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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

**SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND
COMMUNICATION**

**THE PRACTICE OF MEDIA AND POLITICS IN
PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN ETHIOPIA:**

A Case Study on EBC

BY

ZELALEM KASSAHUN BIZUNEH

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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ADVISOR DR. AGAREDECH JEMANEH

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Declaration

I, Zelalem Kassahun Bizuneh, hereby declare that thesis entitled “The practice of EBC in Promoting Human Rights in Ethiopia” submitted for the award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Broadcast, Addis Ababa University, is my original work and it has never been presented in any University. All sources and materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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Advisor's Approval

As University Advisor, I approved this Thesis to be submitted for examination.

Agaredech Jemaneh (Ph.D.) -----

Signature

Date

THE PRACTICE OF MEDIA AND POLITICS IN PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN ETHIOPIA

BY

ZELALEM KASSAHUN BIZUNEH

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Dedication

When I studied this study, I felt a deep sense of gratitude for the victims of violence .I am grateful for dedicating this study to those who have been victims of the forces of darkness just being affected and became street dwellers without knowing the causes and stay with outgrowing eyes in silence and my mother.

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List of Abbreviations

AI- Amnesty International

CD- Coordinated Destruction

EBC- Ethiopian Broadcast Corporation

EHRC- Ethiopian Human Rights Commission

ENDF- Ethiopian National Defense Force

EPDF- Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front

ETV- Ethiopian Television

FBC –Fana Broadcast Corporation

FDI- Foreign Direct Investment

HRW- Human Rights Watch

ICHR- International Council on Human Rights

ICHREE –International Commission of Human Rights Expert on Ethiopia

IDC – Interdisciplinary Challenges

INSA – Information Network Security Agency

IPSS - Institute for Peace and Security Studies

NDC- National Dialogue Commission

OLA – Oromo Liberation Army

OMN- Oromo Media Network

PP- Prosperity Party

PHP-Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

PTFFH- Princeton Task Force on the Future Humanities

TPLF – Tigray People Liberation Front

UDHR- Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Abstract

This study investigates the interplay between media performance, political communication, and the promotion of human rights in Ethiopia, with a specific focus on the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC). The primary objective is to assess how effectively the media serves as a platform for human rights advocacy and political accountability in a complex and often restrictive political environment.

A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining content analysis of selected EBC news broadcasts with survey data collected from journalists at EBC and university students as well as one-to-one conversations with audiences. The content analysis focused on media framing, thematic representation, brief analysis of constitution, and visual symbolism related to human rights, while the survey explored perceptions of media freedom, political expression, and media credibility. Findings reveal that EBC's coverage of human rights is limited and often shaped by government agendas, with journalists facing editorial restrictions and legal uncertainty. Students and journalists alike perceive the media as biased, cautious, and ineffective in holding power accountable. Additionally, the Ethiopian “political” landscape is seen as confusing and inconsistent to human rights, further weakening the media's ability to contribute meaningfully to civic awareness and human rights discourse.

The implications of this study are multifaceted. **Practically**, it highlights the urgent need to strengthen the editorial independence of public media institutions. **Policy-wise**, it suggests reforms to enhance legal protections for journalists and ensure institutional accountability. **Theoretically**, the study contributes to media performance theory by situating it within the context of authoritarian states where state media and political structures are deeply intertwined.

The study recommends further research into the role of private and digital media in Ethiopia’s human rights landscape, comparative studies across regions, and longitudinal analysis to track changes in media performance. Strengthening philosophy and civic education, promoting human rights journalism, and fostering institutional transparency are essential steps toward realizing the media’s potential in safeguarding democratic principles and human rights.

Chapter One

1. Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the general objectives of the study, the specific objectives of the study, the research questions, the significance of the study, the scope and delimitations of the study, organizations of the study, and ethical considerations of the study and also outlines the issue that motivated the study.

1.1. Background of the study

Key words:-Human Rights, Media, Politics, Peace, Collective violence, Force, Reason, Humanities, lies, Coordinated Destruction, Force, Faith

Human rights are fundamental rights and freedoms to which every individual is inherently entitled simply by being human. These rights apply regardless of nationality, ethnicity, gender, religion, language, or educational background. According to Smith (2007), Article 1(3) of the United Nations Charter emphasizes the promotion and encouragement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), signed in Paris on December 10, 1948, laid the foundation for the global protection and promotion of human dignity. Within the UDHR, freedoms such as expression and access to information are recognized as essential to the realization of all other human rights, specifically outlined in Articles 19 and 21. As Nwankwo (2011) notes, the concept of human rights has become one of the most pressing contemporary global issues.

Although all 193 United Nations member states have formally pledged to respect and uphold human rights—and have often codified these rights into their constitutions—in practice, many states fall short of fulfilling these obligations. Governments frequently prioritize the maintenance of political power over the enforcement of these Universal Rights. In a speech delivered on March 20, 2023, during the release of the 2022 *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken highlighted this gap, stating:

“President Biden has made advocating for human rights a top priority. And that’s simply because everyone, everywhere, is entitled to these rights—including people in the United States. As the last four years have shown, countries that respect human rights are, on the whole, more stable, more secure, more peaceful.”

He also acknowledged the shortcomings of even democratic states:

“We’ve been very open about the fact that the U.S. has not—does not always—live up to these standards. Rather than hiding these shortcomings or ignoring these tensions, we confront them openly, striving over years, decades, and even generations to close the gap between our principles and our practice.”

This tension between principle and practice illustrates the global challenge of human rights enforcement and the importance of government and media accountability, where the media plays a central role; the government is highly exposed to the public discourse (Whitten-Woodring, 2017).

Media institutions are crucial actors in promoting transparency, informing the public, and holding political actors accountable for human rights violations. According to Nwankwo (2011), citing Smith (2007), the adoption of the UDHR was largely motivated by a desire to prevent a recurrence of the atrocities witnessed during the two World Wars—events marked by massive human rights abuses and unchecked state power.

Supporting this emphasis on awareness and responsibility, **Mariana Katzarova**, UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights from the Russian Federation, stressed during the 75th Human Rights Day in 2024 that human rights education should be widespread and institutionalized. She argued:

“It should be mandatory not just for schoolchildren to know by heart the Universal Declaration. [...] When the people of your country depend on you, you have to know what these rights are—to know the highest aspiration on this planet, the Universal Declaration.”

Her words point to the urgent need for human rights awareness to extend beyond civil society and into institutions of authority—such as the judiciary, police, parliament, and diplomatic offices—who have a direct impact on whether rights are respected or violated.

Although the term "**human rights**" gained global recognition around 75 years ago with the establishment of the United Nations, its roots lie in earlier legal traditions. The concept is closely tied to the rule of law and the idea of placing inherent limits on the exercise of absolute power by sovereigns, parliaments, or governments (Smith, 2007). In this context, the media is not merely a transmitter of information but a potential catalyst for human rights education, public engagement, and democratic accountability. This role is particularly important in developing countries like Ethiopia, where media institutions face unique challenges in balancing state influence, political engagement, and their responsibility to inform and empower the public about human rights.

In the past fifty years, Africa has produced six Nobel Laureates, including three in literature: Wole Soyinka (1986), Naguib Mahfouz (1988), and Nadine Gordimer (1991), followed by Abdulrazak Gurnah in 2021. Among the most notable recipients is Nelson Mandela (1918–2013), the first democratically elected president of South Africa and a global icon of peace and reconciliation. Ethiopia, too, received global recognition when Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019 for his efforts in ending the conflict with Eritrea.

However, despite these international acknowledgments, recurrent internal conflicts continue to plague Ethiopia, raising critical questions about the sustainability of peace and the effectiveness of institutional mechanisms in upholding human rights. This contradiction has drawn the attention of the researcher, who seeks to explore the role of media and politics in shaping public awareness and response to human rights violations. The objective is to create awareness, assess gaps, and contribute to the broader discourse on peace, accountability, and the media's role in promoting human rights within the Ethiopian context.

Similarly, the two main obligations of the world community are keeping peace and respecting human rights. Arnold (2013, p.19) asserted there is peace neither within the borders of a state, nor beyond them, when **human rights** are disrespected. Peace and human rights are closely

interconnected: international peace is threatened when human rights are violated; internal peace can only be upheld if democracy, rule of law and, in particular, **human rights** are observed (Arnold, 2013).

The human rights are the principal issues of modern societies and they are a significant cause of crisis in Ethiopia (Smith, 2007). A report by UDHR (2023) recent estimations that more than 1351 civilians have become a prey to perpetrators and killed in attacks reportedly by government forces. Another 248 between 4 August and 1 December 2023 and destroyed vital infrastructures including schools, hospitals, on 29 January 2024, at least 89 civilians were killed, reportedly by the government troops, in Merawi town near Bahir Dar (UDHR, 2023).

Overall the update records 594 incidents of human rights violations and abuse affecting 8253 victims- a 56 percent increase compared with 2022. According to the update, state actors were reportedly responsible for some 70 percent of the violations, while non-state actors account 22 per cent.

It also acknowledges the Government pledges to advance peace, justice, and accountability, made in the context of the high-level event held in Geneva in December to mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and calls on the Government to prioritize implementation of these commitments (UDHR, 2023).

Additionally, reports by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE), the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC), and the EHRC have documented numerous extrajudicial killings and other unlawful acts committed in the context of armed conflicts in various regions of the country—including the Amhara, Oromia, and Tigray regions (UDHR, 2023). These violations persist with high incidence rates of inhuman acts, causing widespread trauma and societal breakdown.

Despite the severity of these crises, the role of the media in creating timely and impactful awareness has not been sufficiently evident. In many instances, the public remains uninformed or misinformed, contributing to blind participation in violence and deepening cycles of conflict. Media, as argued by Yanagizawa-Drott (2002), can serve as a **coordination device** in times of conflict—either exacerbating tensions or promoting peace. However, the Ethiopian media

landscape has not consistently demonstrated its potential to prevent or mitigate conflict through awareness and advocacy.

The human cost of ongoing violence is immense. Not only are civilians subjected to atrocities, but the quality of life has significantly deteriorated due to displacement, insecurity, and conflict-driven economic inflation.

For instance, according to a recent Amnesty International update, human rights violations have continued unabated in the Amhara region since the most recent armed conflict began more than a year ago, with no visible progress toward individual accountability. As stated by Amnesty:

"Human rights violations have continued unabated, with no progress towards individual accountability, in the Amhara region since the latest armed conflict began a year ago."

In a poignant example of community resistance, on December 17, 2023, following the killing of three women in Kobo City, mothers and other residents marched directly to the Kobo city administration offices, shouting:

"Stop the killings! Enough!"

"Get out of our city, you are killers!"

These slogans were reportedly directed at members of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), who were allegedly involved in the incidents. Such moments reflect both the deep public frustration and the urgent need **for** reliable, ethical media coverage that can amplify local voices, call for justice, and foster informed public discourse.

The research suggests that two factors that contribute revolts are under sizing human rights and encouraging force (The first is dictatorship, the enslavement of their own citizens, which is the cause of war).The second is War, which is the greatest evil that human societies can perpetrate. Moreover, the frictions between the media and politics as well as their little concern to humanity or lack of knowledge might aggravate the situations (Ayn, 1889). One's knowledge or competence should be measured in relation to the performance of the task at hand. Journalists know something about human rights but they are not competent to handle human rights issues in

the country, it is likely to end in disaster. The media fail to report much that ought to be known, at least in the estimation of those who are victims(ICHRR, 2002).A model of **collective violence** is presented where mass media have the potential to increase participation in conflict by facilitating coordination, in addition to any direct effect on behavior due to content(Yangzawa-Drott, 2002; Skjerdal, 2021).

Coordinated Destruction refers to those varieties of **collective violence** in which persons and organizations specialized in the deployment of coercive means undertakes programs of actions that damage persons or objects(Tilly, 2003).Tilly(2003) further explains the threat of force escalate into struggle between coercive organizations. It includes war, genocides, torture, collective self destruction, public penance, government backed terror (Chorbajian, 2021).Therefore, in order to explain the mechanisms of state-sponsored mass murders, it is necessary to identify the factors that motivate civilians to participate in group violence in times of conflict (Pham et al., 2023).

Faith and force ... are corollaries: every period of history dominated by mysticism, was a period of Statism of dictatorship, of tyranny. Force is a dictator over **rights**: What is force and what are rights? What is the function of media in a democratic society? What role of journalism should be?Ayn (1989) further asked 'do you consider it moral to treat men as sacrificial animals and to rule over him by physical force?'She stated:

*Every dictator is a mystic, a potential dictator. A mystic craves obedience from men, not their agreement. He wants them to surrender their consciousness to his assertions, his edicts, his wishes, his whims- just as his consciousness is surrendered to theirs. He wants to deal with men by means of faith and force-he finds no satisfaction- in their consent if he must earn by means of facts and reason. To him, **reason is the enemy**, he dreads and simultaneously considers precarious. **Reason**, to him, is means of deception; he feels that men posses some power more potent than reason and only their causeless belief or their forced obedience can give him a sense of security-a proof that he has gained control over the mystic endowment he lacks.*

Ethiopia has been in such a stressful situation since time immemorial and has never been freed from forces of problems. However, how did the country lose a solution at a time, when there are more than 20 Universities with people of full knowledge are available? Why these violations have become restless? Furthermore, theory by Glaeser (2005) suggests that ethnic or religious hatred can be effective when powerful “elites” or a state of mind, which manifests a collective feeling of **fake consciousness** that broadcast, messages targeting minority groups Hailu(1989,p.68).

The team work between media and politics is sophisticated in Ethiopia. The last decade has been an abundance of lies, hypocrisies and manufactured images which have neither fully rejected nor deeply accepted. As a result, there is a casual circulation of falsehood everywhere in public (Eshete, 1989). Eshete (1989) also underscores there are outright brazen lies. Concerning lies (Arendt, 1976.p.227) also elaborated lies have always been regarded as necessary as justifiable tools not only of 'politicians' or demagogue's but statesman's trade. Lies are much more plausible more appealing to reason than reality(Arendt, 1989, p.6).

According to Slaatta (1999) media and politics are interdisciplinary field. Media and Politics have always been mutually influential. The media plays an important political role of its own in promoting human rights discussing policies, as well as conveying the relationship of power and ideology. On the other hand, media outlets are subject to political forces (Mottura,2017). The interdisciplinary connection of media and politics have many sides and fiery in Ethiopia. The team work of media and politics is sophisticated influencing with each other in many different ways, at times, both media and politics work hand in hand to discriminate ideas and avoid very important issues. Nevertheless, a powerfully built and free media is crucial to function in giving citizens they need to hold political power accountable.

As Mottura (2017) and her friends suggests that they explain to what extent are media and politics intertwined Hence, this research questions both media and politics in Ethiopia. After knowing and investigating may be what if there is no politics in Ethiopia, in which the country is undergoing in something that does not exist. On account of this, what is the measure to say that there is politics? Is there media objectivity? Who are citizens? What is public opinion? How public opinion shape by the media before entering conflicts? All these points must be

investigated along with the research questions because it is important to be able to give clear insights.

For instance, hate media driving genocide in Rwanda, Kuperman criticizes the media for failing to cover the genocide story well and for being fooled as cited in (Thomson,2007).The political leaders succeeded in creating the 'ideological' conflict as a conflict between ethnic groups(Prejić,1998).Eshete, A. (1989) concerned with the pressing issues, though sadly neglected question of what ordinary citizens -not state officials or political organization-can do in order to overcome the reign of tyranny and destruction.

What can society expect from humanities? This question is ever more pressing in the discussion on the contribution of the humanities in interdisciplinary research that supports public policy in dealing with societal issues. The humanities provide crucial insight into what matters in life, into the character of civilization(Brom,2019).In the science based policy community of- mostly natural-scientists, it is clear that there are limitations in natural science approaches to public policy. This community looks at the 'other' disciplines (Brom 2019), in academia, including the humanities to overcome these limitations. An analysis of these limitations an actual limit, boundaries and necessary bounds clarifies what science advisors need from the humanities; to contextualize decontextualized science advice. Unfortunately there is little structural dialogue between the humanities and the science advice community. One reason for this is the idea held by the humanities that its public task is to unmask power structures rather than to support them. Another reason is the **lack of institutional power** to engage in practical discussions on policy problems.

Journalism studies has always been an inter-discipline, encompassing work in social sciences and humanities disciplines including sociology, history, linguistic, political science and cultural studies (Zelizer,2004).

While there is a growing body of research on media and politics, It is not sufficiently studied area in the country, The existing empirical evidences are ambiguous and have yielded conflicting results since they are only academic writings; fewer not more than seven pages. Some academic articles provide support to the interdisciplinary studies to solve present day problems (Brom, 2019). Other studies found no links between media and politics .At times, some shows a negative

relationship (Menychle, 2018; Agaje, 2015; Ambelu et al. 2021); except Whitten-Woodring (2017) that found both positive and negative relationship of media and politics on human rights.

The interpretive disciplinary traditions of the humanities focus on what it is **‘to be human’** and are directed at individual and collective self-understanding. This is even more important in a technological age of human enhancement, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality where **‘being human’** is at risk and in need of specific academic attention. Without self-understanding, societies run the risk of stumbling blindfolded in a globalizing and technologizing world (PTFFH, 2015).

The impact of media on Ethiopian politics hasn't been significant since the politicians and the media are at odds with each other. In view of the worsening conflicts recently, it is impossible to say that the mass media is giving correct information to the people. Bettina, M. et al. (2017) suggest that the media and politics have always been **intertwined**. However, rather than confronting the government, the media have become an echo. She also pointed out political power explicitly keeps tight control over media. Skjerdal (2012) justified ETV, Ethiopian Herald, Ethiopian News Agency, all of which in various ways are affected by government control. As a result the media show not the stark reality in Ethiopia.

For instance, hate media driving genocide in Rwanda, Kuperman criticizes the media for failing to cover the genocide story well and for being fooled as cited in (Thomson, 2007). The political leaders succeeded in creating the ideological conflict as a conflict between ethnic groups (Prejic, 1998). Similarly, Ethiopians did not learn from Rwanda rather imported the same story the State-machinery moving ignoring human rights abuses everywhere.

Margurite (2012) quoted what the United States 35th President, John F. Kennedy, said,

“The flow of ideas, the capacity to make informed choices, the ability to criticize, all of the assumptions on which political democracy rests depend largely on Communication”.

Nevertheless, in Ethiopia let alone the public make informed choices, it is impossible to oppose and criticize. Those who resist (reason) will be arrested. Why does the government do this? Because it might want to keep everything secret (Eshete, 1989). WBI (2002) notes that in

countries where information kept secret more information is underestimated or not well understood. Furthermore, the WBI (2002) underscored state controlled media distorts information in the incumbent favor. Misinformation and manipulation impair the whole society (Hendricks& Vestergaard, 2019).

In Ethiopia human rights are sacrificed in the name of development. Eshete, A. (1989) concerned with the pressing, though sadly neglected question of what ordinary citizens -not state officials or political organization-can do in order to overcome the reign of tyranny and destruction.

The last decade has been an abundance of lies, hypocrisies and manufactured images which have neither fully rejected nor deeply accepted. As a result, there is a casual circulation of falsehood everywhere in public (Eshete, 1989). Eshete also underscored there are outright brazen lies.

According to Kendeou et al (2019) who provides strategic consulting in his research of the threat of disinformation and misinformation, he called it "**confirmation bias**", a tendency to favor or accept information that supports existing values and beliefs. Gardner (2024) further explained that the goal of the manipulator is to convince something untrue, to create anxiety, anger, and often confusion lead to violence.

The legacy of Meles's politics of manipulation spill over until today. Gardner (2024) explores the degree of subterfuge and deceit had always been part of Abiy's politics."Every steps of the way, he is manipulating," said senior OPDO colleague."The key to his mind set is manipulation."(Gardner, 2024). Disinformers spread fear, suspicions. How misinformation often times works? Hendricks and Vestergaard (2019) discussed that it is not entirely false, but rather **a synthesized pill of downright false or misleading information mixed up and sugar coated a grain of truth making it easier to swallow uncritically**. The media's reliability as an information source is key to how well-informed; misinformed for that matter we are(Hendricks&Vestergaard, 2019).

The media in Ethiopia has gone through a lot of one-sided practices under the authoritarian governments who used the media for fulfilling their wishes (Meshesha, 2014).Gudeta (2008) says that **the media was used only for satisfying the wishes and whims of government**. It was only used for disseminating government's agenda (Tikikil, 2007). Moreover, the Ethiopian media shows loyalty to groups, in this regard, Esthete (1989, p. 155) highlighted and mocked the media

even public communication voicing charges and demands were primarily addressed to the armed groups, not to the public.

This study seeks to explore the complex relationship between media, politics, and human rights in Ethiopia, with an emphasis on understanding how media outlets—whether state-controlled or independent—perform in safeguarding or undermining human rights. By examining the political dynamics and the role of media in reporting human rights violations, this research aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on media freedom, political accountability, and the protection of human rights in Ethiopia.

1.2. Statement of the problems

Human rights violations remain a critical issue in Ethiopia, affecting individuals, communities, and the broader socio-political environment. Despite increased international attention on these violations, the influence of media in promoting human rights awareness, shaping public perceptions, and encouraging political engagement in Ethiopia is not well understood. Media, as a tool for both advocacy and accountability, has the potential to highlight human rights violations, influence public opinion, and catalyze action toward positive change. However, how media reports on, frames, and advocates for human rights issues significantly impacts the effectiveness of such efforts.

In Ethiopia, media coverage of **human rights** violations is often subject to political pressures, government control, vague control and self-censorship, leading to biased or incomplete reporting (Skjerdal, 2012). This dynamic may result in a failure to fully expose or raise the urgency of **human rights violations**, hindering public understanding and engagement. Media outlets may face challenges in presenting these issues impartially, and the manner in which they are framed—whether through **sensationalism, selective reporting, or omission**—can either **promote or undermine the recognition of human rights as a critical issue**.

Moreover, while political engagement can serve as a driver for policy change and advocacy, the connection between media framing and public political engagement remains an under-explored area in Ethiopia. The role of media in promoting human rights issues and motivating political action is critical, yet often remains obscured by political interests and media constraints.

This study seeks to examine the role of media in promoting human rights awareness, public perception, and political engagement in Ethiopia. It will explore how media practices—such as framing, tone, and content selection—affect both the promotion of human rights and public understanding of violations. The research will also investigate the political environment's impact on media coverage and the challenges media organizations face in their efforts to promote human rights. Ultimately, the study aims to provide insights into how media can more effectively contribute to the promotion of human rights and enhance public awareness and political engagement in Ethiopia.

1.2.1. Rationale of the study

The rationality of doing research on the topic of human rights with media and politics in Ethiopia, firstly, media is at its odd and the quality of the relationship with politics is strange or unusual in this twenty-first century. Secondly, as citizen's rights are violated and war is recurrent, thus the study tries to get deep understanding of the multidisciplinary practices of media and politics of EBC on human rights, in like manner as the topic is a boiling issue of the time.

The importance of media in promoting human rights awareness and shaping public perception cannot be overstated, especially in a politically sensitive environment like Ethiopia. Given the ongoing human rights violations in the country, understanding the role media plays in both reporting these issues and advocating for human rights is crucial. This study is timely and significant because it addresses the gap in existing research concerning the interplay between media, political engagement, and human rights. By examining how media framing and content influence public understanding and political response, this research will contribute valuable insights into how media can be harnessed as a tool for human rights promotion, advocacy, and accountability. The findings can potentially inform both media practice and policy-making, encouraging more effective and responsible media coverage of human rights issues in Ethiopia.

1.2.2. Why Study the Practice of Human Rights in Media and politics?

The researcher wants to study media and politics because both are the main ones and have an immediate impact on human rights and freedoms. It is an everyday stark reality that rights are given little attention, yet right is the most internationally approved term of fundamental politics. It is beyond economic freedom or the pursuit of happiness. Citizens have the right which idea is

relevant to him or her without any government interference (Peikoff, 1989). Secondly, the researcher also wants to challenge himself in reading interdisciplinary subjects. Moreover, the study has a desire to go a bit further to discover facts and information to the contribution of future study.

At different times the media and politics interplay the folly of individual rights either due to lack of knowledge or secretly acting behind the public. Instead both use political labeling of citizens. When they raise the issues of rights both media and government adjust interests to shape into a particular disguise. In this regard, such stand might grip unexpected repercussion.

1.2.3. Why select the example of EBC?

The reason behind this is that the government backs EBC; it is also a partisan media organization. According to Rozell (2008), the same concept conveyed through different media would not be understood in the same way. The frequency of stories about individual freedom, civil rights, and other topics was unaffected by EBC. When a bureaucracy does its duties effectively there is usually no news because of the media's blatant bias towards newsworthy content (Rozell, 2008). Because they concentrate on the narrative that has already been established by the state, the media may also make mistakes while reporting on human rights issues.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

To investigate the role of media in promoting human rights and examine the interdisciplinary challenges at the intersection of media, politics, human rights awareness, political engagement, and media consumption—focusing on how political factors and media coverage influence public perception of human rights violations.

1.4. Specific Objectives

More specifically the study addresses the following specific objectives

1. To analyze the influence of media on public perceptions of human rights and political issues.
2. To explore the role of media in shaping individuals' awareness and opinions on human rights.
3. To examine how media practices in promotion, consumption and political engagement together with the impact of media in creating awareness in understanding of human rights issues.

1.5 Research questions

Media Influence on Human Rights Perceptions

- ❖ How do media outlets in Ethiopia cover human rights violations, and what factors influence their reporting?
- ❖ What role do media play in shaping public awareness and response to human rights violations?
- ❖ What actions or policies does the Ethiopian government take when human rights violations occur, and how does this impact media coverage?
- ❖ How do political factors influence the media's coverage of human rights violations in Ethiopia?
- ❖ How does media coverage affect public perceptions and awareness of human rights?
- ❖ What challenges do media organizations face in reporting on human rights violations in a politically sensitive environment?
- ❖ How does media framing influence individuals' views on the importance of human rights issues?

1.6. Significance of the study

This study will contribute to enhancing the understanding of journalists in Ethiopia regarding the impact of media on human rights promotion, specifically through the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC). It aims to deepen journalists' awareness of how effectively human rights messages are conveyed and how they can drive social change by addressing human rights violations. The research will also benefit society by fostering a greater sense of moral responsibility and encouraging more informed and ethical actions. Additionally, the findings will offer valuable insights to journalists, enabling them to assess and improve their coverage of human rights issues, ultimately strengthening the media's role in promoting human rights and combating violations.

1.7. Scope and Delimitations of the study

This study is delimited to examining the role of media in promoting human rights awareness and political engagement within Ethiopia, specifically focusing on the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC). The research will primarily analyze media coverage and its impact on public perceptions of human rights violations, excluding other forms of media such as print media,

radio stations, or social media platforms unless they intersect with the content produced by EBC. The study will also focus on the coverage of human rights issues within the last two years, providing a contemporary analysis of media practices in the current political climate. Furthermore, the research will not examine the legal frameworks or policies governing media freedom in Ethiopia, but will instead concentrate on the content and framing of human rights issues in the media and Constitution in brief.

