



**INTERNAL MEDIA PLURALISM: PRACTICES**

**AND PROBLEMS IN FANA BROADCASTING**

**CORPORATE/FBC/**

**NEWS MAGAZINE COVERAGE**

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Tibebe Tadesse, entitled: *Internal Media Pluralism: Practices and Problems in Fana Broadcasting Corporate News Magazine Coverage* and submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in journalism and communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Internal Media Pluralism; Practices and Problems in Fana Broadcasting

Corporate News Magazine Coverage

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Addis Ababa University, June 2013

The main purpose of this study was to examine the practices and problems of internal media pluralism in FBC's news magazine coverage. Internal media pluralism reflects how social and political diversities are reflected in media contents. Practising pluralism in the media content is very important for a vibrant democracy and development in a country like Ethiopia. Theories of public sphere and developmental journalism have been employed to guide the study. The study was based on three basic research questions and employed both quantitative and qualitative methods.

In the study, the news magazine was examined from the perspective of each determinants of internal media pluralism. The determinants were ownership and control, political, cultural and geographical (locational). The data were carefully analysed to examine the selected news magazine items with several analytical categories. The major findings of the study includes, about 80% of the news sources were government official at different level. So the participation of other potential news sources was very low. Geographically, about 85% of the news items were focused on the federal government and its seat Addis Ababa city administration. The representation of other regional states was found insufficient. After detailed and careful examining of the selected news magazine items with several analytical categories, the study concluded that the news magazine have been lacked pluralism. Finally, the study also forwarded some recommendations based on the conclusions.

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## **List of Acronyms**

**AAU- Addis Ababa University**

**CEC- Commission of the European communities**

**EBA- Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority**

**EPRDF- Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front**

**ERTA- Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency**

**FBC-Fana Broadcasting Corporate**

**FDRE - Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**

**GTP - Growth and Transformational Plan**

**MW- Medium Wave**

**PMC- Population Media Centre**

**NGO- Non-Governmental Organizations**

**SW –Short Wave**

**UN - United Nations**

**UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural  
Organization**

**UNHCR- United Nations Human Commission for Human Rights**

# **Chapter One: Introduction**

## **1.1 Background of the study**

Freedom of expression and freedom of information – the freedoms “to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas” are basic human rights as set out in 1948 by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 19). Since then, international and local human rights standards have acknowledged that freedom of speech must be accompanied by media freedom and media pluralism. Similarly it is also endorsed by the Ethiopian Constitution on article 29/2. “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, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any media of his choice” (Ethiopian Constitution, 1995 p.9).

Media pluralism supposes and must express diverse objectives, ideological and political orientations, and audiences. It is, at the end of the day, how diverse are the opinions promoted, and the breadth of programme output and the social interests they satisfy (Karikari, Kwame, 1993). Maintaining media pluralism is an essential condition for preserving the right to information and freedom of expression that underpins the democratic process. Because an open and free media landscape with divergent opinions and ideas is a key aspect in democratic societies, media pluralism is considered highly important with regard to media policy.

The notion of media pluralism is much broader than media ownership; it covers access to varied information so citizens can form opinions without being influenced by one dominant

source. Citizens also need transparent mechanisms that guarantee that the media are seen as genuinely independent (International Journal of Communication, 2010).

The media are pluralistic if they are multi-centered and diverse enough to host an informed, uninhibited and inclusive discussion of matters of public interest at all times. In the context of its work in the area of media pluralism and concentrations, the Council of Europe has developed comprehensive descriptions of media pluralism. In the explanatory memorandum to recommendation number (99) on measures to promote media pluralism, it defines media pluralism as: “diversity of media supply, reflected, for example, in the existence of a plurality of independent and autonomous media (generally called structural pluralism) as well as a diversity of media types and contents (views and opinions) made available to the public”.

Media pluralism and freedom of media appeared to be recognized for the first time in the 1950s in the western countries. According to Haraszti, the notion of media freedom and pluralism has been, since the 1950s, developed in the constitutional law of several countries, with France, Germany and the United Kingdom leading the way. Over time, the various mechanisms of the Council of Europe have provided powerful and detailed elaboration of pluralism as a right corollary to, and inseparable from, the right to freedom of expression promulgated by Article 10 of the European Commission for Human Rights (ECHR).

However, media pluralism in Ethiopia was guaranteed in the FDRE Constitution for the first time after the overthrow of the military regime. The country guaranteed freedom of expression only in 1991 that led to the emergence of private press. Prior to 1991, there was no private press in Ethiopia. It came to exist only following the decline of the Dergue in 1991

when the government of Ethiopia (EPRDF) guaranteed freedom of expression in the transitional government's charter and then in the 1995 constitution.

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 (Ethiopian Constitution Article 29/4).

