

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
CENTER FOR HUMANRIGHTS**

**THE ROLE OF THE BROADCAST MEDIA  
IN PROMOTING FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION  
IN ETHIOPIA**

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**JANUARY 2012**

**ADDIS ABABA**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE CENTER FOR HUMANRIGHTS,  
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## **List of Acronyms**

AEUP- All Ethiopian Unity Party  
BBC- British Broadcasting Corporation  
CBS- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation  
CPB- Corporation for Public Broadcasting  
CRTC- Canadian Radio-television and telecommunications commission  
DWET- Dimsti Woyane Tigray  
EBA- Ethiopia Broadcast Authority  
EDP- Ethiopian Democratic Party  
EFDUF- Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum  
EPRDF- Ethiopian peoples revolutionary front  
ERIS - Electoral Reform International Service  
ERTA - Ethiopia Radio and Television Agency  
ETV- Ethiopian Television  
FCC- Federal Communications Commission  
FDRE- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia  
FM- Frequency Medium  
GTP- Growth and Transformation Plan  
ICCPR- International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights  
MBI- Ministry of Broadcast of India  
NEBE- National Electoral Board of Ethiopia  
Ofcom- Office of Communication  
PEG- public, educational, or governmental  
TPLF- Tigray people liberation front  
TRAI- Telecom Regulatory Authority of India  
UDHR- Universal Declaration of Humanrights

## **ABSTRACT**

Media scholars argues that, the expansion of the transmission of technology has its own impact for the development of mass communication, while, Journalism and freedom of expression may be less attractive, unless they serve the public interests. As one journalist observed, ‘We have experienced an expansion of technology but the agenda of the media has shrunk. The objective of this thesis was to survey the role of the broadcast media to foster freedom of expression, in relation to the public and recently established commercial broadcasters in Ethiopia. The review of the related literature was focused on historical, theoretical and legal frameworks of the freedom of the expression and broadcast media industry. The quantitative data was collected from systematic registry of the broadcast service concerning its historical and current activities, in addition, the in-depth interview were conducted with the key informants, who were purposely selected. The data analysis showed that, the freedom of expression by exploring the broadcast media in Ethiopia has not achieved its objective. The lack of democratic accountability over broadcasting institutions means that commitment to journalistic integrity is liable to become subordinated to the interests of state and commercial elites. Freedom of expression cannot be separated from, the right to use whatever medium is deemed appropriate to seek and receive information and to have them reach as wide an audience as possible like utilizing mediums such as broadcast service, indeed, the right to receive information would help citizens to make an informed decision. While, the broadcast media industry in Ethiopia, particularly the public that is subsidized by the taxpayers money is not serving as the voice of the voiceless. Broadcasting services are the most important source of information for most Ethiopians; however, it is operating, to promote government’s political and economical agendas in any form of presentation. Based on these findings, this thesis inspires other researchers to conduct later studies.

# **Chapter One**

## **1. Introduction**

This chapter introduces the background of the study and statement of the problem. It also presents the rationale for carrying out the study. It also presents general and specific objective of the study.

### **Background of the study**

Freedom of expression goes further than the theoretical recognition of the right to seek, receive and impart information. The expanded media landscape which today consists of print media and electronic broadcasting offers a fine study in media pluralism, and diversity the inevitable return to democratic governance as the way forward for development has lead to universal acceptance of a free press as a necessary condition for growth and development (Kabral, 2012:30)..

This thesis attempts to asses claims that, freedom of the expression, would not have existed without the broadcast media. it is also, research about the impact of broadcast media, for the promotion of freedom of the expression. It explores how political, economical, social and legal framework changes have reconfigured broadcast service and the consequences of these transformations for freedom of expression and democracy.

The broadcast media is considered essential part of the free press. Primarily, broadcast regulations reflect the underlying concept that broadcast frequencies are a public asset and subject to allocation and administration by the government. The government allocates licenses to broadcasting firms or interests, with the substantial conditions and requirements including stipulations concerning content and ownership- which overall are intended

for the preservation of independent, competitive and diverse sources of news and viewpoints(Moon, 2000:203). The regulation of broadcasting is required because radio, television and other electronic media are more penetrating and pervasive, in society, and have a greater potential for misinformation or other harm if unregulated (Ibid).

The broadcast sector in Ethiopia has broadly, three different kinds of broadcasters: 1) publicly funded television and radio service owned by national and regional mass media agencies 2) private sector radio stations; and 3) community broadcasters that were licensed in 2008 and are largely in the process of establishing themselves (EBA, vol. 1. No: 9)

According to Ethiopia Broadcast Authority's News Magazine, in total there are three television stations, three regional radios, six state owed FM radios, five private radio broadcasters and ten community broadcasters. According to the above distinctions, the radio and television sector is comprised of:

1. The publicly owned radio and television stations include Ethiopia Radio, Ethiopian Television, FM Addis 97.1 and the two channels of the light entertainment(channel 3 and channel 4); these are all a part of the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA), which has near national coverage through the use of a network of transmitters. These stations provide multilingual news and programming across Ethiopia (ERTA Report, 2012).

2. The local radio and television stations owned by the regional mass media agencies include, Addis Television (ETV 2) and FM 96.3 (Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency); Amhara FM and FM Bahir Dar (Amhara Mass Media Agency ); South FM 100.9 (South Mass Media Agency) It also includes eight FM Branch Stations; Dire Dawa FM 106.1 and Dire Dawa

Television (Dire Dawa Mass Media Agency); Oromia Radio and Finfine FM (Oromia Mass Media Agency); Harar FM ( Harar Mass Media Agency); Mekelle FM ( Tigray Mass Media Agency) (EBA, vol. 1. No:9).

3. There are a total of five private radio broadcasters; Afro FM, Dimsti Woyane Tigray (DWET), Fana Broadcasting, Sheger FM and Zami FM . Four of these: Afro FM, Fana Broadcasting Corporation, Sheger Radio and Zami FM are located in Addis Ababa. DWET and Fana broadcasting have historical association with the Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) and Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Front (EPRDF) respectively, but are today legally registered as private company. The Fana Broadcasting Corporation has two radio stations: Fana Radio, and Fana FM. Fana FM has six branch stations in different regions (Jima, Shashamane, Harromaya, Gondar, Desie, and Mekelle) (EBA, vol. 1. No:9).

4. Ten community radio, broadcasters are registered. The community radio stations cover a radius ranging from 16 Km-75Km and their population coverage varies significantly. In some cases, they have a limited reach of 16,000 and in other cases, this rises up to 1.5 million potential listeners. These stations include: Argoba Radio, Kombolcha Radio, Kefa Radio, Waghimra Radio, Sudie Radio, Jimma Radio, Korrie Radio. Setit Humera and Ethiopian civil Service college have not started broadcasting (Ibid).

The historical development of broadcast media in Ethiopia is mainly characterized by the state ownership. For instance, the oldest broadcast media “Ethiopian Radio” was established in September 1935, and has been operating for about 76 years. It has the coverage for 45 million estimated populations. It broadcasts 18 hours per day, in Amharic, Somali, Tigrigna,

orromifa, English, Arabic and French. Its minutes for news broadcast are 12 minutes every hour.

Its sister broadcaster “Ethiopian Television” was also established in November 1964, and has been operating for the last 46 years, with coverage for 25 million estimated population. Its broadcast hours per day are 24 hours and language of broadcast is that, unlike Ethiopian Radio, it broadcasts with domestic and international languages. Minutes of its news broadcast are 14 minutes, every hour.

The other and pioneer FM radio station in Ethiopia in the last two decades entitled “FM Addis 97.1” was established in June 2000 and has been operating for ten years as light entertainment and popular music of programming. It has coverage for estimated population 6 million, with reception of 100 km. radius. As it is stated above, those three broadcast services are under the ownership of Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA) for not profit, which is a public broadcaster subsidized by the federal government and accountable to the House of People’s Representatives.

On the other hand, the commercial broadcaster “Sheger FM” which in this paper, is compared it with the state owed broadcasters, was established in April 2006, operating for 5 years, with an estimated population in catchments area 3 million, and its reception coverage is 40 km. radius. It broadcasts 18 hours per a day.

## 1.2. Statement of the problem

From the 1920s onwards, first, the words and sounds of radio, then the words and pictures of TV have always been present in the here and now of the listeners and viewers and of the world, which surrounds us. They have served to bridge the public and the private, with the reporter building an interactive relationship between them. As a medium, broadcasting provides;

*[...] Broad and cost-efficient, participation in anything by the most rapid moment . . . broadcasting creates a sense of contact with other members of the dispersed audience' (Ferrell Lowe and Hujanen, 2003: 16).*

The broadcast media has been serving as mouthpiece of the government. As a result, the public had no alternative information sources particularly in terms of broadcast media. “Although editorial independence is not guaranteed in the state media in Africa (Elisabeth, 2011:30).The jobs are not more stabled and sustainable. Most journalists working in the state media have been considered as civil servants and there is little or no room for promotion and development of independent journalism due to the bureaucratic nature of the institution. In the independent media, the reporters’ salaries are very low and as a whole, the jobs are not secured” (Ibid)

For instance, Ethiopian Radio was established 76 years before, during the imperial reign, however, this period was best known by its restrictive nature of control on media outlets. The military regime also noted for it’s tighten control of the broadcast. In this regard, the period of EPRDF have shown

some improvements differences at least in terms of the number of regional mass media agencies and community broadcasters, while, the broadcast media at national level is still under the control of the government. However, there are at least five private radio broadcasters. Of course, with the exception of Sheger FM others are thought to have, an affiliation with the ruling party. In Ethiopia;

*[...]The information sources people mainly use were also considered the most important and reliable sources across all groups. Overall, radio, television and word of mouth were mentioned as the most important and reliable source of information (ERIS, 2011)*

The most appropriate and easier medium of communication and source of information for the broad community would be Radio because of its portability and Television because of its visual nature. “The public receives information from a variety of sources “Majority of 81.1% of respondents in the survey of ERIS cites radio as their primary source for receiving news and information, followed by television 61.1%. “ Most of the electronic media, and a substantial number of newspapers in Africa were government owned, and were relentlessly positive in their message. Now, the media in Africa has led to a much wider range of news (Elisabeth, 2011:80).

The reason, why broadcasting service could not simply be left, to market forces is suggested that, there is one main motivation for media communication, which was shared by every authoritarian state, to use it to influence the political process by dissemination of propaganda in the public sphere. Moreover, it could be challenging for broadcast journalists employed in state media, to handle controversial subjects, with impartiality and responsibility.

*[...] Most African journalists have no job security, they are deprived of any form of social security, health benefits or other forms of social welfare benefits, while some are owed numerous months of salaries. Closely related to this, is the fact that most African journalists, especially those in the lower cadre who work as reporter, are poorly paid and ill motivated which partly explains the poor performance of these journalists and most importantly, the continuous disregard of the ethics of the profession( Gabriel,2011:45)*

For a country to be democratically governed there must be certain conditions required. At a minimum as Dahl (1998) contended, there should be certain political and institutional arrangement and practice. A large-scale democracy for Dahl requires “elected officials, free, fair, and frequent elections; freedom of expression alternative sources of information; associational autonomy and inclusive citizenship” in modern representative democracy.

In Ethiopia, most member of opposition party Politicians are disappointed by the state owned radio and television, for instance, His Excellency, Girma Seifu, , Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum(EFDUF) and the only member from the opposition party, in the House of the People’s Representative, told fethe news paper on its January 13 issue that, the objective of the ruling party is mainly monopolizing the public media, while if any one particularly from the opposition party, has public agenda that has to be relayed via the public broadcast media, no one will allow him, to utilize it. The state simultaneously feared that, if broadcasting service left unregulated and free, it may serve as a forum of unnecessary debate, that may lead to destabilize the entire peace and stability of the country. Yet, Allan argues that:

*[...] The lack of democratic accountability over broadcasting institutions means that commitment to journalistic integrity is liable to become subordinated to the interests of state and corporate elites (Allan, 2004: 44).*

The effects of domestic news and current affairs coverage mainly cites the state, have been hotly debatable, because for about 80 million people to remain with one national Radio and Television, basically, it immediately raises a critical question why? With claims that the freedom of expression would not be existed without independent radio and television coverage, and alternative information sources.

### **1.3. Rational of the study**

The ability of individual to obtain information about their government is central to democracy. Because of that the press is to “serve governed not the governor,” so the press has to be protected. The democratic role of the press has been challenged in various ways.

Gabriel Ayite Banglo; on his recent article “Twenty years of freedom of expression in Africa” argues that: Despite the achievements made over the last twenty years, there are a number of challenges and thorny issues that the African media community are seeking to address with Africa governments. Organizing the media as a sector for media development and drawing more investment in to the media sector, for media development, helps to foster the freedom of the expression by utilizing the broadcast media as forum of debate of diversified ideas, building strong media houses to address ethical journalism in Africa, upholding media regulation and media accountability by improving the conditions of service for media workers is also has an important role for media development.

Creating an enabling environment for access to information by addressing the safety and security of journalists as well as fast tracking media law reforms and decriminalizing libel will have great importance for the broadcast media industry.

