewed on January 12, 2018.
- 2. Ato Gebru Gberemariyam**, vice chairman of the Oromo federalist congress and member of pan African parliament, interviewed on January 5, 2018.
- 3. Ato Abel Adamu**, program control manager and deputy CEO of EBC, interviewed on January 10, 2018.
- 4. Ato Ayal Abebawu**, senior editor of current affairs in the department of news and current affairs, of EBC, interviewed on January 11, 2018.
- 5. Ato Mushe Semu**, former Ethiopian Democratic Party head, interviewed on January 2, 2018.
- 6. Ato Miliyon Beyene**, senior expert of media monitoring and analysis, in the Federal Communication Affairs Office, interviewed on January 3, 2018.
- 7. Ato Tamirat Dejene**, Director General of Media Development and Diversity at the federal government communication affairs office, interviewed on January 8, 2018,
- 8. Ato Abiyu Mekonen**, representative director of mass media, monitoring and capacity building, in the Ethiopian broad cast authority Interviewed on January 7, 2018.
- 9. Ato Nebiyu Wondesen**, news and current affairs producer and shift editor in EBC, interviewed on January 6, 2018.

Appendix I1

Interview guide for the informants

1. To what extent does EBC played a role in attaining democracy?
2. What was the role of EBC during the 2015 national election?
3. What were possible challenges that EBC had faced during the election time and aftermath in attaining its objectives?
4. How do you explain the relationship between EBC, the government and opposition political parties?
5. How do the public perceive EBC?
6. To what extent does BEC played its watchdog role?
7. To what extent did EBC perform based on the editorial policy, constitution and media law?
8. To what extent did EBC facilitate public debates during the 2015 national election?
9. To what extent did EBC strive to avert, problems of the society?
10. How does EBC cover 2015(2007) national elections?
11. What kind of activities has been undertaken on behalf of EBC to realize a democratic media?

Appendix I11

List of Political Parties and Debaters

No	Lists of political parties	Debaters
1	EPRDF	1- Ato Shiferawu Shigute 2- Ato Wendesen Kifilu 3- Ato Tefera Derbewu 4-Doctor Abrehme Tekeste, 5-Doctor Tewodros Adhanom 6-Ato Getachewu Reda 7-Ato Kasa Teklebirihan 8-Ato Abadula Gemeda 9-Ato Redwan Husen 10-Ato Asmelash W/ Silase 11-Ato Ahemed Abtewu 12-Ato Mekuriya Hayle 13-Ato Abay Tshaye 14-W/r Aster Mamo 15-Doctor Werqineh Gebeyehu 16-Doctor Debretshiyon G/Mikael,
2	Blue party	1-Ato Yonatan Tesfaye 2-Ato Iyasu Tesfaye, 3-Engineer Yilikal Getnet 4-Ato WeretawuWase 5-Ato LiulSeged Degefu 6-Ato Sileshi Feyisa
3	Ethiopian federal democratic unity forum	1 Professor Beyene Petros 2-Ato KAhasay Zegeye 3-Ato Tilahun Indeshawu 4-Ato Mulatu Gemechu 5-Doctor Merera Gudina 6-Ato Goitom Tsegaye 7-Ato Abreham Salih 8-Ato Birhanu Berhe 9-Ato Andom G/silase 10-Ato Teklu Shewa
4	Coalition for unity and Democratic Party	1 Ato Ayele Chamiso 2-Ato Asbachewu Asme, 3-Ato Sasahulih Kebede 4-Ato Sirak Mekonin
5	Ethiopian raie party	1Ato Teshale Sebro 2-Ato Abera bekele.
6	Ethiopian democratic unity movement	1-Ato Guish GebreSilase 2-Ato Tigistu Ddubal 3-Ato Tigistu Debela
7	Unity for democracy and justice	1-AtoTigisitu Awelu 2-Ato Behaylu Shimekt 3-Ato Dereje Tasewu,

8	Ethiopian justice and democratic force front	1-Ato Girmay Hdera. 2-Ato Geresu Gesa
9	All Ethiopian unity organization	1-Ato Abebawu Mehari 2-Ato Mekonen Adefris 3-Ato Mhari Abebawu 4-Ato Sorsa Genemu 5-Ato Tesfahun Almneh 6-Ato Kasahun Abebawu
10	Ethiopian democratic party	1-Ato Gizachewu Animawu 2-Ato Ermiyas Balkewu, 3-Ato Iyasu Mekonen 4-Ato Adane Tadesse, 5-Ato Wasihun Tesfaye . 6-Ato Yewondesen Teshomeand
11	All Ethiopian national movement	1-Ato Teshome welede Hawariyat 2-Ato Tkola Mamo 3-Ato Mulugeta Asfawu,
12	New generation party	1-Ato Asfawu Getachewu 2-Ato Solomon Tafese. 3-Ato Welde Dana
13	All Oromo People democratic party	1-Ato Tesema Hunduma 2-Ato Mulugeta Wedajo,

Appendix IV

List of EBC Journalist and issues chaired

No	Name of the Journalist	Issue	date	Round
1	Moges Mekonen	Federalism	April 13	1
		The democracy of multiparty system and human rights	April 16	2
		Good governance and rule of law	April 18	3
		Infrastructure	April 19	4
		Education	April 23	5
2	Samuel Kebede	Agriculture and rural development	April 25	6
3	Fitihawek Yewendwesen	Foreign affairs and intelligence	April 28	7
4	Netsanet Feleke	City and industrial development	April 29	8

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and all sources of materials used for this study have been appropriately acknowledged.

Name: Selemon Bekele

Signature: _____

Date of Submission: June, 2018

Place of submission: Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Today, different governments in the world name themselves as democratic governments, however there are a lot of debates encircling about how democracy is conceived and practiced by them. This can be epitomized by scholarly debates on the definition of democracy. According to Diamond (2003 p. 31), “There is no common agreement among scholars as to the meaning of democracy,” likewise, different scholars have identified different characteristics of a democratic rule. However, certain common features may be found in all the various definitions of democracy and characteristics of a democratic government. Dahl (1998 p. 37), in a democracy, it is not only information that the media is expected to provide for citizens. But they are also expected to serve as a watchdog by revealing wrong doings of the government. As Ansah (1988), explaining the media’s role as a watchdog in democratization. Where the “actions of the government, which is only a trustee of the collective will and power of the people, are expected to be regulated by the force of public opinion, and the press is the most appropriate medium for gauging and reflecting public opinion”.

This reveals that the absence of any such mechanism in checking and balancing of the government's performance action would lead to the government’s failure in to complacency, unresponsiveness, and irresponsibility (Ibid,p.12).

McNair (2011), also points out three defining characteristics of a democratic regime. First, there is a need for Constitutionality which requires agreed procedures and rules that govern elections, the behavior of those to be elected, and the legitimate activities of the dissenters; second, Participation: according to McNair, substantial portion of the population must participate in the democratic process; and third Rational choice: choices have to be available for citizens from which they could rationally select. In relation, if democracy is to flourish. There a need for a vibrant media that can better work for the democratic building of a country. In the developing world countries tend according to Bose (2015), the emergences of development communication as a strategy to use mass media to foster social change, which in turn was believed to enhance the socio-economic development of a country. The role of journalism is enormous in change is to bring economic and democratic development in developing countries like Ethiopia. Democracy is a system of government in which all the citizen of the country can

exercise both the human and democratic rights as it's constitutionally guaranteed and so the media needs to work towards such end.

Similarly, Coronel (1999, p.1), adds: "Democracy requires the active participation of citizens. Ideally, the media should keep citizens engaged in the business of governance by informing, educating and mobilizing the public. No doubt media plays a great role in ensuring democracy."

On the other hand, Klein (2017), discusses that a free press is indispensable for people to be informed and to participate in a democracy. A democratic and free press also helps empower individual citizens and promote democratic ideals through credible the spread of information. So that, free media is expected informing the public to decide democratic election. It provokes public debates leading to greater public participation in important decisions. And also it allows political pluralism to express itself by advertising different views and ideological approaches to certain issues. It keeps politicians attuned to public opinion while offering politicians a medium to explain policies decisions to public opinion and build the necessary support. As a result, from this perspective one can argue that media is expected to serve as a platform and public voice. This is due to the fact that the media would provide an outlet for political parties and candidates to deliver their messages to the public so that democratic building process can be done smoothly.

Sometimes, if media is not used properly it has a devastating role. Ordway any Wihbey (2016:10), suggested that "Sometimes the mischief use of media can cause negative outcome in the electoral process". In relation, they talk about media effect theory and state that "Media has the potential to affect the public at large both positively and negatively" depending on how the media frames different kinds of stories. Especially, during national election news coverage, both private and state owned media can affect the result of the election through their framing and agenda setting of the news and programmers they cover about.

In the framing and agenda setting of the news and programmers one can presume that there would be a tendency to control the release of information by the government since most of the information sources come from it. Usually, politicians like to present their successes and their opinions, to use the media to gain public recognition and enlarge their authority; the media's role is to question, analyze and judge these critically. The role of the media is never to blindly

or unquestioningly support a given political party or cause. That not only undermines the credibility and value of the media (which becomes simply a propaganda machine (Wihbey, 2016).

According to Encyclopedia Britannica (2015), elections make a fundamental contribution to democratic governance. This is because in direct democracy political decisions are made directly by the entire body of qualified citizens who make their consent about the type of government they form through elections; Elections enable voters to elect leaders and to hold them accountable for their performance in office.

Accountability can be undermined when elected leaders do not care whether they are reelected or when; for historical or other reasons, one party or coalition is so dominant that there is effectively no choice for voters among alternative candidates, parties, or policies. Nevertheless, the possibility of controlling leaders by requiring them to submit to regular and periodic elections helps to solve the problem of succession in leadership and thus contributes to the continuation of democracy. Moreover, where the electoral process is competitive and forces candidates or parties to expose their records and future intentions to popular scrutiny, elections serve as forums for the discussion of public issues and facilitate the expression of public opinion. Elections thus provide political education for citizens and ensure the responsiveness of democratic governments to the will of the people. They also serve to legitimize the acts of those who wield power, a function that is performed to some extent even by elections that are noncompetitive(ibid).

Ethiopia as a country has a long and rich history. Nigussie (2014, p.76), indicated that the development of media as well in Ethiopia has got long years of history, but the practice of media has been quite dictated by the nature of governments in the past and, as result, the media in Ethiopia have not got better level of freedom and practice. Nigussie described the media history, practice and politics in Ethiopia as follows:

Ethiopia media history can be most likely traced back to the time of ancient kings who started using the *Awajnegari*, that is to say news announcer. The religious and non-religious publications as well as the different historical and religious writings on parchment may mark the beginning of early press in Ethiopia. Formally, however, modern press in Ethiopia is said to be started during the time of Emperor Menelik II.

Afterwards, the media in Ethiopia has gone through a lot of challenges under the authoritarian governments of the past who used the media for fulfilling their wishes.

According to Nigussie during those days media was only used for disseminating government agenda and was authoritarian. In the present government, however, there have been good improvements in introducing dual ownership system contextualizing press freedom and making further media declarations hence, the present study examines how the media serves the present government by examining how the media covers about the 2007 or 2014/2015 election in the process of building the emerging democracy in the country.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to Coronel (1998, p.23), the media's key role in democratic governance has been recognized since the late 17th century, and remains a fundamental principle of modern-day democratic theory and practice. The media has potential to shape public opinion, but it in turn influenced and manipulated by different interested groups in society. The free media can promote democracy educate voters, protect human rights, promote tolerance among various social entities, and ensure governments to act in transparent and accountable ways.

The media are essential to democracy, and a democratic election is impossible without media. A free and fair election is not only about the freedom to vote and the knowledge of how to cast a vote, but also about a participatory process where voters engage in public debate and have adequate information about parties, policies, candidates and the election process itself in order to make informed choices. Furthermore, media acts as a crucial watchdog to democratic elections, safeguarding the transparency of the process. Indeed, a democratic election with no media freedom, or stifled media freedom, would be a contradiction in terms (ibid).

Media in the democratic society plays a significant role educating and informing the society. Dugger (2000), clearly stipulate:

The media report news and information to the general public. This is the most significant role of the media in a democracy, because citizens play a crucial role in the political process and must be informed in order to make educated political choices. The media, therefore, must do a thorough and impartial job when informing the public on all government activities and political events. What is more, to elect among the choices citizens need to be informed, through reporting by the media

about which choice is best for them. In addition, the media create forums for policy debates. Media also ought to function as an investigative agent of the wrong deeds of the government (p.12).

In relation to the recent works there are limited research works found out by the student researcher especially about media and democracy in Ethiopia. Nigussie (2011), conducted his study on the press and democracy in the country by examining selected national dailies. Negeri (2011), as well studied about media for development and democratization process of Ethiopia. Nigussie (2014), made an analysis on media and politics in Ethiopia and tried to find out about the political dynamics of the media in Ethiopia in the last three regimes.

Nevertheless, the present study focuses on how the Ethiopian television of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation covered about the 2007 or 2014/15 election in Ethiopia by examining the extent to which Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (TV) contributes and supports the democratization process in the country in 2007 or 2014/15 election. The study explains the role of EBC (TV) played in democratizing the 2007 or 2014/15 election. It assessed how this media works for the freedom of speech proclaimed in the constitution (1995) and explains the constraints that hobble EBC ability to play a positive role in developing the emerging democracy. In other words, the study looks at the ways in which EBC has been used and how it has worked towards building democracy during election time.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study is to critically examine the role of EBC in how it has been democratizing the 2007 or 2014/15 national election.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The following are the specific objectives of the study:

1. To find out the major roles EBC played in Ethiopia's walk to democracy during the national election of 2014/15.
2. To identify whether EBC has contributed towards the handling of fair and democratic election of 2014/2015.

3. To explain how EBC upholds to its expected role according to its editorial policy, constitution and broadcast law on one hand, and how opposition political parties treated on the other.