1.8. Organization of the study

This thesis is composed of five chapters. The first chapter gives an introduction that includes the back ground of the research area, statement of the problem, objectives research questions, significance, scope and delimitations of the study, the second chapter deal with the review of related literature. Chapter three explains the research methodology followed by chapter four which hosts the result and discussions. In the end chapter five holds conclusions and recommendations.

1.9. Ethical Consideration of the study

The study ensures the protection of participants from harm. It is mainly secured by confidentiality and anonymity during reporting. Similarly, the researcher uses appropriate language to avoid discomfort. Most of all, the study stays neutral and avoid alignment with specific groups.

Chapter Two

2. Review of related literature

This chapter presents a review of existing studies and written materials relevant to the topic and provides a theoretical framework for understanding the role of media in promoting human rights. It offers a wealth of fresh and pertinent ideas that align with the research objectives and questions, while identifying gaps in the literature.

The focus of the review is on the practices and challenges of the media in protecting and raising awareness about human rights, and its capacity to influence government or political actors to act responsibly in the protection of these rights. A key purpose of this review is to examine the extent to which previous research has addressed the interplay between political structures and media practices in shaping public understanding and advocacy of human rights issues.

In the Ethiopian context, the introduction of Ethnic Federalism by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) significantly transformed the media landscape for awhile. According to Moges (2022), ethnic-based clustering of communities became the foundation of federal power and resource allocation, which, while designed to empower regions, often led to ethnic tensions, political conflict, and subsequent human rights violations. This experience mirrors broader patterns seen across Africa, where states are often marked by both ethnic diversity and political instability (Aalen, 2011).

The media in Ethiopia has played dual and sometimes contradictory roles—serving not as a tool for **human rights advocacy** but rather as an instrument of state propaganda. Its influence on public discourse is therefore complex and often shaped by “Ethnic” agendas. As Abbink (2011, as cited in Moges, 2021, p.35) notes, many political groups in Ethiopia are ethno-linguistically divided and primarily address issues of ethnic interests, further complicating the media’s ability to serve as a neutral platform for national human rights advocacy.

2.1. Overview of Media Repression and Human Rights Violations of the TPLF/EPRDF regime.

In this study the researcher found it essential to include some of the characteristics of the TPLF/EPRDF regime since the **PP** was hatched from the same eggs of the former that would help to compare whether there was a change in the handlings of human rights.

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) assumed power in 1991, ending the military dictatorship of the Derg regime, which was against democracy as well as human rights (Abbink, 2013). Most, believed that TPLF would realize true democracy. Initially, the EPRDF promised democratization and freedom of expression, including a vibrant media landscape. However, these aspirations were short-lived as the government increasingly centralized power and suppressed dissent (Reta, 2013).

Over the years, the regime adopted repressive measures to control the media and silence critical voices, leading to widespread violations of **human rights** across the country. Moreover, except for the construction of buildings and the provision of office equipments, EPRDF did not do anything about press freedom (Reta, 2013). Likewise, Abbink&Hagmann (2018) also described the Ethiopian economy with a contested claims to "double digit" coupled with mass poverty, food insecurity and proneness to famine for millions of people.

Since the TPLF/EPRDF took power, it has been using radio and television extensively to strengthen its power and create widespread hatred against the defeated Derg and the Amharic-speaking people, especially the Amharic-speaking citizens, who regarded as the main enemy of the TPLF/EPRDF and were labeled as traitors and "Neftenya". The term 'Neftenya' was used to portray the Amharic-speaking community falsely accused of them to have been oppressing the rest of the country's citizens. In addition, TPLF/EPRDF has been mobilizing all its members to use the media to attack against the Amharic-speaking people (Reta, 2013). Here, judging the Amhara peasants as oppressor refers to "Disinformation", a fabricated content, misleading information that is shared by the source who has the intent to deceive or obfuscate (Lazer., et al., 2018 as cited in Kendeou et al., 2019).

During this time, freedom of speech was guaranteed to all other groups with the specific purpose denied to the Amhara and those whom the ruling party regarded as henchmen of the old-order. This freedom was not constitutionally based but granted by the good will of EPRDF. It was not a

genuine freedom as it only denigrating certain groups considered to be politically enemies, hence primarily serving EPRDF's interests (Reta, 2013, p.250).

2.1.1. Media Censorship, Legal Restrictions and Repression

When those who seem to be experts at lying to the public make statements to deceive the people of their country and the world to pretend that there was full freedom of the press in Ethiopia that was a fraud. Abbink (2018,P.319) documented that in a statement on 18May, the high level TPLF's politician and advisor to the government Arkebe Oqubay, said'...the press in Ethiopia as free as the press in Europe and the Ethiopian press is free to publish whatever it wants.' But they could not.

The EPRDF regime exercised tight control over Ethiopia's media which were state ownership of major media outlets allowed the government to dictate narratives. Independent media faced harsh restrictions, with laws like the 2009 Anti- Terrorism Proclamation (ATP) used to criminalize dissenting voices under the guise of national security (Reta, 2013). These laws blurred the line between legitimate journalism creating a chilling effect on the press. Many have been repressed based on exploitation by the few (Chorbajian, 2021).

2.1.1.1.Persecution of Journalists

According to Abbink (2018.P.2019) scores of journalists were detained, harassed, or forced into exile during EPRDF's period. Four journalists remained in prison; two more fled the country after intimidation by the security forces (Ermias Seyoum, and Mesfin Zeleke of 'Yegna Press'). Notable cases include the imprisonment of Eskinder Nega, a prominent journalist, Wubshet Taye, newspaper columnist Reeyot Alemu, and Unity Party Vice-Chairman Andualem Arage and the persecution of the zone 9 bloggers, who were accused of inciting violence and terrorism through their online activism. Such actions eroded trust in the government's commitment to press freedom (Reta, 2013).

2.1.1.2. Impact on Media Independence

Lately, the government has been using the broadcast media to crush the opposition and independent journalists (Reta, 2013, p.273).The repression dismantled Ethiopia's independent media ecosystem and forced Journalists to practice self-censorship to avoid government

retaliation, limiting critical reporting on governance and human rights issues. International media coverage of Ethiopia during this period also highlighted the severe constraints faced by local journalists. Both radio and television programs remain heavily censored by authorities, causing journalists to censor themselves, too. In a word the stations continue to be faithful mouthpieces of the government. Besides, most government agencies still want the journalist to do a PR job for them (Reta, 2013). Reta (2013) asserts proactive reporting is not encouraged nor appreciated by the management.

2.1.1.3. Human rights violations

Hundreds of people were killed in repressive violence by army and militia forces. Political and civil society activities were more strongly monitored and restricted under auspices of the so called 'Command Post' (Abbink & Hagmann, 2018, p.318). The independent and severely curtailed Human Rights Council compiled a report indicating extrajudicial killings and masses of people arrested, and commenting on appalling prison conditions, including torture, supported by eye witness testimonies (Abbink & Hagmann, 2018, p.318).

The widespread human rights abuses under the EPRDF regime were widespread and systematic. Security forces were accused of extrajudicial killings, mass arrests, and torture, especially in regions where there was strong opposition against the government (Abbink & Hagmann, 2018, p.318).

2.1.1.4. Regional dynamics

Reports of Human Rights Watch documented atrocities in Ogaden Region, including war crimes, mass rapes, and forced displacements during counter insurgency operations against the Ogaden National Front (ONLF). Abbink (2018, pp.317-329) recorded clashes between ethnic groups also continued, with a major new crisis erupting at the Oromo -Somalia border, leading to hundreds of people being killed and hundreds of thousands displaced. Protests against land grabs and political marginalization were met with violent crackdowns in Oromia. The Oromo/Amhara protest from 2014-2018 saw thousands detained, with allegations of torture and killings. In Amhara and Southern Nations, similar intricate of political repression and human rights abuses were observed, often targeting ethnic or political groups deemed a threat to EPRDF dominance. Despite restrictions on local media, international organizations like Amnesty International and

Human Rights Watch played a vital role in exposing human rights violations. However, the regimes tight media control often delayed or distorted the disseminations of such reports.

2.1.1.4.1 'Politics'

Ethiopia, as one of Africa's oldest nations, has experienced significant political and social turmoil. Following the fall of the Derg regime in 1991, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power with promises of democratization and development. Despite these promises, the EPRDF era? (1991-2018) was marked by increasing authoritarianism, suppression of dissent, widespread human rights violations. Media performance during this period was tightly controlled by the state, with independent journalists and outlets often silenced through censorship, arrests, and accusations of terrorism. The inadequate but severely curtailed Human Rights Council compiled a report indicating on appalling prison conditions, including torture, supported by eye witness testimonies (Abbink, 2017.318).

Since Ethiopia's Ethnic Federalism introduced by the EPRDF, it further complicated the Media landscape. Ethnic or language cluster of communities has become the source of power, as a foundation for the country's federal structure, and resources (Moges, M., 2022). While it was intended to empower regions, it often became a source of ethnic tension and political conflict, exacerbating human rights abuses. States in Africa are known both for their ethnic diversity and for their instability (Aalen, 2011).

The one party regime of EPRDF remained in place but appeared increasingly shaky, with country wide contestation and political insecurity ongoing (Abbink, 2017). When TPLF, which came to power at the gunpoint, it established other splinter organizations and renamed the regime the EPRDF. Intellectuals, who opposed the country's division along linguistic identity, were arrested and beaten from the very beginning. Among these, the most notable was the medical expert **Professor Asrat Weldeyes**, who also claimed and argued by questioning **the sea outlet of Assab Port** and cemented to reason never be forgotten.

2.1.1.4.2. Economy

Even though ,Abbink, Adetula, Mehler, and Melber (2017) declared the country's economy continued to grow, others argued that the growth was not a healthy economic effect, but rather a result of loans from **Western countries** , **China**, and the **World Bank**, although foreign investment and tourism did not recover to the level of before 2016 crisis(ibid.p.317). Abbink

(2017) reminded...governments remained active economic actors, buttressed by regular donor fund flows and slightly recovering FDI(Abbink, 2017).Ethiopia was the top recipient of American aid in all of Africa(Gardner,2024).

The annual **IMF** report (of December) on debt sustainability analysis raised the country's risk of external debt distress from "moderate" to "high". There were signs that the country had trouble repaying the interest on the debt burden. Moreover, much of the economy remained in the informal sphere, which accounted 30-90% of the non-agricultural activities (Abbink,2017, p.318). Coercers have made the country a laughing stock by organizing themselves in a way that is not based on their hard work but on their power. Only HIV has reduced while violence and the cost of living are increasing. The country is in a real drama of violence (Abbink et al.2017).

2.1.1.4.3. Propaganda,Conflicts andViolence

According to Marriam Webster Online dictionary, a definition of propaganda is "ideas, facts, allegations spread deliberately to further one's cause or to damage an opposing cause. Totalitarian propaganda feeds on **Us-Versus-Them narratives** and utilizes distrust, tribalism, polarization, and conspiracy theories as weapons in the struggle for power(Hendricks&Vestergaard,2019,p.116).On both sides, contributes to highly volatile opposition between **selfhood** and **otherness**(Kolsto,2009). Ethnic Federalism often becomes a source of ethnic tension and political conflict, exacerbating human rights abuses (Aalen, 2011).

If ethnicity is captured within a state structure, it may create conflict (Aadland, 2002, P.32).Moreover, conflicts creates pressures between **A** and **B**, often people do not trust each other. This type of conflict occurs when the individual is caught between two equally undesirable or unpleasant goals. It is to choose the "**devil and deep sea**" or between "**the frying pan and the fire**" either way he suffers. He is repelled by both, but must decide to endure one and suffer the consequences of the other (Dandapani, 2004).

Undercertain conditions, mass media can affect conflict. In contrast, propaganda encourages violence against an ethnic minority appears to be more capable of including participation in violence when the minority is small and defenseless (Pham et al.2023).

2.1.1.4.4. **Violence**

The three forms of violence are **War, Genocides, and Repression** carried out by agents of state such as armies, and the police or by irregular forces such as militia and vigilantes that the state organizes, supports, tolerates or is unable to suppress. The most direct victims are targeted civilian populations, members of the armed forces, and in ways large and small the social fabrics of society (Chorbajian, 2021).

As many as 22 million non-combatants have been killed in nearly fifty genocides and politicides since 1945(Harff, 2003).Nearly all of the state sponsored mass murders occurred during or shortly after regular civil wars or revolutions. One of their key features is that the violence is of predominantly collective nature, meaning that the killing is carried out by individuals organized linguistically and collectively in groups such as militias, communal police, death squads and the army(Yanagizawa-Drott, 2002).

After the endorsement of ethnic federalism as of 1995, several ethnic based conflicts have been observed between different ethnic groups .To mention a few of them, the Silte-Gurage conflict, the Wogagoda language conflict, the Sekeko-Majang-conflict, the Anuak-Nuer conflict, Bente-Gumuz conflict, the Oromo- Amhara conflict, the Borena Gerri conflict, the Afar-Issa conflict, the Oromo- Somalia conflict, the Oromo-Gumuz conflict (Lubo,2012).In this regard, for instance, Abbink&Hagmann (2018) has a deep understanding of the crisis that clashes between ethnic groups also continued, Oromo-Somali border, leading to hundreds of people being killed and hundreds of thousands displaced.

2.2. Liberalization of Media for a Short-Time attraction, in 2018

After the temporary split or trickery slid of TPLF from the EPRDF in 2018, the release of journalists and the opening of private media were seen as a promising step. Skjerdal (2021,p.15)stated the liberalization of the media was a positive move, however, this was a trick act that surprised many as the media had changed itself; in situation, where the system as a whole had not changed. It is not difficult to understand that this was a temporary move to gain public support. Even if media outlets such as OMN were opened, they should not be seen as a beacon of democracy; because their entire news and work revolves around ethnicity, far from the

realization of democracy and **human rights issues**. For instance, Skjerdal (2021) found out while collecting data for the study:

Hence, when describing 'homecoming' of the Diaspora media in 2021, an informant uses the expression, "Abiy allowed Jawar to return", as if the fate of Jawar Mohammed's media Company was essentially a matter of personal judgment by the Prime Minister rather than the consequence of formal media liberalization. And perhaps, to large extent, it was.

The media, which claimed to have shown improvement, quickly turned into a tool of destruction. One of the unsolicited secondary effects of the newborn media pluralism in 2018 is increased polarization between media outlets informed by an amplification of ethnic interest (Skjerdal, 2021).

2.2.1. Media as Peace Maker or Violence Instigator

Can the media really function as peacemakers between two deeply embedded sides in conflicts? (Oates, 2008). Yangizawa-Drott (2002) discusses that the mass media can in part affect conflict by functioning as a coordination device. What was the image that the media used in Shashemene, Welega, and Addis Ababa? They were all OMN; EBC; they participated in the violence and created a wide-ranging debate by mobilizing and inciting groups; at the initial stage, the speeches by Jawar; Bekele Gerba; Shimelis Abdisa; Abiy Ahmed ;and others created a favorable environment for the spread of the conflicts. OMN played key role in staging the 'Qerro violence' and benefitted them from coverage (Skjerdal, 2021).

2.3. Media Freedom and Human Rights in Ethiopia under TPLF's born Abiy Ahmed

When Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed assumed office in 2018, Ethiopia seemed poised for a new era of democracy and press freedom. Internally the most fundamental change for the media themselves is perhaps the removal of fear mechanisms in the news room (Skjerdal & Moges, 2021). His promises of transparency, democratic reforms, and respect for human rights inspired hope among journalists who had long endured systemic oppression under "previous" administrations. The EPRDF government had left a legacy of silenced dissent, restricted media, and suppressed civil liberties.

Abiy's ascension to power, however, brought stark contradictions. While initially hailed as a reformist, the outbreak of the Tigray war in November 2020 marked a turning point, with Ethiopia plunging into renewed authoritarianism and violence (Abbink, 2017). Journalists have faced increased persecution, including arbitrary arrests, detention, and even disappearances. The Ethiopian government's imposition of a communication blackout in Tigray further obstructed the press, severing access to critical information during a time of widespread human rights violations.

Some cadres and scholars have been declaring that the TPLF/EPRDF regime has completely collapsed in 2018 and that a new regime has arrived in Ethiopia by the name 'Prosperity', in short (PP), as if self-evidently ended EPRDF era (Abbink, 2017, p.318). But the 'Prosperity', which is changing only naming, promotes ethnicity itself continuing to implement with the same officials what TPLF/EPRDF had designed, which latter was called 'Pseudonym changer'.

Last of all, however, Moges (2022) pronounced after April, 2018 the new political reform opens up possible avenues for political parties and activists, yet without considering the general conducts of TPLF/EPRDF. Skjerdal (ibid;2021) stated the media was in positive move, however, that was a trick act that surprised many as the media had changed itself; in situation where the system had not changed. Sooner the state lost people's trust. Soon, the harassment and abduction of journalists and media control continued. Because '**Prosperity Party**' cannot be seen as a change, in the form of a change, rather in the replacement of an official who came from the same party through an unclear and secret procedure. Therefore, it should be noted that there is no such thing as a change

Since then, **human rights** issues have become the timeliness concern of the topic by the larger publics in Ethiopia. The concept of human rights has turned out to be one of the most contemporary issues across the globe (Nwankwo, 2011.p.1) However, the government, political bodies and media have given little attention to man's rights whereas many more old and recent studies have focused on **human rights**. While there has been much research on the impact of media and politics on human rights. Notably, ethical journalism requires correct applications of principles independent from government interests. After all, Journalists seemed retreating rather than maintaining their professional integrity. On account of this, professional and national

loyalties can hardly be treated separately as if journalists are subscribed **to one identity the one day and another the next** (Skjerdal, 2012). Most importantly, journalists do not portray an environment where they normally stay professional and occasionally swop to national loyalty, but rather describe how both loyalties are present at the same time persistently and forcefully (Skjerdal, 2012). Regardless of the legal, political, and economical environment, it is the professional environment that determines whether media act freely (Whitten-Woodring, 2017).

2.3.1. Statism and Terrorism

There is no simple, universal definition of state terrorism which suits or fits to their gang-rule. The line between "terrorist" and "politicians" becomes particularly blurred (Oates, 2008). If the journalists kept silent about human rights violations, who will help us understand meaningfully through coverage about the relationship between media and crimes? (Oates, 2008).

War, genocide, and repression are three forms of violence carried out by state actors, such as police and armed forces, or by non-state actors, such as vigilantes and militias, that the state sponsors, encourages, condones, or neglects to put down (ibid). Moreover, to carry out these evil actions, the state collect money from the people. Concerning this Chorbajian (2021, p.275) explained the wealth created through people's labor either in the form of high taxes or neglect of social services is a display to repression.

Genocide is a particularly heinous form of mass killing because of the very large numbers of people who are killed, and because the victims are not killed for anything they have done. People are targeted from who they are. It is their race, ethnicity, tribe, language, religion or other immutable demographic trait that condemn them (Chorbajian, 2021).

All of this is true of authoritarianism generally, but it is especially true of one of one specific kind of authoritarian ideology: fascism, which seeks to divide population into "us" and "them" by appealing to ethnic, racial, or religious differences (Stanley, 2024).

2.3.2. Truth and Politics

It was unexpected for the public that truth and politics down turned to a bad character. People are used to knowing politics is inefficient to become conscious of truth and goodness as far as the politics of deception continues preaching the necessity of lying (Arendt, 2017). Besides, men come close to the truth, but it was destroyed each time (Mayhem, 2007).

In the late 1960s, political philosopher Hannah Arendt (1976) observed that truth and politics "are on rather bad terms with each other." She saw that power threatens truth, particularly "**factual truth**". "Formal truths like "two plus two equals four" are not as vulnerable as factual truth because "facts and events -the invariable outcome of men living and acting together-- constitute the very text of political realm" not incidentally they also constitute the text of journalism (Shudson, 2008).

Hannah Arendt (2017) indicates how today's politics has affected our moral and political judgment. Her thinking never assimilated to the recent revival of communitarian political thought. The political philosophy of Hannah Arendt showed communitarian objections are against liberalism.

One of the core principles instituted by post-1991 government in Ethiopia that took power after a successful armed struggle was ethnic-based federalism, informed by neo-Leninist political model called '**Revolutionary Democracy**' (Abbink&Hagmann, 2013.p.17).Some purports ethnicity is an extension of Marxist ideology which fell short of fulfilling the realization of equality even in its origin of the Soviet Union let alone in Ethiopia. Moreover, Marxism tries to be "**all embracing**"; it "contemplates...totality"(Sibert, et al.1956), likewise tribalism derived this notion and tried to slogan in Amharic "**ኢቃፊ**", all embracing, to mean it 'politics?'

2.4. Is there Politics in Ethiopia?

As Abbink (2017) in his conversation with politicians, academics, and students in Africa, this is what one hears: "**We do not understand Ethiopian politics.**" However, Abbink (2017) further explained federalism originated from the neo-Leninist model, and then evolved into **revolutionary democracy** based on ethnicity, which was first devised by Woyane(TPLF) and later by the EPRDF, with ethnicity as the main political foundation. Abbink (2017) exposed to ridicule the Leninist political model which is ...often dubbed an "**experiment**". Ethnic identity politics makes Ethiopia unique in Africa, where ethnicity becomes a national politics but in Kenya ethnic parties are not allowed. In Ethiopia they are the norm to run election(Abbink, 2013).

The pure green, yellow, and red flags will not be waved in the air after TPLF came to power. Thinking about **Unity is scary**; all the mistakes of TPLF and EPRDF have made, and justice is

passed over in silence (Rita, 2013). Neglecting justice has become accustomed to covering up the mistakes made by the TPLF/EPRDF, **considered politics?**. They want to collect ideas through NDC in order to use them as PP's own ideas to prolong their power by saying that they will include everything on their agenda. On the contrary, they ignore the human rights violations that have occurred in the country. Instead, they celebrate "Omar-Oil and Corridor Development" as if nothing had happened.

According to President Isaias, the Eritrean people are anti-Ethiopian and only want to secede (Henze, 2000). Furthermore, Meles neutralized and avoided the fierce Ethiopians reaction to the loss off the Red Sea (Henze, 2000). Being an "Ethiopia-nist" and loving the country by saying "Ethiopia," "Ethiopia," and so on, has been viewed as a terrible philosophy. The rationale is that the name Ethiopia might not allow for extremism and narrow-mindedness. In unity that is not possible to lose Assab and to organize a group, and attack those who do not have a group and defenseless, using the power what they have not earned. Interestingly, the TPLF/EPRDF, which hates Ethiopian-ism, tries to promote Pan-Africanism as if they love Africa; one of these was **Meles Zenawi, who once, de-emphasized Pan- Ethiopian identity**(Abbink,2013).

Political liberties, respect for **human rights** and economic **equality** are however neglected, ethnic division was the increase, although repressed. The member of the ethnic group themselves are oppressed .No one is aware of their oppression and report about them. The public look in silence when the experiment is done. But in Kenya formal ethnic parties are not allowed. In Ethiopia they are the norm (ibid, 2017, p.17)?

Underlying assumptions of "**Revolutionary Democracy**" as rather strange with the issue of ethnic- federalism, ethnic identity, springs from two words derived from Marxism, for which to connect Ethiopia to formulate Socialism. The word "**Revolutionary**" seemed causing dramatic or absolute change to the realization of "**true democracy**," it was a very interesting slogan, as it seemed that Ethiopia was rapidly transforming into a democratic country while TPLF/EPRDF still called itself is "Front". Increasingly, an authoritarian governance model, which was a top-down rule that accords ethnic rights. Sadly, it ignores political liberties, respect human rights, economic equality (Abbink, 2013).

2.4.1. What is politics?

Politics is ill understood, have been defined, 'wrote Isaac D'Israeli , as "the art of governing mankind by deceiving them". Politics is then simply regarded as an obstacle-and in a sense, it is an obstacle, but it may not be an all secure or effective one. Some politics exist in unfree regimes, but it is unwanted -a measure to their rulers inadequate progress towards unity; and every effort will be made to keep such disputes secret from the ruled to prevent the formation of a 'public' (Crick,2000).

The wonder of politics meaning judged by the behavior and deeds, and not by the rhetoric (Crick, 2000, p. 9). Currently, many people have no faith in politicians. Rebuilding trust has failed ninety percent of the public distrust politicians; over seventy-five of the public believe most MPs make significant amount of money by using public office improperly; and sixty-five of the public believe that MPs put their own interests first before their party, constituents and country (Flinders, M.2010, p.309).

Public opinion surveys suggest that large sections of the public are more distrustful, disengaged, and skeptical about politics than ever before. 'Politics', for the many rather than just a few, has become a dirty word conjuring up notions of sleaze, corruption, greed and inefficiency. Politicians frequently promise too much and deliver too little. Some politicians have abused their positions for personal gain. People 'hate politics' because they simply do not understand it; and they are generally not helped to understand it by the media or University professors of politics for that matter (Flinders, M.2010, p.309).

Politics is a theory that influences people on international, regional level. It has different sides and dimensions. It also uses forces to govern a nation. Politics itself is a force; it often involves the use of force (Crick, 2000/2004). In other words, politics uses military force. In this regard (Robert, J.A et al.2004) underlines the forceful use of military is physical. A state harms, cripples, or destroys the possessions. Robert et al., (2004) further pointed out to use military power forcefully is to wage war; to use it peacefully is to threaten war.

In the words of Thomas Hobbes -'by the disorder of the present time'. It was an attempt 'to justify politics in plain words by saying **what is...** I believe the essential matter to be very simple (Crick, 2013).In the narrowest conventional (dictionary) usage – what governments do – politics is affecting us intimately, day by day, and hour by hour. In the wider sense – people exercising

power over others – it is part of all sorts of social relationships, be they kinship, occupational, religious or cultural (Stephen d.T. et al.2005).

The enforcement of one group's interests on another or individuals by force and without any element of consent seems far from what most people understand by '**politics**', as Crick (2000) states. On the other hand, a situation (perhaps unlikely) in which a group in total agreement (as to goals and methods), proceeds to achieve more and more of its objectives does not sound like a political process either. (Stephen d.T., 2008).

2.5.Human Rights, Free Media and Democracy

Some of the most widely criticized forms of government behavior are political imprisonment, murder, disappearance, torture. The right to be free from these violations is termed the human right to physical integrity (Singrandelli and Richards, 2006; Poe and Tate, 1994; as cited in Whitten-Woodring, 2018). Human rights research has consistently found that democracy plays a key role in improving government respect for these rights(McCormick and Mitchell,1997;Poe and Tate ,1994;Poe.Tate, and Keith,1999 as cited in Whitten-Woodring,2018).Political competition is 'the critical feature that makes full-fledged democracies respect human rights.(Whitten-Woodring,2018,p.4).Further,Whitten-Woodring(2018.p.4) argued that free media play a crucial role in providing information that facilitates political competition and accountability, but that effects of free media vary depending on the level of democracy or autocracy.