The same is true in the context of Ethiopia, public, commercial and community broadcast services, could influence contemporary political thinking that supported the encouragement of community democracy, to meet the diverse needs of listeners and viewers. Community radios exist alongside state- owned broadcasting networks and commercial radio stations” (Kabral, 2011:30). Gabriel Ayite, on his part argues that: The criminal libel suits throughout Africa are used ruthlessly to break the back of the media and to place tremendous financial burdens on the independent press. A single libel conviction can force any media outlet to stop or go financially bankrupt. Africa in particular has been entirely designed to intimidate the media and to clip its wings.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

In light with statement of the problem, the study will be attempting to find out answers for the following research questions:

1. How freedom of the expression is promoted or challenged by the broadcast media in Ethiopia?
2. How broadcast service serve as public space for the development of the freedom of the expression?
3. What are the regulatory mechanism of the state on broadcast service, and their influence on freedom of expression?
4. How different forms of ownership of the broadcast media affect freedom of expression.

## **1.5. Objective of the study**

### **1.5.1. General objective**

The right to freedom of expression safeguarded in the international human rights treaties, and the FDRE constitution. Broadcast service, facilitates freedom of expression by providing individuals with news and current affairs. The right guaranteed of imparting, seeking and receiving information, and the free flow of information has raised the call for regulation by the government. In addition, the tendency towards private parties' self-regulation raises some interesting issues from a human rights perspective. Freedom of expression is a protection of individuals' right to voice opinions and to receive information through any media outlets including the broadcast media in without state interference. However, broadcasters are increasingly self-regulating themselves simultaneously by the state, in order to secure a "safe" broadcasting environment.

As a legal basis, the thesis will attempt to refer, Article 19 of UDHR and Article 29 of the FDRE constitution, Their level of respect on protection of citizens right against the right of freedom of expression.

### **1.5.2. Specific objective**

How the communicative space and ecology of the broadcast service can be understood in terms of freedom of expression as human rights; How the characteristic features of broadcast media differ from other media types on protecting freedom of expression, and . The need for further legal or political action will be specifically examined in the context of human rights.

# Chapter Two

## 2. Review of related literature

This chapter builds up the analytical framework of the research by reviewing recent literatures relating to the research questions. It focuses on recent debates among writers concerning the broadcast media and freedom of expression. The review also focuses on conventional wisdom of the broadcast media. Further more, discussion of the theoretical perspective on freedom of expression, relationship between the broadcast media and freedom of expression will be examined. The principle of broadcast policies in Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia; whether there is or not, an opportunity for the freedom of expression, in Ethiopia; in terms of broadcast media (radio and television), especially the motivation of public participation of citizens in the broadcast media scenario will be reviewed.

### 2.1. Theoretical perspectives on freedom of Expression

In this chapter, the paper shall look at various theories of freedom of expression that have been advanced and see whether any one of them is capable of supporting freedom of expression in relation with the sense of human rights, which could be contextualized in Ethiopia's broadcast service and citizen's participation.

#### *2.1.1. The Truth theory of freedom of expression*

One common justification advanced on behalf of freedom of expression is that such freedom is instrumental to the discovery of truth. Freedom to disseminate new information and to criticize prevailing views is necessary

for eliminating misconceptions of fact and value. The real problem with this justification is not in what it assumes about the nature of truth, but, in what it assumes is, the best procedure for obtaining truth. In domains in which obtaining truth is the principal value – for example, to guarantee freedom of expression, one should concede that there are specific truths; “right answers” to specific truth-seeking questions, some of those specific truths can be viewed as particularly important to obtain. “These concessions having been made, it would follow that if (1) a governmental regulation interferes with the search for the answer to a particular question – a particular truth – and if (2) obtaining the answer to that particular question is viewed as very important, then (3) the regulation is unjustified (4) the other values served, or “truths” revealed, by the regulation are equally as important as obtaining the answer to that particular question” (Robert Post, 2002).

The problem with the “quest for truth” as a theory of freedom of expression in the “specific truths” sense is that one cannot extrapolate from the quest for specific truths to any recognizable general theory of free speech. The quest for specific truths demonstrates only that some expression does help answer some questions that are relatively important, and that regulation of expression sometimes will be unjustified. Other expression contributes little toward answering some questions; some activities other than expression contribute a great deal toward answering some questions; and answering some questions is less important than, and occasionally is downright destructive of other values that even avid specific-truth seekers would want to protect or maximize.

### ***2.1.2. The General Theory of freedom of expression.***

The general theory account of freedom of expression is easy to state and to grasp. Democratic government requires that the citizens who elect it be capable of assessing its performance. “That requirement in turn requires that the citizenry have access to the information that bears on the performance of the government, both past and future (Frederick F. Schauer, 1982)

In addition, that informational requirement in turn requires that expression conveying such information not be suppressed. Thus, beginning with the premise of democratic decision-making, and adding premises that merely state its requirements, one reaches the conclusion that expression must be free of governmental restrictions. The argument is quite modest in its assumptions, but generates a powerful result, or so it would appear.

*[...]Freedom of expression is normally thought to be a right against governmental regulations, even when those regulations have been democratically enacted (Ibid)*

In other words, freedom of expression is thought to oppose democratic decision-making, at least when that decision-making produces laws that limit freedom of expression. Therefore, the value of democratic decision-making will appear on both sides of the issue whenever a democratically enacted law is claimed to limit the right of freedom of expression. In a democracy, striking down democratically enacted laws in the name of democracy – which is how the democratic argument portrays the right of freedom of expression – is surely paradoxical.

*[...]When one notes the contested nature of the scope of the right of freedom of expression, it appears doubly paradoxical to deny, in the name of democracy, democratic bodies from determining for themselves whether freedom of expression is infringed by democratically enacted regulations( Jeremy Waldron, 1999).*

### ***2.1.3. The Public Discourse Theory of freedom of expression.***

According to this theory, “the democratic will is legitimate only if it reflects “public opinion.” Moreover, the latter is a legitimate basis for the democratic will only if it is formed under conditions of freedom. This does not mean, however, that all expression must remain unregulated ( Robert C. Post,1995)

There is a form of the democratic argument for freedom of expression that merits independent treatment.

*[...] What is necessary is that expression that is part of public discourse – the exchange of ideas that forms public opinion – be left free of censorship and be regulated on only if adequate alternative channels of communication are available ( Ibid )*

The most fundamental debate with the public discourse theory of freedom of expression is its arbitrariness in specifying what lies within and without public discourse. Most statements by commercial speech is not part of public discourse, physician speech to patients is not part of public discourse, art and movies are part of public discourse. Likewise, Weinstein asserts that, “Professional speech – for example, that of lawyers and physicians acting in their professional capacities – lies outside public discourse” (Weinstein, 1997).

Sometimes, Post and Weinstein define media of public discourse by the type of message at issue. However, they define it by “the tangible form by which it is communicated. Dividing speech into content-based categories such as “political,” “religious,” “commercial,” and so forth, and then treating some categories as virtually immune from governmental regulation and others as easily regulable has been a constant temptation for many freedom of expression theories”(Ibid).

#### ***2.1.4. The democratic theory of freedom of expression***

The democratic theory of freedom of expression is necessarily limited to democratic regimes. Yet most who argue for a human right of freedom of expression do not restrict themselves to such regimes. Indeed, “the international human rights conventions that contain the right of freedom of expression do not so limit the right’s application” (Larry Alexander, 1989). Moreover, it is commonplace to condemn non-democratic regimes for trampling on human rights, including the right of freedom of expression. If freedom of expression were a right only in a democracy, non-democratic regimes could not violate it, the democratic theory, to the extent that it protects only that expression of relevance to democratic decision-making, needs a way to make these distinctions. I think, however, that there is no metaphysical basis for any such lines determining units of expression (Ibid)

A proponent of the democracy theory might respond that there is a human right to a democratic form of government, and that the human right of freedom of expression is derived from it. Larry argues that, “when we criticize non-democratic regimes for denials of freedom of expression, we are in actuality criticizing them for their lack of democracy, the case for

democracy can be anything other than an instrumental one, premised on democracy's comparative advantage in reaching morally correct decisions ( Larry Alexander, 1998).

## **2.2. Journalism and Models of Democracy**

In democratic theory, three broad schools of thought have emerged different types of models of journalism. How we evaluate journalism particularly broadcast Journalism in Ethiopia, in the era of the democracy depends crucially on which of these democratic models are emphasized and valued.

1. Elitist democratic model of journalism
2. Deliberative model of journalism
3. Pluralist model of journalism

### ***2.2.1. Elitist democratic model of journalism.***

The elitist democratic model is most often associated with Walter Lippmann (1997) and the ideal of a 'watchdog' press. Walter Lippmann states that, The primary duties for the press are to examine the character and behaviors of elected officials, to monitor closely their activities for corruption or incompetence, to critically analyze policy proposals, and to provide reliable, in-depth information about social problems. Of course, some elite journalistic organizations continue to provide in-depth reporting and investigations of official wrongdoing. Elitist model, the press largely acts on behalf of the public.

### ***2.2.2. Deliberative model of journalism***

In the deliberative model, the press works alongside the public to ‘support reflection and value or policy choice’ (Baker, 2002: 148–9). In most cases, deliberative model of the media is characterized as mainstreaming media. The deliberative model, most closely identified with Habermas’s ideal public sphere, provides a benchmark to evaluate both journalistically produced and non-journalistically-produced discourse.

### ***2.2.3. Pluralist model of journalism***

The pluralist model emphasizes ideological diversity, popular inclusion, citizen empowerment and mobilization, and full expression through a range of communicative styles. In pluralist’s model of journalism, there are certainly signs that some media organizations are enabling for fostering greater democracy.

In sum, democratic normative model of journalism may help clarify the problems and potentials of media organizations, on the bases of school of thoughts stated on the above

## **2.3. Truth and ethics for freedom of expression**

Whether we debate them or not, broadcast media raise ethical questions. Since an important claim made for journalism is that it contributes, in an essential way, to the working of freedom of expression and an entire democratization process.

However, what if the conditions, reviewed in this thesis, under which journalism in the broadcast media is now practiced to promote and protect the freedom of expression, are inimical to ethical action? Media ethics is a large and growing area going beyond the detailed, ‘technical’ literature on journalistic codes of ethics regularly taught on journalism practice courses. By considering the wider philosophical options for grounding an account of how we might expect media to act.

Let me start, apparently, by specifying what the virtues of someone working in the broadcast media might be:

*[...]A coherent and complex form of cooperative human activity whose internal goods involve distinctive standards of excellence. Journalism is a practice with very general implications: it matters to how humans flourish overall in an era where we are dependent on the exchange of vast amounts of socially relevant information (Alisdair MacIntyre, 1981: 175).*

In order to protect human rights and to promote the opportunities for freedom of expression, two aspects of journalism as a practice are crucial here, as long as broadcast service is concerned.

The first involves broadcasting of information that contributes to the successful individual and collective freedom of expression. The second aspect is, we need broadcast media that, by broadcasting of facts and truth.

From here, we can specify three journalism-related virtues. For the first two, we can turn to the philosopher Bernard Williams’ book *Truth and Truthfulness* (Williams, 2002). In a complex argument, Williams suggests two basic ‘virtues of truth’ or truthfulness : *accuracy* and *sincerity*. Williams’ argument lies, since journalism is a practice, which is directed towards the broadcasting of necessary information, it is plausible to see the two truth-related virtues (accuracy and sincerity) as applying to anyone

practicing journalism. **Accuracy** is the disposition to take the necessary care to ensure so far as possible that what one says is not false, **sincerity** is the disposition to make sure that what one says is what one actually believes.

**Accuracy** and **Sincerity** would be plausible virtues whatever media I am discussing, and on whatever scale they acted. However, there is a third possible virtue of particular relevance as media messages increasingly address multiple territories at once: **Hospitality**, first argued for in detail by Roger Silverstone – who calls it ‘the first virtue of the Mediapolis’ (Silverstone, 2006: 136) – considers the role of media in sustaining a common space where diverse groups, who may differ radically in identity, religion, historical interests and values, can be recognized as social and moral agents.

Once again, the main concern here with the philosophical debates to which the idea of media ‘**hospitality**’ gives rise. The point is merely that the broadcaster media’s need to take account of how and what they do affects the conditions for dialogue between cultures and peoples is a necessary part of any media ethics (Ibid)

To sum up, **accuracy**, **sincerity** and **hospitality** in terms of freedom of expression, helps citizen to get the required information on the basis of the right to be informed.

## **2.4. Human Rights and freedom of expression**

As the title of this thesis reveals, the main project of this thesis is that; whether freedom of expression, properly conceived, is appropriately regarded as a “right,” or more precisely, as a “human right” in the broadcast services in a

certain media institutions in Ethiopia. Most of the thesis's part, is devoted to assess, which of various conceptions of freedom of expression is the most eligible for that status and what range of activities will it protect? By definition, human rights are those moral entitlements that accrue to all persons, regardless of whether they are members of this or that particular polity, race, ethnicity, religion, or other social grouping (Allen Buchanan and David Golove, 2002, 868)

Human rights are legal rights established by international treaties and conventions or by customary international law. Article 19 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression." And Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, section 2, declares that "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression."

The full text of Article 19 is as follows:

1. *Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.*
2. *Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.*
3. *The exercise of the rights provided for in the foregoing paragraph carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall be such only as are provided by law and are necessary,*
  - (1) *for respect of the rights or reputations of others,*
  - (2) *for the protection of national security or of public order, or of public health or morals.*

## **2.4. Constitutional Guarantees of Freedom of Expression in Ethiopia**

The right to freedom of expression is provided, in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights Article 19, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Article 19, the American Convention on Human Rights Article 13, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms Article 10, The African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights Article 9, and Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia constitution Article 29.