1.4 Research Questions

In the consideration of the above objectives, the study seeks to provide answers for the following major research questions:-

- How did EBC contribute towards the handling of fair and democratic election of 2014/2015 ?
- How EBC upholds to its expected role according to its editorial policy, constitution and broadcast law on one hand, and how it treated the opposing political parties on the other?
- What challenges were EBC facing in playing democratic roles during the 5th national election of 2014/15?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would serve as a stepping stone for further research ventures in the area. Moreover, since studies done in the area are limited, the student researcher believes that study would help fill the gap and contributes its share in adding data for future studies at every level. The study would also be significant to indicate the role of EBC is expected to play and the actual role it is playing with respect to democratizing the election of 2014/15, but it also identifies the challenges this media is facing when striving to play its democratic roles.

Therefore, EBC could learn from the challenges and make itself ready to ameliorate the situation by its side and put some pressure on the media to make things better by its side.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

In this study the student researcher had to conduct audience analysis, because it supports the thesis in such a way that in a full-fledged finding. The study is researched by employing qualitative research approach. But, if it was employed a mixed approach the researcher would have reached in a valid conclusion. The last limitation of this study was something related with

interviewees. Some of them refused to give an interview. This limited the researcher's ability to gather the complete data.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study basically focuses on the role of EBC in the democratization process taking the case of 2014/15 Ethiopian national it conducted on the debates made among the various political parties took part in the election process.

1.8 Organization of the Study

Chapter one establishes background, states problem, objectives, significance, scope and limitations of the study. Chapter two is all about conceptual framework and review of related literature. Chapter three presents the research methodology. Data presentation and analysis is what chapter four presents. The final chapter is about conclusion and recommendation of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The chapter deals with literature related with the present research topic from the vantage point of scholars, articles, newspapers and books. The theoretical frame work employed to inform the study that is the social responsibility theory of the press and framing theory are discussed respectively.

2.1 A Brief Overview of Media in Ethiopia

Ethiopia, which is the oldest independent country in Africa, is an early lead in developing script written literature. However, the publication of both secular and religious issues were incomparably low and concerning the production of newspapers, magazines and other periodicals the country was too late (Deneke, 1991, p. 70).

The development of modern periodicals can be traced only to the last years of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth century (Negussie, 2006, p.6). According to Negussie, the first real Amharic newspaper, *Aimero-* (intelligence), was issued in 1902 by a Greek business man called Endreas E. Kavadia .The name *Aimero* was given by Emperor Menelik and it was a four page weekly having a circulation of only 24 copies. Later on Kavadia obtained a duplicating machine and the circulation reached 200 copies. Hence during the reign of Menelik II, the press was encouraged though it was not understood as a means of development for national identity or in enhancing government powers.

The appearance and flourishing phenomenon of printing press in Ethiopia creates a land mark in the history of media in Ethiopia during the time of Ras Tefari Mekonnen. Shimelis (2000), summarizes and clearly articulates as follows:

The establishment of *Berhannena selam* printing press and *Berhannena Selam-* government owned weekly newspaper by RasTefari Mekonnen in 1923 and 1925 respectively became a land mark in the history of the Ethiopian press. *Berhanena Selam* became a forum for airing progressive ideas and views by some of the young intellectuals of the country at that time despite many poorly written articles, subject restriction, less appealing of the paper and limited circulation (p.8).

Emperor Minilik II, who is the founder of modern Ethiopia played a significant role in establishing diplomatic relations with European states. This helped many foreigners to establish printing presses in the capital city, Addis Ababa. Shemelis and Tadesse (2000), the progress of the Ethiopian press was interrupted for about five years (1935-1941) as a result of the country's occupation by Mussolini's forces despite some like *Bandirachin* (latter renamed as *Sendeq Alamachin*) of the liberation force. According to (Ministry of Information 1966) quoted in Shimelis, 2000), the publication industry comparatively expanded in the number of periodicals and the size of circulation as witnessed by the emergence of *Addis Zemen*, the Ethiopian Herald, *Yezareyitu Ethiopia* in 1941 , 1943 and 1952 respectively (Tadesse, 2000,p.76).

In regard to broadcast media history of Ethiopia dated, more than 80 years of history when Ethiopian radio became the broadcast media in the media history of the country. According to Ethiopian radio magazine (2000 p. 3), concluded and suggested that “Radio was established in 1935 at *Akaki* town in south eastern part of Addis Ababa stopped its transmission till 1941 though the fascists installed their own radio for their propaganda in the meantime. However, after the evacuation of the Italians, the radio regained its former position and entered into operation starting in 1941.”

Ethiopia media was run under the strict control of the government unit 1990's, (Woletaw and Tedbabe, 1990 quoted in Shimelis 2000), from the time the country fell under military dictatorship from 1974 to 1991. Unlike the proclamation of 26/1967 which did not specify the possibilities for private press, the constitution of 1987 contained freedom of expression albeit its reality. The destiny of the media did change in the after math of the downfall of the dictatorial regime in 1991 (Tadesse, 2000). According to Shemelis (2000), the assumption of power in 1991 by the Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front ushered in a period of fundamental transformation in the political economy of the country.

Many scholars agree that freedom of press in Ethiopia for the first time granted by EPRDF led government. Getahun (2013), supports this saying:

As part of the democratization process, the Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front-led government granted freedom of the press. The recognition to freedom of the press was in tandem with the new government's acceptance of the 1948 Universal Declaration of the United Nations 217 A/111(p.31).

According to the online sources of Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority, the press has demonstrated better growth though the number of newspapers and magazines diminished after the nationwide election of 2005.

2.2 Overview of Democracy?

Media and democracy are quite related. So as to learn how media works in democratic setup necessitates examining the definition of democracy at this level. The term democracy explained by Heineman (1998), as, “It comes from two Greek words: "demos" (the people) and *kratia* (power or authority). Democracy, therefore, is a form of government that gives power to the people, but how, when, and to which people are questions which are often asked all through history” (p.1).

Democracy is based on "rule of law". The law was meant for practicing direct democracy, which is a system in which citizens meet to discuss all policy, and then make decisions, by majority rule no matter how the democracy of the time just never left the room for free women as only men were considered to be citizens. So their democracy was certainly limited.

Later on, according to Nicholson (2016), the “American Founders put "indirect" or "representative" democracy. In this system, representatives are chosen by the people to make decisions for them. The representative body, then, becomes a manageable size for doing the business of government”. The founders used the concept of "republic" to "democracy" for “it described a system they generally preferred: the interests of the people were represented by more knowledgeable or wealthier citizens who were responsible to those that elected them. Today we tend to use the terms "republic" and "democracy" interchangeably (p.60).

According to Stephen C. Angl, (2004, p.525), there is a modern version of democracy. This modern version of democracy is called "democratic centralism," a term made famous by Vladimir Ulyinov Lenin. As the leader of the Russian Revolution in 1917, he established a communist government that allowed no private property to exist. All members of society were theoretically equal. However, Lenin considered a small "vanguard of the revolution" necessary to guide the people and establish order. So a small group of leaders make decisions in the name of the people, based on their perceptions of what the people want and need.

According to Setzer (2013), the ideals of the first French revolution also inspired new conceptions of democracy. The ideas of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" were immortalized in the three colors of the French flag. In Delacroix's painting, liberty is seen leading the people toward these ideals. The founder and father of America, Abraham Lincoln, defined democracy as a challenge. Cuomo and Holzer, (1990) explained Lincoln's definition as, "Government of the people, by the people, for the people." Democracy is by far the most challenging form of government - both for politicians and for the people"(p.20).

2.3 The Political Influence of the Media

Today, the media clearly has a great deal of power influence in many countries' politics arena. Is that pros or cons for government? From the face of Chandrappa (2014), the media abuse their power, especially since they are driven by profit motive to give people what they want, not necessarily what they need. On the other hand, perhaps the media serves as an important player in a modern "checks and balances" system. Reporters function as "watchdogs" to be sure that presidents, representatives, and justices do not abuse their powers. The media, in turn, is checked by government regulations, by skilled politicians, and by the people's own good judgment.

2.4 Democratic Functions of the Media

According to McConnell & Becker (2002, p.3), for the media to pursue democratic roles, freedom of the press has to be guaranteed the normative model of a free press is one in which there is freedom from any government regulation and control that would suggest censorship or limits on the freedom to disseminate information, news, and opinion. With this presumption, scholars have differently expressed, but with common foundations, the democratic functions that a free press could have in democracy.

Wilson (1996, p. 176), strongly argues that in countries where aggressive newspapers and advanced broadcasting systems exist, like America and Britain, democratic accountability works through the media than it works through the parliament. What Wilson's assertion manifests is the important, and inexorable for that matter, contribution that media could have in a democratic state. It is also evident in the account that for the media to have the articulated contribution to democratic accountability, they need to be strong and aggressive.

McNair (2011, p. 18), puts five functions of the media in societies that he called 'Ideal type' democratic societies. These are; (1) informing citizens of what is happening around them ('surveillance' or 'monitoring' functions), (2) educating citizens as to the meaning and significance of the 'facts', (3) providing a platform for public political discourse and facilitating 'public opinion' formation, (4) giving publicity to governmental and political institutions, and (5) serving as a channel for the advocacy of political viewpoints.

Curran (1997), categorized media as the liberal approach against the radical approach; he asserts that the media in democratic societies are 'permanent guard duty patrolling against the abuse of executive power and safeguard individual liberty. The role of the media is stated by Curran (2005,) as:

The media should keep people informed about public affairs so that individuals are adequately briefed when they take part in the process of self-government. The media should be fearless watchdogs, vigilantly examining the exercise of power and protecting the public from wrongdoing (p.29).

According to Glasser, McQuail, Nordenstreng & White (2009), media's democratic functions could be summarized under four broad roles; monitorial, facilitative, radical and collaborative. These roles appear to be somehow embodying the scattered functions situated in many literatures. Thus, they are discussing each at this point would help understand in a bit elaborated way what democratic roles the media is expected to carry out.

2.5 Media and Democracy

It is true that democracy without media is impossible. Keane (2013, p.23), puts the condition saying, "Modern democracy-representative democracy-heavily depends on the media in order to reach the represented large electorates."

On the other hand, media have also been criticized for not making 'creating citizens that democracy needs' their center of attention, and even sometimes they are blamed for contributing to the creation of 'politically apathetic' public through a trivialized content. However, with all the critics and the challenges, the media still have a lot to play in democracy.

2.5.1. The Role of Media in Ensuring Democracy

CNN senior journalist Christian Amanpour (2017, p.45), articulated the relationship between free press and democracy as, “Democracy is impossible without a free press. This is a precept that is deeply ingrained in democratic theory and practice. As early as the 17th century, Enlightenment theorists had argued that publicity and openness provide the best protection against tyranny and the excesses of arbitrary rule” and so claimed in the early 1700s, by the French political philosopher Montesquieu.”

Media plays a great role in informing the public and indicating the government its strong and weak side. In this case, Roy (2013), recognized the importance of the press in making officials aware of the public’s discontents and allowing governments to rectify their errors. This seems to be the reason why the media has been widely proclaimed as the “Fourth Estate,” a coequal branch of government that provides the check and balance of government, and without media governments cannot be effective.

According to Kimanuka (2016), even in modern-day democrats are as hyperbolic in their praise of the press. Despite the present-day mass media’s propensity for sleaze, sensationalism and superficiality, they are still seen as essential democratic tools. Contemporary democratic theory appreciates the media’s role in ensuring governments are held accountable. In both new and old democracies, the notion of the media as watchdog and not merely a passive recorder of events are widely accepted.

Unless media shouldn’t play its watchdog role, government couldn’t understand the problems and interest of the public. Similarly, Ravi (2017), argues that:

Governments cannot be held accountable if citizens are ill informed about the actions of officials and institutions. The watchdog press is guardian of the public interest, warning citizens against those who are doing them harm. A fearless and effective watchdog is critical in fledgling democracies where institutions are weak and pummeled by political pressure (p.90).

In addition, media as a public forum for debate is important to exchange different ideas which are useful for making important policy and strategy. Odika (2013), elaborated this idea that the media serve as a conduit between governors and the governed and as an arena for public debate

that leads to more intelligent policy- and decision-making. Indeed, the Enlightenment tradition of the press as public forum remains strong. In new democracies, the expectation is that the media would help build a civic culture and a tradition of discussion and debate which was not possible during the period of authoritarian rule.

According to Odika (2013), not just journalists, but eminent contemporary thinkers like Nobel laureate, Amartya Sen ascribe to the press the same cleansing powers that Enlightenment philosophers had envisioned. Sen outlined the need for “transparency guarantees” such as a free press and the free flow of information. Information and critical public discussion, he said, are “an inescapably important requirement of good public policy.”

.2.5.2. Media and Elections

During the election time media could play a great role for the election should be fair and democratic. On this idea, Ravi (2017), further discusses that, what the media ought to function during election times is contingent upon what elections require from both the candidates that are participating in the elections and the electorate. It is also important to note, then, what the electorate needs to participate in voting. Obviously, elections call for an informed citizenry that can make a genuine choice from the political alternatives.

Regarding the role of media during election time Nayyar (2007, p. 136), contends that, “during elections, the mass media have so many duties that equally apply to all the media.” These duties according to Nayyar are; the duties to prevent misuse of press freedom, to comply with the prescribed timing of election campaign, and to duly publish or broadcast opinion poll findings. Lange (2004, p. 209), on his part observes, ‘the media have a crucial role in covering the political process and in shaping and contributing to the formation of public opinion, as expressed most importantly in the time of campaigning before elections and during elections themselves.’ Lange (2004), explains that ordinary people the large electorate mostly get the information, as to what former achievements the candidates have, their future programs, and ‘issues under current debate’, that they rely upon for voting via the press and broadcast media (ibid). What is more, some media especially newspapers may have an advocacy function during elections wherein they actively endorse one or the other of the parties competing in election (McNair, 20011, p. 20).

More than any media else, the role of television in election is very important because, in place where it is both affordable and accessible television continues to be the most popular form of media, (Ravi ,2017,p.98).

2.6. The Relationships of Media, Government and Opposition Political Parties.

The survival of media is highly dependent on the relationship between media and government, media and political parties. Dugger (2000), explained this as, “The relationship between media and government and political parties is very important in defining a role for the media in the political process. This relationship inevitably affects the media practice either positively or negatively.”