.Media plays a crucial role in shaping society, influencing public opinion, and functioning as a bridge between the public and key institutions. The various roles of the media are informative, watchdog, activism, entertainment,providing news and updates, etc., Can the media really function as peacemakers between two deeply embedded sides in conflicts? (Oates,2008).The main proof that press freedom and a free media are working properly in the country is to maintain the surveillance over the government(Whitten-Woodring, 2018).According to Schudson (2008)"an unlovable media is essential to keep government power in check".

Democracies have free media and autocracies have government-controlled media. Whitten-Woodring (2018) found that the influence of media freedom on government respect for human rights is negative for the most autocratic regimes and positive for the most democratic regimes. According to (Small and Singer 1976, as cited in Whitten-Woodring, 2018), "democratic dyads

are far less likely to engage in war than mixed and nondemocratic dyads" (p.4). Several studies indicate that media freedom may be a stronger predictor of whether a dyad will enter into military conflict (Choi and James 2006; Van Belle 1997, 2000, as cited in Whitten-Woodring, 2018).

2.6 .Polarization and Conflict

According to Ayn (1973), polarization is against concepts which she called it "anti-concepts" and "theory". Quoting philosophers, she clearly put the **anti-ideas** are the worst divisive, dividing a country by creating **irreconcilable** groups and leading to violence; One aspects which illustrates that in political issues, the anti-concepts makes an **argument of intimidation**. Then , the **discussion** that requires **competence**, whether it is true or false, because such an idea is divisive, it puts the country in danger, and by making the opposition or rivals retreat, it prohibits ideas as if they had nothing to say. Mean what? (Ayn, 1973).

When the media reinforces tribal or ethnic loyalties, it can fuel tensions and conflicts between different groups. Aadland (2002,p.35) said "...in light of historical context, basing nation building on a vision of multiethnic entity, holds the potential for massive conflict as it also fragment ethnic groups along lines of clan and lineage." This makes it **difficult for the media to play a neutral role in advocating human rights**. The advancement of human rights or individual rights in tribalism governance presents several unique challenges, especially when media is involved.

Tribalism governance refers to systems where social organization, political power, and leadership are based on tribal affiliations, traditions, and customs. In such systems, promoting Universal Human Rights can be complex due to conflicting cultural norms, power structures, and political dynamics. Adherents of tribalism or collectivism generally possess a vague and imprecise awareness. In terms of cognition, nothing is more detrimental than an inexact understanding. Ayn (1971) also questioned how media professionals handle and interpret anti-concepts encountered in their cultural environment.

Polarizer's are struggling to eliminate fundamental principles from public discussion. Polarizers say they do not agree with the basic principles and use force to enforce their disagreement. They insist the respect of cultures, languages, worships etc., instead they **keep silent violations of**

human rights and property rights. As Ayn stated without property rights, other rights cannot be exercised (Ayn, 1971).

2.6.1. Culture and Politics in Ethiopia

The people who are confused by the intermingling of culture and politics have taken root in many African countries, especially in Ethiopia. For instance, culture is linked to politics, sometimes culture leads politics, and other times politics continues to fade away being as traditional or indigenous conflict resolution. If the "life experience "is interpreted through a mythical world view, it may restrict critical thinking and a trust worthy communal life (Aadland, 2002).Gelfand (2018) stated that the influence of culture on politics needs a lot of study to understand. She also added "Rule makers are rule breakers".

Cultures give greater attention **to duties** than to **rights** and **to groups** than **to individuals** (Donnelly,2006 p.17).Cultures are resistant to democracy and free flow of ideas and vulnerable to the trickery propagandas of dictators. It also preaches war against his brother saying it is our culture of war. Culture always makes crime using its language groups and asks for forgiveness. Law has no place here.

Moreover, it is a reflection of closed society that absorbs anything without question and worship authorities, witchdoctors. At times, it rejects what it has taken in without reasons. On the contrary, democratic cultures are more open to different people (immigrants), to ideas and change--issues that culture-mongers struggle with. As understood from this, culture is more prominent than politics in Ethiopia. "This hints to ask what the politics of Ethiopia is."

Challenges media faces in promoting human rights in tribal governance systems:

Cultural Relativism vs. Universal Human Rights

Conceptual and Substantive Universality

2.6.2. Cultural Relativism

It is a doctrine that holds an exemption from legitimate criticism by outsiders, a doctrine that strongly supported by notion of communal autonomy and self-determination. Moral judgments would seem to be Universal, as suggested not only by Kant's categorical imperative(a

foundational concept in ethics, proposing a universal moral law that dictates actions based on reason and rationality, not on desires or consequences.) but also by the common sense distinction between principled and self-interested action. And of Human Rights are literally, the rights everyone has simply because one is a human being, they would seem to be Universal by definition (Donnelly, 2013).

The two extreme positions on cultural relativism can be called radical cultural relativism and radical Universalism. The former would hold that culture is the sole source the validity of a moral right or rule. Radical Universalism would hold that **culture is irrelevant to the validity of moral rights and rules, which are universally valid** (Donnelly, 2013).

2.6.3. Universality

Universality means the recognition of human rights in world-wide scale. Two dimensions of universalism can be distinguished: horizontal and vertical. A horizontal dimension presupposes that the idea of the efficient human rights protection is accepted and realized by most. Universalism can be absolute. Human rights are also inalienable rights, because being or not being human usually is seen as an inalterable fact of nature, not something that is either earned or can be lost. Human rights are thus “Universal” rights in the sense that they are held “Universally” by all human beings. Conceptual Universality is in effect just another way of saying that human rights are, by definition, **equal and inalienable**.

The goal of Universalism is to protect and save humans. In a deep explanation, Universalism has no boundaries of sovereignty, history, culture, language etc. On the international stage, all countries should be a member for the strict implementation of Universalism. The International human rights text purports to be binding on signatories with respect to all persons within the geographic territory of the signatory state. They are Universal in the sense rights are guaranteed to all within and between the state signatories (Arnold, 2013). In many countries in the world, international human rights texts explicitly or implicitly purport to be universal and to have binding effect. In relation to poverty countries undermine human rights and expand discrimination (Corrin, 2013). Arnold (2013) notified human rights must be protected irrespective of differing language, political, economic, cultural systems.

There are two Universalities that should be recognized about human rights. These are Conceptual Universality and Substantive Universality, in which the former is implicitly suggested in the very idea of the later. Human rights, following the manifest literal sense of the term, are ordinarily understood to be the rights that one has simply because one is human. Human rights are also inalienable rights, because being or not being human usually is seen as an inalterable fact of nature, not something that is either earned or can be lost. Human rights are thus **“Universal” rights** in the sense that they are held **“Universally”** by all human beings. Conceptual Universality is in effect just another way of saying that **human rights are**, by definition, **equal and inalienable**(Donnelly, 2006).

The main challenges of tribal administration are described as deeply rooted conservatism and tribalism. It is possible to study the dramatic historical and the traditional of mythical world view of one language group and infer the style of another in the handling of disputes and human rights (Aadland, 2002). The measures to ensure the observance of internationally recognized human rights, especially individual rights; Tribalism violates the rights of speech, it may restrict critical thinking and distract a discourse of real consensus (Aadland, 2002, p.30), life and property. Since tribalism involves in myths and dramatic historical context, it is difficult for developing democratic process and if ethnicity is captured within a state structure, it may create conflict (Aadland, 2002.p.32).

When advocating for human rights, the media may be perceived as imposing foreign values or undermining local traditions. For example, practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), early marriages, and discriminatory inheritance laws are sometimes defended as cultural customs within tribal societies. Media campaigns supporting individual rights and equal treatment of citizens regardless of their languages, religions, or beliefs may face opposition and accusations of disrespecting cultural norms.

2.7. The Role of Media and Trust

Trust in the media and in journalists has recently been the subject of heated debate with the terms such as **'lying media'**, 'the media that are part of the system', and 'state-controlled broadcasting' being used (Otto et al.2018). Across the world of the communication scholars mirror the seriousness of trust in journalism and the media.

The role of media, both as a tool for advocacy and a mechanism of state propaganda, has been critical in shaping public discourse on human rights issues in Ethiopia. This interplay of media and politics provides a compelling lens to explore **the human rights** situation in the country. That's why the media credibility and the trust placed in them became a topic of discussion (Otto&Kohier, 2018).

The media are best defined by roles they play in the society. They educate, inform, and entertain through news. The mass media are supposed to play great role in a democracy(Ken,et.al2005).The role of media in promoting human rights is wide-ranging. It plays a major role in sensitizing the public about **human rights**. Media also serves to promote the protection **of individual rights** although it faces challenges in fulfilling its role strongly.

The Media's democratic role would be fulfilled, by journalists' adherence to the professional ethics of objectivity in reporting the facts of public affairs. Objectivity implied a clear journalistic distancing from the opinions expressed in political debates, and a determination not to confuse the expression of opinion with reporting of fact(McNair, 2003). Laihun (2000) discusses media role can be monitorial (a follower), facilitative (a contributor), radical (a convulser),or collaborator (an auxiliary).

2.7.1.Monitorial Role

This role as a theory is called surveillance by Lasswell in 1948,when explained media's role, which is used as a short hand expression to cover processes of observation, collection of information and the content of the information itself (Christians,et al., 2009). However, since surveillance connotes as the term surveillance suggests, it is not just about observing, but also about the systematic collection of information that is guided by criteria of necessity and reliability. Sometimes there is a process of directly reporting the information to policymakers. In some uses, it is linked to and controlled by intelligence. It is likened to a police operation. It is espionage when analyzed in a very negative way. This word is not suitable with news announcement, therefore, more general and neutral term like "monitorial" beneficial to the receiver of information than the agents of information or control (Christians, et al., 2009).

2.7.2. The Facilitative Role of Media

In their facilitative role, the media promote dialogue among their readers and viewers through communication that engage them and in which they actively participate. In facilitative role, The

news media should strengthen and facilitate public participation beyond the government and the market. The media should not only report on civil society organizations and activities; it should also improve and develop them. The media should be able to explain public problems and their solutions to citizens.

2.7.3. Media as a promoter of human rights

Media can play essential role in promoting and teaching human rights and changing the attitudes of the public by shaping and activating political actions. Similarly, media has a capacity to quickly disseminating individual rights. Media take the lead in exposing **human rights violations**. Media can play watchdog roles that can hold accountable those in power and bring injustices to light and construct a democratic society. Media have both preventive and protective role before attacks happen and avoid violations, conflicts, and abuses. Moreover, it amalgamates individuals to be individuals in the society or public life (McNair, 2003). Media coverage of political events, particularly in television news channels has become increasingly influential in shaping public opinion (Saksham, et.al2023). Media as educational institutes' are under a growing control and dependent on government. However, Tax payer funded media are teaching any ideas of its owner's choice by force. Here, any injustice done would be done to an individual, in socialist, which is equivalent to tribalism (idealist) theory one man do not count anyway (Ayn, 1989; Crick, 2000).

The role of the mass media in modern democracy is one of the most controversial topics in politics. Politicians are usually locked in a 'love-hate' relationship with the political media, and the media seem to play an ever-larger part in political life. Political scientists dispute whether the mass media are powerful or not, and whether their impact on politics is good or bad for democracy (Ken, et.al2005).

In Ethiopia, there are all kinds of problems that the media lifts about the problems of politics in the country vice versa. What is the role of media in areas where ethnicity at its climax of violence? Do the media perform appropriately? How should the media work?

In order to say whether the media has worked or not, all procedures must be able to be measured by basic conditions of its operations. Before we list the parameters, can the policy in this country be called politics? First of all, it is necessary to examine the way in which the communal system

has continued until now. In the medieval or ancient world group loyalties were more significant than individuality (Crick, 2000/2004).

Many scholars have said the media must not be under the government control and it should be guided by the market. Market forces oblige them to follow public opinion rather than mould it (Ken, et.al.2005).Media in Ethiopia still under the government control and forced to display collective trends only largely ignoring man's rights. Concerning this, Sarah, (2003) explained calling tribalism communitarianism:-

“Communitarianism refers to social and political philosophy emphasizes the importance of "communalism" that focus on linguistic-identity. Communitarians' also opposes Individualism and rejects laissez-faire policies, which prioritize the stability of the overall Community. Historically, communitarianism emerges in the 1980s.it criticizes two prominent Philosophical schools, namely contemporary liberalism, which seeks to protect and enhance Personal economy and individual rights.”

The application of communitarianism is controversial. It evokes associations with the ideologies of socialism and collectivism. Some of the academics who champion this thought –usually avoid the term “Communalism” advocating “Communitarianism (Sarah, 2003).

According to Crick (2000/2004) Liberals believe that true individual self-interest is respected and that the individual is the only true judge and measure of the correctness of policies. This is in contrast to Marxists who believe that the individual is the only one who can truly achieve freedom and that true freedom will only be achieved when all forms of oppression are eliminated and a classless society is created.

2.8. Fairness Doctrine

It is seldom to hear about "fair and free" politics, which is also a rarely escaped words from the mouths of media and politics in Ethiopia. Moreover, the principle of fairness is not seen in practice in the media, schools, Universities etc., The promoter of equality Orwell in Animal Farm, satirizes authoritarianism "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others"(Orwell, 2008/1945).Likewise, most men believe and forge analogy that all their fingers are not equal so that they make sure they will not be equal with others to the rest of their life.

This led them to decide not even to try to be equal. In contrary, (Dwan, 2018) outlined that human equality is technically possible whatever the psychological difficulties may be.

The "Fairness Doctrine" was taken from the Socialism or Communalism system and blended with Capitalism and create tiny brief temporary counterfeit and called "Mixed Economy", which is a weak principle that prevents **free speech**, but genuine freedom interplay between private and public life (Crick,2000/2004). For a while, this principle moderates the **collectivist trends**. Consequently, the principle protects fairness from the Establishment's and gives temporary solutions only for education. This doctrine is atypical product of the socialist sentimentality that dreams of combining government ownership with intellectual freedom (Ayn, 1972.p.5). It is anti-intellectualism to create a state of unreality; the exploitation of victimhood (Stanley, 2024).

In Ethiopia, lawlessness and human rights abuses are a stark reality. People migrate. Brokers, who are the actors of the migration, make profit. People are kidnapped and tortured. Kidnappers ask for ransom. Even though some have paid, their lives are not spared. When people attacked by terrorist groups, the government watched in silence as crimes were left forgotten.

There is a situation where the government and the law remain silent on those who are engaged in terrorist acts and who are killing innocent people, while the media continues to portray the victims in a manner that is far from the truth. In this regard, the media has been distorting justice by high lighting and giving extensive coverage to the acts of terrorists, and by pushing back the victims whose human dignity has been violated in Mojo; in Shashemene; in Addis Ababa; in Wollega etc.

When theory runs against the grain of living forces, the result is a deceptive theory of politics. That there, is historical justification for this fear is plain enough. To put it briefly, democracy is afraid of the tyrant. That explains, but does not justify. Governments have to be carried on by men, however much Under totalitarian rule one had to be careful when deciding who could be trusted (Dimdins, 2024).

2.81. Arguments on Human Rights

The strong claims made by the doctrine of human right continue to provoke considerable skepticism and debates about the content, nature and justifications of human rights to this day.

Indeed, the question of what is meant by “**right**” is itself controversial and the subject of continued philosophical debate. Because Nedinani (2015) viewed '**rights**' are something privileged.

However, Nedinani's assertion is not acceptable since rights are natural and God given that no one can allow or prevent **the right to life, property and liberty**. Therefore, rights are not a ready-made debate for parliaments. **Rights** are never open doors to skepticism and they are not commodities for sale but not as Nedinani (2015) viewed rights are something given. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt said, " Human rights exist to the degree that they are respected by people in relations with each other and by governments in relations with their citizens".

Rights are the principal form of society, and it is a significant cause of war in Ethiopia. Concerning this Ayn (1989) indicated that unless the doctrines of war rejected from the root of it, war is inevitable. A report by UN human rights research estimated that more than million people are arrested by a secret police and subject to imprisonment without fair trial knowingly or unknowingly. Human rights activists, journalists put to death, jailed in worldwide (UDHR, 1948).

2.8.2. Human Rights and Peace

Before combining right with the word human, first of all one can get the deep understanding of the word "right." The first thing is, journalists are always to serve the general will means "rational will". The will must be universal. There is no general will unless the person wills the good. General will maybe embodied in one man willing universally (Rousseau, 1941).

Human is a word-a singular word which represents "one-man, or a single man, or individual." In this context when it is connected to "rights" it forms Human-Rights - a single man, who has basic fundamental rights, which no one can violate them. Human is an individual man who has inalienable rights. According to Crick (2000/2004) the object of political activity is the happiness of 'individual'. Human Rights are literally, the rights (every one) has simply because one is a human being, they are Universal by definition (Donnelly, 2013).Not only human rights are indispensable as a protection of human beings, they are also primordial elements of safe guarding peace in the world (Arnold, 2013).Respecting human rights and keeping peace are the major obligations of the world people.

2.8.2. Freedom of speech

"To suppress free speech is a double wrong. It violates the rights of the hearer as well as those of the speaker." Douglass (1852, July 5). Melkonian (2012) explained all forms of freedom of speech are good for the full potential of the individual. Everyone has freedom of opinion and expression, this rights includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of any frontiers. According to the argument of (Amnesty International 2006, as cited in Whitten-Woodring, 2018) explained free news media will help to improve government respect for human rights. Freedom of speech is crucial in order to operate society smoothly (Melkonian, 2012). The free press is the ubiquitous vigilant eye of a people's soul, the embodiment of people's faith in itself, the eloquent link that connects the individual with state and the word (Steel, 2013).

Freedom of speech is under a constant scrutiny almost in areas of human interactions and it is also affected by paid surveillances of the state could be taken as a fake freedom. In this regard, forefathers say, "If you don't speak, you will remain ignorant." If a person doesn't speak and he can't make known his illness, he will not get medicine" He should report his problem or illness with his mouth or a sign. However, dictators don't allow citizens to breathe. They want breathless rules. Further people fear because they aware the violations, afraid of their government, and consequently more submissive, the outcome further violations of human rights (Whitten-Woodring, 2017). Tyrants suppress a person who opposes them and hide, so people choose silence. Leaders in public affairs recognize this. They know that no attack is so disastrous as silence, that no invective is so blasting as the wise and indulgent smile of the people who do not care. "(Lippmann, 1913).

When the silence becomes too much, they start to fear. And then people will enter into war. If you don't talk about issues that may be the source of war, if you can't talk about it, war can't be avoided. Regarding this Ayn (1989) explains:

Men are afraid that war might come because they know, consciously or subconsciously that they have never rejected the doctrine which causes wars, which has caused the wars of the past and can do it again -the doctrine that it is right or practical or necessary for men to achieve their goals by means of physical force (by initiating the use of force against other men) and that some

sort of "good" can justify it. It is a doctrine that force is a proper or unavoidable part of human existence and human societies.

If people cannot speak their mind that they won't have democracy. Freedom of speech is the foundations of people. People must speak their mind to be productive (Ayn, 1989). Free speech is only relevant to freely think and speak, free speech is only meaningful if you allow people to that you don't like them to say. Free speech is important not only people who speak the right things (Elon Musk, 12:08-14:16minutes).

Elon Musk speaks at Georgia Meloni's right-wing political festival in Italy. He was asked about his phrase "Walk Mind Illness Viruses', what is that virus?"It is coming to Europe, Elon replied that the virus is consists of creating very divisive identity politics, so it amplifies tribalism, amplifies sexism, the only thing is -isms, divide people, hate each others, people hate themselves. That stuff is creating artificial mental civil war that is created. Individuals must succeed on how they work, the talents they have, not who they are, what tribe, what gender they are"(Elon Musk12:08-14:1minutes).Individuals can survive by choosing to use his mind(Ayn, 1989). Tribalism is all about condemning people, being divisive, it is just evil frankly. Similarly, in Ayn Rand's novel "The Fountain Head", Roark fears the ancient and **ugly monster of collectivism** (tribalism) that at the time was dominating Europe and the thinking of United States(Mayhew, 2007).

2.8.3. Being Right and Having Rights

"Right" in English, like equivalent words in several other languages, has two central moral and political senses: rectitude and entitlement. In the sense of rectitude, we speak of "the right thing to do" of something being right (or wrong).In the sense of entitlement we typically speak of someone having a right. To have right to **X** is to be entitled to **X**. It is owed to you, belongs to you in particular. And if **X** threatened or denied, right holders are authorized to make special claims (Dworkin, 1977xi: 90, as cited in Donnelly, 2013).

In this country there are different backward views of "rights". Because most perceive individual rights as only personal things and interpret it as if individual things are not the basis of the society. Society is only a number of individual men (Ayn, 1989).

Man's rights are a moral concept- the concept that provides a logical transition from principles guiding individual actions to the principles guiding his relationship with others. The concepts that preserves and protects individual morality in a social context -the link between the moral code of a man and the legal code of a society, between ethics and politics(Ayn, 1989).Furthermore, other authors not far from Ayn concepts' and got the idea from Ayn and (Orend, 2002; Nwankwo, 2011) described **moral concepts** are generally '**moral rights**' claimed by everyone.

To violate one man's rights means to compel to act without his judgment (Peikoff, 1989).Man's rights are the natural rights of a person. Man's rights cannot be violated by any circumstances. A society can achieve successful economic development only when it can liberate and ensure the freedom of an individual by strengthening fundamental rights everywhere (Fedorova, 2013). The social value of the **human rights** and freedoms determined by the act that it constitutes one of the forms of **human dignity**. As a result, a human being is recognized as the highest value. Nederman(2020) who further supported rights said natural rights are moral rights.Without heading too far from the assertion of Ayn's concepts ,Nederman(2020) pointed out and categorized that naturalrights denotes the doctrine that human being possess a set of powers, freedoms or competences in which Nederman confirmed formerly stated by Ayn(1889).Similarly, Nederman justified man must enjoy complete and exclusive dominion over his/her mental and bodily facilities and the fruits there of- in the form of personal property.

The United States of America derived from the declaration of independence, built on the principle of individualism, one based on a person's right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It is the pursuit of one's happiness not the happiness of someone else(Ayn, 1987 p.30).Likewise, first three articles of the 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen' (Paris, 1789):

- 1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.*
- 2. The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible¹ rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.*
- 3. The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No body or individual may*

Exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.

I 'Imprescriptibly' means self-evident and obvious, and not derived from or dependent upon any external authority.

For many countries today, human rights are the supreme value recognized by the international community (Fedorova et al.2013.p.405). The effective development of society is possible only in the event of all activities of state bodies being concentrated on the liberation of personality and strengthening of the fundamental rights and freedom of an individual (Fedorova et al.2013.p.405;Crick,2000/2004).

The disregard of human beings during the first half of the twentieth century, accompanied by the two World Wars, opened the need to efficiently and internationally ensure the protection of human rights. Human rights are connected to the rule of law as a basis of a democratic state. The modern states in its finalities, has to promote personal, social, economic welfare of the individual and has three interconnected foundations: rule of law, and human rights. Democracy means political self-determination of individual (Arnold, 2013).

2.9. Theoretical Frame Works

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded in several communications and political theories. Media plays significant roles in carving public awareness influencing political discourse and framing human rights narratives. A fundamental of media theoretical frame works offer an essential overview of media and explains the functions of the media. These theories are Agenda-Setting, Framing, and Priming theories.

2.9.1. Agenda-Setting Theory

This theory was coined by McCombs and Shaw (1972), this theory postulates that media does not tell people what to think but influences what to think about by selecting and prioritization issues.McCombs (2009, p.1) stated the news media determine our cognitive maps of the world. The information in the mass media becomes the only contact many have with politics. The ability to influence the salience of the topics on the public agenda has come to be called the agenda- setting role of the news media (McCombs, 2009, p.1). In the context of human rights,

this theory helps explain how media coverage can influence public attention and policy focus on human rights issues

In Ethiopia, media outlets down play human rights violations depending on political alignment. This theory helps to explore how Ethiopian media sets the public agenda on issues such as the conflicts of Amharic speaking societies in the country and more specifically in Amharic regions. This study analyzes how state-controlled and independent media prioritize topics like human rights abuses and the Amhara Conflict in their reporting.

2.9.2. Framing Theory

Framing Theory, originally introduced by Goffman (1974), explains how individuals interpret and understand their experiences through structured cognitive frames. In media studies, this concept was further developed by scholars like Entman (1993), who applied it to mass communication. Entman emphasized that media not only tell the public what to think about (agenda-setting), but also how to think about it—by framing events in specific ways that influence public opinion and policy discourse. This is especially relevant in the context of human rights, where media framing can either raise awareness or downplay violations, depending on how issues are presented.

Goffmann (1974), advanced that framing theory examines how media constructs a narrative around an issue, influencing audience interpretation. Ethiopian Media often frames conflicts along ethnic or "political lines" shaping public opinion and deepening divisions. Frame and frame analysis is important in media and political studies. Framing refers to selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a message. This study shows how Ethiopian Media frames actors like FANO or the government narratives about conflicts and human rights.

The frames are consists of a protest event analysis based on what is written, aired, and organized by non-state instigators with the explicit purpose of critique or dissent together with societal or political demands.

2.9.3. Priming Theory

As adapted by Iyengar and Kinder (1987), extends the agenda-setting function of the media by shaping the criteria that audiences use to make judgments about political actors and social issues. In the context of human rights, priming helps explain how sustained media attention to specific violations or narratives influences how the public evaluates the government's commitment to protecting these rights. This theory is particularly relevant in Ethiopia, where coverage of ethnic conflicts, state responses, and human rights concerns can influence public sentiment and political action

Media influences how audiences evaluate political figures or policies by emphasizing specific issues. During conflicts media priming can sway public perceptions of government legitimacy or resistance groups like Fano.

2.9.4. Media Effect Theory

Encompasses a range of perspectives that explain how media influences audience attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors (Bryant & Zillmann, 2002). In the context of human rights, these effects are significant — from shaping awareness and empathy to motivating political engagement or indifference. In Ethiopia, where the media operates within complex political and ethnic dynamics, understanding media effects helps explain how different narratives about human rights violations are received and acted upon by the public. Theories such as agenda-setting, priming, and framing offer specific lenses to assess these dynamics.

Media has both short and long term effects on public opinion and behavior including desensitization to violence or increased polarization. Continuous exposure to bias or propagandist reporting in Ethiopia may affect public awareness and attitudes toward human rights violations.