Freedom of expression was for the first time given juridical recognition in modern Ethiopia by the Revised 1955 Constitution. The 1987 Constitution of the Peoples' Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, which had a clear socialist orientation, also gave recognition to freedom of expression. Hence, at least on paper, freedom expression has been given recognition in Ethiopia for more than half a century. However, anybody who is familiar with modern Ethiopian history would know that these constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression were not effective in fostering political dissent and freedom of the expression.

A dramatic change occurred as far as freedom of expression was concerned following to the collapse of the "Dergue Regime". Not only did the Transitional Charter recognize freedom of expression, but also freedom of the press and speech became a reality with an unprecedented proliferation of privately run newspapers and magazines. The extent to which that freedom has subsisted until this day is a debatable issue, but what is certain is that in our constitutional history, freedom of expression was stipulated in the 1995 FDRE Constitution in the most elaborate manner. Article 29 of the FDRE

Constitution provides for the ‘Right of Thought, Opinion and Expression’ in the following terms:

- 1) Everyone has the right to hold opinions without interference.*
- 2) Everyone has the right to freedom of expression without any interference. This right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, orally, either in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any media of his choice.*
- 3) Freedom of the press and other mass media and freedom of artistic creativity is guaranteed. Freedom of the press shall specifically include the following elements: (a) Prohibition of any form of censorship; (b) Access to information of public interest.*
- 4) In the interest of the free flow of information, ideas and opinions, which are essential to the functioning of a democratic order, the press shall, as an institution, enjoy legal protection to ensure its operational independence and its capacity to entertain diverse opinions.*
- 5) Any media financed by or under the control of the State shall be operated in a manner ensuring its capacity to entertain diversity in the expression of opinion.*
- 6) These rights can be limited only through laws which are guided by the principle that freedom of expression and information cannot be limited on account of the content or effect of the point of view expressed. Legal limitations can be laid down in order to protect the well-being of the youth, and the honor and reputation of individuals.*
- 7) Any citizen who violates any legal limitations on the exercise of these rights may be held liable under the law.*

In addition to enshrining freedom of expression as a fundamental ‘democratic right’, the Constitution stipulates that the third chapter of the Constitution (i.e. is its bill of rights) should be interpreted in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and international human rights instruments ratified by Ethiopia.

From an individual point of view, the possibility of appearance, for expressing an opinion on radio or television, is very limited. Particularly in

the state controlled public broadcasters. However, the press has the role of public watchdog or caretaker of the public. Since the press is also enrolled in the system of money (information has to be saleable) and power (the information selection process is part of an institutional power structure).

In relation to freedom of expression, international and national laws in different countries vary up on the context of each country. For instance, United Kingdom, United States, Canada and India have adopted different experiences.

## **2.5. The right to freedom of expression**

Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right, which draws on values of personal autonomy and democracy. Freedom of expression is closely connected to freedom of thought and is a precondition for individuals' self-expression and self-fulfillment. The right to express one self enables an open debate about political, social and moral values, and encourages artistic and scholarly endeavor free of inhibitions (Jacobs and White 1996:223). Freedom of expression is not absolute, since open debate and personal autonomy can cause conflict between the values and rights respected by the system. Therefore, rights of expression can be limited by the system.

The right to freedom of expression is the freedom to communicate opinions, information, and ideas without interference. The primary suggestion of the term 'freedom' is the absence of external interference whether to suppress or to constrain.

To be free is essentially to be free from any arbitrary impediment to action, some dominating power or authority. This right is protected against any form of interference, whatever the source. The Human Rights Committee

has stressed that; Following the development of modern mass media, effective measures are necessary to prevent such control of the media as would interfere with the right of everyone to freedom of expression in a way that is not provided for in the limitation clauses (Human Rights Committee,1983).

To single out particular meanings that may not be conveyed, or to restrict a form of expression in order to control access by others to the meaning being conveyed, or to control the ability of the one conveying the meaning to do so, is to restrict the content of the expression to be conveyed. Moreover, freedom of expression serves the general interest. The fact that a person defends a particular interest, whether economic or any other does not deprive him of the benefit of this freedom.

An individual has the right and freedom not only to express his or her own thoughts, but also to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds. Therefore, when an individual's freedom of expression is unlawfully restricted, the right of others to 'receive' information and ideas is also violated.

### ***2.5.1 Freedom to seek information***

The right to freedom of expression includes the right to 'seek' information and ideas, regardless of frontiers, The freedom to seek information means,

*'That a person has a right of access to information, subject only to the prescribed limitations and the other provisions of the relevant instrument, Access to information is essential for the proper exercise of this freedom since it is on the basis of accurate information that opinions ought to be formed and ideas*

*imparted. In the absence of such access, a person will be compelled to act on the basis of suspicions, rumours and conjectures' ( Walter Lippmann,1990).*

Access to information is also an essential element of the freedom of the press 'What is protected is a two-way flow of information and ideas of all kinds, through any other media of one's choice. The right to private life. must, in particular cases, be balanced against the media's right to seek information'(Ibid)

### ***2.5.2. Freedom to receive information***

Any restriction imposed on the means of broadcasting or reception of information necessarily interferes with the right to receive information. However, the broadcasting of ideas can accomplish nothing if otherwise willing addressees are not free to receive and consider them. It would be a barren market place of ideas that had only sellers and no buyers. Therefore, an individual has the right to receive information from several competing sources of broadcasters in accordance to the right, which is constitutionally and internationally guaranteed. As long as the right to be informed is concerned;

*[...]An individual has the right to receive information that would help him make an informed decision, whether it be in regard to the political party or candidate he should vote for, or the state of the art personal computer he should invest his money in( Sakal, 1962)*

Any restrictions on the exercise of the right to freedom of expression should be 'provided by law' in both international and domestic level. However, for

the objectives: ‘for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence’ and ‘for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary’. Of course, the need for restrictions and limitations on ‘duties and responsibilities’, which the right to freedom of expression carries with it (Ibid)

### ***2.5.3. Freedom to impart information***

The freedom of expression means freedom to express, to be heard by others, and therefore to convey one’s opinions and ideas to others. Indeed, the concept necessarily connotes that what one has a right to express may be communicated to others.

The freedom to impart information and ideas does not include a general and unfettered right for any private citizen or organization to have access to broadcasting time on radio or television. Nevertheless, the denial of broadcasting time to one or more specific groups or persons may, in particular circumstances, raise an issue relating to the exercise of this right. Such an issue would, ‘in principle, arise if one political party was excluded from broadcasting facilities at election time ( Bennet Coleman & Co v. 1973).

In terms of the broadcasters, the argument of the freedom to impart information relies, ‘The freedom to impart information such as radio and television is only granted to the person or body who produces, provides or organizes it. In other words, the freedom to impart such information is limited to information produced, provided or organized by the person claiming that freedom, being the author, the originator or otherwise the intellectual owner of the information concerned (De Geillustreerde, 1976)

Unhindered freedom of political expression is essential to the proper functioning of a democratic system and, consistent with that principle, Accordingly, a law which provided that a party would be entitled to state funding in proportion to the number of its members elected to parliament, but that party with fewer, would not qualify, is inconsistent with the freedom of expression,

*[...] Its practical effect was to restrict the ability of smaller parties to campaign and to communicate effectively with the electorate. Even if the threshold and the requirement of representation by a registered political party in parliament in order to qualify for annual funding, will still place aspiring political partisan a severe monetary disadvantage in mounting an electoral campaign and, thereafter, in maintaining potent political survival (United Parties v. Minister of Justice, 1998).*

It is incumbent on the press to impart information and ideas on political issues as well as other areas of public interest. “Not only does the press have the task of imparting such information and ideas: the public also has a right to receive them” (Lingens, 1986:26).

#### ***2.5.4. Freedom of opinion and thought***

Freedom of opinion is different in character from freedom of expression. The former is a purely private matter, belonging to the realm of the mind, while the latter is a public matter, involving public manifestation. Nevertheless, the difference between freedom of thought and freedom of opinion is less apparent:

*[...] ‘Thought’ and ‘opinion’; both are internal. ‘Thought’ is a process, while ‘opinion’ is the result of the process. ‘Thought’ may be nearer to religion or*

*other beliefs, 'opinions' nearer to political convictions. 'Thought' may be used in connection with faith and creed, 'opinion' for convictions in secular and civil matters (Karl Josef Partsch, 1983)*

When we think about freedom of expression, according to Karl Josef's argument we have to emphasize on opinion, because more of opinion is the way that helps us to express our secular and civil matters.

If individuals do not appear, that is are neither seen nor heard, they do not exist as a public voice. "Only in the light of the public sphere did that which existed become revealed, did everything become visible to all. In the discussion among citizens issues were made topical and took on shape" (Habermas 1989:4).

Another point made by Habermas when discussing the evolution of communication in the public sphere is the change in the "opinion power structure", thus the need to protect the diversity of the public dialogue from the public itself. Whereas the threat to public opinion used to be authoritative powers such as the king or state, the threat is increasingly the public itself. "Wherever the apparently no less arbitrary power of the public itself had taken the place of princely power, the accusation of intolerance was now leveled against the public opinion that had become prevalent. The demand for tolerance was addressed to it and not to the censors who had once suppressed it. The right to the free expression of opinion was no longer called on to protect the public's rational-critical debate against the reach of the police but to protect the nonconformists from the grip of the public itself" (Habermas 1989:134).

### ***2.5.5. The right to freedom expression and language***

The right to freedom of expression protects not only the substance of the ideas and information expressed in broadcast and other related medias , but also the form and the medium in which they are conveyed;

*[...] Language is so intimately related to the form and content of expression that there cannot be true freedom of expression by means of language if one is prohibited from using the language of one's choice. Language is not merely a means or medium of expression; it colors the content and meaning of expression (Karl Josef Partsch, 1983).*

Language is, indeed, an expression of one's culture and often of one's sense of dignity and self-worth.

### ***2.5.6 Freedom of speech vs expression***

Freedom of speech, which is often used synonymously with freedom of expression, has always been thought to cover more than what is literally speech, "All speech employs symbols, whether they are sounds, shapes, gestures, pictures, or any other medium. There is thus no such thing as non-symbolic speech; there is only speech that employs symbols that are less or more conventional. The conclusions to be drawn are that freedom of speech or expression should be thought of as freedom of communication, and that there are no a prior limits on the media of communication that such freedom encompasses" ( Jed Rubenfeld, 2001, 788).

It is most natural to think that if there is a right of freedom of expression, it must be the right of the speaker. Thus, when the government threatens speaker, with punishment if he attempts to give certain information or

express certain opinions to audience, we are tempted to regard this as a violation of speaker's right to freedom of expression, In suggesting that the right to freedom of expression is best thought of as belonging to the audience, I do not mean to imply that people have a right against the government or anyone else that they be spoken to or provided with information. If the right of freedom of speech ultimately belongs to the audience, it is in the form of a right not to be prevented from obtaining information or ideas that are available to it without coercing unwilling speakers (Roger A. Shiner, 2003, 203).

In saying that freedom of expression is best thought of as a right of the audience, not saying that speakers have no standing to object to having their speech suppressed. Frequently it will best serve the audience's right to hear if speakers are given a derivative right to speak.

*[...]In most cases where government interdicts a communication between a willing speaker and her/his audience, the speaker will be in the best position to assert the right to freedom of speech, both because the audience may be unaware of the attempted communication and because the audience's right depends upon the speaker's being willing to speak. The right is not a claim right against the speaker that speaks (Ibid)*

In sum, Freedom of expression is one of a number of mutually supporting rights (including freedom of thought, of association and of assembly, and the right to vote) which, taken together, implicitly recognize the importance, both for a democratic society and for individuals personally, of the ability to form and express opinions, even where those views are controversial. The freedom of expression and its related rights is tolerance by society of different views. In

essence, it requires the acceptance of the public broadcasting of disagreements and the refusal to silence unpopular views.

When ICCPR 19 was being drafted, it was recognized that, although a person is invariably conditioned or influenced by the external world, no law can regulate his opinion and no power can dictate what opinion he may or may not entertain (UN document A/2929) Consequently, there is a dual aspect to freedom of expression. It requires, on the one hand, that no one be arbitrarily limited or impeded in expressing his own thoughts. “The right to hold opinions is, therefore, a right to which no exception or restriction is permitted” (Human Rights Committee, 10 (1983).

Freedom of expression is a means for the interchange of ideas and information among human beings and for mass communication. As originally proposed, the phrase ‘without interference’ was followed by the phrase ‘by governmental action’. The latter phrase was then omitted in accordance with the favored view that the individual should be protected against all forms of interference (UN document A/2929, chap.s.122)

Freedom of expression can not be separated from, the right to use whatever medium is deemed appropriate to impart ideas and to have them reach as wide an audience as possible like utilizing mediums such as broadcast service. The expression and dissemination of ideas and information are, therefore, indivisible concepts. It also includes the right of each person to seek to communicate his own views to others, as well as the right to receive opinions and news from others.

## 2.6. The Role of the Broadcast Service

Broadcasting services are probably the most important source of information and entertainment for most Ethiopians. Because of its immediacy and mass coverage, broadcasting media is thought to have, a powerful influence on society, an influence that governments wanted, to harness to foster cultural and educational values and to reinforce desirable social standards and traditional models of moral behavior, Further more to promote government's political and economical agendas in any form of presentation particularly in the form of news, current affairs and educational programs.