This is because media has its role in government and it can be seen in two ways. When the government is in a position to benefit from the media practices, the relationship would seem to have a positive effect. On the other hand, “when the government puts illegitimate sanctions, including censorship, on the media, the negative effect prevails”. This means “when the media tend to report truthfully and objectively, positive relationship could be secured and when the reverse happens, the relationship would turn out to be unfavorable.” (p.50).

Politicians are always quick to blame the media when a news story doesn't put in a favorable light. But politicians use media to win elections by getting the exposure they need to reach voters. Reporters have no choice but to cover the people chosen to lead the government. In election years, people who work in media should prepare themselves for the manipulation they'll likely face when a politician's quest for office runs head on into the media's desire to seek the truth(ibid,p.65).

2.7. Media and Government

According to Ansah (1988, p. 9), observing the African media during 1988, chronicles that the relationship between the government and the press in Africa generally have been characterized by tension and conflict where there appears to be no tension. The reason for this, he notices, is that either the press has been cowed into submission or it has become the ruling parties' appendage. This plat form could still be observed in Ethiopian media landscape.

The relationship between media institutions and the government is mutual self-interest. Burton (2005, p.20), further notes the attitude of media institutions to government is partly defined by

degrees of interference, which are in turn defined by the terms of regulation for a given media industry. It is also partly defined by the ideological position of given media business, or even their proprietors, towards the rights of the state, within their own idea of the media-audience relationship Kumar and Jones (2005, p. 226), explore five aspects of the relationship between media and government focusing on the American experience (it would also apply to the African and the Ethiopian situations) to demonstrate the relationship. Of these aspects, the researcher wants to focus on the three aspects among others.

The relationship between media and government is illustrated by ‘a mutual need of politicians to appear in the media to have a platform for their positions’, and that of the media ‘to have the politicians appear so that they might attract an audience by having access to authority figures.’ (Burton 2005, p. 20. Kumar and Jones, 2005, p. 227), argue that the government-media relationship on the surface is an ‘acrimonious’ one and the ideally thought ‘cooperation’ is far from what actually exists in the ‘operating mode’. They assert that this relationship is multilayered; First, ‘government officials and news organizations spend a great deal of time and resource making use of the presence of the other, even if there is mutual mistrust of motives and actions’, second, there are personal and institutional relations that define the conduct of how the two sides relate to and consider each other, and finally, ‘the continuing character of the relationship is based on the consistent nature of the information needs, and the institutional responses, of both partners’ (ibid, p.69).

The personal relationship is that between government officials and reporters which appears to be bellicose in that they are sometimes critical of one another. However, Kumar and Jones (2005) explain, the institutional relationship between media organizations and the government is continuous in which cooperation between the two prevails with the intent of getting the most out of it.

According to Kumar and Jones, media can influence the government and the process of governing it follows as well. First, the media inform the public of the actions of officials elected to rule. Second, the information provided influences the workings of the government for the public would act according to the information. Third, through the works disseminated to the wide public, the media inform people the deeds of other governmental institutions. Fourth ‘information provided by the media serves as an early warning system for government officials

of problems they may not have recognized or issues coming to the surface that they did not see coming.

2.8. Media and Political Parties

Concerning media and political parties relationship Melnardus (2016), adds that:

Irrespective of ideological leanings, all politicians are keen on getting into the media”. The media effect potential voters through their coverage in a newspaper article, or broadcast in television or voice on radio. Although democratic elections should be about political choices, in most countries they are basically a popularity contest. And mass popularity comes with media exposure (p.20).

The political parties use the media for their interest. Political parties system is both an opportunity and a threat for activists and their organizations. Parties can be long-term institutional homes for policies and ideas. The media route is another method of ensuring accountability, as the media can echo, amplify, or substitute for citizens’ voices. Lastly, the social accountability route is a more recent phenomenon, driven both by new technology and the need for solutions when states are weak or unresponsive. This particular route attempts to promote accountability by approaching authorities directly, instead of relying on intermediaries, such as political parties or bureaucracies. All three routes provide valuable channels for activists to hold those in power to account for their decisions (*ibid*, p.90).

2.9. The Role of Media in the Third National and Regional Elections of Ethiopia in 2005

In 2005, during the third national and regional elections, Ethiopia has experienced new phenomenon in its process of democratization. According to Smith (2007, p. 55), “one of the most striking things about the most recent election in Ethiopia is that both the ruling party and the main opposition parties presented voters with distinct and substantive policy platforms.”

Smith (2007), explains that this was not only unique in Ethiopia but also continent-wide. It was also during this election that for the first time opposition parties were given airtime in the government media especially EBC, albeit the opposition claimed that there was an unfair distribution of airtime in which EPRDF was given much time- twice the time given for the opposition -which led to an iniquitous competition.

According to Smith (2007), Tesfaye (2006), the major contending parties during this election were the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), and the two coalition parties; United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF), and Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD). In addition, the main issues of the campaigns were ethnic federalism, Article 39 of the Ethiopian constitution which grants the right to secession, land ownership, private sector development, liberalization of economic sectors, the case of *Asseb* port, nationalism united Ethiopia, and human rights cases.

Generally, if Ethiopia's democratization is measured referring to the minimal conception of democratization, it seems that the country is on the right track of democratizing its governance and its society as well, for a democratic constitution and elections are already there. Nonetheless, if the measurement is made based on the liberal conception, the country has still a long way to go, for the constitution has to be translated into practice in a way that freedoms as freedom of Assembly and freedom of the press are respected and elections are conducted democratically.

2.10. Media and Democracy in Ethiopia

There are countries which have free media where as others do not own free media system in the world. According to Nigussie (2014), "While 75 world countries had media systems that could be classified as free, 50 had partly free and 61 were not free. 111 countries still have media systems that are either partly free or not free". This would indicate degree of press freedom in the world, which of course varies depending on the nature of political systems" (p. 10).

Media in many countries are not free because they are controlled by government. Similarly, Sussman & Karlekar (2002), explain as, "In many regions of the world press freedom was hampered by unprofessional journalists and partisan control of the media. In these countries media are firmly monitored and controlled through overt and covert means by political or government forces" (p.15).

According to the report of Human Rights Watch (2005), following the controversial election of 2005, when there were many instances of disproportionate violence by authorities, many journalists were arrested, alongside members of opposition parties, and tried for "outrages

against the constitution" and other crimes, a number of them in absentia. Fines were also imposed on Ethiopian publishing houses.

In Ethiopia there are many challenges that media faced to carry out their mission properly. For example Dagim (2013), explains that, "The Ethiopian private media are not properly carrying out the democratic roles that they are expected to play owing to both internal and external challenges. The internal challenges included journalists' poor understanding of some of the roles, poor level of journalistic professionalism" (p.12).

Nonetheless, the Ethiopian government gave full right for media to perform their duty freely in the 1995 constitution. On the contrary, Ross (2010), states,

While nations across the world have come to respect and honor freedom of expression and access to information as inalienable human rights, the government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has spent years retreating from the international norm on media rights". No matter how the Ethiopian Constitution and 1992 press proclamation lays out the legal foundations for the rights of citizens to hold opinions, thoughts, and free expressions (p.85).

2.11 A brief over view of Ethiopian Broad Casting Corporation (EBC)

The Educational Mass Media Center, which has been established by the Ministry of Education in 1965, has also played an important role in the development of mass communication in Ethiopia, Negussie (2006, p12), Television broadcasting which began in Ethiopia in 1964 was the result of both the country's wish to catch up with the rest of the world in information service and the medium's potential for education and in shaping Haileselassie's personality cult. In addition, it was a time that the Organization of African Unity was established (ibid,p.65).

2.12 Theoretical Framework

This section discusses the theoretical underpinnings of the argument that media serve the ends of democracy. Social responsibility theory of the press, the public sphere, John Zaller's theory of media politics and Hallin and Mancini's models of media systems are the theoretical frameworks of the study. The theories clearly stipulate that the media ought to function

responsibly, as they are the principal institutions of the public sphere, in order to play a crucial role for democracy.

2.12.1. Social Responsibility Theory of the Press

Social responsibility theory stemmed from the 1947's report of the Hutchins commission, which was officially known as 'Commission on Freedom of the Press' (Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm, 1956; McQuail, 1983; Nerone, 2006; Baran& Davis, 2012). The commission was formed in the midst of the Second World War by the request of Henry Luce, publisher of Time and Life magazines, to Robert Maynard Hutchins, the president of the University of Chicago, 'to recruit a commission to inquire into the proper function of the media in modern democracies' (Nerone, 2006, p. 185).

According to social responsibility theory, the media, in order to contribute to the democratic processes of a given political system and to meet the needs of the society, should not be influenced by an ever-increasing co modification of news and other media content and the negative freedom that came owing to an unregulated press. McQuail (1983,p.91), stated the main principles of the theory as follows, "Based on the theory of social responsibility of press, the implication of the theory on this study is the media should accept and fulfill certain obligation to the society in providing diverse views in the democratization process. The media should also play its watch dog role through informative, truth, accuracy and objective accurate.

In addition, whatever government or privet owned media should avoid reports that lead to crime, violence or civil disorder or give offence to ethnic or religious minorities. in the country like Ethiopia, where divers ethnic groups and religions takes place, this part of the social responsibility of the press is vital and fundamental(especially during the time of election) Furthermore, the media should be pluralist and reflect the diversity of their society, giving access to various points of view and the rights to reply.

Therefore, in the face of social responsibility theory of press, the researcher aimed at looking whether EBC has performed its social responsibility during the fifth 2007 (2014/15 GC) national election or not.

2.12.2. Framing Theory

Framing theory is consisted of multiple perspectives and sides, but all perspectives and sides rarely get equal media attention. Some aspects of an issue or event become more dominant. Several factors are involved in creating and addressing social, political and economic issue. Media framing refers to the selection process whereby pieces of information are selected and placed together in news stories (Andsager and Powers, 1999). Two newspapers may present the same story differently by selecting and focusing on different aspects or angles of the same story (Gibbs and Warhover, 2002:159). Media framing deals with how a given media outlet shapes an event. Media do not merely provide facts; they add some context and take out other in order to engage their readers, viewers and audiences. For instance, a tabloid newspaper might draw on the human implications of a drought while a more serious newspaper would focus on its political and economic consequences.

Framing theory is useful in addressing these differences. Tankard et al (1991,p.11), define media frames as “a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration.” cited by (Cartee, 2005:p.24). Using similar principles, Entman (1993, p.52), provides a generally accepted framing definition, where framing refers to “selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”

The implication of framing theory in this study is on EBC’s issue framing for political debates for political candidates during the 2015 Ethiopian national election by considering the social, political and economic aspects of the citizen.

2.12.3 Discourse Analysis

According to the French philosopher and sociologist Michel Foucault (1926-1984), discourse theory is concerned with human expressions, often in the form of language. It highlights how such expressions are linked to human knowledge. A shared argument is that the things people say or write draw from a pool of generally accepted knowledge in a society, while at the same time feeding back into society to shape or reinforce such knowledge. What a society therefore holds to be true changes over time, depending on the ideas that members of a society exchange,

and on the way in which such exchange happens. Another common concern is how specific people, or groups of people, are able to shape these “flows of knowledge”.

Certain persons may be in a particularly strong position to define what is true, while others may be excluded from the discussion. For instance, think about the different status that health advice might have when it comes from an experienced, male medical doctor compared to when it comes from your grandmother. Even though you may not know the doctor very well, your view of his social status, of his training, and of his gender all shape how you make sense of his advice. In other words, discourse theory is concerned with questions of power, and often with questions of institutional hierarchies. In discourse theory, such hierarchies lead to domination and resistance, for example when different people try to assert who should speak with authority on issues of health policy.

The implication of this theory in this study is that to analyze the discourse or political debates on various issues held between 13 opposition political parties and the incumbent EPRDF during the fifth round (2015/2007) Ethiopian national election organized by EBC.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the methods employed to conduct the research.

3.1 Research Methodology

The objective of this study is to identify the role EBC played in the democratization processes of Ethiopia during the 2015 national election and aims to examine the role of EBC towards making fair and democratic election. Thus the main focus of this chapter is to discuss the research methodology, data gathering techniques, sampling method and data analysis technique employed for the study. In order to answer the research questions and accomplish the objectives of the research, of the three approaches to research (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed), this study dwells on the qualitative research approach. With regard to qualitative methods Kruger cited in Daniel(2008), notes that such methods create openness and allow subjects to discuss pertinent issues, clarifying ambiguity or confusion.

This study employed qualitative research design for it helps approach the subject of the study from the view of the sources used in the research (Etal, 2005). It seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspective of a local population. Yin (2011), states that qualitative research differs because of its ability to represent the views and perspectives of the participants in a study. In addition, this methodology is beneficial as it depends on variety of sources to get consolidated evidence about the issue under study.

Moreover, Creswell (2002), suggests qualitative approach is a knowledge claim that the researcher makes, based primarily on constructivist perspectives or advocacy/participatory perspectives or both. And the primary objective of developing themes from the data is made possible through the collection of open-ended and emerging data.

In addition, unlike the quantitative approach, qualitative method accommodates flexibility (Silverman, 2005, Priest,2010, citedin Nwanko, 2011, p.21).The research brings forth is also in the form of words than in numbers(Ibid,p.56). Furthermore, identifying the relevant themes contained in the data should be the main purpose when making use of a qualitative data (Ibid,p.78).

3.2 The study Design

The study employed exploratory qualitative research design. Among the three primary methods from the foundation of qualitative data collection: observation, in-depth interview and content analysis. The researcher used in-depth interview and content analysis of eight political discourses organized and broadcasted by EBC broad during the 2014/15 Ethiopian national election, and document reviews of various sources as primary and secondary data sources. The study benefited from sources interviewed for the study and were included for they have rich experience from the researcher's own experience from being a junior journalist to editor-in-chief. The interview included not only journalists, but also politicians (participants in the election of 2007(2014/15) and important persons chosen purposively as they are found to be more informative for the work. In the case of content analysis the student researcher analyzed eight round political debates out of nine of different political issues. For document analysis, different documents from secondary sources (newspaper, web pages, articles and photos) were reviewed for the study.