2.9.5. Political Frameworks

Provide critical insight into how media functions within a state's power structure, especially in relation to human rights discourse. The Political Economy of Media (McChesney, 2008) reveals how ownership, state control, and financial interests influence what gets reported and how, helping to explain the often selective or biased coverage of human rights issues in Ethiopia. Public Sphere Theory (Habermas, 1962) emphasizes the role of media in facilitating democratic dialogue, which is essential for human rights awareness, yet often constrained in authoritarian or

semi-authoritarian regimes. Additionally, Democratic Media Theory argues that a free, pluralistic, and independent media is vital for democratic societies and human rights advocacy. This is complemented by Hallin and Mancini's model of media systems (2004), which distinguishes between authoritarian and democratic media structures, offering a framework to assess Ethiopia's media landscape and its implications for public knowledge and political engagement. Together, these political frameworks allow for a deeper understanding of how media is both shaped by and shapes political realities concerning human rights

2.9.6. What is Media?

The most common definition of "media" explained it means the use of both traditional media such as print, radio, television and social media, online news. The media main function are informing the public, shaping public opinion or acting as a watchdog. In this regard Whitten-Woodring (2017) stated that avoiding censorship will enable the media to act as watchdog over the government, otherwise media act as a lapdog.

Media is talked about all the time because it is everywhere. Every day media is full around us. Media might be something we hear, see, or even wear on our clothes. Books, TV programs, news sports, video games, the internet are also types of media (Jennings, 2018.p.1).The word media can mean a lot of things. Media refers to be the tools we use to share messages, ideas, and information with other people. There are many types of media. The main types are **print, recorded and broadcast**. The media is best defined by roles they play in the society (Jennings, 2018.p.1).

The mass media are crucial in political life because they are the means by which citizens; leaders acquire political information and try to influence each other. In any case, the media are crucial sources of information (Shehata, et al.2014).The mass media are also thought to be powerful political actors in their own rights. Media plays a crucial role in shaping public discourse, raising awareness on societal issues, and influencing political developments (Skjerdal, 2012). Understanding what media is—and how it functions—is fundamental to examining its impact on politics and human rights in the country.

Media refers to the systems, channels, or technologies used to communicate information to large and diverse audiences. As McQuail (2010) defines it, media encompasses all forms of mass communication — including print, broadcast, and digital platforms — that are structured to

deliver content to the public. Central to this definition is the role of media in informing, educating, and shaping public opinion within a society. While scholars like Skjerdal (2012) have expanded the scope of media and journalism in African contexts to include oral traditions and non-conventional forms of communication such as community whistling or town crier announcements, these practices challenge traditional definitions. Skjerdal refers to such methods under the category of "oral discourse journalism," though he acknowledges they may not align with standard journalistic norms like **verification**, **professional ethics**, and **regularity**. From a more classical perspective, however, these traditional forms — while culturally significant — may be better understood as community communication rather than journalism per se. This tension highlights the ongoing debate about what qualifies as media and journalism, especially when applying Western frameworks to African realities.

2.9.6.1. Media and Politics

According to Slaatta (1999) media and politics are interdisciplinary field. Media and Politics have always been mutually influential. The media plays an important political role of its own in **promoting rights**, discussing policies, as well as conveying the relationship of power and ideology. On the other hand, media outlets are subject to political forces (Mottura, 2017).

The relationship between media and politics is deeply intertwined (Slaatta 1999). Media serves as a conduit through which political actors communicate their messages, influence public perception, and frame policy debates. Through agenda-setting and framing, media can elevate certain political issues while marginalizing others. Politicians often rely on media for visibility, while journalists depend on political events for content, creating a mutually influential relationship. This interaction has significant implications for democratic participation and public opinion formation on human rights in Ethiopia.

The media have the power to inform the public about politics and exercise control over politicians (Stromback & Esser, 2014). Media is increasingly shaped by the dynamic of the public (McNair, 2009a). In any case, the media are crucial sources of information (Shehata, et al. 2014). The reason the core elements of journalism is simple: They never came from journalists in the first place. They flowed from the public's need for news that was credible and useful (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2014).

Media and politics are deeply intertwined though their link can have notable entanglement which can cause harm to the society. Dissemination of **false information and wrong news** among the dangerous situations brought about by media and politics(Hendricks&Vestergaard, 2019). Such as misinformation and disinformation, spread either deliberately or unintentionally. Today, like no other time in history, the threat of misinformation and disinformation at an all-time high. This is also true in the field of education called “**Zombie Concepts**”(Kendeou et al., 2019.p.1)

Media can create combustion to polarization from one side to another by introducing one sided-information. Government or political groups be able to use media to spread propaganda **to control public perception** and in turn to enforce the uncritical acceptance of certain policies. Therefore, fake news and biased reporting decompose public trusts in the media and political institutions. This leads to instability, in turn **affects human rights. Misinformation and manipulation** impair the whole society (Hendricks&Vestergaard, 2019).

The media, both as a tool for advocacy and a mechanism of state propaganda, has been uncritical in shaping public discourse on **human rights** issues in Ethiopia. This interplay of media and politics provides a compelling lens to explore the human rights situation in the country.

2.9.6.2. Media Politics

Media politics refers to the political dimensions of media itself, including how media is structured, owned, regulated, and influenced by political forces. It examines the control of media outlets by governments, corporations, or interest groups, and the impact of such control on media independence and pluralism. In many contexts, especially in authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes, media becomes a tool of propaganda, reinforcing dominant narratives and suppressing dissenting voices. Understanding media politics is key to analyzing the integrity and objectivity of media institutions.

In media politics, there are three principal actors-politicians, journalists and citizen-voter-each of whom is animated by distinctive motives, Crick (2000) cites J.H. Huizinga’s reference to Salazar’s disdain for politics, as published in *The Times* on 16 November 1961: “Who has not often felt the distaste with democratic politics which Salazar expressed when he said that he ‘detested politics from the bottom of his heart’ (p. 1). All those noisy incoherent promises, the impossible demands, the hotchpotch of unfounded ideas and impractical plans. Opportunism that cares neither for truth nor for justice the inglorious chase after unmerited fame ,the unleashing of

uncontrollable passion, the exploitations of the lowest instincts, the distortion of facts...all that feverish and sterile fuss?' (Crick, 2000.p.1)

Media politics in Ethiopia refers to the political control and regulation of media institutions, which often determines what content is disseminated and how it is framed. The state has maintained significant influence over media operations through licensing, censorship, and ownership of major broadcasting outlets (BBC Media Action, 2016). This environment raises concerns about press freedom and the media's ability to report independently on sensitive issues, such as **human rights violations, corruption, or ethnic tensions**. As such, analyzing media politics is essential to understanding the broader landscape of media performance and its implications for democracy and accountability in Ethiopia. Most of all to know the nuts and bolts of the media and politics is vital in changing it for the better-or to prevent it from getting worse (Hendricks&Vestegaard, 2019).

2.9.6.3. Media Ethnocentrism

According to Skjerdal (2021) it is clear that media organizations within tribal governance structures may align with specific ethnic groups, promoting content that favors their interests while marginalizing others. This can lead to biased reporting, further entrenching ethnic divisions and undermining efforts to promote **Universal Human Rights**.

2.9.7. Journalism, Tribalism and Conflict

Journalism is a professional practice within the broader field of media that involves the systematic gathering, verification, and dissemination of information for the public good. According to Kovah and Rosenstiel (2014), journalism's primary purpose is to provide citizens with accurate and reliable information they need to function in a free society. It is characterized by core principles such as truth-seeking, independence, accountability and serving the public interest. While media as a whole may include entertainment or informal communication, journalism specifically tied to news reporting, investigative inquiry, and critical analysis of events and issues. This distinction is important in evaluating claims like those made by Skjerdal (2012), who explores oral tradition in Africa- such as whistling signals or communal announcements — as forms of “alternative journalism.” While these may serve communicative roles within communities, they often lack essential journalistic features such as verification,

editorial process, and public scrutiny. Thus, while inclusive frameworks help recognize local communication systems, a rigorous definition of journalism must preserve standards that ensure democratic function in a society.

Journalism refers to the activities and outcomes of those professionally engaged in collecting, analyzing, and publishing "news"(McQuail, 2013, p.2).Being a journalist is not just working in a baked bean factory-journalists have a more social role that goes beyond the production of commodities to sell in the market place. Journalists inform society itself and make public develop awareness in all conflicting issues that which would otherwise be private. (Harcup, 2005. p.2). The commitment of journalists is to protect the news media from political interference and preserve freedom. To do this self-regulating is crucial, but it does not mean threatening the profession and avoid exposing malpractices (Fidllago et al., 2022)

Journalism is sometimes is said to be **a mirror reflecting society**; on occasions **a distorting mirror** (Harcup, 2003).Journalists who work in the media are important actors in themselves. Not only they transmit the messages of political organizations to the public, but they transform them through various processes of news-making and interpretation (McNair, 2003).On the one hand, Ethiopian journalists increasingly face an unwelcome dilemma: stay and obey (metazez) or “run” (meshafat), that is, change occupations or go into exile (Mayhem, 2007; Dirbab& O'Donnell, 2012). Hegseth (2016) quoted the old adage 'He who takes the King's money eventually does the King's bidding'.

Rather journalism an important job, you might think. But public opinion polls frequently remind us that, in the league table of trustworthiness journalists vie or compete for bottom place with politicians and estate agents. Cynicism starts early. Observer (2002) released a finding about young people who were asked how much they trusted journalists, around **77%** of the respondents said, "**I don't trust them**" Despite this image problem, a never ending stream of bright young and not-so-young people are eager to become journalists why?

On the other, reporting's from permanent conflictive areas are one of the most essential challenges online and televisive media. In such cases **correct and impartial reporting would be the main gun of the conflict** that the media or the reporter from the place of the case, would

offer for the reader (Hajirizi, 2023). Moreover, Hajirizi (2023) suggested the development of **field journalists during violence and riots is a necessity**.

2.9.7.1. **Ethnic Bias and Polarization in Reporting**

Ethnic bias more reflected by the so called "elite" where it is impossible to distinct the lay man as Ayn(1989) explained the elite are unable to reason. Intellectual confusion is the hallmark of the twentieth century, induced those whose task is to provide enlightenment: by modern intellectuals:

*One of their methods is the destruction of language - and, therefore, of thought and, therefore, of communication- by means of anti-concepts. An anti-concepts an unnecessary and rationally unusal term designed to replace and obliterate some **legitimate concept**. The use of anti-concepts gives the listeners a sense of approximate understanding. But in the realm of cognition, nothing is as bad as the approximate. If, loaded with too many approximations, you find yourself giving up the attempt to understand today's world, check your premises and the words you are hearing. To understand what one hears and reads today requires as especial translation.*

2.9.7.2. **Loyalty to Tribal Leadership and Governance**

In tribal systems, obedience to tribal leaders and elders is often a prime importance. The media may struggle to promote **individual rights** that conflict with the interests or authority of these leaders. **Criticism of tribal leaders**, even if justified by human rights concerns, **perceived as an attack on entire community or tribe**, for instance, if a media out let high lights instances of corruption, abuse of power, or **human rights violations** by tribal leaders, it may face backlash not just from the leaders themselves but also from the wider community that views the leadership as integral to their identity and governance. Rahmeto (1992, p.43), said "...ethnic-based politics of the transitional government is incomprehensible and dangerous" (as cited in Aadland, 2002, p.35).

Tribalism exempt from moral law, subject only to traditional rituals, they held total power and exacted blind obedience on the implicit principle of the good is for the tribe. Mankind is not an entity, an organism, or a coral bush. The entity involved in production and trade is man. It is with the study of man, not of the loose "community"—that any science of the humanities has to begin (Ayn, 1998.p.13). A non-tribal view of existence couldn't penetrate the mentalities that regarded the privilege of ruling material producers by physical force as a badge of nobility (Ayn,

1998).The principles of reporting are put to test a severe test when the country goes to war. To whom are you true? To the principle of abstract truth or to those running the war machines?

2.9.7.3. Media and Politics in Promoting Human Rights in Democratic and Authoritarian Regimes (Using Yugoslavia as a Reference)

When investigating the part of media and politics in promoting rights, it is decisive to explore how media works in both democratic and authoritarian regimes. Yugoslavia provides a unique case study because, it experienced both forms of governance, particularly its disintegration in the 1990s.The study placed two illustrations how media interacted with politics in promoting or hindering rights during different periods.

2.9.7.4. Media and Human Rights in an Authoritarian Regime (Yugoslavia under Tito)

Yugoslavia was a socialist state with a one party system under the Communist Party of Yugoslavia throughout the time of Josip Broz Tito's leadership (1945-1980).Tito's regime was less tyrannical contrasted to other Eastern Bloc countries such as the incitement of ethnic hatred was unlawful, individual religious belief was tolerated, however, press censored (Calic,2019). Tito's leadership was still authoritarian in character with limited political freedoms and tight control over media.

2.9.7.5. Media in Yugoslavia Under Tito

The media in Yugoslavia was painfully controlled by the state. The press, radio, and television were used as tools to promote socialist ideology, foster unity among the various ethnic groups, and consolidate the power of the Communist Party. Independent and opposition media were imaginary and denunciation of the government was suffocated. Journalists and media mouths that tried to report on human rights' violations, political difference of opinions, or ethnic tensions were inspected. The media were vital to report the position of party's narrative and used to broadcast Tito's insights of a unified Yugoslavia.

2.9.7.6. Human Rights Situation

Under Tito, freedom of speech was limited; political differences of opinions were crushed and an individual who finds faults with the government confronts detention and intimidation. Nevertheless, the state's media largely downplayed these human rights violations. The notorious Goli Otok prison camp, where political dissents held in custody,

2.9.8. Media and Politics in Promoting Human Rights in Democratic States

In democratic states, the media is often considered the "fourth estate," serving as a watchdog over the government, advocating for transparency, and promoting public awareness of human rights issues (Whitten-Woodring, 2017). However, even in democracies, the relationship between media, politics, and human rights is complex. Media can both empower and challenge human rights advocacy, depending on various factors such as media ownership, political pressure, and access to information.

2.9.9. Literature Gaps

Whitten-Woodring (2017) studied the relationship between media freedom and government behavior for the respect of human rights. She found that in democratic countries media freedom and government behavior is positive. She also underscored the importance of strong institutions. Zakaria (1997) as cited in Whitten-Woodring (2017) argued that democracy without constitutional liberalism is “**dangerous**” bringing with it the erosion of liberty, the abuse of power, ethnic division, and even war. Zakaria (1997) further defined constitutional liberalism as protections of “the individual’s **rights to life and property, freedom of religion and speech** as cited in Whitten-Woodring (2017)”

Whitten-Woodring (2017) found that in democratic countries media freedom and government behavior is positive, however, she stated the importance of strong institutions to force the government whereas in authoritarian state government behavior on human rights is negative.

This finding is not complete because she did not consider it on the moral philosophical ground and she was unable to fight.

Muluneh (2015) mentioned Hammarberg et al. (2011) and said that the media should be the voice of the people by preparing a platform for different voices and allowing the people to discuss human rights violations. However, it is not correct to try to expect **development journalism** with the protection of **human rights**. Because development journalism mainly focused on the establishment of governments that only follow the idea of being **developmental state**. Developmental governments long for entirely positive journalists. Development journalism comprises the reporting on ideas, programs, activities, and events, which are related to an improvement of the living standard, mainly in the rural areas (Wimmer, et al., 2005, p.2). Hence, the report of corruption, bad governance, accusations of officials absolutely forbidden.

Developmental governments desire journalists' hunger for constructive reports rather than reports on corruptions and corrupt practices or human rights issues. As a result, the journalists cannot report on human rights. The present study examined the developmental origin of 'blue lies', a pervasive form of lying in the adult world that is told purportedly to benefit a collective (Evans, et al.2017). Many scholars have advised that 'Ethiopia's developmental state' and appealed to democracy as the only salve the country's predicaments (Gardner, 2024.p.109).

Moreover, Muluneh (2015) was seen that he tried to combine variables that were completely unrelated such as **developmental state** and **human rights**. Dictators make laws and regulations to destroy their reliance on the validity of their own judgments and choices Ayn (2007), which they did not implement themselves. Therefore, this study examines fundamental rights and individuals with the three variables from the perspectives of philosophy and theory of journalism.

Muluneh (2015) linked development journalism with human rights or man's rights. Moreover, Muluneh (2015) tried to combine variables that were completely unrelated such as developmental state and human rights. His argument emerged from the thought of developmental journalism which he did not notice the suppression of human rights manifested from the very nature of developmental state. His study attempted to show developmental state and human rights are connected. Muluneh (2015) further claimed developmental journalism and

human rights are inherited. In that, (Muluneh, 2015; Ayele, 2021) tried to create linkage where there is no proof to classify developmental state as inherited as human rights at all.

Ayele et al.(2021) underscored the political economy of EBC that he collected data based on "the theory of political economy " in which he showed the direct and indirect influence of the Ethiopian government on EBC and guided the station to cooperate with the governments' political economy, in which the study did not explain it. In fact, basic questions come to the mind of the readers "What type of political economy governs the government of Ethiopia?" in that the article gives no definitions and explanation, So Ayele's study left the reviewer on air. Before defining the type of political economy of the incumbent, Ayele et al. (2021) described the cover up in an opaque ways and departed from the reference of man in 'the political economy' unexplained.

The study did not clarify the clear connection of the media to which it operates. In this paper Ayele et al.(2021) tried to integrate the theory of political economy with media before even defining what 'the political economy' is. For instance, if we look at comparatively both psychology and political economy, in psychology, one may observe the attempt to study human behavior without reference to the fact that man is conscious. In political economy, one may observe the attempt to study and to devise social systems without reference to man (Ayn, 1989.). As a result, Ayele's study can be noticed as an attempt to design a social system without mentioning man.

In addition, Ayele et al.(2021) revealed the study, suggesting that it was necessary for EBC to cooperate with the political economy of the state. Contrary to this, the study opposed the intrusion of government in the work of the site. Why did this opposite understanding come about? It may be because the study did not understand to what kind of political economy wanted to connect the media. He also recommended only the realization of reform on 'political economy, party ideology, regulations' by the same system... these suggestions are inconsistent with the objective realities in the country. Waiting for a change from the same destructive regime is supporting by itself, a mere advice with a superficial study is helping the regime to make more mistakes.

In the same way, Menychle (2018) outlined that a media free from a political interference is indispensable for the flourishing of democracy. This is the desire of all researchers that they thought the incumbent might be able to reform or make necessary correction to media, however, the nature of the tribal rule is not convenience even to think or make democracy a reality. First of all, the system has no fertile grounds since its inception. Furthermore, Menychle (2018) described that media and politics have relationships like fungi and plants, which he told us that it is impossible to find free media in "a young democracy" in Ethiopia. So in this country, for how long media stays young without free media or democracy?

The shortcomings of the researchers all "researchers" let them be under quotation, for the reason of the default consisted of their inability or unwillingness to fight the battle where it had to be fought: on moral-philosophical grounds (Ayn, 2007).

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodologies which were employed in the study. It includes the limitations and ethical concerns of the study. This chapter further describes techniques used in collecting and analyzing data for the study.

3.2. Research Approaches

The approaches to research involve philosophical assumptions as well as distinct methods of procedures (Creswell, 2014). In order to answer the specific questions the study applied the major kinds of approaches centering on searching the facts in depth. Mainly, the aim is to get insights into the "why's" and the "how's" of political and media performances on human rights in Ethiopia. In this approaches, interviews, Barbour (2018) less formally approach FGD as a supplementary and data collection tool, one-to-one open-ended interviews, and content analysis were the methods most employed. The data included media content, interview transcripts, context dependent cases, human experiences.

The second approach was numerical data which seeks to quantify the level of facts aimed at establishing the relationships and generalize the findings. These techniques involved questionnaires which could be measured and analyzed statistically to identify relationships. In addition, the goal of the study is measuring variables, making predictions, and generalizing findings to a larger population. The paper aimed at describing characteristics of facts of the population which could give the picture of the current affairs. One of the methods used to describe the situation was observational studies by describing existing conditions or realities. The study also examined the relationship between politics, media and human rights without devising them so as to decide to what degree the variables are associated with each other. The observational studies through survey were used to collect qualitative data from which statistics could be measured. The survey form of research is designed in which the investigators use the statistics to describe and measure the degree between two or more variables or sets of scores (Creswell, 2014). This study is designed to survey what is being done in Ethiopia's news media regarding human rights. The survey focuses on the interaction between politics, the media and the rights of the people. Using purposive sampling, key informants were interviewed.

The research was conducted using many options, and the research was supported by description and numbers. The questions prepared for the interview were closed and open and semi-structured, so they were useful for collecting primary data. Secondary data was collected from books, online journals, and other media outlets. The semi-structured interview was aimed collecting quality data from key informants, journalists working in the government's news broadcasting and others who can provide constructive ideas, as it is useful to collect data for this thesis project, to obtain in-depth information. It is designed to strengthen the quality of the study. Moreover, the study deal with both qualitative and quantitative data collections and performs text and content analysis in conjunction with visual review methods. The qualitative research is intended to approach the world "out there"(not in a specialized research settings such as laboratories) and to understand, describe and sometimes explain social phenomena 'from inside' by analyzing experiences of individuals or groups or by analyzing documents such as texts, images, film, music(Barbour,2018.p.15)

3.3. Research Design

This study is designed to survey what is being done in Ethiopia's news media regarding human rights. The survey focuses on the interaction between politics, the media and the rights of the people. Using judgment or purposive sampling, where key informants would be interviewed. In addition, Barbour (2018) asserted that one -to-one interviews are more appropriate to raise sensitive topics than FGD. However, FGD is employed since it is the dominant form of qualitative data collection (Morgan, 1997). Moreover, a comprehensive overview of research design methodologies is provided, including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (Creswell, 2014).

Chapter Four

4. Results and Discussions

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study based on data gathered through structured questionnaires, interviews, and informal focus group discussions. The results are discussed in two sections: first, responses collected from EBC journalists, and second, perceptions gathered from students in relevant fields. The discussion contextualizes the results with reference to Ethiopia's media environment, human rights practices, and political communication dynamics.

According to the aim of the study, the data were collected in a quantitative and qualitative manner from the subject of the study. The analysis and discussions were presented with tables and charts. The data were gathered using questionnaires, interviews of key informants of EBC journalists as well as one-to-one interviews with random selections of the audiences.. The data analysis has sub-classifications perceive media and media workers as well as human rights advocates, students in Ethiopia. The third section aimed at how students perceive rights and use their rights every day. The fourth deals with how students get information on politics. The participants were randomly selected for the reason that they showed interest to fill the questionnaires voluntarily right at the request.

The questionnaires were conducted to both regular and extension journalism and political science students of AAU. The first part of the questionnaire was dedicated to general demographic information about the respondent's gender, age, marital status, work experiences, etc. to help to classify the data. The second one was how students of politics, journalism, philosophy and psychology perceive media and media workers, politics as well as human rights violations in Ethiopia. The third section aimed at how students perceive rights and use their rights every day. The fourth deals with how students get information on politics. The participants were randomly selected for the reason that they showed interest to fill the questionnaires voluntarily right at the request.

4.1. Responses from Students

The student respondents were drawn from various departments such as journalism, political science, philosophy, and psychology. Their responses provide critical insight into how educated youth perceive human rights and media roles in Ethiopia.

A striking 82% of students reported that they never feel free to speak about politics at university or in public spaces, while 18% said they rarely do. This overwhelming lack of freedom of expression reflects a climate of fear or censorship, potentially rooted in surveillance, repressive policies, or political sensitivity in academic environments.

On the role of the media in promoting human rights awareness, responses were sharply unified: 54% of students “strongly disagreed” that media play a positive role, while 46% disagreed. This unification reflects a contested media landscape where media outlets may be viewed as ineffective public informers, while others are perceived as biased or state-controlled.

In terms of equality before the law, the responses were highly critical. The majority (mean = 1.19) felt the government does not treat citizens equally regardless of language, income, or political opinion. Similarly, the trust level in journalists was low (mean = 1.23), suggesting public skepticism toward media professionals, possibly due to perceived partisanship or lack of integrity.

Another critical observation from the student responses was the perception that university lecturers prioritize collective rights over individual rights. Over 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. This may suggest a shift in academic focus influenced by regional policy, tribal inclinations, or cultural values emphasizing community over individual freedoms.

4.2. Responses from Journalists at EBC

The survey distributed to journalists at the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) gathered insights into their perceptions of political communication, media freedom, and human rights. Of the 22 journalists surveyed, 73% were male and 27% were female.

When asked how frequently they accessed information on political affairs, the internet was reported as the most frequently used source, with a mean score of 4.73, followed by television (mean = 3.68) and university-based interactions (mean = 3.59). Newspapers and family discussions were the least utilized sources. This suggests a heavy reliance on digital platforms and formal media, but limited engagement through interpersonal or traditional print means.

Regarding their familiarity with national and international human rights standards, the responses reflected moderate awareness (mean = 2.16 on a 5-point scale), indicating a gap in professional knowledge that may impact reporting accuracy and depth. Significantly, 73% of journalists reported having experienced rights violations personally. This perception may affect their confidence in reporting on human rights issues and may reflect broader institutional or political pressures.

All journalists reported that they never engage with human rights media reports, which is alarming for professionals expected to inform the public. This result was juxtaposed with the contradictory finding that EBC's frequency of reporting on human rights was consistently rated as very high (mean = 5.00), pointing to possible institutional mandates that do not necessarily translate into journalist-level engagement.

Importantly, 86.4% rated the media's role in holding politicians accountable for human rights abuses as "very poor," and 13.6% as "poor." This indicates a strong sense of institutional

inadequacy and limited trust in the watchdog function of Ethiopian media. Such results suggest a constrained media environment that lacks autonomy or power to hold political elites accountable, possibly due to structural censorship, political interference, or self-censorship by journalists.

Integrated Analysis

The convergence of findings from both journalists and students indicates a media landscape and sociopolitical environment where freedom of expression and rights-based discourse are severely limited. While journalists express institutional frustration and disengagement from human rights advocacy, students exhibit fear and skepticism, which undermines civic engagement and democratic development.

Both groups reveal an awareness of rights violations and a lack of confidence in the institutions meant to safeguard freedoms. Despite high exposure to political content via media and academic platforms, there remains a widespread perception of inequality, suppression of speech, and weak accountability mechanisms.

These findings point to systemic issues within Ethiopia’s media and governance systems, where political influence constrains journalistic freedom and shapes public discourse through fear or misinformation. Addressing these challenges requires institutional reform, rights-based media education, and the establishment of independent mechanisms for media accountability and political communication.