Because of the limited number of available channels concentrated influence in the hands the state are using it, to pursue governments own interests rather than the freedom of expression which guaranteed by law. However, there are some arguments for the need to regulate the broadcasters;

*[...]for at least some measure of public control of programmers in the general interests of the community, not only to prevent the service from being used for improper purposes, but to ensure that it will exercise a positive influence for good on the individual and national character' (Gibson, 1942:10).*

The public interest alone does not sufficiently explain the need for media regulation. As implied by the above argument, a more realistic approach would seek to explain media regulation by politics as well as economics. Although, recent legislative changes have significance on the level of regulation influencing the broadcast industry, many aspects continue to be subject to regulation and broadcasting continues to be one of the most regulated industries.

From the 1920s onwards, first, the words and sounds of radio, then the words and pictures of TV have always been present in the here and now of the listener and viewer and of the world, which surrounds us.

There has never been a time for the challenge and opportunities of broadcast news and current affairs so as it is now. Quantity of broadcast news is greater than ever before, for instance the air time covered by Ethiopian radio and television agency for and sheger FM , News and current affairs and other related programs rose dramatically from 6 hours on to 24 and hours. While, consumers are still expecting, high quality news across all the main public and commercial service broadcasters. However, it identified ‘significant challenges’ for news and current affairs and other related programming, As a medium, broadcasting provides ‘the most rapid, broad and cost-efficient participation in anything unfolding moment by moment broadcasting creates a sense of contact with other members of the dispersed audience (Ferrell Lowe and Hujanen, 2003: 16).

### ***2.6.1. Radio as broadcast service***

Radio’s development over the years has been very much a function of its potential social usage as a medium. Broadcast journalism emerged only after a systematic struggle for acceptance within the media – not just by inventors and pioneers of equipment, but by reporters and broadcasters.

The arrival of a new means of disseminating information and entertainment tends to destabilize the then existing media system, However, Early radio news was a prisoner to the press. Text based information had to be converted into writing for listeners’ ears, into a style suitable for radio, but there were no interviews, features or actuality.

*[...] Notwithstanding this, radio's take-off was swift and public enthusiasm for it peaked during the 'golden age' of the 1930s and 1940s. Millions used radio as the main source of both information and entertainment. News was just one element of a schedule among drama, soap operas, music, comedy and talks. (Jane Chapman & Marie Kinsey, 2009 )*

The twentieth century has witnessed successive advances in our ability to use more frequencies for varied and improved communication. In the past, it was perceived that a finite public resource necessitated some form of regulation, and from this emerged the concept of broadcasting as a public and commercial service. Therefore, the spread of radio in the 1920s and 1930s was accompanied by a rapid institutional growth of a new form of media organization: broadcasters, who were communicating radio transmissions. Television built on the structures first developed for radio (Chapman, 2005: 221).

Such is its important communication potential that broadcast journalism has always formed part of a bigger picture. During the entire nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there was one main motivation for media communication, which was shared by every country: to use it to influence the political process in the public arena.

Thus, broadcast journalism was plunged into a relationship with the public forum. It has always been a love-hate affair of mutual dependency. The revelation of social problems can have a progressive, even democratizing effect, "Yet it can also be argued that the lack of democratic accountability over broadcasting institutions means that commitment to journalistic

integrity is liable to become subordinated to the interests of state and corporate elites” (Allan, 2004: 44).

### ***2.6.2. Television as broadcast service***

The development of photography introduced a claim to accuracy and impartiality because of the apparent veracity of an image, but it was viewed at the time as an opponent to print news reporting. In contrast, “television fundamentally changed the media landscape for both practitioners and public (Altheide, 1991) of course, old media has never completely replaced by new ones, so at first television news was presented in almost the same way as radio. Nevertheless, the ‘age of television’ took off in the 1950s (Ibid) using largely the same technology worldwide, although its take-up varied geographically according to the affordability of sets.

*[...]Journalism as providing the ‘oxygen of publicity’ for terrorists, Mrs Thatcher highlighted contemporary debate about the effects of television. In the cases of coverage of terrorism and of missing children, the style of television treatment becomes part of the social policy process (Ibid)*

TV can encourage ‘moral panics. Furthermore, our sense of priority can be distorted by the pictures, because some news stories, such as earthquakes or floods, lend themselves more readily to protracted TV news exposure than slower processes, such as political oppression, unemployment or diplomatic and trade negotiations, Television embodies an old paradox: often the more we see the less we learn, the less we see the more we learn” (Crisell, 2002: 161).

## **2.7. Broadcast Service Regulation**

### ***2.7.1. Ethiopian Broadcast Authority***

The Ethiopian Broadcast Authority is established as an autonomous federal agency having its own legal personality. According to the Broadcast service proclamation, No 533/2007 the authority is established with the objective, to ensure the expansion of high standard, prompt and reliable broadcasting service that can contribute to political, social and economic development and to regulate it.

The proclamation stipulates that, “broadcast service” means a radio or television transmission program conducted to educate inform or entertain the public (Article 1.2).

#### ***2.7.1.1. Public Service Broadcasting Service***

“Public service broadcasting service” means a radio or television transmission service established for the purpose of educating, informing and entertaining the public, in the federal or regional state to which government budget is allocated in full or in part and is accountable to the Federal House of People’s Representatives or to regional council (Article, 1.9).

#### ***2.7.1.2. Commercial Broadcasting Service***

“commercial broadcasting service” means a radio or television transmission service established for profit by a legal entity with the purpose of informing, educating or entertaining the public(Article, 1.10).

### ***2.7.1.3. Community Broadcasting Service***

“Community broadcasting service” means a non-profit Radio or television transmission service established by the will, interests of community, administered, and run by the community living in specific area or who posses a common interest (Article, 1.10).

### ***2.7.1.4. Broadcasting Service Licenses***

According to broadcasting service proclamation No. 533/2007, part three, categories of broadcasting services shall be public, commercial, and community broadcast services.

#### ***2.7.1.4.1. Public Broadcasting Service***

- a) Enhance the participation of the public through the presentation of government policies and strategies as well as activities related to development, democracy and good governance;
- b) Present programs, which inform, educate and entertain the public;
- c) Present program which reflect unity of peoples based on equality;
- d) Promote and enhance the cultures and artistic values of the public;
- e) Service political parties operating in accordance with Constitution and the electoral laws of the country on the basis of fair and just treatment.

#### ***2.7.1.4.2. Commercial Broadcasting Service***

- a) Provide equal treatment to any community in its license area;
- b) Transmission of its programs shall cover the whole area of its license;
- c) Include regional and national news in its programs;

d) Submit to register the license given by the authority to the Ministry of Trade and Industry or to the Regional Trade and Industry Bureau.

#### ***2.7.1.4.3. Community Broadcasting Service***

a) Carry out its activities base on the needs of the community regarding development, education and good governance;

b) Promote and develop the language, culture and artistic value of the community.

c) Allow the participation of the members of the community in the preparation of its program;

#### ***2.7.1.5. Ownership***

According to a proclamation to provide for freedom of the mass media and access to information, No. 590/2008, Article, 7 about Mass Media Ownership; the article stipulates that;

7.1) Any person who exercises direct or indirect effective control over a company possessing a nation-wide broadcasting license or a broadcasting license for an area with a recorded population of more than 100,000 inhabits, may not exercise direct or indirect effective control over another company holding such a license and servicing the same or an overlapping market;

7.5) for the purpose of Article 5(1) of this proclamation, a company is of an Ethiopian nationality if its total capital originates from a local source or persons holding its capital or voting rights are Ethiopian nationals and it does not include a company whose capital or voting rights are held by a locally registered business organization in which foreign nationals acquired voting rights. Similarly an association is considered as a local if it is

registered as a local association in accordance with the charities and associations law.

In general, public, commercial and community broadcasters as well as the freedom of the mass media and access to information law has the significance to promote freedom of expression guaranteed by the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The constitutional principles secure and preserve the well-being of persons, national security, public order and other overriding rights. Moreover, it consolidates achievements and positive practices pertaining to freedom of expression while removing structural and institutional impediments that hinder the operation of freedom of expression and free exchange of information and ideas. Both broadcast and information proclamations help to aware high ethical standards and professional competence that plays an indispensable role in the national endeavor to build democratic order in Ethiopia.

# Chapter Three

## 3. Research Methodology

The study design can be achieved through a number of alternative designs. In m research, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research strategy was used. My the questions for the interviewees were composed and structured of close-ended and some open-ended together with semi-structured qualitative question for collecting primary data. The secondary data was surveyed from books, online journals, other electronic media and print outlets. Semi-structured interview was intended to secure a qualitative data of key informants from both private, government broadcast media and other sources of informants who are thought to be as a source for strengthening the qualitative data. This method was taken as one of the data-gathering instrument to give a qualitative depth to the thesis project.

### 3.1. Description of Study Participants

In the history of the broadcast service in Ethiopia, there was no systematic registry of the broadcast service concerning its historical and current activities. However, recently on the bases of Ethiopia media mapping, conducted by, Electoral Reform International Service (ERIS, 2011), with its intensive experience of the media mapping survey, has presented the tangible data of the media institutions in Ethiopia. Indeed, the thesis project was relied on the data compiled by ERTA, ERIS and some International experiences which has been reviewed on chapter two. Of course, primary data was explored from survey of journalist working in broadcasting media, and relevant interviewees out side the media institutions. Ethiopia

broadcasting authority as the duty bearer and mandated to regulate and monitoring the airwave, was also used as, the source of the information for primary data.

### **3.2. Sampling and data collecting**

The number of journalists working in ERTA for both radio and television are 345 full times and 25-par time, in Sheger FM there are 32 employees and 13 full time Journalists. The data was collected deliberately, considering the age, gender, experience, and the university they have graduated. Some 24 journalists and 3 senior editors, 2 deputy editors- in- chief and 1 editor - in-chief of the news and current affairs were interviewed from ERTA. While, I was unable to interview, some journalist from sheger FM, because of lack of interest, of the management to be interviewed. However, I was obligated to explore secondary data from ERIS in terms of sheger FM.

The interview was conducted, face to face simultaneously by the assistance of the telephone service. The other sources were lecturers from the school of journalism, civic societies, member of opposition and ruling parties, and ordinary citizens. Some of the interviewees who were not interested to be coated were represented in the presentation, in the form of English alphabets. The method also included related literature review, which of course a secondary data tool for the research paper.

### **3.3. Method of data presentation**

Quantitative data were presented according to the data collected by ERIS in the form chart (table), that much with my thesis. More over the quantitative data, which I have exploited, was about radio, because in the context of Ethiopia, there is no domestic television to compare and contrast with each other except the only state owned ETV. Of course, the number of radio

stations and their potential listeners in Addis Ababa and at regional level were assessed, in terms of the consistency of the listeners and their favorite radios, type of programs they are interested in, and analyzed in accordance to the objective of the thesis. More or less the data was presented in different forms, as it intended to be presented for professional record keeping.

In terms of the quantitative data, the stories told by the interviewees were, individual cases, on the broadcast industry, but it has implications for the protection of the human rights and freedom of expression elsewhere, and implications for progress of the press industry as a whole. The quantitative data also summarizes that; Journalists should depend for their position in society on the trust of their listeners and viewers.

### **3.4. Significance of the study**

In its examination of the practice of freedom of expression of Ethiopia citizens on the broadcast media, this thesis aims at offering insights into the role and impact of the broadcast service in terms of freedom of expression, considering the fact that the broadcast is becoming increasingly influential, powerful and fast reaching, media in the context of Ethiopia.

Given the fact that broadcast media is under severe restriction, it is argued that broadcasting service as an alternative media in Ethiopia which to certain degree provides a public space for citizens to discuss their sensitive issues and express their political opinions.

It is meaningful to look into issues such as the impact of the broadcast service on society, its role and significance as a public space and its potential capacity to mobilize citizens and facilitate their participation in the political, economic, social, and legal landscape of the country.

Moreover, freedom of expression, as an important part of citizens' civil and political rights, is also believed to be a precondition of democracy. The significance of this thesis, also slightly moves the focus on to the citizens, examining how citizens practice their rights under different levels of restriction.

### **3.5. Limitations of the study**

The study of this thesis project was conducted in the presence of the following limitations, and my generalization and conclusion can be taken in to account under the following constraints.

1. The historical back ground of broadcast media is almost all the history of the press as a whole in context of this country, there was lack of systematic records of data and basic statistical data, and finally I was obliged to explore the data from a single data source which ERIS.
2. I faced, lack of related research works that could have been indispensable and helpful to the topic, because the term human rights, freedom of expression and broadcast service, were not that much familiar in the history of this country.
3. My personal occupation is journalist, and I know the negligence of some elitist, against the institution that I am working for; because of that reason people were reluctant, even by some authorities in providing genuine responses. Even if some of them were considering me as if I was deployed from ETV to exploring information for the matter of media consumption.

## **Chapter Four**

## **4. Data Presentation and Analysis**

Based on the objectives set for the study, data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative instrument. In this chapter, the presentation of the quantitative data presented in the form of chart (table) and analysis made, in accordance to the data sources that were collected by Electoral Reform International Service (ERIS). ERIS is a not-for-profit non-governmental organization, which has worked in over 70 countries, in the same survey, to the full spectrum of democracy assistance and advice.

The quantitative data's surveyed, collected and compiled by ERIS, are media mapping exercise which were intended to provide Ethiopia Broadcast Authority's recent and accurate information on the media in the country. Of course, the mapping presents a profile of major mass Medias in Ethiopia, while I explore the data, which are convenient with my thesis. I hope I might be the firs person who utilizes this data to the assessment for my thesis.

However, the summary and presentation of the qualitative interview which was collected through face to face and telephone assisted, from the interviewees' were presented in a manner, to the context of the respondents interest and the frame of the semi structured way of the interview.