3.3. Sampling Techniques

As to the sampling method, the researcher used purposive sampling technique to collect the data relevant for the study and selected eight political debates out of nine political debates which were organized and broadcasted by EBC.

According to Kothari (2004), purposive sampling method involves deliberate selection of particular units of the universe for constituting a sample which represents the universe. In addition, Oliver (2012), states that purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher, based upon a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research. Some types of research design necessitate researchers taking a decision about the individual participants who would be most likely to contribute appropriate data, both in terms of relevance and depth.

Based on this eight round election debates were selected from the 2014/15 election debates. Moreover, the researcher purposively approached those journalists, editors and politicians and important persons who can better provide the information found to be relevant for the study. In other words, selected such persons who are presumed to be representative are practitioners in

area. The journalists, editors and politicians and important persons were chosen with the complete discretion of the researcher for he thought that these chosen sources are representative samples of the population accordingly nine individual's from different areas were chosen for the in-depth interview in order to gather the relevant data for this study.

3.4 Instrument of Data Collection

3.4.1 In-depth Interviews

According to Rubin and Rubin cited in Ulin, Robinson and Tolley (2005), in-depth interviews interaction between one interviewer and one respondent. Different scholars have called this kind of intensive, one-on-one interviewing a “conversational partnership”

Moreover, of the three types and styles of interviews; fully structured interview, semi-structured interview, and unstructured interview (Robson, 2002). This study took semi-structured interview guides to collect data for the consumption of its undertaking. Furthermore, semi-structured and unstructured interviews are widely used in flexible, qualitative designs where respondents are given a free reign to say whatever they like on the wide topic of the interview with a fairly minimal prompting from the interviewer

As commonly practiced, interviews are conducted one-on-one and face-to-face. Equally, they can also take place in group settings (ibid,p.54). So, it is with endorsing these ideas that the researcher took in-depth individual interview or qualitative research interview as a method for collecting data.

The study used discourse and content analysis methods for the study. Content analysis is widely used in communication research and provides a brief description of important aspects of text or data collection (Wilkinson, Joffe and Yardley, 2004). Content analysis is also technique based for gathering and analyzing the content of a program, content, according to Deacon et al, (1999), refers to any message that can be communicated in forms of words, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes or meanings. The qualitative content analysis would also help to identify the encoded message elements of the media content. The media content of the election debate of 2014/15 focused on nine issues,

These issues were qualitatively analyzed by taking the content of the 5th election debates among the political parties. The discourse and theme of the contents were analyzed so as to come up

with better analysis about the performance of EBC. In relation to qualitative content analysis, Staiger (2005, p.10), says, “The method considers the units meaning as determined by the context”. Robin et al (2005, p.224), also discusses about a qualitative content analysis as it focused on the political debates of different opposition political parties with the incumbent during the national election of 2007/2015 organized by EBC on different polices. The student researcher analyzed eight round political debates out of nine due to their availability to the study.

According to Michel Foucault (2011,p.58), discourse theory is concerned with human expressions, often in the form of language. It highlights how such expressions are linked to human knowledge. A shared argument is that the things people say or write draw from a pool of generally accepted knowledge in a society, while at the same time feeding back into society to shape or reinforce such knowledge. What a society therefore holds to be true changes over time, depending on the ideas that members of a society exchange, and on the way in which such exchange happens. Another common concern is how specific people, or groups of people, are able to shape these “flows of knowledge”

Discourse analysis was applied in this study to critically analyze the political debates held between 13 opposition political parties with the incumbent EPRDF on various issues organized by EBC to evaluate EBC’s role in the democratization process of the country as a national media.

The study focused on the political debates of different opposition political parties with the incumbent during the national election of 2007/2014/15 organized by EBC on different polices. The student researcher analyzed eight round political debates out of nine.

3.4.2 Data Analysis

The emphasis of qualitative analysis falls on how to fit the rubrics of data, bringing together context and meaning (Ulin, Robinson and Tolley, and 2005). Creswell (2002), also says, making sense out of text and image data are the things carried out in the process of data analysis. The process also involves preparing the data for analysis, going pretty deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data.

In qualitative data analysis, there is a sequence of interrelated steps to be considered; reading, coding, displaying, reducing, and interpreting (Ulin, Robinson and Tolley, 2005). As Creswell (2002:191), puts, an ideal situation in qualitative data analysis is to blend the generic steps with the specific research design steps.

As opined by Ulin, Robinson and Tolley (2005:145), qualitative analysis begins with data immersion, which means the researcher reads and rereads the organized notes and transcripts until he/she is well familiarized with the contents.

With this process the contents were classified in to identified categories. Those categories were seen in light of the various democratic issues entertained during the eight rounds of election debates between the incumbent and contesting parties. Coding is the process of organizing the material into “chunks” before bringing meaning to those “chunks.” (Rossman and Rallis, 1998 cited in Creswell 2002:192).It involves taking text data or pictures, segmenting sentences (or paragraphs) or images into categories, and labeling those categories with a term, often a term based in the actual language of the participants called, an *in vivo* term (Ibid, p.54).

This study is a critical analysis of the role of EBC in democratizing the election of 2014/15(2007). For this purpose, the Constitution of Ethiopia, broad cast law, articles, newspapers, the writings of media and political critics, government policy, various books and documents, research and scholarly works in the area of media, democracy, election and/or politics, in Ethiopia have been reviewed and carefully studied. Discourse analysis was applied to examine the various political (election), election news and debates of the EBC.

In general, this study tries to examine what roles EBC was playing in democratizing the election of 2014/15(2007) and what challenges it is facing in discharging its responsibilities. The study employed qualitative research that aimed at assessing the perception of EBC journalists, politicians (party leaders) towards their democratic roles since the election of 2014/15.

Thus, for examining the role of EBC in the democratizing the 2014/15 national election, it would be appropriate to employ qualitative methods and the methodological tool to collect the data through in-depth interview and qualitative content analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION

This chapter deals with data presentation, analysis and discussions based on the data gathered through qualitative data approach from 9 informants (journalists, media heads, opposition political party leaders, media expertise, etc...) and content analysis of the eight round political debates out of nine on different issues organized by EBC.

4.1 Qualitative Data Presentations and Analysis

As it is pointed out earlier, the qualitative data was obtained through in-depth interviews conducted with 9 informants and the content analysis of the eight round debates made between the leading party and competing parties.. Hence, this section discusses the analysis of the qualitative data. The analysis starts by looking at the understanding of the actual democratic roles that EBC played during 2015 national election, the relationship between EBC and opposition political parties, professional intervention by government officials, challenges EBC faced to practice its expected role, problems of practicing journalistic professionalism, etc...Finally, it discusses solutions that EBC is expected to do in the future.

4.1.1 Democratic Roles of EBC

Kasoma (2000, p.38), mentioned authors like Grosswiler (1998), and Dahl (1998), ‘Who seem to be undecided to clearly come out and attribute to the press a causal relationship with democracy’? Kasoma provides his counter argument thereby mentioning scholars who believe that free and independent media is the lifeblood of democracy. He mentioned, among others, scholars like Ansah, Lichtenberg, Geller, and Imanyara clearly articulate that democracy could not exist in an environment where media does not exist. What is more, he contends, media in a democracy serves as watchdog in that it monitors the power of government and other powerful institutions to make sure that they are following democratic procedures (Ibid, p.90). Along with kasoma’s argument, the student researcher raised a question about the extent to which EBC played its role in the democratization process of the country.

On this issue the vice chairman of the Oromo Federalist Congress and member of Pan African Parliament said:

EBC was not doing its best of its ability. It is not discharging its responsibility in the manner expected or stipulated in the constitutional prerogative given to it. There are rules and regulations given to organizations but some of them are not obeyed to do

it. They are not practically implemented. Concerning media in this country it has been stipulated in the constitution. But what was being done all the way through was very unknowing and embarrassing. This institution (EBC) is financed by the government which is the tax of the people of Ethiopia. (Personal interview, January 5, 2018).

On the contrary, program control manager and deputy CEO of EBC explained that, “EBC as an important media in the country, it has done a lot in the national building process. It gives information, entertaining and educating people as much as possible.”

On the other hand, business issues team leader in current affairs department of EBC said, “the journalists are working in EBC for many years. From these times for eight or seven years he and some others were working on good governance and democratization issues.”

The discourse that can be understood from the above discussions made by the Oromo Federalist Congress vice chairman and member of Pan African parliament, program control manager and deputy CEO of EBC and the business issues team leader in current affairs department of EBC indicate that EBC television efforts in the democratic process of the 2014/15 election were not done up to the level it could have been. This is implicated by the speech made by the program control manager and deputy CEO of EBC where he mentioned:

EBC tried but it did not reach to a better level. In similar vein, it is mentioned that “EBC was not doing its best of its ability. It is not discharging its responsibility in the manner expected or stipulated in the constitutional prerogative given to it”. This may reveal that EBC has not worked to the level it could towards meeting the right to the freedom of speech and expression as stipulated in the 1995 constitution and the 1992 press proclamation. (Personal interview, January 10, 2018).

Similarly, a senior editor of current affairs in the department of news and current affairs, of EBC said that, “most of the journalists are working in EBC for twelve years. It is impossible to say that EBC is playing a democratic role that is expected as a media.”

There is strong criticism made about the practices of EBC, a former Ethiopian Democratic Party head also said, “As institution EBC has played its role even if it could not achieve its media goal”. (Personal interview, January 2, 2018).

This implies that EBC seemed to give more weight to its political influence than working towards meeting the principle of journalism and working as a democratic media. The discourse of ‘EBC played its role even if it could not achieve its media’ adheres that.

Similarly, a senior expert of media monitoring and analysis, in the Federal Communication Affairs Office stated that, “many could ‘not deny that EBC is really a source of information. Now a day we can see some changes especially on social issues.’”.

This claim is supported by a director General of Media Development and Diversity from the Federal Government Communication Affairs Office, who said:

EBC was almost the only source of news and information in this country. In the previous times EBC was playing a great role in entertaining different development works and creating awareness to the public about policies and strategies of the government. It has also done a lot in covering national and regional election. It is doing its best according to the commitment level of the government for democracy. EBC was also active when the constitution was ratified. In this case it has done much in creating awareness about each and every article of the constitution to the public. During the split among TPLF members and at the period of called *Yetehadiso Niqinaqe* the role of EBC covering related events was so good. (Personal interview, January 8, 2018).

He added that EBC has made its effort to work for the country, but it does not play its role as expected. He also mentioned that, “There are a number of positive efforts that sometimes some government officials are not giving information to EBC. There is no culture in EBC using better experience of different mediums”. (Personal interview, January 8, 2018).

This reveals that EBC’s right as media is denied by officials who have public accountability to provide public information where anybody has the right to seek and impart information as in the 2008 media freedom and access to information and the 2007 broadcast proclamation of the country.

Similarly, representative director of mass media, monitoring and capacity building, in the Ethiopian Broadcast Authority told that:

We as broadcast authority are monitoring and evaluating broadcast information. And we are presenting and make it available the result to the public. When we see the effort of EBC in the areas strengthening the democratization process in Ethiopia we can say that there are better jobs done. It has also done in making government policy and strategy to be reached to the public. It is also a source of information. But in the case of presenting different ideas freely, it has limitations. (Personal interview, January 7, 2018).

He added that, “EBC is not a front media of information. Sometimes important information announced in EBC after it has been broadcasted in some other mediums. Different sounds are not heard in EBC from opposition political parties.” (Personal interview, January 7, 2018)

Most of the interviewee agreed that there are limitations in EBC in creating awareness of the public about the programs of political parties and those policies and strategies of the government. EBC is not working towards meeting public interest as its principles and there are complaints that have come to them by mentioning that ‘information is not broadcasted in EBC.

4.1.2 The Role of Free Press in Democratization Process

Many of the 21st century scholars agree that a free press has an indispensable role in the democratization process. For instance Klein, (2017, p.45.) agree that “a free press is indispensable for people to be informed and to participate in a democracy”. According to the author a democratic and free press helps citizens to exercise their democratically driven rights without fear or favor. Therefore, a given media both government owned private as well freely opens fairly its door for political debates and dialogue so as to inform the citizen.

On the other hand, McNair (2011, p. 44), asserts that “freedom of press is always viewed as a central to the democratic process.” On this sense having a free press is not a choice for a democratization process rather it is compulsory. In the face of these scholars the researcher is aimed at critically analyzing the role of EBC as a free press during the 2015 Ethiopian national election based on the data collected thoroughly.

Still, the coverage pattern and treatment of the party on power and the competing parties as the vice chairman and member of pan African parliament have not been fairly treated and freedom could not be achieved through the media by letting the media become the voice of the unvoiced voices in the nation.

4.1.3 Challenges of EBC in the Journey to Democracy

According to the informants EBC faces various challenges that hinder it towards the journey to democracy. For instance authors like Ravi (2017), argue that governments cannot be held accountable if citizens are ill informed about the actions of officials and institutions. This cannot be done without vibrant media. From the point of view EBC has left behind in serving the democracy to the level it could as the informants indicated above. The watchdog press is guardian of the public interest, warning citizens against those who are doing them harm. A fearless and effective watchdog is critical in fledgling democracies where institutions are weak and pummeled by political pressure.

Having a free media in an emerging democracy in Ethiopia is not easy. Accordingly, news and current affairs producer and shift editor in EBC said, “Establishing a free press in a given country specifically like Ethiopia a developing state cannot be easily achieved at night as a result of various challenges emanated from the political economy ideology the country followed”. (Personal interview, January 6, 2018)

As a result, for the question for he, on whether EBC has got any challenges or not in exercising its right guaranteed by the constitution. It is stated that, “From the very scratch, EBC is established with a motto of “the sound of diversity and renaissance to serve the citizen along with the editorial policy and ethics of the profession. However, EBC has not been yet serving the citizen as per the required amount.” (personal interview, January 6, 2018).