4.2. Section 1-Demography of Students

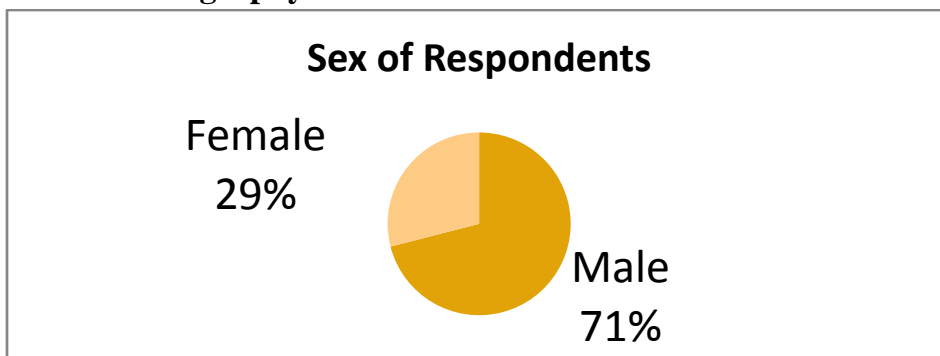
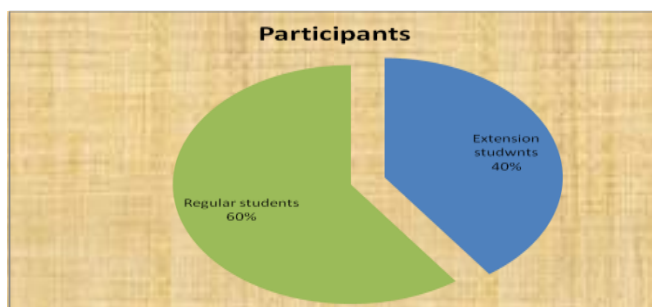


Figure 1: The size of the participants in AAU



As in the chart 40 % of the respondents were from fifth year political science, lawyers and psychology extension and regular students. Among them, 71% were males and 29% were females. Furthermore, had minimum 1-3 years work experiences. The participants of regular students of AAU were constituted 60%, but almost all second year journalism students, about majority of them didn't like politics and showed very low attention to it.

Section 2- The Extent of Media Posses ‘Political Knowledge’

The data showed the respondents perceived that the media’s political knowledge through the data collected from 100 respondents aimed to assess the perception. Based on the L-scales, low, moderate, high, the mean score was 1.65, with a standard deviation of 0.672, indicating agreement that the media possess, but the range of responses points that there were some variation because the majority clustered around the lower end of the scale. The positive skewness value 0.552, confirms that students rated the media’s knowledge from very low, low and moderate. But no students assign high ratings. This suggested a lack of confidence among students about the political competency of the media.

When compared to other variables in the dataset, such as educational status and major subject, it may be worthwhile to explore if whether students in higher academic years or political science-related fields perceive the media differently. For instance, respondents with more academic exposure to political issues were critical of how the media handles political content. Similarly, the majority of the respondents were male, a gender based cross-tabulation could reveal if perception differ between male and female students, which may provide additional insight into how different groups engage with political media content.

From the theoretical perspective, this perception ties to media literacy and agenda setting theory, which posits media influences what people think about, but not necessarily what they think, if students believe the media lack political knowledge, they also question the media’s ability to frame political discourse meaningfully, which undermines the media trust and its role in democratic engagement.

Furthermore, this finding supports critiques of state-owned or heavily regulated media (e.g., EBC in Ethiopia), which are often accused of promoting official narratives rather than engaging in critical or investigative political journalism. This perception might explain low civic engagement or poor public awareness about complex political and human rights issues.

This perception has a direct connection with media and human rights. If students doubt the media’s political knowledge, they also doubt the accuracy or integrity of media reporting on human rights violations. This could result public disengagement or misinformation limiting the media’s potential as a tool for promoting human rights awareness and advocacy.

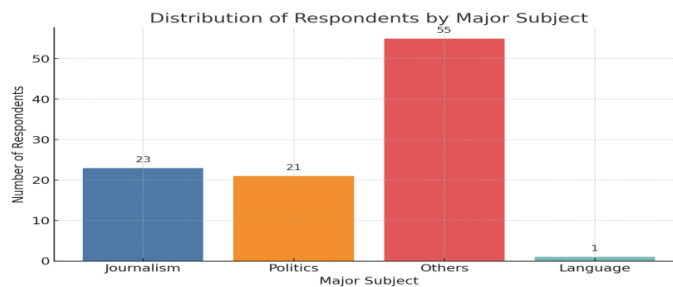


Figure 2. Respondents by Major Subjects

According to the figure2, the respondent in this study came from a range of academic backgrounds. The 55% of majority identified their majors as “others” indicating fields outside of language, journalism, or political science. This diversity indicated a broader range of general perspectives toward media and politics. However, the 44% were from journalism (23%) and political science (21%) majors, which was relevant given the focus of this study on media and political relationship on human rights knowledge. These students were more likely to have academic exposure to political communication, media ethics and human rights governance issues. As such, their perceptions of media competence may be more informed or critical to those

in unrelated disciplines. Only 1% of the sample studied language, having minimal impact on the overall interpretation.

This distribution supports further comparative analysis based on academic background. It would be particularly insightful to explore whether journalism and politics majors evaluate media knowledge on human rights differently than students in the “Others” group represent a broader cross-section of disciplines less directly related to media or governance.

The survey reported an overall average score of 1.65 out of 3 for perceived political expertise of the media, indicating a "low to moderate" assessment; however, disaggregated data may uncover variations in perception based on academic orientation. For example, political science students may be more critical, whereas journalism students may balance criticism with insider understanding of media limits. Students in the "Others" category may have a more generalist view of media, which could explain why their judgments are slightly less critical or neutral. This variance highlights the significance of academic background in influencing opinions of media credibility and efficacy in political reporting and human rights awareness.

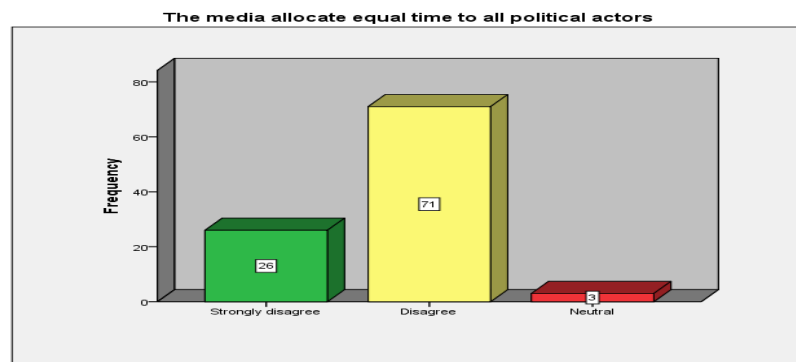


Figure3- Media allocation

The survey item 3, "The media allocate equal time to all political actors" was evaluated by 100 respondents. The scores ranged from 1 to 3, with a mean of 1.77 and a standard deviation of 0.489. This indicates that, on average, respondents disagreed with the notion that the media provides equal representation to all political actors, scoring closer to "Disagree" on a 3-point Likert scale. The negative Skewness value of -0.477 indicates that a larger proportion of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, implying that the media—likely state-run

outlets such as EBC—favors certain political groups while marginalizing others. **This corroborates qualitative findings of media bias and selective framing within politically controlled media environments.** This perceived inequality in media representation is significant within the context of this study, which investigates the intersection of media performance and human rights in Ethiopia. Unequal media exposure not only undermines **freedom of expression** and **political participation**, which are core human rights, but also enables **selective framing** that favors dominant political narratives while silencing opposition voices. In the case of Ethiopia, where state-run outlets like the (EBC) dominate the media landscape, such bias contributes to information control, suppresses dissent, and distorts public understanding of critical human rights issues—including displacement, conflict, and state violence.

The data thus supports the argument that media inequality reinforces broader patterns of "political" exclusion and human rights violations.

The descriptive statistic for the statement "The media allocate equal time to all political actors" has a mean score of 1.77, indicating a perceived lack of fairness and inclusivity in Ethiopia's media landscape. This perception is consistent with the study's overall argument that media performance, particularly by state-owned outlets such as EBC, is influenced by political interests rather than democratic values. When state media fails to provide equal coverage to all political actors, it not only violates journalistic ethics but also jeopardizes the public's right to diverse political information, which is a fundamental human right under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

This finding can also be interpreted through the lens of Framing Theory, which holds that media does more than just report facts; it actively shapes how audiences interpret issues. The media reinforces a biased narrative that limits political accountability by disproportionately amplifying the voices of those in power while marginalizing dissenting or opposing viewpoints. Furthermore, Media Effects Theory and Priming Theory argue that consistent exposure to specific political content causes audiences to internalize these frames as normative. Over time, this undermines critical civic engagement and contributes to a culture of silence or passive consent to government actions—even when they involve human rights violations such as forced evictions, suppression of free speech, or biased conflict reporting.

Thus, the media's failure to give equal time to various political actors is more than a statistical observation; it reflects a deeper democratic deficit and demonstrates how state-controlled communication can be used for political exclusion and rights suppression.

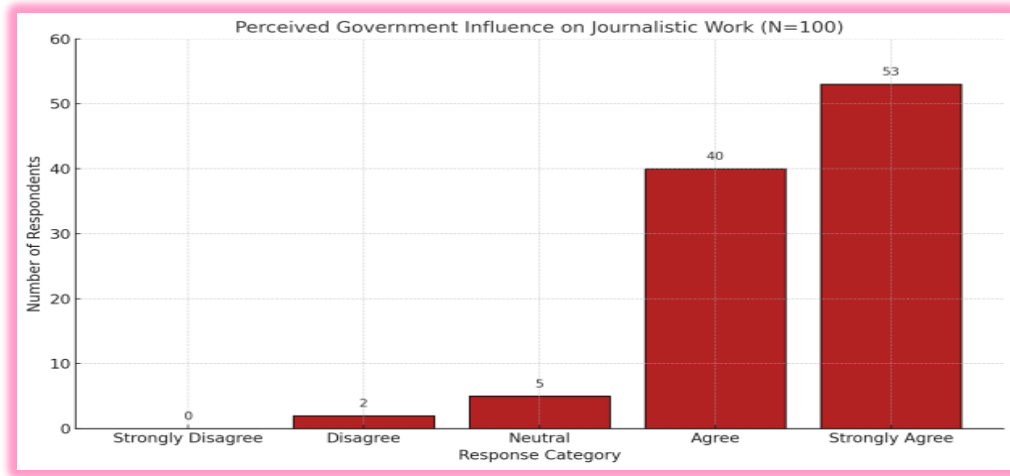


Figure 4- Government influence on journalists

The survey item "The government officials influence the professional work of journalists" received a high mean score of 4.43 on a 5-point Likert scale, with a standard deviation of 0.607. This indicates that respondents strongly agree that government interference undermines journalistic independence. The median and mode values (both = 4) demonstrate that this perception is widespread. The low variance indicates a consistent viewpoint among participants.

This finding has significant implications for press freedom and human rights accountability. When government officials exert influence over journalists, media independence suffers, and the press's role as a watchdog is diminished. In Ethiopia, where state media outlets like EBC dominate the information landscape, such interference contributes to biased reporting, censorship of human rights violations, and limited public access to accurate accounts of political and social realities. It also silences critical voices and marginalizes victims of human rights violations, particularly in conflict-prone areas. This violates not only freedom of expression but also the public's right to know, which is necessary for a democratic society.

The high mean score of 4.43 (on a 5-point scale) indicates that respondents strongly agree that government officials have a significant influence on the professional work of journalists. The low standard deviation and variance indicate that this opinion is widely held across the sample.

This contributes to the study on media performance and human right by implying that journalistic independence is jeopardized, which can lead to biased or incomplete reporting on human rights issues.

Response Option	Frequency	Valid percent
Not at all	91	91.9%
Slightly	8	8.1%
Total(Valid)	99	100.0%

Summary Table 1- Trust Information Politicians Share

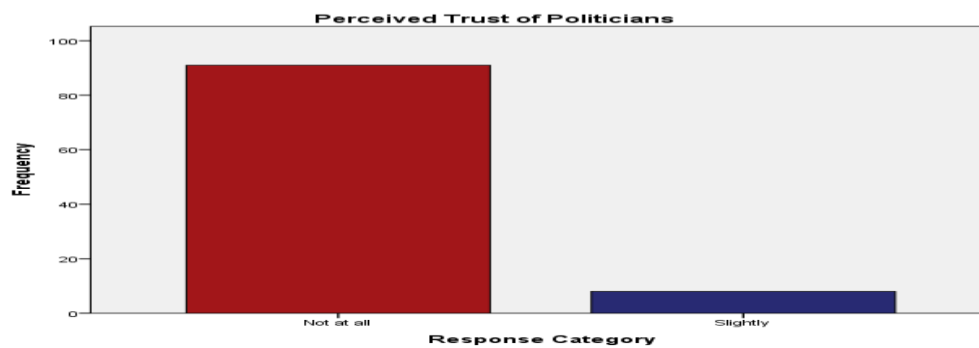


Figure 5- Trust of Politicians

The findings indicate an overwhelming lack of trust in the information politicians share through the media. An alarming 91.9% of respondents reported that they do not trust political information at all, while only 8.1% reported slight trust. This result reflects a deep credibility crisis between political figures and the public, likely stemming from repeated exposure to misinformation, propaganda, or politically manipulated media narratives. In the context of this study on human rights, such distrust raises critical concerns. If political discourse disseminated through state-controlled media — like EBC — is not trusted, it weakens the media's role as a democratic institution. It also hinders the public's ability to make informed judgments about governance, accountability, and human rights practices. The erosion of trust in political communication

through media signals a broader failure in transparency, and it emphasizes the urgent need for independent journalism committed to truth, ethics, and public interest.

Item 5- To what extent do trust journalists in Ethiopia?

Trust Level	Value assumed	Description	Frequency estimate	Interpretation
1	1	Not at all	Majority(mode=1)	Most respondent selected this
2	2	Slightly	Few	Minor trust
3 or more	3+	Moderate+	Very few	Rare to none

Summary Table 2- Trust of Journalists

The data show a strong public distrust of journalists in Ethiopia, with a mean score of 1.23 and a mode of 1, indicating that the vast majority of respondents have no trust in journalists. The low standard deviation (.601) indicates that this opinion is widely held among respondents with little variation. This finding has significant implications for the media's role in promoting human rights. In a democratic context, journalists are expected to serve as watchdogs—exposing abuses, reporting impartially, and informing the public about violations and accountability. This finding suggests that there is a widespread belief that Ethiopian journalists are compromised, possibly due to censorship, political pressure, self-censorship, or ties to state interests. Such a perception not only undermines the legitimacy of journalism, but it also reduces public engagement with credible human rights coverage. In a context where state media dominates, such as EBC, restoring trust in journalism is critical for improving transparency, justice, and civic engagement.

Section3-Item1. Media and Human Rights-University Lecturers Emphasize Collective over Individual Rights

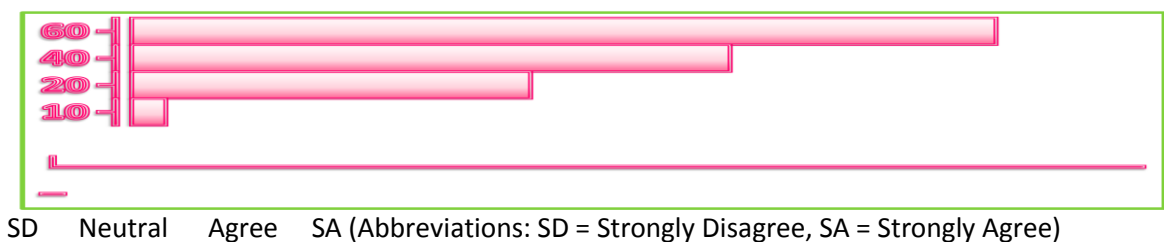


Figure 6- Collective over Individual Rights

The data reveals that a **majority (53%) of respondents agrees**, and **22% strongly agree**, that university lecturers in Ethiopia place greater emphasis on **collective rights** over **individual rights**. This suggests that academic discourse may be shaped more by communal or state-centric perspectives than by liberal-democratic traditions of individual freedom and autonomy. While in modern age rights as civil rights are essential in an industrious societies — especially for marginalized individuals or groups or communities — overemphasis on collectivism without balancing individual rights can limit personal liberties, freedom of expression, and protection from abuse. In the context of media and human rights, this academic tendency could influence future journalists, policymakers, and civic actors to prioritize group identity or state goals at the expense of the individual's dignity and autonomy. This bias may also contribute to the weak media advocacy for personal rights such as freedom from arbitrary arrest, property rights, or protection from defamation — issues commonly underrepresented in Ethiopian state media like EBC. A rights-based approach to education and journalism must balance both individual and community dimensions to foster a truly democratic human rights culture.

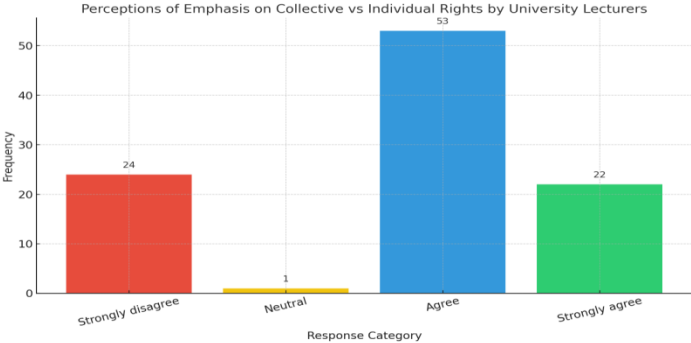


Figure 7- Collective over Individual Rights

The chart reveals that a significant majority of respondents believe university lecturers prioritize collective rights over individual rights. Specifically, 53% agreed and 22% strongly agreed with this statement, totaling 75% support for the claim. Only 24% strongly disagreed, while a negligible 1% remained neutral.

This finding has important implications for human rights education in Ethiopia. The strong emphasis on collective rights may reflect historical and ideological narratives that prioritize national unity and group identity over individual liberties. However, this orientation could risk

downplaying the importance of personal freedoms and legal protections, especially in cases of state-led violations such as forced evictions, arbitrary arrests, or media censorship. It underscores the need for balanced academic discourse that integrates both community responsibilities and individual entitlements as fundamental to a democratic society.

Section3, Item 2- “The media provide adequate information about human rights issues.”

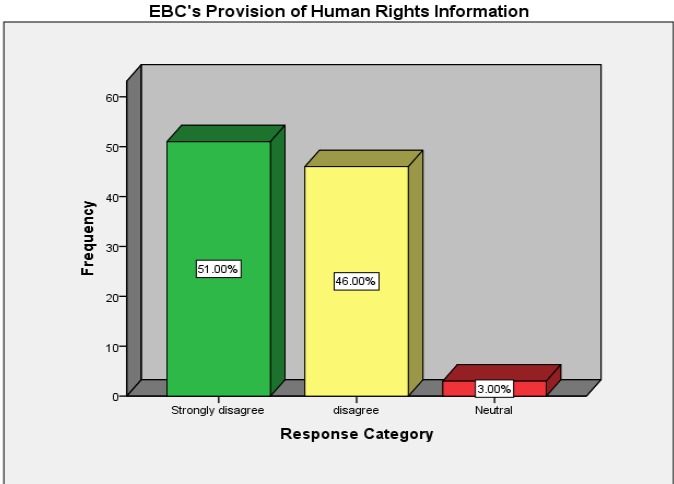


Figure 8- EBC’s Provision of Human Rights Information

In response to the survey item assessing whether the media provide adequate information about human rights issues in Ethiopia, the findings show an overwhelming perception of inadequacy. Out of 100 student respondents, **51% strongly disagreed** and **46% disagreed** with the statement, totaling **97% who believe the media fails to adequately inform the public** on human rights issues. Only **3% of respondents remained neutral**, and none agreed with the statement.

This result reflects a significant gap between the public’s expectations and the media’s performance in covering human rights-related topics. The data suggest that students perceive the Ethiopian media—particularly state-owned outlets like EBC—as either insufficiently prioritizing human rights or lacking the editorial independence to report on these matters comprehensively and critically.

The near-unanimous disapproval among student respondents also aligns with previous findings in this study, where students expressed general distrust in both journalists and political actors. The perception that the media fails to provide adequate human rights coverage may contribute to a lack of public awareness, limited civic engagement, and an erosion of confidence in the media's watchdog role.

These insights call into question the effectiveness of the media's role in promoting democratic accountability and safeguarding civil liberties. They also underscore the urgent need for reform in both content priorities and journalistic practice to ensure that human rights issues are more prominently and accurately reported to the Ethiopian public.

Section3-Item 3- Freedom of political expression in academic and public spaces.

The analysis of responses to the question regarding freedom to discuss politics in public and academic settings reveals a concerning lack of open political expression among students. With a **mean score of 1.18, median of 1.00, and mode of 1**, the data suggest that the vast majority of respondents feel "**never**" free to express political opinions either.

The findings indicate that a significant majority of students do not feel free to express political opinions in University or public settings. Specifically, **82%** of respondents reported that they "*never*" feel free to speak about politics in these spaces, while the remaining **18%** indicated they "*rarely*" feel free to do so. No respondents selected options indicating regular or full freedom of expression. These results suggest a pervasive climate of political self-censorship or fear among university students, possibly due to perceived or experienced consequences for engaging in political discourse. The data point to broader concerns about the state of political freedom and democratic engagement in educational and public institutions, highlighting a critical area where reforms in civic space and freedom of expression may be necessary.

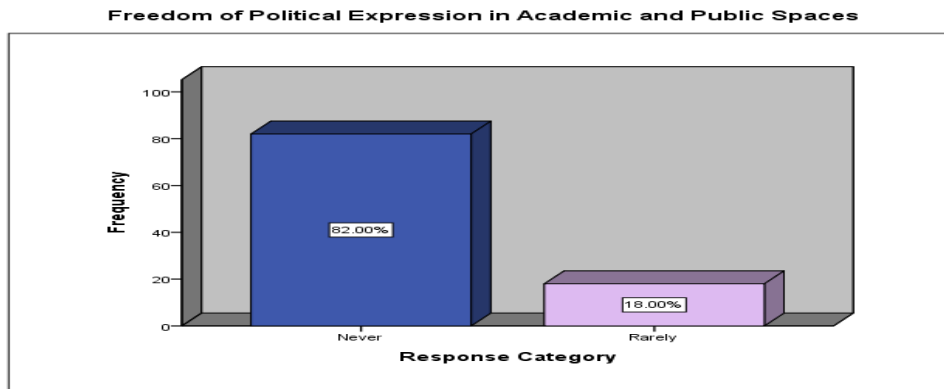


Figure 9- Freedom of Expression

Section3 Item 4- The media play a positive role in raising public awareness about human rights.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	54	54%
Disagree	46	46%
Total	100	100%

Table 3- EBC’s Role on Public awareness of Human Rights

The findings reveal identical perception among students regarding the media’s role in promoting human rights awareness. A slight majority 54% **strongly disagreed** that the media play a negative role in raising public awareness about human rights. This suggests that all of the students recognized the media as ineffective platform for disseminating information and educating the public on rights-based issues.

On the other hand, 46% of the students **disagreed**, indicating a significant level of skepticism or dissatisfaction with how the EBC operate in this regard. This may reflect the level of media freedom, quality of reporting, or no coverage of human rights topics, particularly in the Ethiopian context, where state- controlled narratives influence content.

This highlights the need to critically assess media credibility, content diversity, and political influence when discussing their educational role in human rights. It also suggests opportunities for media reforms or training to strengthen their impact in civic education and human rights promotion.

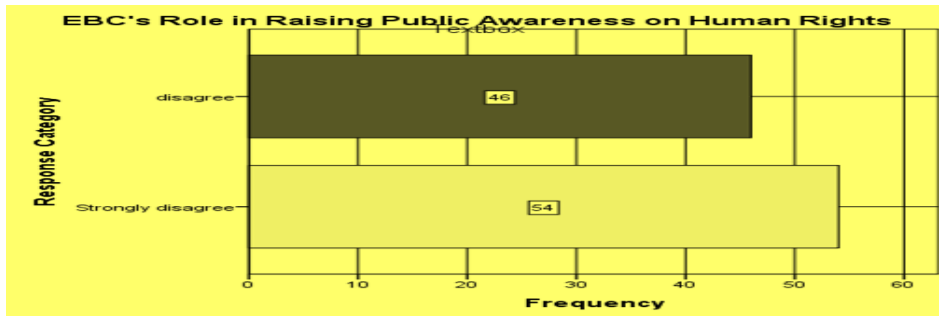


Figure 10- EBC's Role in Raising Human rights Awareness

Section4- Item 1- How well democracy is functioning in Ethiopia?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very badly	98	98%
Badly	2	2%
Total	100	100%

Table 4- Perception of Democracy

The findings from the students' survey indicate an overwhelmingly negative perception of state of democracy in Ethiopia. An astounding 98% of the respondents stated that democracy is functioning "Very badly", while the remaining 2% also responded negatively by selecting "badly". The absence of any neutral or positive evaluations underscore a profound disillusionment with the current 'political system'. This result suggests that students, who represent a critical segment of the informed and potentially active citizenry, perceive severe deficiencies in democratic governance. These perceptions likely stem from a range of systemic issues like unsuccessful tribal experiments, including perceived electoral irregularities, constraints on 'political freedoms', suppression of dissent, and lack of accountability among the political leaders.

The data also reveal that young people may understand tribalism is dangerous or feel alienated from ‘political’ processes and disempowered to influence change. Such sentiment can be detrimental to democratic development, as youth disengagement weakens civic participation and hinder the growth of an active democratic exercise. The findings align with existing concerns about shrinking civic space, limitations on freedom of expression, and the politicization of public institutions in Ethiopia. In this context, the media’s roles become especially significant. When media institution fail to serve as independent watchdogs or platforms for diverse political dialogue – as is often the case under state control-public perception of democracy deteriorate further. The EBC, as a state-run outlet, faces criticism for reinforcing government narratives rather than promoting rights of citizens, accountability. Therefore, these survey responses call for urgent reforms in both the political system and media landscapes to restore public trust and establish democratic legitimacy.

Section 4 Item 2- The government treats all citizens equally regardless of their language, opinion, or income level”

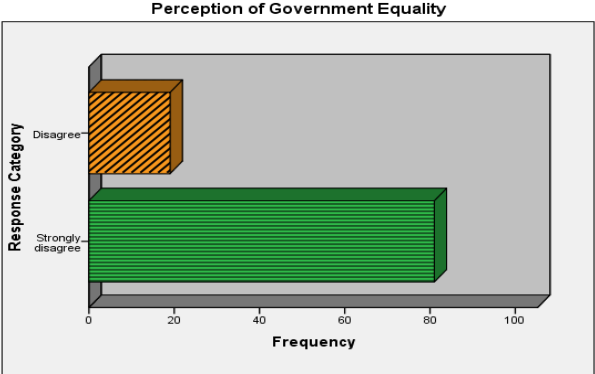


Figure 11- Perceptions of Government Equality

The chart depicting students’ responses to the statement “*The government treats all citizens equally regardless of their language, opinion, or income level*” reveals a strong sentiment of perceived inequality. A significant majority—approximately 80 out of 100 respondents—**strongly disagreed** with the statement, while the remaining portion also expressed disagreement.