### **4.1. Quantitative Data**

#### 4.1.1. Chart. 1 . Source of Information

	Source of information	Percentage
1	Radio	80.1%
2	Television	61.6%
3	Word of Mouth	49.5%
4	Community Meeting	35.9%
5	Church or Mosque	16.9%
6	Mobile	16.3%
7	Newspaper	13.3%
8	Bill Board	4.0%
9	Satellite Television	3.8%
10	Police	2.7%
11	In ternate	2.6%
12	None	2.3%
13	others	2.1%

(ERIS, 2011)

Nationwide radio is the single source of information most frequently mentioned as source of information; in rural areas, particularly radio is widely consumed. According to the data indicated on the table of chart 5, 80.1 % of the information is consumed from the key source, which is “Radio” followed by 61.6 % “television”. 49% of the respondents respond that their source of information is word of mouth.

#### 4.1.2. Chart. 2 . Information Source By Region

	<b>Region</b>	<b>WOM</b>	<b>TV</b>	<b>RADIO</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Dire Dawa</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Addis Ababa</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Harari</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Gambella</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>SNNPR</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Benshangul Gumuz</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Somali</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Oromia</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Amhara</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Afar</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>77%</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Tigray</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>68%</b>

(ERIS, 2011)

Between the three most significant means of communication, there are considerable differences among regions in terms of degree, which they individually acts as a source of information and news. In Addis Ababa (96%) and Tigray (70%), television is the most frequently mentioned means in which the public receive news and information. In contrast, in other regions highlighted radio as the most frequently referred to medium as the source of information and news. To the contrary 96% of the source of information in Somali region, and 90% of the source of information in Afar region is, through the word of mouth. Of course, the reason might be because of the pastoralist nature of the people in the region.

### 4.1.3. Chart.3. Most Reliable and Important Source of Information

	Medium of communication	Most important	Most Reliable
1	Radio	53.1%	51.2%
2	Television	20.5%	21.5%
3	Word of Mouth	11.2%	9.7%
4	Community Meeting	4.8%	5.1%
5	Not Stated	7.8%	8.2%

(ERIS, 2011)

The information sources people mainly use were also considered as the most important and reliable sources. Radio as the most important (53%), and with 51.2% is mentioned as the most reliable followed by television and word of mouth. The importance of television is indicated 20% and its degree of reliability is 21%. As a matter of traditional source of information is concerned, in the country where its citizen's are in need of information, still word of mouth is scored with 11.2% in its importance and 9.7% reliability.

Of course, the meeting can be in religious institutions or any other assemblies, however, according to the respondents reply, the survey indicated that, 4.8% source of and its importance is collected from the community meeting, and its reliability is 5.1%. Non-stated sources are also 7.8%, respectively with 8.2% reliability.

In general, "Radio" is the most "Important and Reliable" source of information. This indicates that, broadcast media is an important medium of communication on strengthening freedom of expression.

#### 4.1.4. Chart.4. Most Listened Radio Station

	<b>Radio</b>	<b>Most Listener Radio</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Radio Ethiopia</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Fana FM</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Oromia</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Radio Fana</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>South FM</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Addis FM 97</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Amhara</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Sheger</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Mekele FM</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>DWET</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>VOA</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Deutsche Welle</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>FM 96</b>	<b>2%</b>

( ERIS,2011)

In this context, Radio Ethiopian's position is unchallenged in most of the country with 67% most listened station. Of course its coverage, age of broadcasting, human and financial resource has its own impact. Rather, the main question that has to be raised is that, to what extent is Radio Ethiopia, strong with its content, as public media?

In deed, "Radio Ethiopia" has no any computing broadcaster at national level. However, for the future there might be possible challenges.

#### 4.1.5. Chart.5. Most Listened Radio Station in Addis Ababa

	<b>Radio Station</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Fana FM</b>	<b>55.1%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Sheger FM</b>	<b>45.7%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Addis FM 97</b>	<b>45.7%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Radio Ethiopia</b>	<b>21.9%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>FM 96</b>	<b>17.2%</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Radio Fana</b>	<b>11.7%</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Zami</b>	<b>8.2%</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Afro FM</b>	<b>2.7%</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>VOA</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>EMMA</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Deutsche Welle</b>	<b>0.8%</b>

(ERIS, 2011)

A very different trend is evident where there is limited competition between broadcasters in Addis Ababa. In this case the audience tended to listen more to and the commercial broadcasters like Fana FM, Sheger FM, and FM 97. This indicates that the audience is migrating from Radio Ethiopia.

If the competition would have been at national level, as it has been suggested in the previous summary of the chart, the opinion of the respondents indicates that where there is access to receive an alternative source of information, the choice of the public might lay on commercial broadcaster that are thought to be independent.

**Chart.6. Residents’ Favorite Domestic Radio Station in Addis Ababa.**

	<b>Radio Station</b>	<b>percentage</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Sheger FM 102.2</b>	<b>56.7%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Fana FM 98.1</b>	<b>56.7%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Addis FM 97.1</b>	<b>50.8%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Radio Ethiopia</b>	<b>27.6%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Addis FM 96.1</b>	<b>22.0%</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Zami Radio</b>	<b>14.2%</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Radio Fana</b>	<b>13.8%</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Afro FM</b>	<b>4.7%</b>

(ERIS, 2011)

According to the listeners respond their favorite radio station is Sheger FM(56.7 %) and Fana FM(56.7).We can imagine that, the recently established radio stations are favored by listeners at least by one fold in contrast to the oldest radio station “Ethiopian radio”. The reason that they maintained large proportion of audiences than any public broadcasters highlights some thing to raise a question why the audience is shifting dramatically to the commercial broadcasters.

Of course, it would be very difficult to compare public media, which is the advocator of any current government versus commercial broadcaster, which are portraying them selves as nondependent institutions. While even though Fana FM, which has historical association with the ruling party has better degree of acceptance compared with the pioneer radio stations accordingly.

#### 4.1.7. Chart .7. Program Genre Listened to Radio.

	<b>Program genre</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>female</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>News and current events</b>	<b>52.6%</b>	<b>41.6%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>14,3%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Drama</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Entertainment</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Sport</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Development related</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Discussion and debate</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Phone in</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>

(ERIS, 2011)

Among these series of the programs listened to the radio, 52.6% of male and 41% women respondents, listened “News and Current Affaires”. Drama is followed by 6.6% male and 10.0% female. Sport is also listened by 6.1% male and 1.9% female.

Entertainment, Development related, Health, Discussion and Debate, and Phone in scored, below 6%, the major listened genre “News and Current Affaires” is responded with high percentage. However, everybody is ambitious to listened news and current affaires; this has to be the program that has to be the forum, which should entertain public opinion in a faire, balanced and nondependent manner. Because, news and current affaires must convey, the message of the public, in terms of the public interest, on the basis of journalistic professional excellence.

#### 4.1.8. Chart 8. Lists of Television Channels

Region	Television channel people Have ever watched	Favorite television channels
Addis Ababa	ETV (96.8 %) ETV 2 (83.4%) Super Sports (55.3%) Aljazeera (52.1%)	ETV (91.9 %) Oromia TV(47,8%) BBC wo.news (44.6)
Afar	Super Sports (52.7%) Euro news (45.5 %) Press TV (33.3%) Sky News (25%)	ETV (93.5 %) BBC wo.news (57.1%) Super Sports (100%)
Amhara	ETV (84.6%) Super Sports (64.5%) Press TV (60.1%)	ETV (81.7 %) Super Sports (81.4)
Benishangul Gumuz	Aljazeera (59.6%) ETV (53.5%) ETV 2 (44.7%)	Aljazeera (87.8%) ETV (68%) Oromia TV (41.1%)
Dire Dawa	ETV (79.8%) Super Sports (68.8%) Euro news (68.2%)	ETV (73.2 %) Oromia TV (48.4%)
Gambella	BBC wo.news (54.5%) CNN (40%) Aljazeera (32.4%)	ETV (78 %) Super Sports (25%) Oromia TV (20.5)
Harari	ETV ( 73.8%) Press TV( 68%) Euro news (66.7%) Aljazeera (63.7%)	ETV (86.9 %) Sky News(44.4%) Aljazeera(40.6%)
Oromia	ETV ( 72.3%) OTV(64.8%) Super Sports(56.7%)	ETV (84.4%) Oromia TV(76%) ETV 2(52.6%)
SNNPR	Super Sports (75.1%) ETV (67.8%) BBC (46.3%)	ETV (94.9 %) Oromia TV(42.7%) BBC(41.2%)
Somali	Aljazeera(50.5%) Super Sports (50%) BBC(46.3%)	ETV (75.2 %) BBC(84.4%) Aljazeera(57.9%)
Tigray	ETV(77.7%) Super Sport(72.7%) Press TV(57.1%)	ETV (94.7 %) Super Sport(45.7) Oromia TV(38.2)

(ERIS, 2011)

For instance, the most viewed domestic television, in Addis Ababa is Ethiopian Television (96.8), followed by ETV2 (83.4%) and Oromia TV (47.8%). And BBC (44.6), Aljazeera (52.1%) and super sport (55.3 %) viewed among the international channels.

The data clearly indicates that, viewers of television channels favorites' domestic television, while the alternative is too narrow. Even there is no slight alternative source of television channels similar with radio. The only national TV and other regional Mass Medias are state owned. Moreover, it would be very difficult, to describe, there is an alternative source of television media.

The other example is that, Viewers in Benishangul Gumuz have ever watched Aljazeera (59.6%), and their favorite media is that Aljazeera (87.8 %). Unlike Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella Viewers, have ever watched, **BBC (54.5%), CNN (40%)** and Aljazeera (32.4%). The data explains that because of lack of alternative TV channel, viewers are shifting to the international media outlets. And we can imagine that to what extent the westerns political, economical, social and cultural hegemony is imported to the innocents citizen's and the right to be informed is affected by the lack domestic and alternative media sources.

As Elisabeth Blunt, on her recent article "Through a glass darkly Africa in the western media" she stated that;

*"The same stories about Africa get covered again and again in the international media is that; Egypt=archaeology. Zimbabwe=Mugabe. Nigeria=419 Scams. Sudan=Darfur. Ethiopia=famine. Let us hope that from now on Ghana=football."*

## 4.2. Qualitative Data

Whether we debate them or not, broadcast media raise theoretical and ethical questions. Since an important claim made for journalism is that it contributes, in an essential way, to the working of freedom of the expression and democracy. Its ethics and commitment of the state connect to questions of democratic functioning. Nevertheless, what if the conditions, analyzed in this thesis, under which broadcast journalism is now practiced, to ethical and legal action? What are the wider implications for broadcast media, democracy, and for attempts to regulate the broadcast media within the democratic process? In connection to the legal framework and relevant follow-up questions the respondents opinion presented as follow in a summarized way;

### 4.2.1. Interview Part One.

Name: Amanuel Abdissa, Male.

Academic Statues: Ass. Professor(MA, in Broadcast Media)

Current Position: Head of Broadcast Journalism, A.A University, School ofMass Communication and Journalism;

Q. To what extent broadcast media has vital role on promoting freedom of expression in Ethiopia?

*[...] In Africa as a continent, Ethiopia as a Nation, there is no way to entertain the opinion of the public better than broadcast media. In applying this idea, there would be lack of commitment, both sides. Of course, the right of freedom of expression is constitutionally guaranteed, and certain institutions are on the right truck on building the journalistic professional capacity of the new generation. Above all, from both sides it needs irreversible commitment.*

Q. ERTA as public media it has benchmarked “BBC” did you think it is convenient to ERTA, to associate it self with BBC?

*[...]The most issue that always amazing me is that ERTA as public broadcaster has bench marked BBC, imagine to what extent it is difficult to imitate BBC's professional and organizational structure. Rather it was better to adopt African experience like South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria.*

Q. This days there are certain commercial broadcasters that are trying to compute with the public media, what could be your comment about those broadcasters?

*[...]To comment about the commercial broadcast the way that Sheger FM is trying to make a difference, the journalists integrity and professional output, is better than others in my point of view, particularly the consistency of the station may attract the segmented and fragmented audience around its radius.*

Q. From the journalists working in the public, commercial and community broadcasters what type of ethical activities should be expected?

*[...]Journalists from the public and commercial as well as the newly emerging community broadcasters in Ethiopia, have to know the laws of the land including the penal and criminal codes. Moreover, they must have to perform every activity with knowledge and professional excellence, finally the public interest and right to freedom of the expression has to be respected in programs, news and current affairs that are relying particularly on the public broadcasters as far as watchdog journalism is concerned.*

Name: Liul Seyoum, Male.

Academic Statues: MA, in organizational management

Current Position: Public Relation and Communication Affaire,  
Directorate Director, in the “Institution of Ombudsman”

Q. Institution of Ombudsman, as a guardian of citizens particularly in terms of freedom of expression, did you agree that ERTA is serving the public properly?

*[...]The institution that I am working in is, intensively working to secure the Freedom of Mass Media and access to information as a right of the public. Considering this, broadcast media is the most important medium of communication. However, I have never been satisfied by the achievements of public media like ERTA.*

Q. If your institution is not satisfied about the achievement of the public media ERTA, what should be the option for institutions like “Ombudsman” to explore the broadcast media?