In fact it was also told that there are different hitch ups that hinder the media not to render better journalism as to the principles of a free press.

It is further argued that EBC attempted a little bit on diversifying voices during election times though it is not quenching. According to him EBC mostly focused on the good deeds of the ruling government as if there are no public complaints and grievances in the county, the deputy director of EBC in contrary indicated that:

It can be remembered that EBC hold a forum during 2005(1997 E.C) national election. That was a great achievement. At that time opposing political parties were entertaining their political agenda on EBC live. Hence, I can reaffirm that EBC was playing its share in the democratization process of the country. EBC along with versatile challenges, it attempted to play a pivotal role in the democratization process

focusing on the culture and value of the community, level of education and awareness of the citizen. It is undeniable that EBC lacks a capacity to fulfill the needs of millions of people. as a result most of its air time is outsourced to the regional states mass media. Therefore, insufficient air time can be taken as a major challenge that hinders EBC to be a voice of diversity. (Personal interview, January 10, 2018)

For similar question concerning job responsibility, former Ethiopian Democratic Party head, critically summarized that, as long as EBC is financed by the government, it is undeniable that it favor for incumbent. The editorial policy by itself is designed in a way that can favor the government. According to him EBC is observed fairly reporting on the socio-economic lives of the community but, when it comes to the political agenda it is against the needs of the community. at large in addition to the opposition political parties. I think, lack of professionalism, the turnover rate and the influence of the incumbent can be listed as causes that EBC is facing so far.

Similar to, former Ethiopian Democratic Party head and Director General of Media Development and Diversity, agree that lack of diversified free media coupled with the government action of close most of the private press creates conducive opportunity for EBC to stick up on promoting the good deeds of the government. On the other hand, it closed its door to entertain the diversified views of the opposition parties.

After sharing some the above views related with EBC's role in the democratization process added that EBC's media landscape seems disorganized. To him much of the air time is out sourced to the regional states Media. The remaining few air times is allotted for promotion. It is ignorance to the public social, economic and political issues seemed as EBC is not a national media.

Therefore, interference of government, lack of professionalism, insufficient air time, self-censorship, illegitimate sanctions, and the turnover rate of practitioners are found as a major challenges that EBC has been facing on the journey to democracy along with its little attempt.

4.1.4 EBC and Political Parties

Scholars agree that media has a direct relationship with political parties in various ways. For instance Dugger, (2000), further elaborates that, "The relationship between media and

government... In the struggle for attracting audiences and promoting independent voice, journalists use politicians as one of their news sources. Moreover, politicians need the media to address their public and get support.” (p.10).

It is undeniable that the relationship political parties and government with media is very strong because both need media to address their programs to the public. Chobanian 2015), it’s as there are:

There are three areas of nexus in the relationship between media and political parties. First, the media resort to the parties as one of their major political sources that they need to perform their democratic functions. Second, as it works in their relationship with the government too, the media inspect platforms of different political parties in which they evaluate and present to the public the likely effects of the programs of the parties if the people are to elect them. Third, the political parties draw on the media to address the public as to what the public needs to know about their programs. In addition, fundamentally, it is through the media that the parties can maintain a regular connection with their public (p.45).

In this case for the question I raised the relationship of EBC with the political parties, vice chairman of the Oromo federalist congress and member of pan African parliament, said, “This institution (EBC) is serving the incumbent without giving the smallest Share to the opposition and while other citizen is in need.” (Personal interview, January5, 2018)

Similarly, news and current affairs producer and shift editor, further elaborated that, “The ideas and stands of political parties are not well entertained because self-censorship begins from our bosses. The journalist’s sometimes go out and bring back with some ideas and then decide them by saying ‘no this cannot be entertained in our media.’” (Personal interview, January 6,2018).

From the above interviewee one can understand that, no matter how the 1995 constitution of Ethiopia guarantee freedom of speech and expression of as contain in article 29, it can be said that the freedom of expression is not addressed because of the managerial problems of media leaders. So journalists are not taking a risk by doing so. Everybody thinks of his/her salary and his/her personal gains. This might not be the intention of the government, but managerial incapacity of the media would be a factor for the improper practice of the media towards

building democracy in the country. Because of all these reasons EBC could not play its role as it has been expected.

According to, news and current affairs producer and shift editor, it is impossible to say fully that EBC is not carrying out its mission adding that there are trials. But it is true EBC does not work as it has been expected. But sometime what all (political parties) say may be not broadcasted, because EBC is considered by him as a responsible media. If EBC cannot broadcast all political parties' appropriate idea in one way or another it is wrongful act the informant.

No matter how the claim made by the former informant, the program office and the deputy director of EBC put forth saying, "It is true we are not serving Political parties as expected. But they have also simply hatred for EBC. They do not have knowledge how the media is working. They have little knowledge about media environment." (Personal interview, January 10, 2018).

This indicates that there are certain gaps in the way EBC is perceived, but one cannot simply claim that there is no truth in it in regard to the low access of the media to the contesting parties. In fact in democracy it would not be easy to broadcasting the interest of all individuals.

Business issues team leader in current affairs department, on the other hand similarly said:

As EBC is serving the government, it does not serve the opposition political parties. But political parties do not have good attitude for EBC. When they are calling us for news coverage they are not respecting us. They are snatching and contemplating. Because of this I have damped news two times, I remember. Sometimes the news conference they call would be full of nagging and so on."(Personal interview, January 12,2018).

As the interviewee, actually it is difficult to say EBC is serving the opposing political parties well as indicated in the editorial policy of the media. According to him one reason that EBC is not serving the political parties well is their bad attitude towards EBC. Their main complaint on EBC is that EBC is dumping their idea away, and of course, that might work straight right because there could be a failure in serving them as expected.

Similarly, the senior expert of media monitoring and analysis, gives an example that EBC was reporting the celebration of the anniversary of the ruling party that is Ethiopian people revolutionary democratic front (EPRDF). Every event of the celebration was reported and

announced to the public very well. On the other hand, EBC could not report press conferences of the opposition political parties as it did for EPRDF's anniversary. Most of the time, the public listen the conferences and meetings of the opposing political parties from some other medium including social medium. Rather, EBC has taken much of its time by reporting the weakness, disagreement and conflicts of opposition political parties. Most likely, it focuses on their bad side. When the political parties are criticizing some government policies and tasks, EBC will be busy in criticizing their critics. EBC gives too much air time covering events related to EPRDF. But it is complained that gives less credit for the opposition parties. Sometimes the opposition political parties are also dissatisfied with EBC and complaining it. When one sees EBC as a media, it seems that is doing its task by taking advantage of the government.

Correspondingly, the Director General of Media Development and Diversity observed that EBC has failed to sound the ideas, views and programs of the opposition political parties. It does not serve well. Sometimes some political parties will get the chance and others will not. There are no clear criteria for this. Not only the political parties but anyone who has a different idea could not be treated by EBC.

Therefore, EBC as a national media is claimed as not entertaining the views and voice of opposition political parties compared with the incumbent. In contrary, EBC is alleged as a media promoting the activities of the government ignoring the subject of the opposition parties.

4.1.5 Media Ownership and its Influence on the Perceptions of the Public towards EBC

Ownership of media has got something to do with how the media is perceived by audience. Of course, one ship in all the ways cannot put its thumb prints in the media practice and usability in all the ways. However, because EBC covers about the positive aspects or success stories of the party on power and down plays contesting party's interests in the news and programs, it doesn't seem to gain public trust. As a result, most of the informants tended to agree that the public has no positive attitude to EBC. They consider EBC as propaganda machine of EPRDF. For example, former Ethiopian Democratic Party head, in relation to this case:

The ruling party assumes EBC as its own property. The opposition parties on the other hand think that EBC is parts and side of the ruling party. This has been seen practically. Due to all these reasons the opposition parties are looking EBC in doubt.

If EBC is not independent and it is working for the success and win of the ruling party, then what is expected from the opposition parties about EBC? EBC is always doing wrong things. For example, I myself had an experience of what I had said and what was reported was mismatched. This may create a wrong image of mine in the society. So, this (the absence of credibility) might irritate the opposition political parties. (Personal interview, January 2,2018)

4.1.6 EBC's Editorial Policy and the Broadcast Media Law

Scholars agree that within the context of supporting democratic transitions, the goal of media development generally should be to move the media from one that is directed or even overtly controlled by government or private interests to one that is more open and has a degree of editorial independence that serves the public interest. A media sector supportive of democracy would be one that has a degree of editorial independence, has diverse and plural voices, and serves the public interest. In this case EBC has an editorial policy that allows it to serve all legal and registered opposing political parties and the public equally without any discrimination.

There is also conducive environment in the country for media to do according to the freedom of speech and the principle of the absence of censorship. It is also confirmed in the constitution and media laws passed by Ethiopian broadcasting Authority. For example, Article 29 of the Ethiopian constitution puts as "...everyone has the right to freedom of expression without any interference..."

Similarly, media law passed by Ethiopian broadcasting Authority (Proclamation No.533/2007) declares as:

Any program to be transmitted shall reflect different and balanced viewpoints to serve the public at large" I also go on stating that "Any broadcasting service licensee shall allocate free airtime for political organizations and candidates registered in accordance with the relevant law, to publicize their objectives and programs to the people or to transmit statements during election period (p.3).

No matter how the issues raised in the constitution, serving various viewpoints was meant mainly for the party on power. This is supported by the claim of business issues team leader in current affairs department, who mentions that, "In some Cases yes EBC is not serving the public and the opposition parties as per the required amount. The founding

decree of EBC obliged it serving 3 bodies. That is the public, the government and opposition parties”.

Similarly, the senior expert of media monitoring and analysis, added that, “The editorial policy and the constitution allow the media (EBC) to serve all equally. But it does not perform its task according to the editorial policy given to it. It is observable that EBC is standing on the extreme side of the government and afraid to serve the others”.

This mean EBC is not working based on its editorial policy but by the interest of certain individuals indicated by the informants. This is still supported by, the senior expert of media monitoring and analysis. On his part said that “EBC is not undertaking its responsibility according to the constitution, editorial policy, free press and broadcast law.

Therefore, it is understood that the constitution of the country, the broadcast law and the editorial policy of EBC allows to serve the public and the opposition parties equally, but the experience of EBC indicates that it couldn't fulfill its mission and goal according to the those declarations.

4.1.7 EBC Journalists Freedom

Media is expected to be free from any interference. Media independence is a precondition for any media decided to serve the public. Amanpour (2017), said that democracy is impossible without a free press. This is a precept that is deeply ingrained in democratic theory and practice.

Concerning the goal of media Zaller (1999, p.2), highly recommended that the goal of media politics is to produce stories that attract big audiences and that emphasize the "Independent and Significant Voice of Journalists.” For citizens, the goal is to monitor politics and hold politicians accountable on the basis of minimal effort.

On this issue, the news and current affairs producer and shift editor, said that, there is professional freedom in EBC. In EBC the problem emanates from leadership. But sometimes there are cases that are reserved for bosses only. There is also self-censorship, by saying ‘no we don't want to do this.’ But if the journalists are boldly doing their job, no one say ‘no.’ he added that, in EBC there is no strong news room leadership. Self-censorship is very strong; this is one the problem EBC is facing.

Similarly, one of the major limitations is the low level of skillful man power that is committed on the basis of knowledge and principles of journalism, towards practicing professional journalism which can disseminate balanced news and programs and also to entertaining different ideas. He said that EBC is not working like a voice for the voiceless. This might be attributed to, individual journalists self –censorship of tradition that EBC has been facing as the program officer and deputy director of EBC.

Self-censorship, as the business issues team leader in current affairs department, has become a tradition of journalists in a bid to favor the government and put themselves in a safe zone. This has been the case as, the senior editor of current affairs in the department of news and current affairs, and the former Ethiopian Democratic Party head, because, “All bosses and most of the journalists are members of the ruling party. The bosses are appointee of the ruling party. So they will take side for their party, whatever they are doing including their profession”. (Personal interview, January 12,2018).

According to the Director General of Media Development and Diversity, most journalists are committed to foster the journalistic principles along with the editorial policy of EBC. However journalists are not free to do so as long as they are intimidated by their immediate bosses. As a result public dissatisfaction on the news stores that EBC produced are resulted.

Similar to the Director General of Media Development and Diversity, idea the representative director of mass media, monitoring and capacity, also added that:

At the time when we were at inspection we get opinions from EBC staff members that there is interference. Biasness in EBC is personal. There are complains, from different angles that EBC journalists are not free in their professions. They are sometimes not confident, they afraid. They are saying; ‘if we do this we will be accountable.’ Some times editors are influencing them. The broadcast low gave freedom to the media to present diversified views. (Personal interview, January 8, 2018)

Therefore, in one way or another in EBC there is an influence up on journalist. Freedom of profession is in question mark. There is also lack of professionalism as well. Being a party member is also another problem.

4.1.8 EBC as a Forum for Debate and Discussion

One of the goals of media is to serve as a public forum for the best idea to emerge. Curran (2005, p. 126), suggested that the media is considered to be an autonomous space that is distinct from society wherein ideas struggle for supremacy and “reason-based consensus emerges that guides the public direction of societies.” The well-known American democrat Thomas Jefferson arguing that only through the exchange of information and opinion through the press would the truth emerge.

Within this frame work, the senior expert of media monitoring and analysis articulates EBC as a media could not set an agenda and forums by itself especially to make elections fair and balance. He said EBC associates every broadcast with EPRDF. In similar tone, the Director General of Media Development and Diversity also said that, “EBC does not work as public forum. Investigative journalism is not as such practical. Earlier there was an investigative program called ‘*Aynachin*’ but it was closed for unknown reasons for the public”

Generally, the discourse made about the EBC as a media is not positive about its professional practice. Most of the informants tended to agree that it could only be said there is an effort. Based on the data gathered, the unfavorable political situation observed about the incumbent government recently demonstrated that EBC could not become the voice of diversity. This is because the EBC could not “serve as a conduit between governors and the governed and as an arena for public debate that leads to more intelligent policy and decision making thought it is expected to do so as any democratic media (Odika 2013). It can be said that the media system of any country is a reflection of the social political and economic environment in which it operates.