Not a single participant agreed or strongly agreed, underscoring a widespread belief that the government fails to uphold principles of equal treatment.

This perception of systemic inequality may reflect experiences of ethnic, linguistic, and political marginalization within the country. Ethiopia’s multi-ethnic federal system, although designed to promote inclusion, has often been criticized for exacerbating ethnic divisions and enabling political favoritism. Students' overwhelming disagreement indicates a lack of confidence in the government's ability or willingness to treat all citizens fairly, particularly in areas such as access to services, political representation, and protection under the law.

Such findings are critical for understanding the broader crisis of legitimacy facing public institutions. If young citizens—who represent the next generation of leaders—believe that the government discriminates based on identity or opinion, this erodes social cohesion and trust in democratic processes. Moreover, it reinforces the importance of an independent and inclusive media to expose inequality, give voice to marginalized groups or individuals, and advocate for equitable governance. However, if state media like EBC fail to critically address these disparities or reflect the voices of diverse communities, they risk further alienating the public and perpetuating the cycle of inequality.

4.3. Survey Results of Journalists

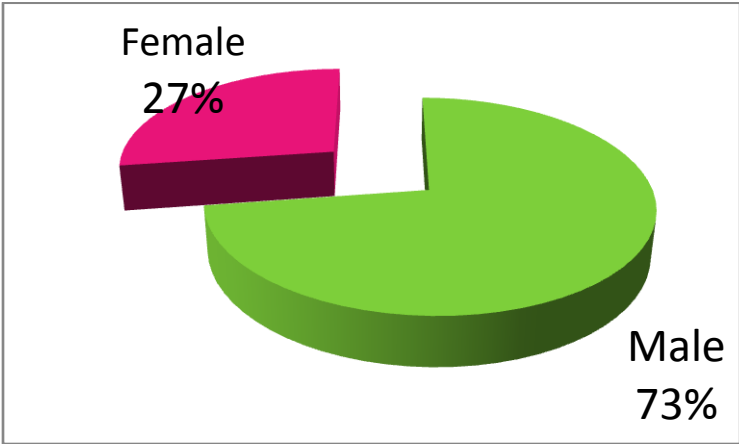
The second questionnaires were distributed to EBC’s journalists and key informants in whom the results were analyzed and interpreted as follows.

Respondents		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	16	72.7	72.7	72.7
	Female	6	27.3	27.3	100.0
Total		22	100.0	100.0	

Table 1- The sex of the respondents

The majority (73%) of the respondents were males while 27% represented female that indicates in EBC, there is strong male dominance in the EBC station. The data revealed gender imbalances which could be projected when interpreting results.

Pie-Chart 1- Sex of Respondents



Item : How familiar are you with your rights under national and international law?

N	Valid	19
	Missing	3
Mean		2.16
Median		2.00
Mode		2
Std.Deviation		1.344
Variance		1.807
Range		4
Minimum		1
Maximum		5

Table 2- Perception of Human Rights

The above table 2, assesses the journalists’ familiarity with their rights under both national and international law. On average, the mean 2.16 signifies the journalists have a “somewhat familiar “understanding of their rights. Both the median and mode (2), which connects the central tendency aligns with “somewhat familiar "signifies that most journalists fall into this category. The standard deviation (1.344) quantifies how much each journalist data points deviate from the mean (average)of the data.

According to the above data there is a moderate spread in the responses regarding familiarity with rights. This means that while many respondents have a certain level of familiarity, there is a notable variability, with some being more familiar and others less so.

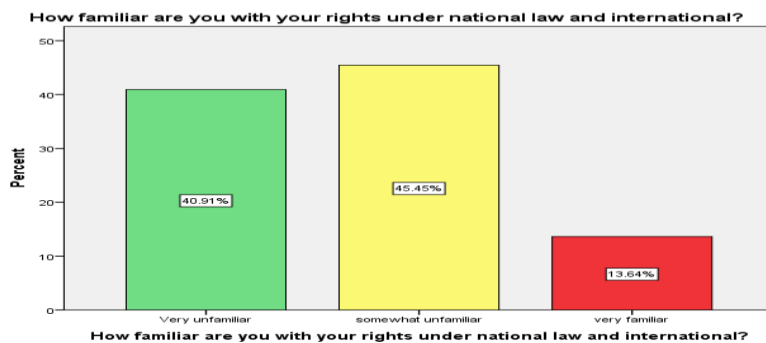
The Range (4) is the difference between the highest and the lowest values in dataset. It provides a single measure of how spread out the values was. When calculated the:

$$\text{Range} = \text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}$$

$$5 - 1 = 4$$

The Range 4 illustrates the journalists’ familiarity with rights spans across 4 distinct levels. This signifies a diversity of knowledge levels among the journalists.

Q-The chart illustrating “How familiar are you with your rights under national and international?”



Bar-Chart 2

From the table above 46% of the journalists were “somewhat unfamiliar” of their rights while 41% “very unfamiliar” In total, a significant majority of respondents 86.49% were unaware of legal rights. Only 13.6% of the respondents consider very familiar with their rights. This

suggests a major gap in rights awareness, which could have implication for human rights advocacy, civil rights, fundamental rights, human rights education, rights empowerment efforts.

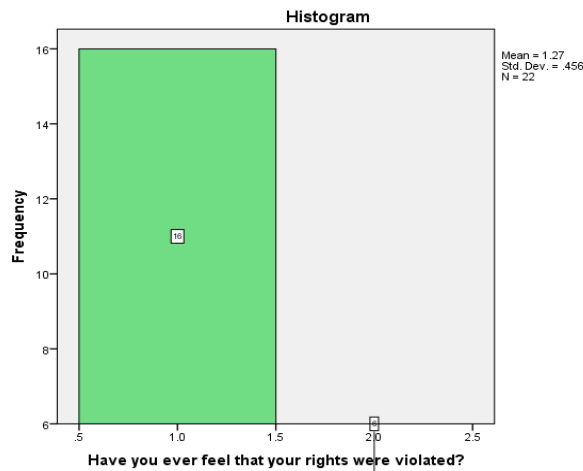
Q- Have you ever feel that your rights were violated?

The survey results indicate that **72.7%** of respondents have felt that their rights were violated, highlighting a significant concern regarding human rights awareness and protection. This finding underscores the necessity for comprehensive strategies to address and prevent human rights violations in the EBC.

Q- Have you ever feel that your rights were violated?

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	16	73%
No	6	27%
Total	22	100%

Table3- Perception of journalists’ Own Rights



Bar-Chart 3

Based on the statistical data, the interpretation is coded as “Yes” or “No”. Given this coding the mean 1.27 indicates that the great number of journalists answered “Yes”, indicating they have felt their rights were violated. Both the Median and Mode being equal confirm that “Yes” was the most frequent response. Additionally, the standard deviation of (.0456) and a Range (1) suggest there were limited variability in the responses further strengthening that the journalists felt their rights were violated in different occasions. This statistics shows that the rights of the journalists’ have been violated; highlighting potential worry of inhuman experiences amidst the surveyed group.

Q- How well do you think the government protects human rights?

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Very poorly	9	40.9%
Poorly	8	36.4%
Fairly	5	22.7%
Total	22	100%

Table 4- Government Responsibility on Human Rights

The survey result indicates in Table 4, the perception of the respondents about the inefficiency of the Ethiopian government’s human rights protection. Among the respondents a large portion of them constituted 40.9% of “Very poorly” while 36.4% of the respondents “poorly ”were sized 8, whereas 22.7% of the respondents were amount 5.

These findings suggest that more than three-quarters (77.3%) of the participants perceived that the governments’ performance in safeguarding human rights were below an average level. This sentiment aligned with various reports of the challenges of human rights in Ethiopia. Freedom House’s (2024)reports indicated the political rights is 10/40 and Civil liberties 10/60,United Nations Human Rights reports(2023)documented 594 incidents of human rights violations affecting 8,253 victims, with state actors allegedly responsible for 70% of these violations. The report also noted a significant increase in arbitrary arrests, particularly following the declaration

of a state of emergency in the Amhara region. and CIVICUS monitor (2024) Sylvia Mbatia announced in a new report has downgraded Ethiopia’s Civic Space to ‘closed,’ its worst rating a sustained assault on civic and political rights in the country.

Q- How do you rate the civic space in Ethiopia?

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Narrowed	4	18.2
Obstructed	3	13.6
Repressed	6	27.3
Closed	9	40.9
Total	22	100

Table 5- Journalists’ Perception of Civic Space in Ethiopia

In Table5, Nine of the 22 participants selected “closed”, accounting 40.9% of the total number of responses. According to the data, a large proportion of the respondents believe Ethiopia’s civic space is quite limited. According to the survey, more than two-third of EBC participants considers Ethiopia’s civic space to be either repressed or closed indicating the presence of constraints on civil liberties. This outcome is consistent with the East African (December 2024) evaluation, which underlines substantial constraints on civil liberties and engagement within the country.

Statistics		
How often do you engage with media reports on human rights?		
N	Valid	22
	Missing	0
Mean		1.00
Median		1.00
Mode		1
Std. Deviation		.000
Variance		.000

Range	0
Minimum	1
Maximum	1

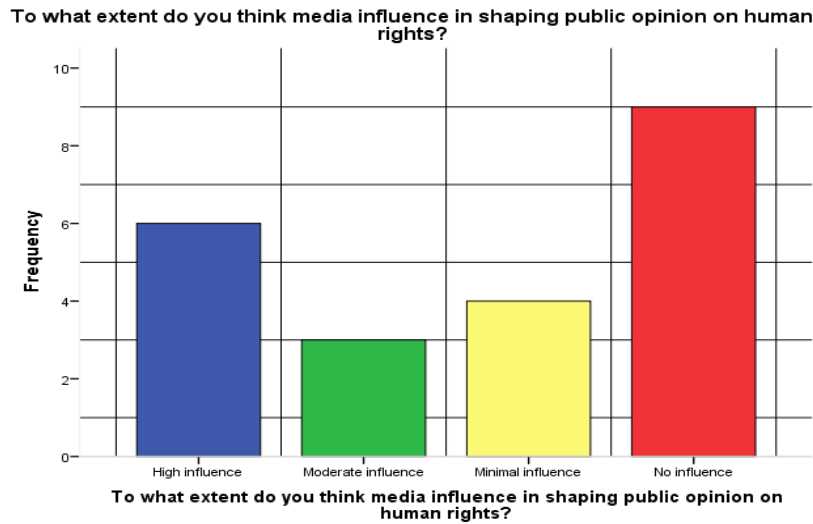
Table6 – Frequency of Reporting on Human Rights

Based on the survey statistics in Table 6, on how often the journalists engage to report human rights issues out of 22 participants 22 of the respondents that constitute 100% answered “Never”The 22 of the respondents uniformly replied they “Never” engage to report Human Rights. Among the participants no one engage and show inclination to human rights issues. First, the fundamental insights about the lack of engagement indicate either “Never”engages with media report on Human Rights showing a gap in awareness or interest. Secondly, the respondents not ever engage on Human Rights reports as a journalist. Thirdly, there were potential barriers for the lack involvement of Human Rights reports in EBC that could be due to limited access to Human Rights media content, lack of interest, distrust in media sources or censorship. In conclusion, the statistics indicates Human Rights coverage doesn’t absorb or reach the public effectively. Therefore, efforts should be made to improve awareness accessibility and public interest in Human Rights-Related media news. The likert scale Never(1), Rarely(2),sometimes(3),often(4),very often(5) were used to measure the frequency of behavior or experiences so that this scale effectively captured the respondents engagement levels. The mean of suggests the respondents involvement on Human Rights reports “Never” and tilting more towards ‘Never’.

Q. To what extent do you think media influence in shaping public opinion on human rights?

This question intended to ask the EBC impact public opinion regarding human rights .It seeks to explore how EBC’s coverage, framing ,narrative influence how people perceive and understand human rights issues.The following Bar-Chart visualizing the survey results. It distinctly illustrates that the majority of respondents believe the media has little or no influence on shaping public opinion on human rights, with” No influence” being the most selected response.

Bar-Chart 5



Since the questionnaires were presented to journalists, the responses had become more arousing curiosity. Journalists are expected to have a deep understanding of media influence on human rights issues, yet 40.9% of them believe media has no influence on shaping public opinion on human rights. This amplifies important question about how journalists perceive their own professional roles in the society. The heightened question would be: **“Why journalists respond in this way?”**

Firstly, many journalists, especially in government restrictive environments, where there is frustration with limited impact, may feel their reporting doesn’t lead to change. In such kind of restrictions, the possible reasons might be government censorship limits how much they can report on Human Rights weights.

Secondly, journalists working in state affiliated or politically aligned media houses may feel their reporting is heavily monitored. In the context of EBC or other media outlets are ethnic media, meaning journalists cannot freely report on human rights violations. Next, if a journalist work for government sponsored media outlets, journalist may not see their work as shaping real public debate – except reinforcing government’s narratives. This implies journalists may believe the

media is a tool of parliament elites rather than independent force shaping public opinion (Even though not well versed, lately one of the MP forwarded an incomplete question for EBC's CEO).

Thirdly, journalists may feel that traditional media no longer drives public discourse since social media platforms dominate, people rely on Face book, you tube, Twitter, Telegram influence news rather than traditional journalists. Social media and citizens journalists were reporting in ways EBC could not.

Fourthly, journalists working in restrictive environments may be hesitant to say media influences public opinion on human rights because reporting on human rights could be dangerous. Journalists were jailed, harassed or censored. All journalists survived on the job, that journalists indirectly or unconsciously expressed in their face and their presentation that they worked under extreme pressure. It has become routine that journalists, who have covered sensitive ethnic and "political" problems, have been arrested. This entails , some journalists may white-washed the media's role in shaping human rights discussions since acknowledging media influence could be "politically" risky.

Fifthly, journalists may believe that when they report on Human Rights affairs, the public did not engage or care about them as a result of growing sentiment of tribalism and instability, prioritizing survival over Human Rights and economic hardship make Human Rights seem an abstract topics. Furthermore, ethnic and "political" divisions may cause media outlets are biased, they ignore or reject human rights reporting. This hinted journalists feel their work is undermined or ineffective if reporting Human Rights and protecting the public or shifting public opinion from involving in conflicts.

The study interpreted that journalists have recognized structural and "political" limitations on media. In spite of that journalists feel frustrated or powerless in shaping public opinion on Human Rights.

Strengthening free and independent journalism is necessity especially more funding and protecting the profession will be able to **minimizing conflicts to war spending or promoting Human Rights to peace.**

Engaging audiences using new digital tools and storytelling techniques make Human Rights coverage more attentive and accessible.

Advocating for greater press freedom to allow for more impactful Human Rights Reporting.

Finding and discussion

Overview of the Survey result

The study conducted among the journalists regarding the media's influence on public opinion on human rights revealed unexpected insights. A significant number of participants (40.9%) believed that the media has no influence on public perceptions of human rights. Meanwhile, 18.2% indicated minimal influence, while 13.6% and 27.2% felt the media has moderate and high influence, respectively. These findings suggest a prevailing skepticism among journalists regarding the effectiveness of media in shaping human rights awareness.

Interpretation of findings

Lack of Trust in Media as an Influential Force

One of the most striking findings is that nearly 60% of journalists believe media has little or no influence in shaping public opinion on human rights. This may stem from the perception that media is either controlled by the "political" elites or suffers from credibility issues due to biased reporting. If audience do not trust media, they may dismiss human rights coverage as propaganda or irrelevant to their daily lives.

Government Censorship and 'Political' Constraints

Journalists working in politically controlled environments often face restrictions when covering human rights violations. Government censorship, self-censorship, and restrictive media laws may lead journalists to feel powerless in influencing public opinion. As a result, even when human rights issues are reported, they may be framed in a way that aligns with the terrorist or government narratives, reducing their perceived impact.

Competition from Social Media and Alternative Information Source

The rise of social media and alternative digital platforms has shifted the way people consume news and information. Journalists may perceive that public opinion is now shaped more by social media influences, citizen journalists, and grassroots activists rather than traditional media outlets. The wide spread use of platforms such as Facebook, Telegram, Twitter and YouTube for news consumption may reduce the perceived role of traditional media in human rights discourse.

Public Apathy toward Human Rights Issues, another key factor could be the public’s lack of engagement with human rights topics. Economic hardships, political instability, and ethnic tensions may cause individuals to prioritize other concerns over human rights issues. Journalists may feel that even when media outlets report on such violations, the public response remains minimal, reinforcing the belief that the media has limited influence in shaping awareness and action.

Implications of the findings

The results highlight an urgent need to re-evaluate the strategies media outlets use to report on human rights. If journalists themselves believe their work is not significantly influencing public opinion, this suggests structural barriers that need to be addressed such as: Strengthening independent journalism to ensure credible and impactful reporting on human rights, Increasing media literacy among the public to enhance trust and engagement with human rights issues, advocating greater press freedom to reduce censorship and allow for unrestricted reporting of human rights, leveraging social media to make human rights content more accessible and engaging

Table 11-Q7: How frequently does your media outlet report on human rights?

Frequency of EBC report on human rights?		
N	Valid	22
	Missing	0
Mean		5.00
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.000

Variance	.000
Range	0
Minimum	5
Maximum	5

Table7- Frequency of EBC reports on Human Rights

In Table 7, all 22 respondents gave the same answer regarding how frequently EBC reports on human rights. The Mean, Median, Mode =5 suggests that every respondent chose the same value choice 5, which represents “Never” the adverb indicates “0%” indicating “not at all” equates zero level of reporting on human rights. Since all answers were identical that there was no variation in response. The Range also confirmed that everyone answered “Not a moment” meaning “Never” further indicates, the respondents had never ever thought about it.

$$\text{Range} = \text{Maximum} - \text{Minimum}$$

$$0 = 5 - 5$$

It implies there was uniform agreement among the respondents that their media (EBC), in any circumstances never ever report human rights violations in the country. This signifies that human rights were not the core editorial focus. There was no strong support to report human rights, or there were no institutional commitment to raising human rights awareness. Especially, the study signals journalists may be ignorant to involve on these matters in which they perceive EBC would take them to court if they report human rights subjects.

On top of that, the research revealed a **serious gap** in EBC media on human rights reporting. It could also identify a lack of prioritization or awareness of human rights topics, or the possible restrictions or pressure or self-censorship in reporting and investigating human rights news. Additionally, there were training gaps how to cover human rights matters, these uniform responses of the respondents develop questions about editorial priorities, government’ interferences, potential external limitations affecting coverage and journalistic capacity as well as editorial policies that avoid human rights cases, political or legal constraints influencing content choices.

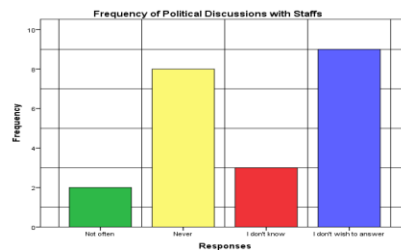
Q- How do you rate the role of the EBC in holding politicians accountable for human rights abuse?

Response Category	Frequency	Percent
Very poor	19	86.4%
Poor	3	13.6%
Total	22	100%

Table 8- EBC in holding Accountable of Human rights abuse

As Table 8, rated the role of the media in holding politicians accountable for human rights abuses, an overwhelming majority (86.4%) of respondents rated the media’s role as "very poor," with the remaining 13.6% selecting "poor." Not a single respondent rated the media’s performance as moderate or better. This suggests deep dissatisfaction among journalists regarding their capacity—or willingness—to expose and challenge political power in matters of human rights. The findings point to significant institutional and structural barriers, such as censorship, lack of legal protection, political capture of media, and the absence of investigative culture, which collectively undermine the media’s watchdog function.

Q-Do you often talk about politics with friends?



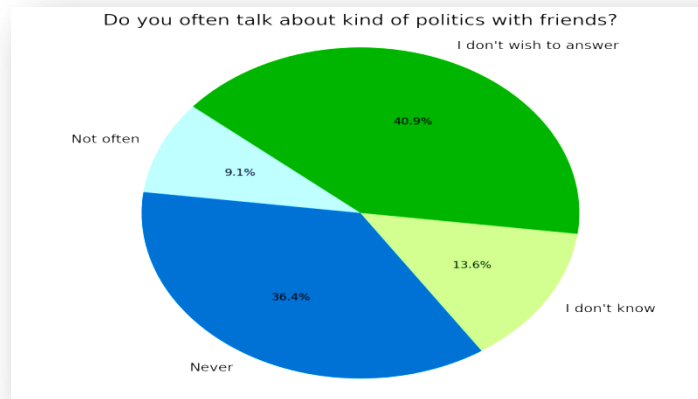
Bar- Chart-6- Perception of Journalists Talking Politics

Finding and Discussion

The chart and bar graphs illustrated below, the majority of the journalists avoid discussing politics because 40.9% of the respondents chose” I don’t wish to answer ”, indicating reluctance to disclose their stance possibly due to sensitivity , fear of judgment from same language or ethnic group. On top of that, 30.9% said “Never” meaning they do not talk politics at all with staffs. However, very few respondents engage “political” talk since only 9.1% of two

respondents said “Not often”, suggesting rare “political” discussions. Three journalists 13.6% of them answered “I don’t know”, which could reflect uncertainty or lack of awareness about what counts as “political” discussions.

Pie-Chart 5



Interpretation of the above charts

The chart 5, suggested that “political” discussions among staffs were not common in EBC in this group, with over 77% never engaging, unsure, or unwilling to respond. This could result a lack of “political” interest or awareness or a fear of “political expression”, this also in turn showed that these journalists were on the job where the restrictive political environments or social norms where **political talk considered divisive or inappropriate**. In the bar chart also used and showed how often respondents talk about “politics” with staffs. It is clearly seen the highest bar for “I don’t wish to answer” and “Never”, confirmed avoidance.

Detailed Interpretation

● **High reluctance to answer:** The largest group of journalists chose “I don’t wish to answer.” This could imply a broader lack of trust in survey anonymity or institutions. Further, it reflects discomforts with discussing “politics”. Secondly, due to potential conflict or taboos. Ontop of this, fear of “political” consequences especially, in restrictive or under surveillance, or closely monitoring environment.

●**Low engagement in “political” talk:**Eight journalists that constitute 36.4% said “Never”and two respondents of 9.1% chose “Not often” combined 45.5% of the respondents were rarely or never talk about “politics” with staffs. This might suggest low ‘political interest’ or awareness among the general journalists, this indicated a disconnect between civic education and real-life dialogue or simply a social norm of avoiding politics applauded to keep peace among staffs.

●**Uncertainty:** The three respondents that constituted 13.6% of those who selected “I don’t know” probably lack awareness of what counts on political discussion. This also reflected general confusion especially, if they were not exposed to active ‘political discussion’ at home or school.

Implications for Media and Human Rights Communication

The result showed a low level of staff-to-staff “political” discourse, which limited the Human Rights awareness. As the previous data suggested a result of no detail discussions on critical “political”issues or information weakened the EBC’s and other media organizations since they were unable to report on Human Rights. These raised questions on why journalists so hesitant to discuss “politics”? What factors, education, media political environment discourage discourse? How can media, schools, or civil society foster safer spaces for political discussion?

The Frequency of Political Discussions

Among journalists, the survey explored how often respondents engage in political discussions with their staffs. The result revealed a generally low level of interpersonal “political” discourse among participants. The findings suggested there were a strong hesitancy or reluctance to take part in or even disclosed ‘political conversations’ that the **journalists looked “politics” as something secretive**. The fact that a significant portion of respondents that were over 77% either never talked about ‘politics’ were unsure,or preferred not to answer reflected potentially suppressed ‘political system’. Such hesitancy stem from fear of “political” repercussions, systematic norms discouraging political discourse, which would further indicated as there were a general sense of political discord.

The low level of political discussion among journalists indicated a disconnect between access to political information and active civic engagement. Even in contexts where media coverage on

Human Rights was unavailable, such lack of discussion among journalists **reduced the potential public dialogue and understanding**. In the environments where political expression limited or perceived as risky, private discussions among staffs could serve as a safe space for reflection and critical engagement. However, journalists kept silent on these matters in the work area since that invites risks. The absence of such discourse highlights broader challenges in EBC over the democratic participation and civic consciousness. The insights have significant implications for Human Rights advocacy and media effectiveness. If journalists as well as the audiences or the people are not openly discussing “political” matters, including those issues related to Human Rights- this limited the societal impact of EBC’s reporting.

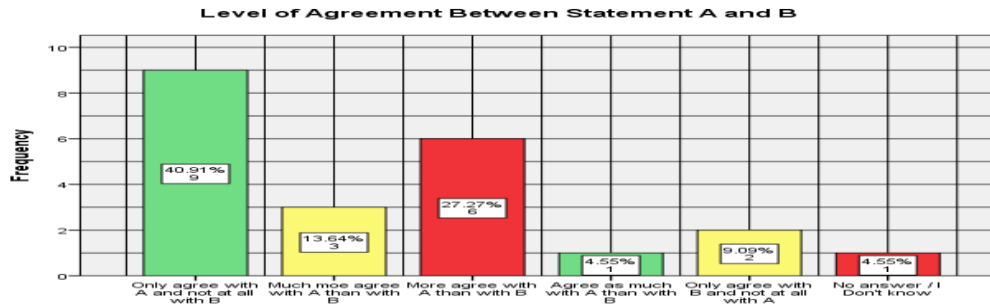
Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal a deeply rooted reluctance among individuals to engage in political discussions with friends—an indicator of broader socio-political dynamics in Ethiopia. The significant percentage of respondents who either avoid or refuse to discuss politics highlights the enduring presence of **fear, distrust, and disengagement in the public sphere**. Despite infrequent media coverage on human rights issues, such as through state-owned outlets like EBC, the impact of this coverage remains limited when people do not feel empowered to reflect, critique, or share ideas freely.

The study underscores the limitations of current educational and media systems in fostering critical civic engagement. Political discussions, when they occur, are often shaped or suppressed by **party influence, institutional surveillance, or tribal stigma**. As a result, civic education and human rights reporting are not translating into meaningful awareness or action.

Real change requires more than curriculum revisions or surface-level reforms. It requires building trust, protecting freedoms, and creating inclusive, credible platforms where citizens—especially youth **in connection with experienced seniors on objectivism**—can safely express ideas, question authority, and engage in dialogue that matters. Only through such structural and cultural shifts can Ethiopia move toward a more participatory, rights-respecting society.