*[...]Our institution is attempting to convey our public messages and announcements via the commercial broadcaster, radio Fana. You can imagine that, if the issues of “Ombudsman” were not entertained in the public media, what would be for the other sectors and citizens as whole?*

Q. Did you have any last comment against ERTA on how to develop its services as public media?

*[...] In general, what I would like to suggest is that; as institution ERTA has to make structural change to properly entertain the public interest.*

Name: Tsige Gebreamlak, Male.

Academic Status: BA, In International Language (English)

Current Position: Spokes Person, “Ethiopian Human Rights Commission”

Q. Human right is technically associated with freedom of expression, what did you suggest about the activities of the broadcast media in Ethiopia on fostering freedom of expression with the perspectives of your commission?

*[...]The core rational behind the establishment of the EHRC is for the realization of harmonious polity within which the human rights of Ethiopians- at both the individual group level- is best promoted where human right are foster and enforced in an organized manner through a public institution. Taking this in to account, the role of the media particularly broadcast service has un compromised task for the promotion and protection of human rights. However, the public broadcast is not properly serving the public at large, and whatever the reason is, it is not acting as public watchdog media. The media has to go ahead of the citizen’s interest, to serve as public forum.*

Q. what has to be done in order to promote the freedom of expression using the broadcast media outlets particularly the public broadcast service as a stakeholder of the human right institutions?

*[...]Of course, there is no clear working manual on how to work with public, commercial, and community broadcasters, while, the national aspiration of the human right commission and other human right institution can be realized under political, social, and cultural conditions that guaranty respect for the fundamental rights and freedom of Ethiopia’s nation, nationalities, peoples and citizens. Accordingly, in this diversified nature of the public interest there must be diversified and an alternative, broadcast media outlets. This diversity should have to afford its alternative, in terms of content and capacity of coverage.*

Name: Liulseged Weldehana, Male.

Academic Statues: MA, in Educational Research

Current Position: Public Relation Expert, Ethiopian Broadcast Authority.

Q. The Ethiopian Broadcast Authority is established as an autonomous federal agency having its own legal personality, are you really working on the bases of the legal entity with clear objective of your legal mandate?

*[...] As an authority we are trying to accomplish the objective of the broadcast, what we have to believe is that, the nature of the broadcast service is too complicated to manage, and to regulate. However, with all of its limitations, the authority is on the right way to implement all its duties. Moreover, establishing at least ten community radios according to the demand of the public could be taken as a success story, for the authority.*

Q. Is there any conducive atmosphere that the broadcaster's media outlets are broadcasted, in a manner that contributes to the proper social, economic, political and cultural development of the country?

*[...] What has to be underline hear is that; the license is given according to the broadcast proclamation, the duties to perform quality journalism in terms of format and content lies on the shoulder of the broadcasters. Respectively, if there is any kind of complaint and grief against the broadcasters the duties of settlement for a certain case lies on the shoulder of the authority. Accordingly, the authority is objectively accommodating any relevant cases that has to be handled under the mandate of the authority, of course, we may be far away from perfect, however we are trying to serve the public as far as the law of the land is concerned.*

Q. There are strong critics against the Ethiopian Broadcast Authority, for the lack of your willing not to afford broadcast license at national level, and your recent announcement not declare new broadcast license for at least within these five years?

*[...]Yes of course, we are exposed for such critics, while the reason is not as certain people are trying to portrait it. Broadcast service is not as easy as print media, its technological installation needs, huge investment.*

Q. If the issue is the question of huge investment, this concern must be the concern of the citizens who may be interested to invest on this area, what has worried about that?

*[...] For that matter, there is no serious demand to get a license, at national level. However, the reason that we are not interested to afford the license is that, the country's broadcast technology is under the process of technological transformation, from the analogue system to full digitalization. In this term of transformation, it would be very difficult to release license, taking into account, the current technology will be out of system in the coming few years.*

Q. Still those who are interested to have broadcast license at national are doubtful on your response about your licensing process, and they considering it as a pretext not to afford the license?

*[...]As a broadcast authority we have never have attempted to be the constraint on affording license to those who are demanding on the bases of the law, however this allegation may be baseless, and unfounded on the base of facts.*

Name: Daniel Bekele, Male.

Academic Statues: MA, in Broadcast Media

Current Position: Director for Education and Training Directorate, ERTA

Q. When we think about the freedom of expression, the role of the broadcast media is irreversible, if so, did you think that the agency that you are working in is treating it on the bases of the right given to the right holders?

*[...] When we discusses about freedom of the expression, the main debate that has to be answered is that, freedom for whom? With one or the other way, freedom of the expression belongs to the public. The freedom of the journalists and broadcast institutions is a matter of editorial independence. In my view, freedom of the expression using the broadcast media is not properly entertained in the public broadcast including ERTA.*

Q. Is there clear justification, for not properly handling this right which has been constitutionally guaranteed right?

*[...] Of course, the reason might be lack of practice of the people, to explore the media as a means of exercising freedom of expression, and the capability of the journalists to accommodate the interest of the public, as safeguard for citizens. Of course, whatever the editorial policy protect the journalists for being free, while, because of the previous traditional practice, of the public media, journalists still exercising self- censorship. This are the controversies that have came barriers for implementing the role of best journalism practice. And I would like to suggest that journalists must perform according to policies written on the editorial, as far as I know the editorial policy has its own legitimacy.*

Name: Ashebr Getnet, Male.

Academic Statues: MA, in Sociology,

Current Position: Current Affaires Directorate, Director, ERTA

Q. According to the recent survey conducted by ERIS, the most, Program Genre Listened to Radio is News and current affaires with 52.6 %(Male) and 41.6% (female), did you agree with that finding?

*[...] I agree with the findings, because it is true, people want to have hot information about any daily activities at national level, as well as world wide, due to this practice it is natural that news and current affaires is the most listed genre better than any kind of programs.*

Q. If it is so, to what extent the directorate of the news and current affaires is airing news and current affaires in a manner that has to be treated to promote freedom of expression of the public in the context of ERTA?

*[...] With all of its limitations, we are working on the development-reporting model of journalism; however, we cannot say that the freedom of expression is absolutely protected in the news and current affaires that we are relying on the air.*

Q. What are the reasons for not exploring to guarantee the freedom of the expression?

*Actually the limitations on exercising freedom of expression lies not only on the broadcasting sector, by default even citizens are reluctant on utilizing ERTA as medium of mass communication to reflect their opinion on the basis of freedom of expression.*

Q. If freedom of expression is to be exercised in the broadcast media people's media priority, should have been the only national public broadcaster ERTA, but there is quantified data indicating, the audience is migrating to the commercial broadcasters like Sheger FM, and Radio Fana did you agree?

*[...] The country is on the economic development truck, and the media's role should also, to foster the development, while commercial broadcasters may not expected to act like the public media ERTA is performing. However to protect the migration of the audience, we shall be working strongly to make the media more entertaining, educative, and more informative.*

Q. what did you suggest, about this current scenario? Of course, in terms of physical coverage no media could challenge ERTA; and what has to be done to bring change and to transform the broadcast industry?

*[...] "Hopefully" we will remain the most competent public broadcaster, and we shall be working to detach the wrong tradition perception of the staff from self-censorship.*

Q. what should be the future prospect of the public media like ERTA, and other public broadcasters

*[...] There are no obstacles to implement, freedom of expression using the broadcast media like ERTA, however, the motivation, to develop self confidence of the journalist must emanate from the journalists, as well from the managing bodies, of course, the public broadcast institutions should also protecting themselves from internal and external intervention which violets the sovereignty, of the media house.*

Name: Fithawek Yewendwesen, Male

Academic Statues: BA, in Political Science

Current Position: News and Current Affaire, Senior Editor, ERTA.

Q. Editors are an important personalities within any given media house, however, their a critical comment about your independence to promote freedom expression in the context of ERTA?

*[...] As senior editor, I feel that, freedom of expression is not practically implemented in ERTA as an instrument for the expansion and strengthening to freedom of expression. I cannot explain the exact reason, but what I know, as a senior editor is that, all of us, members of news and current affaires, with one or the other way; we are highly engaged in the process of self-censorship.*

Q. The editorial policy of the institution, gives clear mandate for the journalists as well as editors in different level, what could be the reason for having critical self-censorship?

*[...] In my point of view, there is external as well as internal intervention that influences journalists, and citizens are not that mach open to exercise their constitutional right in terms of freedom of expression. In general, the problem emanates from both sides, institutional as well as the practice of the public to explore the public media as a forum of public debate that fosters socio economic activities.*

Q. What would be your future ambition?

*[...] I am very mach ambitious to see responsible and free journalism practice in the public media, particularly broadcasters like ERTA as far as it is a public broadcast media. Unless and other ways, the freedom of expression may not be implemented using the broadcast media*

Name: Samrawit Sintayehu, Female.

Academic Statues: BA, in political Science,

Current Position: News and Current Affaires Directorate,

Online and Monitoring, Deputy Editor In-Chief, ERTA.

Q. To what Extent ERTA's website is visited per a day?

*[...]The traditional media is transforming to modernized media, conventional media is transforming to professional media, and it obvious, radio, television and newspapers converged within the new media, which is internet. Because of this, we have developed ERTA's website two years before, and disseminating news and current affaires in a summarized and condensed way of presentation, and we have 9000-10,000 average visitors per a day.*

Q. According to the survey conducted by ERIS(2011), the source of information at national level indicates that, Radio(81%), Television (61.6), Newspaper(13.3)and Internet(2.6%), what does it mean for the visitors of ERTA website?

*[...] the access to the internet determines the figure of the visitors, however, we are not that much satisfied in terms of the number of visitors, and we have a doubt about the content of the news and current affaires. As any one can suggest, the content of the news and current affairs of ERTA is more or less about development, there is no more debatable socio economic and political contents of news and current affaires, that may be the reason that viewers are commenting through the feedbacks that we are collecting from the website. Samrawit concluded that, if there is some sort of change in terms of the content and format of our website in terms of news and current affaires, the number of the visitors to the website may be dramatically changed, unless we will remain in the same figure of visitors even for the future*

## 4.2.2. Interview Part Two.

When freedom of expression is so heavily constrained, just how easy is it for journalists to act with ‘accuracy, sincerity and hospitality’? It is to these three ‘virtues’ that the thesis now turn with examples drawn the summary of the comment, from my research interviews who don’t want to be cited.

*[...] Even if you came up through finding your own stories, my first loyalty must always be to ‘the desk’. On the more, this means prioritizing the stories I am told to report rather than my own stories. The members of the management want people, who to pronounce and only witnessing, the development of the country, they want, the younger the better they witness about the success of the small-scale industries. You know that is what they want; otherwise, you will have to do it again (Informant A, December 2011)*

A journalist working on the same institution described a very similar crisis of conscience.

*[...] In order to gain a measure of employment protection, I was expected to ‘internalize’ the requirements of the broadcast service and produce news according to the style and editorial motivation of the broadcaster, the beginning was, at the day that I was given an orientation about the editorial policy of the institution. On popular media that I am working in, there is little or no space for independent ethical reflection (Informant B, December 2011).*

Another reporter described a story he was asked to do shortly after joining the broadcast service:

*[...] I thought the story was appalling. I thought all along that it was with no logic whatsoever, and I felt very much disappointed, about it. I talked to a Deputy-editor-in-chief, and said that I was not very happy about it, and he say nothing at the time, So if I lost my job I wouldn't be able to pay the rent or anything like that, which probably isn't an excuse, but there was still that thought in my mind (Informant C, December 2011).*

Even at the more commercial broadcast practice, a reporter who stays the course or, alternatively, manages to move fairly and frequently between news organizations, will build up a degree of respect, and therefore autonomy.

*[...] I have been around the broadcast media for a long time. It may not pertain forever, but I don't tend to worry about what the next job's going to be, I assume there will be one, until that I will be working with careful manner, I felt secure enough to refuse stories that seemed ethically dubious. I knew that, I would be under serious evaluation, if the news editor refused to broadcast, exclusive story, however, I will never do anything that strikes my conciseness (Informant D, December 2011).*

A journalist, who was a staff of ERTA, explains how the sincerity of a story can be sacrificed while retaining 'truth'.

*[...] I was always giving prominence, to minor news and current affairs. There had to be truth. It may be twisted or biased, but there must have been some truth. The broadcasting is working on the presumption that positive and developmental stories. Always go for the positive line, some one has to perceive that, this type of practice, even may harm the state, The news and current affairs, directorate, takes the lead in deciding which stories should be covered and how, when this pressure started happening, I just had daily arguments with them. 'But why do they want me to run it, it*

*is not true, you know, so what, I mean, you know. They do not care whether it is true or not. They literally do not (Informant E, December 2011).*

The other reporter who was known, thorough his straightforward script writing and reporting, reflected and explained, his views regarding his past working as follow;

*[...] Okay, if the news and current affairs directorate have a few issues, which they were particularly interested in. They are always wanted you to write in certain ways. You will be given highlights on how to produce your script, but apart from that, they just wanted you to write down in the way you saw it. Indeed, you may produce your story, but you may be forced to produce in mixed way, according to the interest of your editor not the interest of the exact event. For that, matter I can say that, journalism is suffering within the broadcast media (Informant F, December 2011).*

Either way the management of that particular broadcaster will have accrued greater power at the expense of individual journalists not the ideal conditions in which to act ethically.