Ansah (1988, p.12), said that, Africa is dominated by single-party regimes without the provision of a significant choice of leadership. Therefore, he concluded that having such environment, expecting the media to be an active role player in the provision of forum for debate is ‘unrealistic.’ This needs to be changed for EBC like any other democratic media is expected to accept the responsibility to facilitate a plate form for diversified ideas as McQuail (1983, p. 90), indicates. This function however, is already neglected by EBC and the discourse made about the media is not positive. This indicates that it is failed to be a social responsible media with reference to the forum function media.

Thus, EBC as one of the media that has wider coverage is expected to have greater contribution. This is because one of the contributions of media is developing the culture of covering of issues related to societal problems thereby influencing policy makers. Problems related to ‘injustices’ are never and ever enduring. In similar way EBC is expected to do so but honestly speaking EBC does not serve the public well. It is hoped that EBC become the tool for democracy and development.

The program control manager and deputy CEO added that:

We need EBC to be the agent of changes. But we are not in apposition of hiding information, because now a day peoples are holding the world in their pocket within their mobile apparatus. In fact in principle there is no free media in the world. American media is working for the benefits of Americans. When we come to Ethiopia it is a complicated nation. I know there is thinking why EBC not as such a public media? But when you see the reality it is different thing, no matter how what is practiced elsewhere. (personal interview, January 10,2018).

The business issues team leader in current affairs department said that, EBC staff members are not satisfying the public’s interest. Still as a national media EBC has short coming to be an agent to solve public’s problem and not fully answered the question of the public. It has wide gaps in strengthening the democratization process in Ethiopia.

Similarly, the former Ethiopian Democratic Party leader pointed out that, it is fair and professional to broadcast a balanced report. The public needs a variety of ideas. They cannot get enough information, so that they are dissatisfied. Due to this reason the public turns its face to other alternatives. Because of EBC not performing its responsibility the public exposed to other distorted information. So, for years EBC does not play its role in creating awareness in the society in the areas of democracy. EBC wasted much of its time by transmitting and presenting government’s propaganda, songs, and dancing, showing landscapes of the country and the like. But instead of all these there are different social issues and problems that should be entertained. However EBC failed to do so. Some investigative programs like *Aynachin* were not becoming sustainable. According to the interviewee it is true that EBC is a well experienced media but it failed in the areas of journalistic principles like independence, responsibility, fairness and so on.”

According to the Director General of Media Development and Diversity, still there are wide gaps and problems in EBC. It is true that Information transmitted by EBC does not meet the interest of the public. That is why EBC is trying to reforming itself now. EBC has serious problems in implementing different ideas, values and issues of democracy.

The researcher, therefore, comes up with important points that indicate EBC is in fact trying its level best to fulfill its mission but it doesn't satisfied public's interest as expected. There are different role expected to be played by EBC but duo to its weak performance it doesn't its touch its target well.

4.1.9 2015 Ethiopian National Election and the Role of EBC

Until EPRDF freed the country from *Derg* and it came to power in 1991 Ethiopian has never experienced any democratic elections. But after EPRDF led government come to power five round elections have been conducted every five years gap. The 5th round national election held in May, 2015.the election hosted by national electoral board of Ethiopia (NEBE). According to different sources gathered from different corners. The 2014/15 national election was focused in different areas. The researcher has tried to narrate some focusing areas below.

On the other hand, Ethiopian broadcasting authority has allowed air time for the candidates in a bid to inform the citizens to make their decision on variety of issues.

Table 1-Times allocated to political parties in media

Allocated hours in election media	600 hours
Allocated column in print media	700 column
No issues (agendas) for debate in EBC	9(multi- party system, building democracy, federalism, agriculture and rural policy, urban development, industrial policy, good governance, rule of law, national security, foreign policy, infrastructure, education and health.)
No of aired and printed activities related to election campaign	1,165
No of air banned	20 (due to their violent nature)

The total air time and print used by EPRDF in %	98%
The total air time and print used by the opposition political parties %	51%

Source: Ethiopian herald, 26 May 2015

During and on the election period, the ruling party and opposition political parties as well can use state media launch their campaign. This is stated in the Article 59 of the 2015 the Ethiopian Electoral Law. It stipulates that political organizations and candidates' supporters are entitled to free access and use of state owned media. The mass media and journalists are guided by a code of conduct derived from elections regulations number 6/2010.

The African Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM) was informed by EBA that some political party campaign messages submitted to the media houses did not meet the requirements. Therefore could not be transmitted without revision. However, some political parties confirmed that some media houses were unable to air their campaign messages, as they were not willing to revise their messages as required by the EBA.

The African Union observers therefore, reported that some political parties alleged that the media (including EBC) were unable to air their campaign messages in the original forms. Censorship in Ethiopia makes it difficult for members of opposition parties to effectively campaign to the general Ethiopian populous, thus limiting knowledge of political candidates. The censorship in Ethiopia makes it difficult for members of opposition parties to effectively campaign to the general Ethiopian populous, thus limiting knowledge of political candidates.

4.1.10 Covering Election 2015

It is obvious that media plays a significant role at the time of election in covering the processes. (Lange, 2004, p. 209) suggested that media have g great role during elections in that they cover the political process, and also play a part in shaping and contributing to public opinion formation. He also added that candidates simply presented their future program and the current debating themes in media.

As a result, the student researcher is aimed at examining the role of EBC during the 2015 national election. Informants also reflected their idea in relation to the role EBC.

According to the vice chairman of the Oromo federalist congress and member of pan African parliament, therefore, EBC has never done well during the period of the election (2015). Not done what is expected from it. Just for formula to make things appear and it has been said, opposition parties have got air time and used EBC. His party (OFC) has tried to present its manifesto but the media (including EBC) are literally cancelling because it was not their interest, so were being embarrassed.

The news and current affairs producer and shift editor, on his part a little bit disagreed with the idea of the vice chairman of the Oromo federalist congress and member of pan African parliament, by saying that, the 2005/1997 national election was a model for our democracy. All stands, views, ideas and programs of the government and opposition political parties were entertained very well in EBC. During election times EBC reported news and programs according to the time table of Board of the national election. The opposition parties were participated in the panel discussions prepared by EBC. But during election times EBC was not reporting complains of the people in relations to the results of elections. It was this complains raised many times by the opposition parties. EBC could not show the real problems associated with elections raised by the public and the opposition parties. It is impossible to say that EBC is fully cover election final results as the public expected. In this case EBC couldn't reach to the public.

Similarly, business issues team leader in current affairs department, expressed the election process as follows:

As it was known, one of the manifestations of democracy is election. For example elections of 2000, 2002, 2007, I have been participated as a reporter. So, EBC has tried its best to make the election fair, free and democratic. But as national media and worked for long, what it has done was not enough. Even if they were not live there were debates between political parties. The whole debates were aired by EBC. And when the election was run we have tried to conduct an interview with opposition parties. For example, at the time of 2015(2007) national election I was reporting the election process at Bole, there was wrong thinking among the opposition parties that EBC is not reporting their view. (personal interview, January 12, 2018).

According to the above speech members of political parties were not willing to provide EBC with the right and full information. At the time of pre- election process their debate was not transmitted live, so that they complained that their idea was cut when it was aired. It is true when they were debating the time allocated to them was limited. It was not enough to express their idea, because of this that they are complaining. He said he agree with their complains, because the time allocated to them was not enough to express their whole programs and planes to the people within such short time, while EPRDF has long time to express itself. In fact the time was allocated by Ethiopian broadcast authority according to the seats they have in the parliament.

According to another interviewee during the time of elections EBC was trying to entertain the ideas and programs of opposition parties but it was not sufficient obtained to the level the country's democracy needs. There is an effort to allocate air time to each of them to express their programs. The attempt is weak. Especially opposition parties are not using this media properly. They are not properly participated in EBC, let alone in 2015 election even the whole round elections. They all come to studio and use air time allocated to them by Ethiopian broadcast authority. But the problem is most of the time EBC is not set an agenda for the opposition parties to introduce their programs to the public. When they are expressing their ideas EBC is broadcasting it according to the interest of the ruling party. There is also an attempt of dividing and make them clash the parties each other by EBC. So, no one can say that EBC is properly served the opposition politic parties.

In contrary, still the other informants clearly articulated the role of EBC at the time of 2015 national election saying that, EBC is not independent media. This has been seen during the election times. It never presented different ideas of political parties to the public. It did not do this by allocating enough and balanced air time for competent candidates of political parties.

The interviewee went on stating that, "As we know the air time was allocated by the ruling party itself, by the name of experience of some other country. This is sometimes good in the countries where privet media are better developed and different media are there as an option. But here we don't have such accesses. Air time given to the opposition parties is always seen as favor and as a gift". This is because, perhaps the ruling party considers itself as the owner who gives air time and the opposition parties are takers from the owner.

There is a common discourse that the media have not served the public, but there is a claim from the media that it is serving the people in relation to this.

The former Ethiopian Democratic Party head continuing by asking questions like:

If EBC is saying it is working for balance and fairness, where is it? If we do not have equal chance and equal air time to debate with the ruling party, what is fairness? At the time of election the role of EBC should be creating awareness to the people on the issues of political rights, and agitates the people to participate in the election and exercise its constitutional right. But what EBC was reporting about the election standing at the election station was not enough. At the time of election it is not only the politicians but different social classes like intellectuals, youngsters, women and everyone wanted to reflect his/her views on the media. Idea is not being afraid and limited. (Personal interview, January 2, 2018).

The above two interviewees implicated that EBC does not serve what is expected to serve. One could expect EBC would sustain the democratization process began in the country. But it did not happen so. At the time of 2002 and 2007 national elections, the opposing political parties became weak, then the media including EBC only presented about the ruling party agenda and as a result political parties were not able to actively participate in the media, At the time of 2005 national election, the debates of political parties were transmitted live to the public. But election debates after 2005 were not live. That is why the opposition political parties did consider EBC the propaganda machine of EPRDF.

Similarly, an informant stated that at the time of 2005 national election live debates of different political parties were transmitted. The public has got a chance of hearing different views. Programs and planes of opposition parties were introduced by EBC to the public properly. From all these I can conclude that at that time EBC has played a great role of becoming as sources of information. So, EBC has done well in the 2005 national election. In 2010 (2002) election to some extent it has tried to entertain different ideas of opposition parties.

Therefore, some of the informants claim that the way EBC covers the national election of 2014/15 was very weak. Opposition political parties and the public didn't satisfy in the way EBC cover the process of the election. They also added that EBC was focusing on news coverage of elections in fever of EPRDF, and time was limited for the debates of opposing

political parties. So, EBC was not doing its journalistic practice fair and balance. Others argued that EBC was tried its best to cover the process of the election. In fact political party debates were not live. In this case they agreed that EBC didn't practice as it was expected.

4.2 Analysis of the Political Debate

Under this topic the student researcher attempted to analyze the selected eight political debates organized by Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation on various issues aimed the study concentrated on analyzing the role of EBC could play in the democratization process with a specific reference to the 2007or 14/15 Ethiopian national election.

4.2.1 General Procedures of the Debate

First of all, EBC journalist who chaired one of the debates introduces the topic of the debate held between EPRDF and opposition political parties for the audience. These political parties were selected to participate in the debates according to the number of candidates they presented for the parliament. These are:-

- 1.አህአዴግ (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Remocratic Front)
- 2.መድረክ (Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum)
- 3.አዴፓ (Ethiopian Democratic Party)
- 4.ሰማያዊ (Blue Party)
- 5.ቅንጅት (Coalition for Unity and Democratic Party)
- 6.አንድነት (Unity for Democracy and Justice)
- 7.አትፓ (New Generation Party)
- 8.መኢአድ (All Ethiopian Unity Organization)
- 9.አራፓ (Ethiopian *Raie* Party)
- 10.አዴአን (Ethiopian Democratic Unity Movement)
- 11.መኢብን (All Ethiopian National Movement)
- 12.አፍዴታግ (Ethiopian Justice and Democratic Force Front)
- 13.መአህዴፓ (All Oromo People Democratic Party)

EBC had allocated 1080 minutes or 18 hours for all nine round political debates. The topics or issues of the debates which included:

- Education policy.
- Agriculture and rural development policy.
- Foreign affairs and intelligence policy.
- Federalism.
- The democracy of multiparty system and human rights.
- City and industrial development policy.
- Good governance and rule of law.
- Infrastructure policy.
- Health policy.

Two hours were allocated for each debate. Each debate was grouped in to three phases. The first phase offered chance for debaters to present their initial idea on the selected topic for debate. The second phase granted chances for debaters to explain their view after they heard the initial views of each other. The third and the final phase offered chances for participants to conclude their idea.

For the first phase 39 minutes were allocated and out of it 15 minutes were allocated for EPRDF and 6 minutes were allocated for opposition political parties to present their initial idea on the topic chaired for the debate. For the next phase that is explanation 56 minutes were allocated out of it 20 minutes were allocated for EPRDF and 9 minutes for the rest of opposition political parties each. Some 26 minutes were allocated for the final phase. Out of which 10 minutes were allocated for EPRDF and 4 minutes were allocated for the opposition political parties each to conclude their idea.

The political debate on April 10,13,16,18,19, 23,25,28,29 and 2014/15 was chaired by one EBC journalist who was in charge of controlling time allocated for participants. And he/she announces the next party who is ready to uphold the stage. Order of presentation was determined by lottery chances. The lottery was drawing two times. The first lottery determines that whether EPRDF or the opposition political parties take the stage. The second lottery was drawing among the opposition political parties that determine their orders they follow to

present their views. The purpose of EBC providing these debate programs is that the political parties should advertise their programs and aim to the public. These debates were carried out on the issues and topics they agreed to debate on.

In all these stages the facilitator sometimes interrupted the idea of the participant specially the opposition political party's representatives. Names of party representatives and journalists who chaired the political debates are reproduced in the appendices.