Bar-Chart 7-Item A_B Statements of Agreement



The above bar chart shows responses about the level of agreement between statement A and B, which is “**Statement A:** “*Man should be responsible for his own success and well-being using his ability of mind*”, and **Statement B:**“*Man should be given privilege according to his or her ethnicity* ”.The bar are categorized into two axis from left to right X- axis depicted between the highest and the lowest frequency and the Y-axis illustrated the most common response, which answered ,were 9 respondents constituted 40.91% that they “Only agree with **A** and not at all with **B**”. The next most common response, which answered “More agree with A than with B”. Very few participants selected “Agree as much as with **A** than with **B**”, 9% of the respondents replied “Only agree with **B** and not at all with **A**”and one person chose “No answer /I don’t know”

The bar chart specified strong preference for the **statement A**. Because the largest group, only agree with **A** and not at all with **B**, showing a clear perception that media does indeed play a strong role in reducing exclusion and privilege across the country. In other words, EBC could help individuals to use mind.

The data reveals a strong preference among respondents for the belief that individuals should be responsible for their own success and well-being through the use of their intellectual abilities, rather than being granted privilege based on ethnicity. With 81.8% of the participants aligning more with this **meritocratic ideal** and only 9.1 supporting ethnic-based privilege, the findings suggest a dominant endorsement of **individual responsibility and meritocracy**. In the context of Ethiopia, and more broadly in African societies marked by ethnic diversity and inequalities ,this sentiment reflects a pushback **against ethnically driven favoritism and identity- based access to power or resources**. While identity- politics and ethnic federalism have been central to

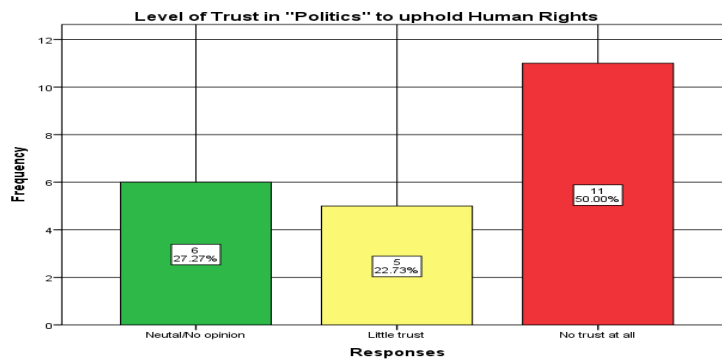
Ethiopia’s political structure, this data indicates growing support for **Universalist approaches to justice and equality**, where opportunities are based on individual effort rather than group affiliation. From a social justice stand point , this points to tension between the need to correct historical group based marginalization and the desire to move toward a more merit based society. It also highlights a possible shift in public attitudes, particularly among younger or civically more engaged or civically more engaged populations, toward prioritizing national unity and equal opportunity **over** ethnic entitlement.

Interpretation

The majority 18 out of 22, 81.1% signify a stronger agreement with the idea that success and well-being should come from individual effort and mental ability (Statement A) rather than ethnic privilege. Only 2 respondents showed minimal support for Statement B, which was 9.1% of journalists explicitly supported ethnic privilege without agreeing with individual responsibility. Neutrality is low- only 1journalist is neutral that shows equal agreement and another 1 didn’t answer.

These implications were the data reflected as a general individual orientation in values among participants. Ethnic-based privilege was largely rejected, which could inform debates on policies around meritocracy, equity, and identity policies. The data also could suggest that the respondents favor equal opportunity systems rather than group-based advantages.

Bar-Chart8-How much trusts do you have in politics to uphold human rights?



As the above Bar-Chart 8, vividly illustrates, half of the journalists (50%) have no trust at all in “politics” to protect human rights, followed by 22.7% that said they have little trust, indicating a degree of doubt and disillusionment. Only the 27.3% chose to remain neutral or undecided, possibly due to lack of information, indifference, or fear of repercussions or full trust in the system.

The result or the findings showed a significant **trust slippage** in politics when it comes to the protection of human rights. This confidence may stem from ongoing human rights violations, perceived impunity of political actors, corruption, and the absence of accountability mechanisms. The absence of any positive trust responses also underscored a deep-rooted disillusionment with the current “political” system. Such situations can have serious implications, including reduced civic engagement, increased “political” apathy, and the potential for social unrest if people feel their rights are consistently being violated or ignored by those in power.

Item 2-Statements of Agreement Compare EBC on A_B

The table clearly illustrated the comparison between **Statement A:** “EBC plays a crucial role in protecting human rights”) and **Statement B:** “EBC fails to significantly impact human rights issues”.

Statistics	Value
Mean	6
Median	6
Mode	5
Standard deviation	0.873
Variance	0.762
Range	2
Minimum	5
Maximum	7

Table 9- Compare EBC on **A and B**

The table 9 shows the participants were 22 and there were no missing values. The mean 6 indicates that the participants slanted strongly in favor of Statement **B**, specifying they mainly perceived EBC as ineffective in protecting human rights. The Median 6 is a middle score also falls at 6, reinforcing that a majority selected values favoring Statement B. The Mode is the most frequent score was 5 i.e. “More agree with **B** than **A**”, though multiple mode exist. The standard deviation (.873) showed that the responses had low variation, meaning there was relatively strong agreement among participants. There was low variance (.762) reflected limited diversity in opinion. The Range (2) shows the answers ranged only between 5 and 7, meaning no one favored statement A. The Minimum (5) shows no one is strongly supported statement A. The Maximum (7) shows the most extreme answers sided statement **B** entirely.

This data shows the respondents skepticism toward EBC’s effectiveness in protecting human rights. Everyone’s responses fell on the side of more agreement with statement **B**, with no respondents agreeing with statement **A**. The clustering of scores between 5 and 7 confirmed that. This pattern suggested a consensus that EBC either does little or nothing to promote or protect human rights.

4.2.1 Thematic Coverage of Human Rights by EBC

The content analysis revealed that EBC's reporting on human rights-related issues was often selective and framed in ways that served the political narrative of the government. Four major themes were identified from the sampled televised news content: **forced evictions, hate speech and incitement, civilian displacement due to drone strikes, and visual propaganda**. These themes emerged repeatedly across multiple dates, with particular attention given to how each was reported, omitted, or reframed.

One recurring issue was **forced evictions**, which were often reported in EBC news as development efforts or urban beautification projects. However, the coverage largely excluded the perspectives of those displaced or denied them the opportunity to voice their experiences. Compensation was mentioned but rarely scrutinized. In some reports, authorities were portrayed as negotiators or mediators just to pay unfair compensations, but without any critical assessment of the fairness of the compensation packages. As a result, human rights violations — such as the

denial of housing, livelihoods, and adequate legal recourse — were minimized or ignored entirely in the media coverage.

Hate speech was another significant theme, especially during periods of conflict. EBC aired emotionally charged language, including labeling opponents as “terrorists,” “foreign agents,” or “anti-peace elements.” This use of dehumanizing language constituted a form of indirect incitement, contributing to a hostile public atmosphere and undermining rights to dignity and non-discrimination. In some cases, this rhetoric appeared to echo official government discourse without journalistic scrutiny. For instance, in a recent health professionals strikes for a better payment, the vice Minister of Health openly intimidated the question of pay raise as backed by terrorists, equally ETV presented the strikes live that there were some anti-peace elements involved in the strike wearing white gown.

Coverage of **conflict and drone strikes** revealed another pattern of selective reporting. Civilian casualties were rarely acknowledged, while military actions were framed as necessary and precise. Reports avoided graphic or distressing imagery of victims, instead emphasizing technological superiority and national defense. This selective visibility of suffering arguably contributes to the erasure of victims’ voices and violates the journalistic responsibility to truth and transparency.

4.2. Qualitative data Collected from Journalists (The respondents were able to speak freely **off the record**)

1.**Name:** Anonymous

Academic Status: MA in Journalism

Current Status: Government Chief Executive of EBC

Time: 4:00

Date: 29/5/24

In his position as chief executive officer, he was asked what views he had on human rights issues. He replied that he has no responsibility to air human rights violations via EBC. He further indicated that such reports would probably fuel conflicts among people.

Q-Some scholars say it is significant to report human rights issues siding victims what would you say on this?

Like I said, a journalist should be responsible to his/her profession so that when journalists report on human rights matters, had to be careful.

On April 6, 2025 he also replied the same answer in front of the parliament when he was asked by the MP but too late. Even though the question was not asked fully in connections with victims 'orientation, the MP, who only pointed out that the EBC was public funded, so it did not address human rights violations, adding, the chief said that such human rights issues would fuel further chaos among people, therefore, EBC is not subject to report human rights in any circumstances..

2. Name: Anonymous

Academic Status: MA in Sociology and MA in Broadcast

Current Position: Editor in chief of ETV

Time: 5:02

Date: 29/05/2024

EBC has sub channels such as ETV news, entertainment, Afan Oromo, Children, ETV radio, Ciber Media etc.

Q1. Based on his services in EBC, the editor-in- chief was asked about to give his opinion on the performances of both Media and Politics , he said that everything the media crew do is in favor of the incumbent. Journalists have no choice, but to support those on power. The state works through media. It presents public agendas, for example, when we say public problems, we report about roads, electricity, water, transportation. Of course, the politics is disturbing our work if we are forced to lie being as a mouthpiece of the government. Adding, when he was asked if there was politics, he said policy issues, election reports etc get coverage on media. It is the government that takes the larger portions of the air time. It seemed politics exist in the country; however, it is culture screwing itself to frustrate, and then fear.

Q2. Previously you said there is politics in Ethiopia. How do you measure it? What kind of politics is it?

The structure of the government is based on languages federalism. When EBC was born, it was to look like Ethiopian ethnicities. As soon as possible journalists must work on issues of ethnicity as an agenda. The entire airwaves will have been consumed covering language federalism. Currently, EBC is working on the matters of peace and security.

Regarding the crisis in the country, we will declare the traditional conflict resolution strategy to backup NDC. We also take best practices of other countries like South Africa, Tunisia etc., The war has severely destroyed the economy.

Q3. What have you done to bring war criminals and those involved in corruption to justice?

Journalists cannot say that war criminals, liars, corrupt officials should be brought to justice. Such a matter is decided by the politicians and editors of the newsroom.

Q4. Why politicians detest when journalists better accomplish by means of scoops, investigations, and news analysis?

This is what we are faced with when journalists do an investigative report to expose bad governance or human rights violations.

Q5. Do you work on the rights of man or human rights?

Never, never because the government doesn't allow journalists to prepare programs about individual cases of human rights violations rather than groups' interests.

3. Name: Anonymous

Academic Status: MA in Business

Current Position: News Reader, Reporter

Time: 6:00

Q1. Based on your service years, what are the challenges of media and politics in this TV station in promoting and reporting human rights issues?

When journalists want to work in favor of the people, they are influenced by the ruling media officials. So it is the officials that decide whether to report violent human rights cases.

Q2. Do you think there is politics in Ethiopia?

Yes, there is politics; I call this politics because journalists work what the system orders them. When the government makes a mistake, we cover it up knowing that it is a mistake. Even though I have no political knowledge, it affects all of us.

Q3. How do you evaluate and promote freedom of speech and the rights of man in your organization?

The system will never allow announcing man's rights or human rights. It raises a lot of questions. I know the system will do mistakes on a purpose. It is tough.

4.3. One -to-One discussion (The respondents were able to speak freely off the record).

4.3.1. Person One (Unrecorded)

One of a PP member, whom I got him around street coffee seller, did not want to be known as a PP member, but indirectly the researcher understood the tone of his speech that he is a member. When asked the human rights situations in the country, in which different regions "why have never demonstrated empathy to each other about cases of Human Rights ", he said, no, from his speech color the researcher perceived the intended meaning that the respondent was nervous to express himself freely for not going through it all, ignoring what has happened on the ground, he intentionally emitted fear just not to have further discussions on the matter. However, at times, in the middle he leapt and uttered 'there is tribalism in all churches', so he seemed against it, but probably, he himself was there to collect information.

4.3.2. Person Two(Unrecorded)

Everywhere, it is usual to hear the news of kidnappings, arbitrary detention, what is your view on this? Do you think the people agree with the matter? He said that the people are terrified to speak, if they suggest about the incidents, they feel the tensions with uncertain outcome ending up with the same calamitous events. Therefore, people avoid such topics and choose to remain silent.

4.3.3. Person Three (Unrecorded)

Q-Based on your experiences what would you say about human rights? Could you share?

The freedom of expression is one of the basic rights. It should be respected. Speech is right. Speech is not a crime. If this right does not get its level or if violated, bad governance becomes a reality everywhere and affects the lives of the poor people. For instance, tribalism as well as regionalism must be uprooted to work together with citizens of this country. The present administration has several shortcomings because the authorities are incompetent at least in considering the status of the riches from the poor. Authorities collect high taxes from the poorest ones than the richest. This can be one of the best examples of human rights violations regarding taxation. The interviewee, adding he said "In the first place, the policy itself violates our freedom of speech. I am a Bajaj driver, so the authorities forced drivers to drive on cobble stones road for transporting passengers. These roads were not built up to standard so that some parts of the Bajaj

worn out very quickly and broken down since the stones were not carved smoothly. Before the driving job, he was a college student. However, since graduation he could not find decent job in line with his educational experiences whereas his schoolmates got high paying job as a result of kinship relationship with authorities.

Response for Core Questions

The media are not neutral. They are the right hands of the government. Media are not the ears and eyes of the public. Journalists never fight to report human rights issues to satisfy the public because media workers are one-sided intentionally against the public. The media are the lapdog of authorities in Sidama. This media work under the auspices of the regional authorities; as a result even if the opinions are fruitful, the media drop it. Regarding human rights, the Sidama's media never allow such issues to be aired. Let alone the human rights, if accidents occurred, if there were no permission from authorities, journalists remain silent instead.

There is no media which help the public to speak the mind. The situation is frustrating since the public is under authoritarianism. If there were individuals who raised issues about various problems, or those peasants who asked fertilizers end up in prison and subject to torture. No one is allowed to freely express oneself. Freedom of expression is unthinkable in Sidama region. The media are not ready to make government officials accountable.

In different parts of the country, the low and middle income societies of the work forces are under poverty status. Such people are already lost their ability to cope the roaring economic situations at the moment, though the trouble stated since TPLF led PP embarked on power, it still deteriorating the standard of living. For instance, in different parts of the country especially in Addis Ababa, those who have private houses have been subject for forced eviction, high taxations. “Why not you have a hen, that also subject to pay taxes”. Our lives are under constant threats; individuals are at high rate of frustrations. It is a crying situation; there is no place for complaints. Authorities are like a hand in a glove.

The person who was interviewed was asked how he thought these problems could be solved. He replied that the first thing should be system change, and then governance must come from the Ethiopian people, through competition not just from fewer interest groups on power. The authorities must serve the public until they leave the office after every four years. To do these

they should be guided by God's word in connection with the right philosophy of the time. Authorities must not stay for life in office "under different names or only replacing individuals from the same party and then calling it peaceful power transition." This act is the character of divisive regimes. All authorities should hold office according to knowledge and experiences in order to save lives rather than going to war.

Person Four

Name: Anonymous

Academic Status: MA in Law

Current Position : Law consultant

1. People are dying everywhere. People are being hurt by wars and oppressors. When will this situation stop? Why are most people are silent, especially officials?

Answer: What will it bring if he speaks or if he is silent? It is better if he remains silent.

2. As a legal expert, how do you view human rights? While people are being harmed, no regional authorities have issued any statements of condolence in the media. Why was silence chosen?

Answer-Let me give you an example. For example, if a Wolaita banana is poisoned, we do not say that the Wolaita banana is poisoned. The reason is that in this expression, there is a society or nation that is harmed. Therefore, it is better if one person is harmed than the society is harmed. Let me add another example: if many chickens are being kept in a poultry farm, and if one of them gets sick, the solution is to kill the ill one quickly to protect the rest of the chickens.

3. How do you believe media coverage will affect the public's perception of human rights issues?

Answer: The media cannot be completely independent and broadcast whatever they want. The media should only serve the interests of the government. The media should not criticize or challenge the existing regime. It will be punished by examining the journalists.

4. In what ways do political institutions help protect human rights? Or do you think they are an obstacle?

Answer: As I have already explained to you, the people themselves do not know their rights and obligations.

5. How do you think some of the challenges in the country can be solved?

Answer: The only way to find a solution is to use an indigenous problem-solving method.

6. If you can elaborate on this point, could you elaborate or explain it?

Answer: This means by the elders of the country and by forgiveness.

Here, many people suggest indigenous or traditional ways or means of solving complex social issues counting it as is knowledge implies, it is undermining victims.

4.4. Framing

A Framing Analysis of Stories in Single outing EBC's focuses on how the media practice in promoting and protecting human rights. This study applies a qualitative framing analysis which focuses on analyzing and investigating media stories, news based on the topical circumstances. The study picks the most sensitive issues.

4.4.1. The Content analysis

The analysis of media content revealed that the EBC's framing of human rights issues often shifts according to the political environment and the specific case being covered. Several critical patterns emerge: The coverage of mass killings in the Wellega region was minimized or omitted, with officials justifying the violence as part of a security operation. The frame used primarily emphasized security concerns rather than focusing on the **Human Rights** violations themselves. This framing aligns with a tribalism approach, where the state's narrative was often prioritized. The coverage of the rape case particularly the fake documentary, inclined heavily towards **victim-blaming** and **discrediting the victim**. The use of false witnesses and fake certificates further compounded the damage, misrepresenting the victim's story while promoting a government-aligned agenda. Coverage of the drone attacks also adopted a denial of minimization tone, with military officials framing the attacks as part of national security efforts. No accountability was proposed and the attacks were justified as necessary action for defense. Notably, the Prime Minister's Hate speech was framed within a tribalistic and blame game

context, with the intent of consolidating support for the government while delegitimizing opposition voices. The tone was aggressive, inciting further division, but it didn't call for any direct action to address the violations.

4.4.2, Live Speech of PM Abiy Ahmed in Parliament and Violence in Oromo region

On June 14, 2022, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed falsely, without evidence made out a speech in parliament that there are people who hate Oromo's, and he further said that no one would be allowed to live in Ethiopia who held those views.

This type of awkward and authoritarianism have gained momentum for knocking down of hundred million people. He continued to accuse and seemed ready to attack those who were part of his hate spreading conversation; he was also threatening unknown forces or ethnic groups.

This hate speech is a direct attack and a crime of genocide against Amhara farmers, women, men, and children in the West Wolloga Zone of Gimbi Woreda. Following the speech, violence broke out in Gimbi, Oromo region which killed more than Six Hundred Amhara civilians dead. The government blamed OLA, but the criminals were never arrested. Amharas see the Gimbi massacre a linkage of Authorizations. The lunch time "Live" transmitted speech was edited from the video in that same day of evening news.

Latter, Fano, who fell with federal soldiers with Tigray war, refused to disarm. A year later, August 2022, Fano attacked several army units in Amhara region. Fano claimed the government tried to weaken Amhara people. Authorities imposed curfews, ban gatherings under new orders. Then the government declared six-month state of emergency (SoE), which led to violence between Fano and the ENDF. August 14, 2023 lawyers and witnesses said police have arrested and detained Amhara youths. Tesfaye Beljige addressed the parliament the necessity of declaring a state of emergency in Amhara region shock the constitutional order, which present a danger to the country as well as safety of the public.

4.4.3. Content Analysis

Content Table

ID	Date	Program Title	Human Rights Issues	Tone	Actor mentioned	Frame used	Call for action	Source cited	Violation described	Accountability	Visual
1	03/11/2024	TV news	Displacement	Neutral	Government official	Responsibility	No	Government official	Yes	No	yes
2	10/12/2024	Law task	Extrajudicial killings	Critical	Victims family	Human interest	YES	Victim	Yes	Yes	No
3	05/01/2025	Human Rights and Law	Freedom of expression	Supportive	Journalist	Morality	Yes	NGO	No	No	yes
4	18/02/2025	አውነትንፍለጋ (seeking truth)	Sexual violence (Rape)	Denial/ discrediting	Government spokesperson False witnesses	Victim blaming	No	Government media	No	No	Yes
5	22/01/2025	የህዝብጥያቄ (public demand)	Mass killing Wellega	Omission /Minimization	Local officials	Security justification	No	Local officials	yes	No	none
6	5/02/2025	የጠቅላይ ሚኒስትሩ ንግግር (PM speech)	Incitement/ hate speech	Aggressive	Prime Minister	Tribalism /blame game	Implied violence	PM speech	Yes	No	Live parliamentary broadcast
7	10/03/2025	Drone attack information	Drone attacks on civilians	Denial	Military officials	National security	No	Defense Ministry	Yes	No	Aerial Imagery/Explosions

Map showing the areas where the attacks were reported

8 November 2024



Residents and eyewitnesses told the BBC that a drone strike in the South Achefer Woreda of the North Gojam Zone of the Amhara Region killed several people, including children and pregnant women. The attack took place on Tuesday, October 26, 2017. Witnesses and residents said that it occurred three times in a row in Arge (Zebest), a small town about 40 kilometers from the Woreda capital, Durbete. Local residents who told the BBC that the attack took place at around 1:10 in the morning on the market area of the city, a primary school and a health center; said that “everyone from children to adults” was killed.

The absence of any call for accountability was a consistent trend across all the human rights violations covered. For example, in the cases of mass killings in Wellega and drone attacks, no government or military officials were held accountable, and no efforts were made to repair the harm caused. Similarly, media reports did not often call for any meaningful action to rectify the situations. Instead, they were framed as national security issues or local disputes that did not require immediate interventions or response from the international community or other stakeholders.

4.4.4. Result-Hate Speech and Political Discourse

EBC coverage of political speeches by high-ranking officials, particularly the Prime Minister, was found to lack critical scrutiny. Speeches containing inflammatory language or divisive

rhetoric, especially those targeting opposition groups or ethnic regions, were broadcast without editorial challenge or alternative perspectives. In one particular parliamentary session, the Prime Minister's use of derogatory language to characterize certain ethnic groups and accuse critics of being "enemies of the state" was aired multiple times and repackaged for propaganda purposes. No effort was made by the broadcaster to verify the implications of such statements or to investigate their impact on national unity or incitement of violence. Furthermore, media narratives often glorified such speeches, portraying them as expressions of patriotic leadership. This unchecked repetition of state rhetoric contributes to a toxic public discourse and fails to meet journalistic standards for neutrality and balance.

4.4.5. Normalization of Hate Speech and Media Complicity

The reproduction of hate speech and inflammatory rhetoric on EBC without critique reflects a deeper problem tied to **agenda-setting theory** and **media capture by political elites**. According to McCombs and Shaw (1972), the media not only tell people what to think about **but how to think about it**. By consistently framing polarizing speeches as legitimate governance tools, **the media contribute to the legitimization of divisive ideologies**. Furthermore, from a **Political Economy perspective**, EBC's reliance on state funding makes it structurally dependent on political actors, discouraging critical coverage of those in power. This results in the normalization of hate speech and potentially paves the way for violence, especially in an ethnically polarized country like Ethiopia. The absence of critical journalism in such contexts can deepen societal fractures, erode democratic principles, and contribute to the rise of authoritarian populism.

4.4.6. Media Erasure and Historical Control

In the process of data collection, it was observed that certain television broadcasts, especially those related to sensitive human rights violations such as state sponsored violence, rape cases and ethnic conflict, were no longer accessible on the official EBC platforms. Attempts to retrieve these broadcasts through public archives such as the Wayback Machine yielded limited results, often displaying only metadata or graphical summaries rather than full video content. This erasure of audiovisual records reflects a broader concern about the manipulation of collective memory through state-control media. In authoritarian contexts, the strategic deletion of sensitive

media can serve to suppress accountability, sanitize the historical record, and protect those in power from scrutiny. This phenomenon highlights a critical dimension of media framing— not only what is shown, but what is intentionally not shown or removed. As such the absence of content itself becomes a form of framing and censorship. These researches acknowledged these archival gaps as part of the methodological challenge and include them in the analysis as evidence of state influence over natives and the erasure of counter-narratives in post-conflict Ethiopia.

Stanley (2024) argued that authoritarian regimes frequently erase or distort history to maintain control and suppress dissent, a tactic that has direct implications for human rights. This kind of incident is a recent memory in Syria, where the Assad regime has leveraged state media and censorship to suppress alternative narratives and penalize dissent, effectively reshaping public memory to reinforce its legitimacy (Christou, 2024). Similarly, in Russia, the government has developed a sophisticated digital censorship regime that limits access to independent journalism, further demonstrating how control of information can erode democratic discourse and obscure human rights violations (Sherman, 2020). This international examples mirror patterns observed in Ethiopia's state-owned media. Particularly EBC, where selective reporting, visual propaganda, and the omission of key human rights issues reflect broader strategies of **narrative control**. By examining EBC's framing of topics such as forced evictions and conflict reporting, this study highlights how the erasure and distortion of information contributes to a media environment that undermines public awareness and accountability in the realm of human rights.

Code Table for Content analysis (forced eviction and compensation)

Code	Definition	Indicators in EBC Content	Media Framing Observed	Human Rights Implication
Forced Evictions	Coverage of displacement due to government or development actions	Mentions of eviction, relocation, resettlement	Neutral to pro-government framing, no victim voices	Violation of right to adequate housing
Inadequate Compensation	Compensation that is below market value or delayed	Authorities mentioned as providing compensation with no follow-up on fairness	One-sided reporting; victim concerns not represented	Economic injustice, inequality, right to property violated
Government as Broker	Government officials profiting by reselling evicted land or homes	No critical investigation, but interviewees describe officials selling land at high prices post-eviction	Not covered in media or dismissed as rumor	Corruption, abuse of power, failure of state accountability
Silenced Victims	Victims not represented in the narrative	Lack of interviews with displaced people or visuals showing only new construction	Victims' voices excluded or minimized	Lack of media independence, suppression of dissent

Table Report on Forced Evictions

4.4.7. Result –Forced Eviction and Compensation

The analysis revealed a pattern of limited and highly selective coverage of forced evictions on EBC. While certain reports acknowledged the relocation of citizens due to urban expansion or development projects, they often framed these actions as part of national progress, with little to no mention of the lived experiences of those affected. The issue of compensation was occasionally addressed; however, it was presented from the authorities' perspective, emphasizing the provision of compensation without questioning its adequacy or fairness. Interviews with key informants and documented cases suggest that many victims received payments far below market value. Moreover, allegations emerged of government officials acting as brokers, reselling vacated land at inflated prices—yet such claims were entirely absent from EBC's narratives. The

voices of the displaced were systematically marginalized, and no investigative reporting was observed that would highlight the human cost of these evictions. This selective framing reflects a clear bias toward state narratives and reveals a broader media failure to uphold the principles of transparency, accountability, and human dignity in reporting on human rights issues.

4.4.8. A Brief Content analysis on The Ethiopian Constitution

Some analysis of human rights articles and their connotations in the constitution is crucial for better analysis on why human rights are seen as an abstract since a reality. The protection of human beings corresponds to the contemporary developments of both the national and international law. Basic rights have become increasingly significant. Even though human democratic rights is mentioned in article 10/1and2, it is something left on the paper. Moreover, article 2 which the word "peoples" hints hidden meaning which counteracts article 10 of number 1, which actually tricks rights' of man emerges from " The natural rights of man", which is born rights, but article 10/1 carelessly taken as "**the nature of mankind**". This denotes the constitution is in itself contradicts, so is in conflicts of man's rights.