*[...] The stories the news and current affairs desk demanded were not about individuals. The stories were not, soundly based, funny or sensational and attracted plenty (Informant G, December 2011).*

If we have to think, we must have to think about the future prospects of journalism, there health environment about the broadcast service in Ethiopia, broadcast has to be independent, said one of my interviewee & added;

*[...] In the short term it is the journalist who has most to lose from the sort of ethical dilemma, because he or she is faced with, personal moral standards, but in the long term, broadcast media journalism, as a whole will suffers if lower standards of accuracy are normalized (Informant H, December 2011).*

### **4.2.3. Broadcast Media and May 2010 Election**

When Ethiopia was braced up to hold the 4<sup>th</sup> national election in may 2010, all political parties vying, for seats in the federal and regional parliaments, had fielded their candidates. In addition, large number of voters was registered across the nation. According to the report from Ethiopian National Electoral Board to cast their votes, close to thirty million eligible voters were registered across the nation.

To conduct a free, faire, democratic and transparent election, the government has also formulated an election code of ethics that was widely embraced by over fifty-five of political parties. However, one of the main opposition parties, the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum (EFDUF) had not signed the code of ethics of the election.

As a manifestation of democratic pre-election process, free debate among the computing political parties, via different media outlets is vital, on the process of election. Of course, citizens also look at candidates and contesting political parties, which could satisfy their socio-economic and political interests. Furthermore, all actors hade to fulfill their duties in a civilized manner.

On the bases of election debate, what was to be noted and capitalized was that, the media's role on helping contesting political parties, to introduce their polices and agendas to the public at large. For this purposes, free air time on

the broadcast and newspaper space /column/ was allocated to the contesting political parties.

FDRE Constitution adopted in 1995, clearly stipulates that, political power is assumed only through, an election, further states that, election should be fair, free, democratic and transparent.

Cognizant of this fact, the government has issued the broadcasting proclamation;

*[...]Any broadcast service licensee shall allocate free airtime for political organizations and candidates registered in accordance with related law (Broadcast Pro,533/2007,43/01)*

In addition to that, about the candidates and contending political parties' access to the media, there was another respective article:

*[...]Candidates should be entitled to get access to free airtime on the state owned media (Broadcast Pro,533/2007,59/2)*

In addition, the proclamation stipulates that,

*[...]The Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority together with National Electoral Board is responsible to prepare a directive that determines the mode of air time utilization (Broadcast Pro,533/2007,59/2)*

According to Ethiopian Broadcast Authority's website, election campaign and utilities of the media outlets, the authority has used to address the problem on the bases of international standards. This directive, which was taken in to account was that:

- .Number of seats in the Federal Parliament and state council..... 55%
- .number of computing candidates.....20%
- .Participating in the election.....25%

on the bases of these principles for the may 2010 general election, the total time and column allocated were;

Television.....90 hours.

Radio.....495 hours.

Newspaper.....845 columns.

Of course, the ruling party (EPRDF) has maintained the lion's share, of the airtime, because of its majority seats in the House of People's Representative, and had guaranteed 37% of the airtime and newspaper columns.

The free airtime and newspaper columns allocated to political parties amounts to 40 million birr at least, according to the authority. The broadcast airtime and newspaper column was perceived, it was allotted according to the international best practice, and however, claims were reflected latter to the debate or at the time of pre-election period.

#### **4.2.3.1. Views and Comments of Opposition Parties**

The major Ethiopian opposition parties were not happy at all with pre election process leading to the 4<sup>th</sup> national election. Parties such as the All Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP) and the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum(EFDUF) accuse the government with the news coverage, by state-owned Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA).

#### **4.2.3.2. All Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP)**

At a press conference held on May 20/2010 the All Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP) chairperson Hailu Shawel, said that he was disappointed with the

coverage that, Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA) gave to election. The chairperson added that the agency, did not cover AEUP'S major meeting held in Gondare, Wolaita, and Goffa Sawla.

#### **4.2.3.3. The Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum (EFDU)**

Dr Negasso Gidada, the public relations head of forum said that, his party had not benefited from televised debate as much as it should had, as the time allocated to opposition parties was very small. Most of the airtime has been allocated to the ruling party; there was no enough time for us to say our thoughts.” He said.

He added that forum was using the debates as small opening whole through which it tries to pass on its ideas. He further added that the recurring power outrage have made it hard for forum to reach audiences across the nation who misses the televised debate due to the interruption.

#### **4.2.3.4. Ethiopian Democratic Party(EDP)**

Lidetu Ayalew, president of Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP) said that the televised debate have played a big role in chancing the bad perception that has been created about his party within the public. “We know that people would eventually change their attitude about the party, but we did not expect that the change would be this drastic.”

#### **4.2.3.5. Ethiopian Broadcast Authority**

Director General of Ethiopian Broadcast Authority Desta Asfaw said that “Adequate airtime and newspaper column was allotted to all contesting parties, however, he pointed out that none of the political parties were able to fully utilize the opportunity they were given.” While there is no party that used 100% of the allocated airtime. For instance, Desta said, from the allotted;

From...90 hours.... of Television airtime only.... 61%.....were utilized  
From...495 hours....of Radio airtime only.....51%.....were utilized  
From...849 columns...of newspaper space.....40%.....were utilized

Briefing local and foreign reporters on that day (May 20/2010), Board Chairperson Professor Merga Bekana said that, he believed, The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), had created a conducive environment for the election which was held in May 2010. He also indicated that, the board has handled all complaints lodged by political parties “we had serious attention to each complaints. Merga added that, board had been restricted with adequate staff were recruited. According to him, a series of trainings overall offered to electoral officers on the electoral law.

From the information outlined on the above, what has to be taken in to consideration is that, 39% of television and 49% of radio airtime was not properly utilized. If an airtime that worth nearly 40 million birr were not utilized its 50%, there should have been some problem with it. That may be the reason that opposition parties were complaining about the airtime utilization.

The other critical challenge that has to be answered is that, it arises from the practice, which is thought to be best at international standard. If airtime and newspaper space must be distributed, based on the parliament seats, there would be possible challenge, for the parliament, which has been controlled 99% of its seats by the ruling party, on the coming election.

#### **4.2.4. ERTA and its Technological Expansion**

ERTA in general, and its Radio and TV stations are under threat by its target audiences. An expansion of the channel, coverage and technical innovation may have, its own impact; For instance, the Ethiopia Radio and Television Agency (ERTA) Board chairperson, who is also Minister of Government Communication Affairs Office, Bereket Simon said (Wednesday 3, January 2012), the agency is busy to increase its TV channels to eight and digitalize the transmission. The number of channels would also reach eight, and digitalize the transmission.

ERTA is striving to increase its transmissions coverage to 86 from the present 42 per cent. The number of channels would also reach eight (8) and that of the radio transmission coverage to 96 from 67 per cent. At the time, that he presented the agency's report to the House of Peoples' Representative, covering achievements and gaps in the GTP (growth and transformation plan) implementation. He told the House the agency has been mobilizing the public toward the effective execution of the plan.

He said programs focusing on agriculture, infrastructure, development; political parties, foreign policy, women and youth issues, as well as the Diaspora have been covered. The agency has been providing relevant

information to the public in news and current affairs, programs and discussion formats, the board chairperson added.

However, he said, some drawbacks have been witnessed in the quality and the content of TV and Radio programs due to capacity limitation.

Culture, Tourism and Mass Media Affaires Standing Committee Chair Person Rabia Eissa on her part commended, the effort of the agency to popularizing the GTP, added that the programs broadcast on land lease and anti terrorism proclamations were instrumental on clearing public misunderstanding. She also called the agency to closely follow and inform the public on the government's measures taken against rent seeking mentality.

As stated on the above the expansion of the transmission technology has its own impact for the development of mass communication, while, Journalism and public affairs are less attractive, unless they serve the public interests. As one journalist observed, 'We have experienced an expansion of technology but the agenda of the media has shrunk' ( Pilger, 2001).

The assessment from the interviewee as well as the data indicates that, the issue must be an ethical and journalistic value that should promote the democratic discourse of the people. The way to be the voice of the voiceless has to be prioritized. The respect of human rights has to be exercise in the broadcast media mainly in the public broadcasters. Journalism is a practice with very general implications: it matters to how humans flourish overall in

an era where we are dependent on the exchange of vast amounts of socially relevant information (Alisdair MacIntyre, 1981: 175).

## **Chapter Five**

### **5. Discussion**

#### **5.1. Theoretical perspectives**

They do not fit our intuitions about freedom of expression; they are vague and indeterminate; or they cannot distinguish expression from conduct generally. I conclude that we do not have a tenable general theory of freedom of expression (Larry Alexandery, 1999). However, Among theories of freedom of expression that have been advanced and reviewed in chapter two, that are capable of supporting freedom of expression in relation with the sense of human rights, the public media ERTA and Sheger FM are exploring, by mixing up the Freedom of expression which is supposed to produce truth, public discourse, democratic and general theories.

Freedom to disseminate new information and to criticize prevailing views is necessary for eliminating misconceptions of fact and value, so to the

discovery of truth “truth theory” has to be excised. Respectively the “the general theory of freedom of expression, adding premises that merely state its requirements, one reaches the conclusion that expression must be free of governmental restrictions. Freedom of expression is normally thought to be a right against governmental regulations, even when those regulations have been democratically enacted ( Frederick F. Schauer, 1982)

On the bases of public discourse theory of freedom of expression, what is necessary is that expression that is part of public discourse is, the exchange of ideas that forms public opinion should be left free, on only if adequate alternative channels of communication are available (Robert C. Post, 1995).

In Ethiopia radio and television channels are restricted only on state ownership, so unless there is an adequate channel of communication, the freedom of expression may face constraints, as Robert and Post stated their ideas with on or the other way the country need to have an alternative broadcast outlets.

While, the democratic theory of freedom of expression is necessarily limited to democratic regimes, so it raises a question are we, on the track of democratic culture or not? Particularly in terms of our human right record via freedom of expression on the broadcast media landscape, we are yet to answer, I remain unconvinced that the case for democracy can be anything other than an instrumental one, premised on democracy’s comparative advantage in reaching morally correct decisions ( Larry Alexander, 1998).

## **5.2. Journalism and Models of Democracy**

Journalistic model of democracy depends crucially, on the base of the three schools of thoughts, elitist, deliberative, and pluralist. The elitist democratic

model is most often associated with Walter Lippmann's (1997) the ideal of a 'watchdog' press. Walter Lippmann states that, the primary duties for the press are to examine the character and behaviors of elected officials, to monitor closely their activities for corruption or incompetence, to critically analyze policy proposals, and to provide reliable, in-depth information about social problems. To discuss this mode particularly, the public broadcaster ERTA, must have to adopt this type of model of journalism. Indeed the commercial should also to perform in the same way, but because of the resource mobilization more responsibility must be on the shoulder of ERTA.

In the deliberative model, the press works alongside the public to 'support reflection and value or policy choice' (Baker, 2002: 148–9). In most cases, deliberative model of the media is characterized as mainstreaming media. The pluralist model emphasizes ideological diversity, popular inclusion, citizen empowerment and mobilization, and full expression through a range of communicative styles. 'Newness' of form and content (Winston, 1995). However, these two model is also implementing in ERTA, but the remaining idea to make the media as the forum of ideological diversity must be strengthen, indeed the commercial media Sheger FM should also, practice such model of journalism to serve the public.

### **5.3. Truth and ethics for freedom of expression**

Journalism in the broadcast media is now practiced to promote and protect the freedom of expression, to the extent that journalistic-produced news content is increasingly homogenized across media outlets ( Boczowski and Santos, 2007) sometimes, They do not fit our intuitions about freedom of

expression; they are vague and indeterminate; or they cannot distinguish expression from conduct generally. I conclude that we do not have a tenable general theory of freedom of expression' (Larry Alexander and Paul Horton, 1983). Civic journalism is increasing and access to public information and government services is expanding (Pavlik, 2001)

In order to protect human rights and to promote the opportunities for freedom of expression, three aspects of journalism as a practice are crucial here, as long as broadcast service is concerned, Journalism stands accused of sacrificing accuracy for speed, purposeful investigation for cheap intrusion and reliability for entertainment. 'Dumbed down' news media are charged with privileging sensation over significance and celebrity over achievement ( Hargreaves, 2003: 12).

The first involves broadcasting of information that contributes to the successful individual and collective freedom of expression. The second aspect is, we need broadcast media that, by broadcasting of facts and truth.

For the first two, we can turn to the philosopher Bernard Williams' book Truth and Truthfulness (Williams, 2002). In a complex argument, suggests two basic 'virtues of truth' or truthfulness: accuracy and sincerity. Accuracy is the disposition to take the necessary care to ensure so far as possible that what one says is not false, sincerity is the disposition to make sure that what one says is what one actually believes.

However, there is a third possible virtue of particular relevance as media messages increasingly address multiple territories at once: Hospitality, first argued for in detail by Roger Silverstone – who calls it 'the first virtue of the Mediapolis' (Silverstone, 2006: 136).

Accordingly, in terms of accuracy, the news and current affairs which is broadcasting through ERTA and Sheger FM, might be considered as an

accurate news and current affairs, by taking the necessary care what they broadcast might not be false. Because of sincerity, unless what they broadcast is what one actually believes, the content of the items has to be revised, this might be the reason Sheger becomes more favorite radio station better than the public broadcaster FM Addis in Addis Ababa, according to the survey indicated in chart 6.

When we observe about hospitality, yes of course, ERTA in general is working for tolerance and hospitality. In this manner, because of the nation nationalities and people's right, ERTA is moving forward indifferent directions to entertain hospitality.

## **5.4. Constitutional Guarantees of Freedom of Expression in Ethiopia**

The right to freedom of expression is provided, in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights Article 19, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Article 19, the American Convention on Human Rights Article 13, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms Article 10, The African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights Article 9.