Fig 1, election 2015 political party's debate

4.2.2 Political Debates on Education and Social Development Policy

This was the topic organized by EBC for the 2007/15 national election. In this stage 5 opposition political parties were participated. Namely:-Blue party, Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum, Coalition for Unity and Democratic Party, Ethiopian *Raie* Party, Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front and the incumbent EPRDF

Opposition political parties were debated with EPRDF on the education and social development policy of the ruling party and activities undertaken to scale-up social development. On this stage opposition political parties won the lottery to present their idea before that of EPRDF. Based on the second lottery drawn Blue Party, Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum, Coalition for Unity and Democratic Party, Ethiopian *Raie* party, were scheduled to take the stage respectively and Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front become the last presenter.

The political debate is divided into three stages. The first offered chances for political parties to present their initial ideas. The second phase offered time for presentation while the third deals with summary.

On the education and social development policy debate, opposition political parties stressed the failures of the education policy of the ruling party. Issues like lack of quality education, over depreciating lives of teachers, adopting foreign educational policies that did not fit the socio-economic endeavor of Ethiopia, inappropriate engagement of government political system in education, were pointed out by the opposition political parties as a mistake committed by EPRDF educational policy over the last 24 years. One of their representatives declared that:

EPRDF's education policy is designed in the way that denies the moral of teachers by maximizing workload and paying less. So that, the policy by itself is a threat for future Ethiopia hence the upcoming generation pass through this deteriorated policy. The education policy and curriculum as well is driven directly from outside without taking into account the social, political, historical and economic aspects of the country and its citizens. Education must be led by expertise. But in the case EPRDF's era the educational systems manipulated by cadres.

EPRDF on his part said that the educational policy was one that the government can speak loudly for its successful achievements. More than 34,000 schools were opened and boost access to education. Women got the chance to education close to one to one ratio with that of men. One of the representatives of EPRDF on his part mentioned that:

Our policy gave a special priority for teachers. The policy solves problems seen in the sector for long time in the past. Previously there were 2 million students and 4 thousand schools were in the country. There were 68 thousand teachers. Nowadays there are 34 thousand schools and above 24 million students are in the country. Now 439 teachers are working. The capacity of teachers has got priority. In each *kebele* at least there are one or two schools are available.

To wrap-up the 7th stage of political debate on education and social development debate was concluded offering sufficient time for EPRDF to present ideas while denying time for political opposition parties to summarize opinions on both sides concrete policies were not raised that that can change the nation through education.

4.2.3 Political Debates on Agriculture and Rural Development Policy

In this stage 5 opposition political parties were participated to hold their election campaign analyzing the rural and development policy of the ruling party. Namely:-Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, Unity for Democracy and Justice, Ethiopian Democratic Unity Movement, Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum, Ethiopian Justice and Democratic Force Front.

On this stage, EPRDF won the lottery to start the debate. Unity for Democracy and Justice, Ethiopian Democratic Unity Movement, Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum, Ethiopian Justice and Democratic Force Front presented their political view based on their lottery chance.

On the political debate EPRDF presented on the major achievement of the party over agriculture and rural development policy. The main theme of EPRDF debate was agricultural productivity, technology transfer, access to health care service and education to the rural community, food security, job creation; irrigation based agriculture were some of the achievements that EPRDF registered over the last five years through implementing effective agriculture and rural development policy. One of the representatives of EPRDF indicated that,

Hence, part of the society is dependent agriculture. EPRDF followed agriculture led industrialization aiming at boosting the lives hood of the farmers and transforming in to industry as well. Therefore, over the years the government has rendered enormous attention for the field. The objective on the ground shows that the effective implementation of the policy has shown visible changes on the lives of farmers

In the contrary, the opposition political parties claimed EPRDF as a responsible party for low level lives of the farmers and the rural community. They have also blamed EPRDF's policy over land is owned by government.in general; one of the representatives said that:

EPRDF land policy is not effective in such a way that farmers are living under poverty line because of they are snatched rights to decide on their own land.in the names of investment thousands of farmers are displaced without getting fair reward. The agricultural sector is still running in traditional ways in most parts of the country. As a result the lives of farmers are declining from time to time. This caused uncontrolled migration to cities and urban areas

4.2.4 Political Debates on Foreign Affairs and Intelligence Policy

In this debate 6 opposition political parties were participated. These were:-Ethiopian people's revolutionary democratic front, Ethiopian federal democratic unity forum, All Ethiopian unity organization, Blue party, Coalition for unity and Democratic Party, Ethiopian justice and democratic force front.

On this stage, EPRDF won the lottery to start the debate. Ethiopian federal democratic unity forum, All Ethiopian unity organization, Blue party, Coalition for unity and Democratic Party, Ethiopian justice and democratic force front presented their political view based on their lottery chance.

On the debate EPRDF representatives said that the foreign affairs and intelligence policy of the country aimed to fulfill the goal of development and democracy in Ethiopia. According to EPRDF cooperation strengthen with all neighboring countries based on common economic benefit. The cooperation focuses on peace and development and economic integration. Trade and business diplomacy is another part of the foreign affairs policy. In this case Ethiopia has achieved success. Ethiopian foreign policy is designed based on peace and stability with neighboring countries. This is a base for poverty redaction and sustainable peace in the country. It was noted that as a result of pertinent foreign policy the image of the country is changing. The policy creates good investment environment and stability.

One of the representatives of EPRDF announced that:

Our foreign policy, which was effective with both neighboring and oversea countries are designed forgetting on our common interest and peaceful coexistence. As a result our foreign policy registered remarkable results in the areas of political, economic, social and diplomatic endeavor. To further strengthen our diplomatic and economic ties we are now connected with neighboring countries though rail ways, road and electricity. As a result we have built our cult globally and attracting thousands of investors.

Representatives of opposition political parties on their side said that Ethiopia has played a great role in the establishment of the previous OAU and now AU and in the previous League of Nations and now UN. Most of the political opposition parties though agreed that Ethiopia's foreign affairs and intelligence policy has shown a little progress with neighboring and foreign

countries, they strongly pointed out that there are lots of things that led the country down ward. For example, the poor diplomatic relation of Ethiopia with Eritrea resulted the loss of *Badme* and the death of thousands of the youth between the two countries. They stressed that Ethiopia become a land locked country losing the *Asab* port as a result of poor diplomatic relation that the ruling party was following over the last couple of decades. One of the opposition political parties' representatives clearly stated that:

Ethiopia has a long history of diplomacy and foreign policy. Due to its strong diplomatic policy Ethiopian kept its sovereignty. As Ethiopia is not colonized it is a model for the rest of African countries. Ethiopia has done a lot in the formation of league of nation now UN and the previous OAU now AU. Because of the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea we lost *Badme*. Land was given in the borders of Sudan and Djibouti. Ethiopia has lost *Asab* port.

They believe that the foreign policy of Ethiopia did not save citizens to migrate outside and suffered from brutality and operations. They condemned the violation of Ethiopian citizens in Arab countries and South Africa among others.

4.2.5 Political Debates on Federalism

In this debate 5 opposition political parties are participated. These were:-Unity for democracy and justice, All Ethiopian national movement, Ethiopian democratic party, All Ethiopian unity organization, Ethiopian people's revolutionary democratic front.

On this stage, the opposition political parties won the lottery to start the debate. Unity for democracy and justice, All Ethiopian national movement, Ethiopian Democratic Party, All Ethiopian unity organization, Ethiopian people's revolutionary democratic front presented their political view based on their lottery chance.

On the topic 'federalism' chaired for political debates, opposition political parties circled on the merits of the application of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia. Federalism is not operated and functioned in the right way by the ruling government saying that it is resulting in instability, ethnic conflict, unfair wealth and resource distribution; demolishes nationalism and patriotism and unlimited interference of the federal government.

On their political campaign, most of the opposition political parties stated that they will follow geographic based form of federalism if they are elected as a government. One of the representatives of the opposition political parties mentioned that:

The concept of Federalism is that power is equally shared among states and power is decentralized. But in the case of Ethiopian federalism power is not decentralized. The domination of one party system is highly reflected. It is impossible to say that regional states are really exercising their own power by themselves. Equal share of power and wealth is the principle of federalism but Ethiopian federalism failed to do so.

EPRDF on his part said that Ethiopian federalism brings about so many achievements. It saves the country from disintegration or deportation among the nations. It brings economic development in the country. Nations and nationalities granted the right to administer themselves up to succession. They have got the chance to develop and use their language and their culture and history. It brings sustainable peace in the country. One of the EPRDF's representatives suggested that:

Ethiopian federalism is based on two major pillars. One is saving the country from disintegration. The other is bringing about sustainable peace and development across country. In the past many youngsters who stand for change have been killed. Due to this many begun fighting for freedom. The right of nations and nationalities is not respected. Now our federalism gave answer to these longtime questions. Our federalism brings about peace and economic development of two digits. Nations and nationalities have got their own rights of administering themselves up to succession.

4.2.6 Political Debates on Multiparty System and Human Rights.

This debate focused on multiparty system and human rights. In this debate 5 opposition political parties were participated. These were:-Ethiopian people's revolutionary democratic front, New generation party, Ethiopian federal democratic unity forum, Blue party, Unity for democracy and justice.

On this stage, EPRDF won the lottery to start the debate. Then new generation party, Ethiopian federal democratic unity forum, Blue party, Unity for democracy and justice Presented their political view based on their lottery chance.

On the debate EPRDF said the dictatorial *Derge* regime was destroyed by EPRDF for the sake of freedom and democracy. All Ethiopians struggle for this democracy. A constitution focused on humans and democratic rights ratified in the country. Democracy and human rights are granted in the country after EPRDF conquered the power. Due to this, 75 parties have been created. Religious and individual rights granted. One of EPRDF's representatives elaborated that,

Democracy is a basic issue for EPRDF. That is why it dismissed the dictator *Derge* and now introduced democracy in the country. Now Ethiopia has got very appreciable constitution which includes both human rights and democracy. Nations and nationalities have got the right of administering and learning by their own languages. All peoples of Ethiopia are now equally participating in the development. Now EPRDF creates favorable conditions for the opposing political parties to participate in the political system of the country. The right of groups is approved.

Opposition political parties on the other hand said that the democracy of EPRDF does not fulfill the criteria of international democratic rights. There are no human and democratic rights in the country. Though, the constitution granted citizens the right to be organized and peaceful demonstration, EPRDF the ruling party suppressed and denied citizens to apply it accordingly. They said that there is no multiparty democracy system in Ethiopia. There is no government or good system that can run and guide elections properly. So the system is not real but pseudo and dictatorial. Power is not in the hands of the people. The terrorist law violates human rights of the people. Especially opposition political party leaders are prisoned because of this law. One of the opposition political party concluded that:

There is no democracy and multiparty system in Ethiopia. Because of these leaders of much opposition political parties and civic association are prisoned and some are migrated outside. Many Ethiopians are displaced due to their identity, color, religion etc. The media does not serve voices of opposition political parties. Rather it magnifies the success stories of EPRDF. The concept of multiparty system is not functional in Ethiopia. In general, several activities must be conducted to sensitize the concept of democracy and multiparty system in Ethiopia.

4.2.7 Political Debates on City and Industrial Development Policy

This debate focused on City and industrial development policy. In this debate 5 opposition political parties were participated. These were:-Ethiopian Democratic Party, All Ethiopian national movement, Ethiopian democratic unity movement, All Ethiopian unity organization, Ethiopian people's revolutionary democratic front.

On this stage, opposition political parties won the lottery to start the debate. Then Ethiopian Democratic Party, All Ethiopian national movement, Ethiopian democratic unity movement, All Ethiopian unity organization, and Ethiopian people's revolutionary democratic front presented their political view based on their lottery chance.

On this stage, opposition political parties raised various issues that the incumbent fails to succeed in connection with city and industrial development. It was stated that industry shares 15 % of the country's economy though it was expected much as the country follows agriculture led industry policy. It was noted that the country's city development is 16 % which is slow. Ethiopia city development rate is below even compared with the neighboring countries, infrastructural problems, lack of quality infrastructures, access to potable water, electricity, and road transport services were mentioned as failures of the policy able to achieve over the couple of decades. Lack of good governance and rent seeking mentality were also raised as factors that push back the country's development in the sector. One of the representatives of the opposition political parties said that,

The development of city and industry here in Ethiopia is very low. Now it is not in a position to be a base for the economic development of the country. When we see economic share of industry, it is not more than 14%. During the past years at the time of *Derg* and Emperor Hailesilase its share was 12%. In the past 24 years this number increased only by 2%. The sector did not benefit the public like by creating job opportunities.

EPRDF on his part said the policy of EPRDF creates wide job opportunities in the cities. Housing projects, small scale enterprises, different infrastructural developments were expanded. Due to these development individuals created their own wealth. The saving culture of the people developed. Today many cities emerged with schools, health, and telecom and power centers. Jobs have been created For 8 million citizens. 540 small scale enterprises have been

created. Road constrictions and water and electric services, industries and investments are expanded in the cities. One of EPRDF's representatives announced that,

Some issues raised by opposition political parties are known and we are solving them with the public. Some of the issues are wrongly perceived. When EPRDF came to power there was no peace in the cities. Because of wrong policies that the past regimes had applied our cities were less developed. City services were very weak and so on many residents were poor and cannot get enough services in the case of industry, now many investors from outside as well as from inside are at work.

4.2.8 Political Debates on Good Governance and Rule of Law

This debate focused on good governance and rule of law. In this debate 5 opposition political parties were participated. These were:-New generation party, Ethiopian democratic party, Blue party, Ethiopian federal democratic unity forum, Ethiopian people's revolutionary democratic front.

On this stage, opposition political parties won the lottery to start the debate. Then new generation party, Ethiopian Democratic Party, Blue party, Ethiopian federal democratic unity forum, Ethiopian people's revolutionary democratic front presented their political view based on their lottery chance.

On this stage, the voices of opposition political parties' sounds that over the last couple of decades the rule of laws, which is the core principle of the constitution was not respected. Rather, lack of good governance incredibly widening and suppress and violates the democratic and human rights of individuals and group as well. They condemn the ruling party as if it has been applying the rule of men ignoring the law and regulation of the constitution.