Regarding fundamental rights the constitution wrote that the Federal and State legislative, executive and judicial organs at all levels shall have the responsibility and duty to respect and enforce the provisions of this Chapter 3 of article 13/1and 2 mentioned the state should interpret consistently as the integral part of the principles of UDHR, International Covenants on Human Rights (ICHR). However, from the practical observations this law is questionable since the authorities are immune from accountability placing public officials at the top to do whatever they wish to do. For instance, in all regions there are citizens whose rights are violated in which man's rights are under risk if he or she stand run political office or any office of the government. He or she has no rights to participate in politics except joining or alienating. Above all, Arnold (2013) described constitutional law of today is regularly anthropocentric, placing man on the top of the constitutional guarantees. From Arnold's assumptions, anybody can learn that the purpose of constitution is not to force but must **respect man**.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1. Summary of the Main Findings

1. The study found that the media in Ethiopia, particularly state-run outlets like EBC, play a limited and often compromised role in promoting human rights and "political" accountability. Journalists operate under tight restrictions and "political" influence, which undermines their ability to report freely and critically. Both students and media professionals as well as one-to-one conversations acknowledge the potential of the media to support human rights, yet they point to biased coverage and avoidance of sensitive political issues. Furthermore, Ethiopia's political system itself is often confusing, marked by mixed messages, unclear commitments to democratic principles, and inconsistent enforcement of rights, which complicates the media's role and further weakens public trust in both institutions.

In his study of literature review and analysis highlight the problem of politicians and the media not properly understanding where human rights begin. As a result, human rights violations are being treated as a daily occurrence, and the number of victims has increased. Furthermore, citizens are being terrorized and silenced by the suppression of reports, the distortion of justice, and the distortion of history.

2. The study has found that the definitions of politics are too many and very confusing. However, through reviewing different literatures the Leninist-Ethnic-Federalism is not politics, but it is an experiment to test if it works, but many Africans and Europeans were once tried yet avoided that it was not working. Many scholars have said that the collective trends are incomprehensible in causing chaos, anger, a lot of disagreement, not only in Ethiopia but also around the world. If we take an example from Africa that language based administration is both controversial and unintelligible (Vaughan, 2003, p.15). Vaughan (2003) further explained that internationally and domestically Ethnic or language federalism was seen eristic initiative and then reaching peak in other parts of Africa, most notably in Eritrea and South Africa, both of whose governments publicly expressed concern about the Ethiopian experiment. Given Yugoslavia and the collapse

of neighboring Somalia, such an act of ethnicizing politics in Ethiopia—surely thereby of inflaming ethnic passions—appeared to many to be inexplicable, irresponsible and dangerous. (Vaughan, 2003:15). Therefore, based on the various literatures, there is no modern politics in Ethiopia. Politics started from one man not from groups. The respect of one man is not personal; it is societal because many collectivists think one man's rights are personal things i.e. full of fallacy. If whatever policy or politics does not have personal value to think, it is a force imposing on society what is not satisfying true democracy.

5.2. Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the performance of the media—particularly the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC)—in promoting human rights including freedom of expression in Ethiopia. The findings were drawn from quantitative and qualitative data collected from two key groups: journalism and students of journalism, political science and others at Addis Ababa University and journalists working at EBC and interviewing different people. Their perceptions provide valuable insights into how the media in Ethiopia is perceived and functions in relation to the practice of protecting human rights and creating awareness and democratic discourse on fundamental rights.

The feedback from students highlighted an atmosphere of anxiety and repression regarding political discourse. A significant portion indicated they seldom or never feel at ease talking about politics in public settings or at their university. Likewise, confidence in politicians and journalists was markedly low, reflecting a prevalent mistrust of information shared by mainstream media. Nonetheless, students had mixed views on the media's role in advocating for human rights, with some recognizing its beneficial effects while others maintained a critical stance.

Journalists at EBC provided a more nuanced but equally concerning picture. Although they reported frequent exposure to political information through media channels—particularly television and the internet—their own engagement with human rights issues was minimal. Most journalists admitted to not engaging with human rights reports, and an overwhelming majority believed that the media performs poorly in holding politicians accountable for rights abuses. This

indicates a systemic issue within the state media apparatus, where editorial independence and critical reporting are limited.

Moreover, while EBC rarely broadcasts content on human rights, this is not matched by meaningful journalistic participation or audience engagement. The findings also highlighted a perceived governmental influence over journalistic practice and a media environment that prioritizes collective rights and state narratives over individual freedoms and critical discourse.

This study set out to explore the interdisciplinary performance of media and politics, in the promotion of human rights protection and awareness in Ethiopia, with a focus on the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC). Data collected from journalists at EBC and students in journalism, political science, and related fields at Addis Ababa University, and one-to-one interviews revealed a complex and often troubling picture of the state of media freedom and human rights discourse in the country.

The journalists' responses demonstrated a significant disconnect between institutional narratives and personal engagement. While the EBC is said to never cover human rights issues, the journalists themselves are largely disengaged from these topics, with 100% reporting that they never engage with human rights content directly.

This is a **significant finding**, as it highlights a critical absence of human rights content in media coverage. Such results may suggest, lack of institutional focus on human rights reporting. Insufficient training or awareness among journalists. Editorial policies that reprioritize or avoid sensitive issues. Possible political or legal constraints influencing content choices on institutional distrust **and** media underperformance.

The results gained from the data collection methods revealed that these results reflected a deep mistrust among journalists toward political institutions when it comes to upholding human rights. As professionals who often observe and report on actions of political actors, journalists are uniquely positioned to assess the real-world alignment or misalignment between political rhetoric and actual human rights practices. Several factors contributed to these distrusts such as censorship, harassment or threats against media workers by “political” actors. As has been noted earlier supporting and covering up ethnic acts or **fearing the ethnic group**. Besides, lack of

“political” will to implement or enforce human rights legislation. In fact, impunity from violations of human rights quite an alarming and spreading where those responsible for abuses remain unpunished.

The high percentage (72.7%) of participants who expressed no or little trust points to a **crisis of credibility** in political institutions. It also highlights the **vulnerability of human rights advocacy**, particularly in environments where media freedom is under pressure.

Since the Ethiopian media system established on the ground of ethnicity, It would be impossible to freely exercise the freedom to write, speak and use one's God given potential not only in the field of communication but also in the fields of science and technology to flourish using only one's mind (ibid). Instead this situation force journalists to obey the authorities at any level. As a result, such limitations lead the public to obey any destructive acts as of cultivating democratic ideals. Mayhem (2007) argued the more consistently journalists **obey altruism** command and sacrifices objective values the more destructive its effect.

In Ethiopia, there are too many indicatives so as to go past that the media are under ethnic control systems which only raise the "**us**" or the "**them**", rather than as alternative of educating the public to come closer for common good. Even under the TPLF/EPRDF regime, justice was being perverted by persecuting journalists and media institutions who spoke and wrote against it, the PP which changed its name and was born from EPRDF ,for instance, the media does little effort since 2018 from the death of Engineer Simegnaw, Hacaallu Hundessa (Singer), Asaminew Tsige (General) among others left unresolved.

On the contrary, EBC publicizes the militant groups called "Shane" in covering more than ten times since 2020-2024. Still now Shane group never stop killings of innocents. Because EBC gave Shane more coverage than Fano causes. However, if the media stopped reporting on terrorist events, terrorist would stop killing of innocent people (Oates, 2008). Moreover, the media do not provide analysis or background to terrorist events, making it difficult to either understand the roots of the conflicts or work toward a solution (Oates, 2008).

EBC and other media organizations solely rely on the effects of the conflicts ignoring the causes of the defiance, for instance, the media classifying Fano as the enemies of the people as criminals

or terrorist group. Although the media reports the acts of terrorism, it tends not to talk about the political causes as well as the aims of the terrorists. In this sense, such groups are reduced to mere murderers(Oates, 2008).

Far from the objectives of the media that is the purpose of serving the public, EBC's journalists sided to the government tied up in the propaganda of strengthening the securities and surveillances apparatus by threatening the freedom of the people and disparaging the opposite sides.

The media never focus to the solution except to demonize the groups involved and increase security at the expense of human rights. Ironically the process of demonization can amplify the alleged power of the group and influence (Oates, 2008). Chiefly, EBC has exaggerated the danger of Fano and supported the governments counter measures whole-heartedly- simplifying the causes and amplifying the state propaganda. Oates (2008) discussed that the media ignore the **social causes** and goals of the resistance groups.

Both the government and the media are taken committing war crimes by killing peaceful people in the name of upholding the law. It has been more than a year and half since the campaign began, declaring State of Emergency (SoE) and labeling the image of Fano a terrorist. It is an unethical infringement, such as libel (McNair, 2003). In this way the media leaving the causes and establishment of Fano, completely support the government and operate propaganda outside of professional ethics.

Whether the media and the government label Fano groups are criminals negatively, the ground reality is opposite as Hewitt (1992) found that "terrorist" was not necessarily a negative term for all audiences as cited in (Oates, 2008).Consequently, the EBC helped focusing on much more on the violence, shifting from analytical look of human rights violations committed by the government and most importantly publicizing the state progress avoiding the attacks on civilians in Amhara regions.

The media have created a deep divide in civil society by not presenting the real situation to the public in an impartial manner. Besides, the media have ignored the daily atrocities being committed against the Amhara people. In contrast, the media are busy reporting on corridor development, tree plantation and oil news as if nothing has happened in the country.

This can be understood from the broadcast of the media and the language usage that the government backed journalists are further discriminating against a certain group based on language. Critically, Oates (2008) validated in the evidence that the media exacerbate the divisions in the society that lead some to turn to political violence.

However, the media and the political bodies have deliberately framed slogans that say "*The Fanos' Unity have not been achieved*" or "*The Unity of Fanos' were unable to be united*". In addition, other phrase like "TPLF is better than PP" has been spreading among the people as if TPLF is not on power at the moment, which indicates that politicians involved restoring fully controlled governance by TPLF. Adjacent to this, as discussed in the one-to-one interview, for many seemed the purposes of the slogans were shifting the public attention to focus on the past and cancel the memory of the present if only the people want complete regime change; with the goal of suppressing any teachings that challenges ethnicity (Stanley, 2024).

The media ignore certain groups and trivialize their causes the notion that the media work to promote a political line at the expense of sizable minority or even dispossessed the majority of the population (Oates, 2008).

The Prime Minister's speech in parliament, which from the beginning indicated that he had a special mission and was prepared to carry out more attacks, and his speech was filled with power and intimidation as he watched right in his eyes the destructive nature of state-backed Shane and TPLF. Tilly (2003) described such a rhetoric that the threat of force escalate into the struggle between coercive organizations. It includes war, genocide, torture, collective self-destruction, public penance and government backed terror.

The EBC reports on the government that say the government is seeking genuine peace and that the National Dialogue Commission is independent and impartial. However, when it comes to the implementation of the government in practice, this is far from the case. The governments' soldiers on the ground are engaged in a large scale military campaign and are attacking innocent civilians. For instance, according to report released by the EHRC, many people have been subjected to human rights violations between 2023-2024.

The EBC is not functioning as a peace maker between deeply rooted sides in a conflict. As cited in (Qates, 2008) Wolfsfeld (2004) argued that the media framing of peace process can be critical

to its success and the media can nurture a destructive cycle of mistrust and hatred. Under certain conditions, mass media can affect conflict. First, the media propaganda encouraging violence against an ethnic minority appears to be capable of participation in violence when the minority is small and defenseless (Pham et al., 2023).

This study set out to examine the intersection between media, politics, and human rights in Ethiopia by analyzing the role and performance of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), particularly through the perceptions of students, journalists and others including literature reviews. Through survey data, interviews, and content analysis, the study has uncovered several interrelated challenges that hinder the realization of a free, accountable, and human rights-centered media environment in the country.

The data from students demonstrated a clear restriction in political engagement and expression. Most students reported feeling unable to speak freely about political issues in public or even academic settings. This pervasive fear of expressing political opinions indicates broader societal and institutional constraints, and raises concerns about the actual implementation of constitutionally guaranteed freedoms.

On the other hand, while some students acknowledged the positive role of the media in raising human rights awareness, nearly half expressed distrust or dissatisfaction with the current media system. This polarization underscores the critical need for reform in media institutions, especially those controlled by the state. The perception of media as both a tool for public education and a vehicle for propaganda remains a central tension in Ethiopian political communication.

Findings from EBC journalists reinforced these concerns. Journalists overwhelmingly rated the role of the media in holding politicians accountable for human rights violations as “very poor” or “poor.” They also cited limited familiarity with human rights frameworks, both national and international. While they frequently accessed political information through digital platforms, including the internet and television, their engagement with human rights issues in reporting was minimal. Interestingly, although most journalists reported that EBC infrequently covers human rights, they also acknowledged major gaps in quality, depth, and critical accountability reporting.

These findings suggest that the Ethiopian media landscape—especially state media—operate under constraints that compromise its ability to serve as a watchdog, informant, and platform for public debate. Both students and journalists identified gaps in political freedom, human rights awareness, and institutional trust, pointing to the need for a more independent, informed, and rights-based media sector

Thus, while there is some recognition of the media’s potential to educate the public and promote rights awareness, the current structure and performance of Ethiopian state media fall short of fulfilling these democratic functions. A shift toward greater media independence, professionalism, and civic engagement is essential to bridging the gap between Ethiopia’s legal frameworks and its sociopolitical realities.

The impact of media on human rights in politics.

Relationships

It is possible to create four possible outlines for the purpose of the study conveniences which show the researcher focuses to which the relationships extended. Each outlines indicates the importance by illuminating attention on the different parts these variables can play in the study.

- 1. Politics ----- Media**
- 2. Media ----- Politics**
- 3. Media ----- Human rights**
- 4. Politics ----- Human rights ----- Media**

The first outline shows that political activities and practicalities of decisions. Politics as an independent variable creates a casual impact, which is on media character and human rights. Politics influences media so that politics would be independent variable (Oates, 2008). It is manifested through political statements and government by languages and guide lines. At the same time, media becomes dependent variable because of its character across media coverage, bias, and censorship. For instance, A study examined how government controls on media affect the amount and type of coverage. Whitten-Woodring (2017) studied the relationship between media freedom and government behavior for the respect of human rights. She found that in

democratic countries media freedom and government behavior is positive. She also underscored the importance of strong institutions. Zakaria (1997) as cited in Whitten-Woodring (2017) argued that democracy without constitutional liberalism is “**dangerous**” bringing with it the erosion of liberty, the abuse of power, ethnic division, and even war. Zakaria (1997) further defined constitutional liberalism as protections of “the individual’s **rights to life and property, freedom of religion and speech** as cited in Whitten-Woodring (2017)” The second relationships indicate media coverage influences political activities or results. Media influences politics as a result it would be independent variable to which the coverage illumines the tone, the amount, regionalism on political consequences and developments. Familiarly, politics shifts to dependent variable in election results and public strategy choices. Then media coverage of political campaigns affects election results. Thirdly, media influences human rights media would be independent variable in which the openness of media platforms content censorship. As opposed to media, human rights transfigure dependent being variable in this instance over public conversations on political facts opinions. Subsequently, media censorship affects the audiences’ responsiveness to speak up political comments.

Fourthly, **political activities** influence **media character** which reveals over **human rights**. In this link the political actions dominate human rights issues midst of media as an intervening variable, politics transforms as an independent variable, media is intervening variable, and **human rights the dependent variable**. Therefore, state policy on media controls affect human rights, audience’s conversation by pre-conceived dominance of media in which politics affects man’s rights linking media as intervening variable.

Human rights are a mock as dependent variable measuring the ceiling of discussions, open dialogues. However, media behavior and secretive political actions contribute to the spiral of silence and indulge audiences to smile (Carelessness) on human rights. Therefore, this study argued Whitten-Woodring’s findings because unless there is a respect of fundamental rights having only strong institutions no government change behaviors for the respect of human rights as Whitten-Woodring (2017) stated government behavior on human rights remain negative.

Since the questionnaires were presented to journalists, the responses had become more arousing curiosity. Journalists are expected to have a deep understanding of media influence on human rights issues, yet 40.9% of them believe media has no influence on shaping public opinion on

human rights. This amplifies important question about how journalists perceive their own professional roles in the society. The heightened question would be:”Why journalists respond in this way?”

Firstly, many journalists, especially in government restrictive environments, where there is frustration with limited impact, may feel their reporting doesn’t lead to change. In such kind of restrictions, the possible reasons might be government censorship limits how much they can report on Human Rights weights.

Secondly, journalists working in state affiliated or politically aligned media houses may feel their reporting is heavily monitored. In the context of EBC or other media outlets are ethnic media, meaning journalists cannot freely report on human rights violations. Next, if a journalist work for government sponsored media outlets, journalist may not see their work as shaping real public debate – except reinforcing government’s narratives. This implies journalists may believe the media is a tool of parliament elites rather than independent force shaping public opinion (Even though not well versed, lately one of the MP forwarded an incomplete question for EBC’s CEO).

Thirdly, journalists may feel that traditional media no longer drives public discourse since social media platforms dominate, people rely on Face book, you tube, Twitter, Telegram influence news rather than traditional journalists. Social media and citizens journalists were reporting in ways EBC could not.

Fourthly, journalists working in restrictive environments may be hesitant to say media influences public opinion on human rights because reporting on human rights could be dangerous. Journalists were jailed, harassed or censored. All journalists survived on the job, that journalists indirectly or unconsciously expressed in their face and their presentation that they worked under extreme pressure. It has become routine that journalists, who have covered sensitive ethnic and “political” problems, have been arrested. This entails , some journalists may white-washed the media’s role in shaping human rights discussions since acknowledging media influence could be “politically” risky.

Fifthly, journalists may believe that when they report on Human Rights affairs, the public did not engage or care about them as a result of growing sentiment of tribalism and instability,

prioritizing survival over Human Rights and economic hardship make Human Rights seem an abstract topics. Furthermore, ethnic and “political” divisions may cause media outlets are biased , they ignore or reject human rights reporting. This hinted journalists feel their work is undermined or ineffective if reporting Human Rights and protecting the public or shifting public opinion from involving in conflicts. The study interpreted that journalists have recognized structural and “political” limitations on media. In spite of that journalists feel frustrated or powerless in shaping public opinion on Human Rights.

5.3. Recommendation

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are made to enhance the role of media in promoting human rights and democratic values in Ethiopia:

- EBC and other state-affiliated media should implement structural reforms that protect journalists from political interference. This includes legal safeguards, editorial independence, and institutional mechanisms that uphold ethical reporting standards. Enhance journalistic independence. According to Shudson (2008), “Unlovable press is essential to keep government power in check” (p.1)
- Journalists should receive comprehensive training on national and international human rights standards. This could improve their ability and confidence to report on sensitive issues and hold powerful actors accountable.
- Journalists should come to the profession not by privilege but by meritocracy and high caliber journalists must serve the citizens not just one language groups, regions etc. Therefore, most journalists must be able reason to win or to serve the reason since the lack of government’s commitment to equality, the public perceives government favoritism or exclusion based on identity or beliefs, and it weakens national cohesion and undermines trust in governance
- Universities should create safer spaces for students to discuss political and human rights issues freely. This can be achieved through student-led forums, academic panels, and inclusion of human rights education in the curriculum.

- EBC and other broadcasters must work to regain public trust by promoting transparency, providing balanced reporting, and inviting diverse viewpoints. Engaging audiences in interactive programming and feedback mechanisms can also foster a more participatory media culture. Rebuild public trust media

- Civil society organizations and international partners should support the growth of independent media and watchdog organizations that can complement state media by providing critical oversight and alternative perspectives. Support media watchdog independent outlets.

- Policymakers should revise or repeal laws that suppress free speech, particularly those that criminalize political dissent or restrict press freedom. Ensuring legal protections for freedom of expression is vital for a healthy democratic environment.

- All members of the society, community, groups or whatever must know that the mob mentality as well as an attack on the defenseless is immoral and the repercussions in turn affect as a flashback, though. Therefore, the media must teach this without hesitancy and challenge the government and politicians that the media is responsible in minimizing conflicts.

5.3.1. Final Remarks

The study confirms that the relationship between media, politics and human rights in Ethiopia is shaped by deep-rooted institutional challenges, ethnic control, and public mistrust. However, it also highlights a growing awareness among students that of the role media can and should play in upholding democratic principles. Moving forward there is an urgent need for policy, educational and institutional reforms to ensure that the media becomes a genuine platform for accountability, expression, and the protection of human rights.

If we take France in 1789 situations were disastrous. Social unrest, upheaval and looting had swept the country and people were near starvation in many cities (Ken, 2005).If France didn't come to an agreement quickly, her collapse was under her nose. Immediately France announced a declaration based on Rights of the Individual and the Citizen (Ken, 2005).So France ended privilege and the power of the government started from the ability of the protection of individual rights.

The study recommends addressing these issues as it is crucial to promote the legal and human rights protection without indivisibly any involvement of forces, since this is almost as nearly as a great leap towards a solution. First, implement educational programs to inform journalists about their rights since it is a course of action for rectification. Second, strengthening free legal institutions help to ensure that the judicial systems are accountable, accessible impartial, equipped to handle human rights cases effectively. Most of all, both the media and the position of justice department should be based on merits rather than privilege based on ethnicity in the country. Thirdly, the media engagement is just as important as the legal institutions to encourage responsible reporting of victims as well as human rights issues to raise public awareness that the violators accountable. To reduce the prevalence of rights violations and foster the respect of human rights stakeholders must focus on these above points.

Recommendations (Grounded in Context and Data)

Based on the findings and the Ethiopian political landscape, the following recommendations are offered with realistic awareness of current limitations to freedom of expression, institutional independence, and civic trust.

A. Recognize and Address Fear of Political Expression

Efforts to increase public engagement must begin by acknowledging that many citizens view political conversation as risky. Programs that promote civic dialogue should prioritize safety, particularly for youth and University students who may be embedded in politically charged environments.

B. Advance Media Literacy, Not Just Media Access

Rather than assuming state media coverage is effective, citizens should be equipped with tools to critically assess media content, identify bias, and seek out diverse sources. Media literacy programs should prioritize independent thinking and fact-checking skills, rather than passive consumption of state narratives.

C. Rethink Philosophy, Civic Education to Encourage Inquiry

Civic and human rights education in schools should be reoriented to promote questioning, dialogue, and student agency—while also recognizing the political limitations of educational institutions in Ethiopia. Reforms must address not just content but also political interference in academic spaces, few researchers have given little considerations to arming of journalists' with human rights philosophy as it directs to the answers of the challenges pose to human rights.

D. Engage Knowledge Based Dialogues

Where institutional trust is low, respected community figures like philosophers, teachers—including experienced, knowledgeable citizens, religious leaders, and local activists—can be more effective than formal institutions in guiding discussions around political participation and Human Rights awareness. The norms of reasoned discourse arguments are decisive, not status or traditions (Habermas, 1992, p.2). In this Habermas noted **the merits of arguments** and not the identities of arguers are crucial.

E. Encourage Arts and Gradual Norm Shifts: Because discussing politics remains taboo for many, change may be most effective when introduced through mediums—like music, storytelling, theater, and satire—which can address sensitive topics in familiar and less confrontational ways.

This distrust may also limit the media's ability to function as a bridge between government and the public on rights-based issues. When political actors are not seen as trustworthy, media may take on a more adversarial role, which can intensify tensions between journalists and politicians.

F. Theoretical Integration

This perception aligns with **Media Performance Theory**, which asserts that media must fulfill roles such as being a watchdog, a forum for public debate, and a promoter of transparency (McQuail, 2010; Whitten-Woodring, (2017)). The lack of perceived impact by EBC implies failure in these normative functions, suggesting **media underperformance** in serving democratic society.

Additionally, from the perspective of **Critical Institutional Trust Theory**, these results indicate **low public trust in state-aligned media institutions**. According to Norris (2011), such distrust is common in contexts where media is seen as lacking independence, being politically biased, or failing to challenge authority. This has wider implications for civic engagement and human rights accountability.

To restore public trust and improve its human rights impact, EBC should:

1. Enhance editorial independence by reducing government interference and promoting diverse viewpoints.
2. Train journalists on human rights reporting and international best practices.
3. Collaborate with civil society and watchdogs to improve its transparency and accountability role.
4. Develop programs that give voice to marginalized communities, enhancing credibility and representation.

Recommendations for Strengthening Media Impact

1. **Enhancing Investigative Reporting:** Journalists should be provided with training and resources to conduct in-depth investigations into human rights violations, rather than just surface-level news reporting.
2. **Building Trust in Media:** Fact-checking initiatives and transparency in reporting can help rebuild public trust in media as a credible source of information.
3. **Utilizing Digital Storytelling:** Engaging formats such as short videos, podcasts, and interactive social media campaigns can help reach younger audiences who primarily consume news online.
4. **Collaboration between Media and Human Rights Organizations:** Journalists can work closely with human rights advocacy groups to ensure accurate and impactful reporting.

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Appendix1

Interview Guide Questions: For professional journalists, editors, reporters

1. What are your thoughts on the violations of human rights in different regions of the country?
2. It is significant to report human rights issues siding victims what would you say on this?
3. Based on your experiences what do you think about the performance of media and politics on human rights in this station?
4. What role did you play to take war criminals to justice and those who involved in corruption?
5. Why politicians detest when journalists better accomplish by means of scoops, investigations, and human rights issues?
6. To what extent do you work on the human rights violations and the rights of man?
7. According to your experiences what are the challenges of EBC in promoting and reporting human rights?
8. To what extent do you believe to say there is politics that protect the fundamental rights of citizens?
9. How do you evaluate freedom of speech and promote human rights in EBC?

Appendix2

One –To- One Conversation or Discussion

Introduction Questions

1. According to your experiences what would you say about human rights violations?
2. What does it mean human rights to you?
3. What influence do you feel about the country's policy?
4. Will you say something a little about you in connection with the human rights cases?

Core Questions

1. How do you think the influence of the media coverage on human rights concerning the attitudes of the people?
2. In which ways the political institutions understand the protection of human rights in the society or do you think they are obstacles?
3. When did you remember the last time the media play role on human rights issues? Can you share some examples from your experiences?
4. In different parts of the country human rights violations are ongoing. What are your thought on the violations of human rights in different regions of the country?
5. What are the challenges of the media? How do you think to solve the consistent troubles of this country? What are the policy influences in your society or organization?

Probing and follow up questions

1. What causes you to reach to that experiences or understanding level?

Reflective Questions

1. In the past few years, in what ways have you observed any change on human rights coverage in EBC?

Closing Questions

1. Based on the title of our discussions if you have anything important to add which we did not discuss.