Freedom of expression was for the first time given juridical recognition in modern Ethiopia by the Revised 1955 Constitution. The 1987 Constitution of the Peoples' Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, which had a clear socialist orientation, also gave recognition to freedom of expression. Hence, at least on paper, freedom expression has been given recognition in Ethiopia for more than half a century. However, anybody who is familiar with modern Ethiopian history would know that these constitutional guarantees of

freedom of expression were not effective in fostering political dissent and freedom of the expression.

On the ground, there was hardly any free press or freedom for political dissent despite what these constitutions provided. For instance for about 80 million people to exercise his or her freedom expression, through the radio or television medium a single national radio station has been serving for about 76 years, and single national television station also for about 45 years. This prevents that to have an alternative source of information. Where there is no an alternative source, as if the newly established FM stations around Addis Ababa, the dependency of the public in only state media may limit the practice to exercise the freedom of expression through the broadcast media.

Above all, Any restriction imposed on the means of broadcasting or reception of information necessarily interferes with the right to receive information. However, the broadcasting of ideas can accomplish nothing if otherwise, free to receive and consider them. It would be a barren market place of ideas that had only sellers and no buyers.

Therefore, an individual has the right to receive information from several competing sources of broadcasters in accordance to the right, which is constitutionally and internationally guaranteed. As long as the right to be informed is concerned;

“An individual has the right to receive information that would help him make an informed decision, whether it be in regard to the political party or candidate he should vote for, or the state of the art personal computer he should invest his money in”( Sakal, 1962). When we think about freedom of expression in terms of freedom to receive information, the role of the broadcast media would be the most important medium of mass

communication particularly in Ethiopian context where 85% of its citizen's are agrarian community.

## **5.5. The Role of the Broadcast Service**

Because of its immediacy and mass coverage, broadcasting media is thought to have, a powerful influence on society. Governments wanted, to foster cultural and educational values and to reinforce desirable social standards and traditional models of moral behavior, further more, to promote government's political and economical agendas in any form of presentation particularly in the form of news, current affairs and educational programs. Broadcasting utilizes the electromagnetic spectrum, an immense, but finite, phenomenon of nature (Ferrell Lowe and Hujanen, 2003: 11). Text based information had to be converted into writing for listeners' ears, into a style suitable for radio, because of the listeners accessed to in Ethiopia are Radio(81%), Newspaper readers(13.3%) according to the survey conducted by ERIS.

Old media has never completely replaced by new ones, so at first television news is presented in almost the same way as radio. The spread of radio in the 1920s and 1930s was accompanied by a rapid institutional growth of a new form of media organization: broadcasters, who were communicating radio transmissions. Television built on the structures first developed for radio (Chapman, J., 2005: 221). The same was happened in Ethiopia, television was built on the framework of radio.

In contrast, television fundamentally changed the media landscape for both practitioners and public, of course, The Laswellian questions of who gets what, when, and how (Laswell, 1958) have been removed from the

international politics of the global economy. The moving image revolution could prove as powerful as its predecessors, for it is still young and will gain new power as it increasingly dominates the Web. ‘There are indeed decidedly different kinds of thinking associated with moving images: jumpy, fast-moving, ironic, surface-orientated ways of thinking. Some we have seen – and already grown comfortable with. Some we have likely not seen yet’ (Stephens, 1998: 11).

“The incentive on the broadcaster is therefore to deliver the largest possible audience at the lowest possible cost...advertising funding tends to encourage the production of program’s with shallow but wide appeal (DCMS, 1999: 206).

As far as public broadcast is concerned in Ethiopia, it broadcasts not for profit, but it always under the influence of the government that allocates annual budget; at the same time, commercial broadcasters like those, that Sheger FM might be influenced, by the advertiser’s interest.

## **5.6. Broadcast Service Regulation**

The Ethiopian Broadcast Authority is established as an autonomous federal agency having its own legal personality. According to the Broadcast service proclamation, No 533/2007. The proclamation stipulates that, “broadcast service” means a radio or television transmission program conducted to educate inform or entertain the public (Article 1.2).

Accordingly, ERTA can be regulated, “public service broadcasting service” established for the purpose of educating, informing and entertaining the public, in the federal state to which government budget is allocated in full or

in part and is accountable to the Federal House of Peoples Representatives or to regional council (Article, 1.9).

Similarly, Sheger FM is, “commercial broadcasting service” established for profit by a legal entity with the purpose of informing, educating or entertaining the public(Article, 1.10).

Two of them are established to inform, educate or entertaining the Public, however, because ERTA is accountable, to the Federal House of Peoples Representatives, and the house is controlled by the dominance of the ruling party except one seat, to the member of the opposition party, to what extent the station could be independent broadcast industry?

Sheger’s independence in terms of profitability and an influence of commercial advertisers? Because its radius coverage, it is still covering only 40 km and there is no attempt of expansion, in its six service years of broadcast, the station shows nothing in scaling up its physical coverage.

In general, in terms of human and financial resource, no institution could challenge ERTA, while Sheger becomes the most favorite radio, of course, coverage and content has to be compromised.

## **5.7. Ownership**

According to a proclamation to provide for freedom of the mass media and access to information, No. 590/2008, Article, 7 about Mass Media Ownership, Any person who exercises direct or indirect effective control over a company possessing a nation-wide broadcasting license or a broadcasting license for an area with a recorded population of more than 100,000 inhabitants, may not exercise direct or indirect effective control over another company holding such a license and servicing the same or an overlapping market. Nevertheless, the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority is now refrained not to issue any new license, with out any new act.

The other critical criteria for ownership is that, for the purpose of Article 5(1) of this proclamation, a company is of an Ethiopian nationality if its total capital originates from a local source or persons holding its capital or voting rights are Ethiopian nationals and it does not include a company whose capital or voting rights are held by a locally registered business organization in which foreign nationals acquired voting rights. Indeed the proclamation has state nothing about the reason, while according to the Canadians ownership, as stipulated by the federal broadcast regulator, the CRTC, and reflecting the federal Broadcast Act, all Canadian broadcasting must be Canadian-controlled, “to safeguard the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada.”

## **Chapter Six**

### **6. Summary and conclusion**

Human rights are legal rights established by international treaties and conventions or by customary international law. Article 19 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that: Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.” In addition, Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, section 2, declares, “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression.”

Article 29 of the FDRE Constitution provides for the ‘Right of Thought, Opinion and Expression’ in the following terms: 1) Everyone has the right to hold opinions without interference. 2) Everyone has the right to freedom of expression without any interference. This right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of

frontiers, orally, either in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any media of his choice.

The right to freedom of expression is the freedom to communicate opinions, information, and ideas without interference. The primary suggestion of the term 'freedom' is the absence of external interference whether to suppress or to constrain.

ERTA is public broadcaster. Its 95% of the annual budget is funded by the state which is the tax payers money, to be free is essentially to be free from any arbitrary impediment to action, this right of the public to receive and seek information through the public funded media has to be protected against any form of interference, whatever the source. Accordingly, the broadcaster has to be market place of ideas.

Nationwide, 80.1 % of the information is consumed from the key source, which is "Radio" followed by 61.6 % "television". Accordingly, if the flow of information is to be free there must be alternative information sources at list to obtain diversified information in the country of diversified nation and nationalities. For citizens, who cites and consumes information 80.1% from Radio and 61.6% from television, there must be alternative media sources despite the only state owed radio and television station. Otherwise, Article 29 of the FDRE Constitution that provides for the 'Right of Thought, Opinion and Expression' which include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds will not be fulfilled without alternative information sources particularly with out private broadcasters at national level, for the matter of balancing the sources. In relation to this an interviewee's comment from Ethiopian Human Right Commission (EHRC) would have meaning to strengthen the above ideas and conclusion " the role

of the media particularly broadcast service has un compromised task for the promotion and protection of human rights. However, the public broadcast is not properly serving the public at large, and whatever the reason is, it is not acting as public watchdog media. The media has to go ahead of the citizen's interest, to serve as public forum.

The oldest broadcast media "Ethiopian Radio" has been operating for about 76 years. It has the coverage for about 45 million estimated populations. Its sister broadcaster "Ethiopian Television" was also operating for the last 46 years, with coverage for 25 million estimated population. The other pioneer FM radio station in Ethiopia in the last two decades entitled "FM Addis 97.1" has been operating for ten years as light entertainment and popular music of programming. It has coverage for estimated population 6 million. Their registered owner is ERTA, 95% of its budget is funded by the state or by the taxpayers money. On the other hand, the commercial broadcaster "Sheger FM" which has been operating for the last 5 years, has an estimated population in catchments area 3 million.

Most listened "Radio Station" is "Radio Ethiopia" with listeners of 67%, FM Addis 97.1 has 9%, and Sheger FM 102.2 7%. This tells us Radio Ethiopian's position is unchallenged. In deed, "Radio Ethiopia" has no any competing broadcaster at national level. FM Addis covers the radius of 100Km, while Sheger Fm has the reception coverage of 40 Km.

However, For instance, residents' Favorite domestic radio station in Addis Ababa is that, Sheger FM 102.2 (56.7%), FM Addis 97.1 (50.8%) and the oldest radio station Radio Ethiopia (27.6%). Here is the critical issue that has to be seen in-depth, to be listened is a matter of reception and converge

capacity, while to be favorite is about the matter of the content, it is the matter of trustworthiness, it is about telling an accurate, reliable, balanced, faire, undistorted, and independent story telling. Accordingly, FM Addis in specific, ERTA in general, has to examine themselves are they rely serving as the voice of the voiceless? If it is, so why the huge and oldest stations subsidized in millions of budget by the taxpayers money are unable to be the favorite media outlets, truth telling is the most significant and excellence of professional journalism, particularly in the context of public media principles.

Moreover, the interviewees on interview one and two responded and confirmed that, ERTA as public broadcaster has bench marked BBC, imagine to what extent it is difficult to imitate BBC's professional and organizational structure. Rather it was better to adopt African experience like South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria. To comment about the commercial broadcast the way that Sheger FM is trying to make a difference and the journalists integrity and professional output, is better than others.

The other interviewee responded that, they have never been satisfied by the achievements of public media like ERTA. Rather, their institution is attempting to convey public messages and announcements via commercial broadcaster. You can imagine that, if the issues of "Ombudsman" were not entertained in the public media, what would happen, for other sectors and citizens as whole? In general, as institution ERTA has to make structural change to properly entertain the public interests.

The media industries have been subject to wide-ranging government regulation of public and private providers and some direct government provision in most

countries, and Ethiopia is no exception. The freedom of the expression, which is guaranteed by law, universally and locally is currently being challenged by information colonization. The public interest factor must have an opportunity in favor of having access to a free flow of constitutionally protected freedom of expression. The significance of broadcast service must be strong means for expressing opinions and receiving information.

Restrictions from the state should be, in order to secure that, the principles of freedom of expression is protected. Another aspect of the positive state obligation could be the need to secure that, every citizen has means of equal access to the public and commercial broadcast service. However, the current trend in broadcast content regulation is the development of self-regulatory practice according to respondents in interview one. Self-regulation must also refer to situations in which the broadcast service industry, of its own editorial policy, and its own means of regulation.

The Ethiopian Broadcast Authority is established as an autonomous federal agency having its own legal personality. According to the Broadcast service proclamation, No 533/2007 the authority is established with the objective, to ensure the expansion of high standard, prompt and reliable broadcasting service that can contribute to political, social and economic development and to regulate it. According to the proclamation, categories of broadcasting services shall be public, commercial, and community broadcast services.

Accordingly, the aim of the proclamation is, to Enhance the participation of the public through the presentation of government policies and strategies as well as activities related to development, democracy and good governance; and of course, the role of the commercial broadcast is to provide equal treatment to any community in its license area.

According to a proclamation to provide for freedom of the mass media and access to information, No. 590/2008, Article, 7 about Mass Media Ownership, Any person who exercises direct or indirect effective control over a company possessing a nation-wide broadcasting license or broadcasting license for an area with a recorded population, of more than 100,000 inhabitants. According to broadcasting service proclamation No. 533/2007, part three, categories of broadcasting services shall be public, commercial, and community broadcast services.

In Ethiopia, the history of the broadcast media is the history of the public broadcasting media; however, there are about 5 commercial broadcasters in FM level among 31 licensed broadcasters, while, the commercial media radio Fana is historically affiliated with the ruling party. Accordingly, Sheger FM is believed to be the only independent commercial radio station among others, this may be the reason that has enabled the station to be the most favorite, however, the commercial media is influenced by the commercial advertisers, the station has enjoyed public trust.

According to the response of interviewees in interview one, Ethiopian Broadcast Authority will not, release new broadcasting license is that, broadcast service is not as easy as print media, its technological installation needs, huge investment. For that matter, there is no serious demand to get new broadcast license, at national level. The reason, that the authority is not interested to afford the license is that, the country's broadcast technology is under the process of technological transformation, from analogue system to full digitalization. In this term of transformation, it would be very difficult to release license, taking into account, the current technology will be out of system in the coming few years.

However, ERTA is striving to increase its television transmissions coverage to 86 from the present 42 per cent. The number of channels would also reach eight (8) and that of the radio transmission coverage to 96 from 67 per cent. This type of double standard response is reluctance, not to afford broadcast license under the pretext of technological transformation. Unless, the ownership of the broadcast industry has not been entertained equally, the state owed and its affiliations may colonize the source of the information despite the law of the land. The right of the public to receive information from alternative broadcast media sources and media ownership would be violated with unconstitutional manner.

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