The opposition political parties stressed that lack of good governance crawls the lives of hundred thousands of its citizens and deems the concept of supremacy of the constitution. One of the representatives of the opposition political parties said that:

Ethiopia and its citizens are suffering from lack of good governance over the past couple of decades since EPRDF took power. Corruption and mal-administration is ever increasing in social, economic, political and justice aspects.

.EPRDF on his part said the ruling party is working with the people to solve problems related to good governance. In this case different improvements have been seen. One of the representatives of EPRDF said that:

In the areas of good governance and rule of law there is success. This success brings about sustainable pace and development in the country. EPRDF is a party which discusses problems with the society”. EPRDF is answering public questions. There are problems related to good governance and corruption. We are solving the problems of corruption. It will be solved with the development the country.

4.2.9 Political Debates on Infrastructural Development

In this stage 6 political parties were participated. Namely:-Ethiopian Democratic Party, Ethiopian federal democratic unity forum, All Oromo People democratic party, Blue party, Coalition for unity and Democratic Party, Ethiopian people’s revolutionary democratic front.

On this stage, opposition political parties won the lottery to start the debate. Then Ethiopian Democratic Party, Ethiopian federal democratic unity forum, All Oromo People democratic party, Blue party, Coalition for unity and Democratic Party, Ethiopian people’s revolutionary democratic front presented their political view based on their lottery chance.

On the debate opposition Political parties said EPRDF used infrastructural development built for political propaganda. There is a high corruption and quality problem in the construction sector. Telecom and electric power must be privatized. This will benefit the people. Many infrastructure services are concentrated in Addis Ababa. Road construction is very corrupted and lacks of quality too. Telecom, electric power, water and road offices are not integrated and cooperate each other. Housing projects yet did not answer housing problems. One of the representatives of the opposition political parties concluded that:

A little effort was underway in terms of infrastructural development in Ethiopia though, EPRDF always used it for propaganda to hide its humans and democratic right violation. Whatsoever compared with the demand of the society coupled with the lengthily time that EPRDF stayed in power the infrastructural development is not quenching.

EPRDF on its side said that modern telecommunication services (mobile, internet and so on) are available in the country. Now 4 thousand megawatt electric services are available. 6 thousand towns have got electric power. The problems of quality and good governance in the infrastructure sectors are improving. Water service coverage of the country is now reached 76.7%. Thousands of kilometers of roads are constructed. A number of many dams are constructed. Railway construction has been done. Because of all these infrastructure developments the economy of the country is developed. One of the EPRDF's representatives mentioned that:

As everybody knows EPRDF had done a lot in the areas of infrastructure. These services benefited the society a lot. EPRDF doesn't believe that infrastructure can be done by private sectors. EPRDF tried to expand electric power by building dams including the renaissance dam. Telecom service is expanding. Water and road constructions are benefited a number of societies. Yes there are corruption and good governance problems in this sector. But the government is trying its best to solve the problems.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

In order to address the research objective and answer research questions for the research topic 'the role of EBC in the democratization process the case of 2007 or 14/r15 national election. The student researcher applied qualitative research approach. In-depth interview and discourse /content analysis were applied as instrument of data allocation.

The student researcher simultaneously discuss the findings of study gathered from eight purposely selected opposition political parties whom participated in the 2007 or 14/15 Ethiopian National Election and participated in the in deep interview session and eight out nine randomly selected contents of political debates organized by EBC and transmitted for the citizen on various issues and different times.

The in-depth interview which raised eleven questions were took place with opposition political parties who have participated during the 2007 or 14/15 national election and EPRDF the ruling party. in-depth interview were also hold with nine EBC journalists, media experts and authorities similarly have had an experience of reporting land enrolling professions inputs to the election.

In-depth interview mainly targets two perspectives. The first is the role of EBC undertakes in the democratization process of the country through its all activities during and after the consecutive two years of national election time 2007 or 14/15.

The second session mainly focuses on the role of EBC in the democratization process of the country during the 2007 or 14/15 national election.

Therefore, the finding of the in-depth interview shows that EBC is not properly carrying out its roles. EBC is far from one of the democratic roles it should play facilitating debates. And this is due to internal and external factors. The internal factors are misunderstanding of the role and professional weaknesses. The external factors are the influence and domination of the ruling party and government officials.

The student researcher critically analyzed the content of eight out of nine political debates organized by EBC along with the role of EBC as national medium played in facilitating the election.

Generally, EBC had allocated some 1080 minutes or 18 hours for all nine round political debates some thirteen opposition political parties were participated.

4.3.1 The Role of EBC

The finding of the student shows that the role of EBC during the 2007/15 national election was organizing eight stages for political debates focusing on various issues. During the debate the role of EBC was limited to controlling time allocated and announcing the time allocated for the parties. The way EBC handles and facilitated the debate seems democratic but sometimes the chair interrupting especially when the opposition political parties debating by saying 'you are out of the topic' but mostly the chair leads well the debate until the time allocated is completed.

4.3.2 Gaps of EBC

The finding of the purposive selected content analysis indicated that somehow EBC had played its role in the democratization process through broadcasting political debates which is considered as value of democracy. But there are multiple gaps that EBC failed to fulfill the role expected.

4.3.2.1 Insufficient Time

According to Berg and Betcheva (2012), the political parties could be treated equally and in the balanced way without any favors, the duration of a debate depends on a variety of factors, including whether it will be broadcast, the number of candidates and how many debates there will be. One to three hours is a common range. But it could be allocate equally for all debaters. However, EBC had allocated two hours for a single political debates stage. Out of it a single opposition party was granted some 20 minutes to deliver its campaign while EPRDF was granted 45 minutes. In this sense, the time allocated for opposition parties along with the depth of the content/topic chaired for debate is incomparable. On the other hand the time granted for the ruling party EPRDF seems that EBC favored the incumbent by rending sufficient time.

4.3.2.2 Non-Inclusiveness

All candidates of political parties could be invited to the debate by the media and they have to be encouraged to do so (ibid, p.56). For the 2007/15 Ethiopian national election around 75 opposition political parties were registered for contest under the national electoral board. But EBC had offered chance for thirteen opposition political parties.in addition there were opposition political parties who were participated in five to six stages while others participated in one and two stages. Therefore, EBC is said non-inclusive and lacks fairness in promoting democracy.

4.3.2.3. Non-Participatory

According to the Organizing and Producing Candidate Debates an International Guide (2014, p.98), citizen questions via phone, internet or taped in this instance, questions come from the general public remotely via the internet or cellphone. Video questions from citizens can also be taped in advance and shown at the debate. The debate could be live transmitted and this would enable the media to work for building democracy (ibid, p.87).

In the case of EBC however, all the nine political parties' debates were not live. The debate is recorded in the studio and then broadcasted to the citizen. Here by, EBC also failed to participate the citizen in the live political debates well through phone call. Next, one can claim that EBC might edit the actual speeches of the participant.so that it lacks credibility.

4.3.2.4 Framing

Conversely, debates can be focused on specific topics to allow for a more in-depth discussion and to ensure these areas are addressed by the candidates, such as foreign and domestic matters, to more than a dozen issues. Most likely, the issues could be current and basic for the public. *ibid.*

The topics framed by EBC for the debate seemed on areas where the ruling government had achieved over the last couple of decades. Most of the issues were on policies of the government under taking over the years. Human and democratic rights, freedom of speech and media, justices, human development and other critical issues of the citizen were not framed and presented for political debates. This shows that EBC failed to promote issues of the public at large.

4.3.3 The Role of Opposition Political Parties

In all stages the opposition political parties who have invited to access the stage were present. Based on the time they were granted they had attempted to deliver their thought though, the time allocated was insufficient. But, the finding of the content analysis shows that the opposition political party's role by itself hinders the country's journey towards democratization. Most of the opposition political parties did not excessively used their time by raising pertinent public issues by showing failures of the government. They focused in blaming the government for all its deeds without impractical possible policies and strategies that fill the gap if they are elected as government.

To summaries, the finding of the study revealed that EBC was not working to the level the society expects it as it was found out. EBC lacked multiple issues as a result it could not contribute much to the democratic setup. This hinders it not to play its share in the democratization process of the country. For instance, insufficient allocation of time, non-inclusiveness, non-participatory of audience and framing issues are some of the implications that EBC's failures in the democratization process of the country were observed.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This research attempted to examine what actual democracy EBC is playing and tried to identify the challenges it is facing in the course of discharging its democratic roles during the 2015 national election and aftermath. The study has employed qualitative methods. In deep interview a survey focuses on the 3 EBC journalists and one deputy CEO of EBC experience towards their democratic roles. In-depth interviews were also conducted with 7 informants selected from different organizations, and political parties. On the content analysis the student researcher analyzed eight round political debates out of nine between 12 opposition political parties with the incubate EPRDF on different policies.

The researcher has come up with valid and reliable findings and concluded and recommended the following points:

First of all the finding shows that EBC is well aware of the role of media and believe that media should play the democratic roles of facilitating debates, and discussion, disclosing various societal problems and collaborating with political parties during election time..

However, when it comes to the actual practice of these roles, the finding shows that EBC is not properly carrying out these roles. EBC is far from one of the democratic roles it should play facilitating debates. And this is due to internal and external factors. The internal factors are misunderstanding of the role and professional weaknesses. The external factors are the influence and domination of the ruling party and government officials.

Second, the finding of the research shows that, collaborative role with the political parties is found to be a role that EBC is playing is not good or not friendly. The reason for this is EBC itself is not entertaining different opposing reason. EBC is not doing its level best in the democratization process of the country. Due to all these reasons there are doubts or no trust between EBC and political parties.

Third, according to the informants, perception of the public towards the democratic roles of EBC, the finding showed that the public not relies and have no trust on EBC information disseminated. According to survey the opposing political parties and the public label EBC as 'allies and propaganda matching of the government'.

Fourth, the research has found the relationship that EBC has with government. Then, the finding indicates that the relationship between EBC and the government is that government officials are dominating and influencing the media.

Fifth, the research also finds out, there is a high intervention of the government, Lack of professionalism of the journalists. Self-censorship of the journalists is the major challenges of EBC.

Sixth, during the national election of 2015, EBC as national media and worked for long, what it has done was not enough. Even the time of pre- election process the political prates' debate was not transmitted live. When they were debating the time allocated to them was limited. It was not enough to express their idea, so the research find out that, the attempt that EBC tried to make the election democratic was very weak.

Seventh, Opposition parties are not using this media properly and they were not properly participated in EBC. EBC did not make an attempt to set an agenda for the opposition parties to introduce their programs to the public. Even when they are interviewed, EBC is broadcasting their idea according to the interest of the ruling party (EPRDF). The ruling party (government) advertising itself for long time in this media. But opposition parties could not get enough time to express their programs. Different social classes like intellectuals, youngsters, and have no room to express their feeling.

Eighth, during the political debate between political parties with the incumbent the role of EBC was limited to controlling time allocated and announcing the time allocated for the parties.

Ninth, over all EBC had allocated two hours for a single political debates stage. Out of it a single opposition party was granted some 20 minutes to deliver its campaign while EPRDF was granted 45 minutes. In this sense, the time allocated for opposition parties along with the depth of the content/topic chaired for debate is incomparable.

Tenth, for the 2007/15 Ethiopian national election around 75 opposition political parties were registered for contest under the national electoral board. But EBC had offered chance for thirteen opposition political parties.in addition there were opposition political parties who were participated in five to six stages while others participated in one and two stages. Therefore, EBC is said non-inclusive and lacks fairness in promoting democracy.

Eleventh, All the nine political parties' debates were not living. The debate is recorded in the studio and then broadcasted to the citizen. Here by, EBC failed to participate the citizen in the live political debates well through phone call. Next, one can claim that EBC might edit the actual speeches of the participant so that it lacks credibility.

Twelfth, on the debate the topics framed by EBC for the debate seemed on areas where the ruling government had achieved over the last couple of decades. Most of the issues were on policies of the government under taking over the years. Human and democratic rights, freedom of speech and media, justices, human development and other critical issues of the citizen were not framed and presented for political debates.

Generally speaking EBC 2014/15(2007) national election debate headed by EBC was not democratic, not attractive and not interesting like that of 2002(1997) national election.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the research finding the researcher recommends that EBC should set a new way that is structured in a way that contributes to the development of a democratic culture in the country. EBC should also be socially responsible in that it promote discussion and debate, serve the interest of the society, and focus on various problems the society faces. EBC also must come close to the opposing political parties to transmit their message to the public. There must be trust between both EBC and opposing political parties.

Opposing political parties also should have good attitude for EBC. The government should make its officials and the structure itself responsive to the information needed by the media and the society as well. EBC has to be free and independent from government influence. Internally it is better for the journalist professionally strong by providing training and so on. And they (journalists and heads of the media) should be free from membership of any political party, to avoid biasness.

EBC should have the commitment and the strength to resist the intervention of government and officials and keep on pursuing its roles. It has to be strong enough in its professional ethics and it has to be credible institution.

As a public media, first EBC has to serve the public. It has to answer the question and understand the need of the public.

EBC has to be free and independent. It has to be governed by its own editorial policy, broadcast law and constitution.

EBC has to serve as public discourse forum media. It has to develop its leadership and professional capacity. It has to change its current format and structure which are not attractive and interesting. It has to be participatory. Different social class like females, youth, disabilities and children do not get enough rooms at EBC.

It has to set agendas by itself. It has to deliver fresh and informative information on time.

In the future, EBC has to cover elections properly. The political parties and their supporter must participate in EBC to express their ideas and opinions. In the time of pre- election process the political parties' debate has to be transmitted live. The opposing political parties must get enough air time to promote their programs and ideas to the public. To make the election democrat and participatory EBC has to play its expected role as much as possible.

The researcher recommends EBC that at the time when elections activities were aired they have to be attractive and interesting.

Political debates organized by EBC should be inclusive, the time allocated to all political parties should be equal, the agendas should be focused on critical social issues, all registered political parties should participate in the debate, and the debate should be broadcast live.

Finally the paper suggests that EBC is still need to work in creating informed citizen. So, EBC must change all the above scenarios, and it has to be a channel of diversified idea as of its motto 'the sound of renaissance and diversity.