In principle, a vibrant democracy requires an independent and pluralistic media, which is free from governmental, political or economic control and with access to the materials and infrastructure that are needed for the production and dissemination of media products and programmes. On the other side, the monopoly tendencies of media become a major threat to media freedom. Some, however, have argued against media pluralism, holding that very diverse viewpoints in the media may actually serve to divide rather than unite a people. According to Servas (1996), in some countries, there is little genuine media freedom and therefore limited space for pluralism and genuine competition. State authorities attempt to dominate the media market, independent television and radio channels are denied licences and critical newspapers are prevented from buying newsprint or distributing their papers.

Even there are different challenges and miss understanding on the practice of media pluralism, its importance was increased through time. In analysing the concept of pluralism, two perspectives have to be mentioned: internal and external pluralism.

Internal pluralism reflects how social and political diversity are reflected in media content. That is, the representation of different groups in the media as well as divergent political or ideological opinions and viewpoints. Media concentration (the opposite of diversity) can manifest itself in the value chain of content creation, content packaging and/or content delivery. Whereas External pluralism covers the number of owners, media companies, independent editorial boards, channels, titles or programmes. There are possibilities on which

one form of pluralism may overlap with the other having some features in common. In other words, internal and external pluralism can be studied independently or in combination. But external pluralism is all about media structures that may influence the media content and business. Internal pluralism is mainly about content diversity in a media institution, which is the main focus of the study.

Coming to the Ethiopian contexts, the nation is the home to about eighty five million people (UN 2013 estimation) with different nationality, religious, culture, economic, political orientation, culture and other backgrounds. To build democracy and ensure development in this nation, the active participation of the public at large is very essential. And media have the power to facilitate these vital issues if it managed properly. The Ethiopian government also well recognize the issue of media pluralism and its importance in principle with its different laws including the constitution. But different research findings /local & international/ has question about the implementation of the laws.

Its shortcoming begins with the limitation of the alternative outlets. According to the Ethiopian Broadcast Authority (EBA) there are only four Television stations which all are owned by the government. There are also about thirty FM and two national radio stations throughout the country. Among these seventeen are owned by the regional and the federal governments. The remaining thirteen FM and the single national radios are commercial, out of them nine FMs and the national radio are owned by Fana Broadcasting Corporate/ FBC/.

The gradual increase in the number of the radio stations does not insure the pluralism nature of the media only by itself. Unless and otherwise they can entertain diversity from different aspects in their news and programmes contents. Ethiopian broadcasting service proclamation also establishes this argument. According to the proclamation “any program to be transmitted

shall reflect different and balanced viewpoints to serve the public at large” (proclamation No\_533/2007 article 30/1).

After the dawn fall of Dergue few broadcast media were get rebirth. Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC) was one of them. FBC /the former Radio Fana/ was established in November 1994. It is the first national private radio station in Ethiopia. The station is broadcasting its programmes and News in six languages. These are Amharic, Afan Oromo, Somali, Afar, Sidama, and Welayta. As a medium it uses SW1-6110KHZ (49MB), SW2-7210KHZ (41MB) covering most of the country and on MW1080KHZ which encompasses 100km radius from Addis Ababa. The station has also launched the first private FM station (FM98.1 Addis Ababa) on March 10, 2007. Currently it is running other eight FM radio stations in different parts of the country which are Mekele FM94.8, Dessie FM96.0, Shashemene FM103.4, Haromaya FM94.8, Gondar, Jimma FM98.1, Nekemte FM96.1 and WelaytaSodo FM 99.9.

According to the corporate editorial policy, FBC has a mission to inform, entertain, educate, motivate and connect Ethiopians in transforming the nation towards prosperity and democracy. It stands for and promotes progressive values of the society. In order to realize these issues, the corporate has been declared a vision to exercise internal pluralism in the institution, particularly in those FM radio stations which were established to carry out those missions with different social and political diversity, in other words through localization and diversity.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Media pluralism is one of the most vital components of a democratic society, which in turn is a prerequisite for sustainable social and economic development (UNESCO, 1991). In its other version it is also very crucial for the existence and survival of media intuitions. The media is dependent on audience or consumers. The audiences are those who decide which media they will use or subscribe for their consumption of information and or entertainment. If they don't like what they view or listen, then it loses its customers.

It is very difficult to survive for media institutions particularly for those commercials, without audiences or viewers or readers, because to get money they have to sell their users for advertisers or sponsors. One of the reasons that can result for loosing users is lack of pluralism. If there is any political bias in the media, or if it lacks plurality people may feel that they did not have any stake on the media. The probability to entertain their opinions and viewpoints will be under question. This is also the reality that could be in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia is home to millions with different nationality, religious and economic background, very different political orientation, culture, language and others. To build democracy and ensure development in the country with the active participation of the public at large the role of mass media is indispensable. The Ethiopian government recognizes the issue of media pluralism in principle, as provided in its different laws and the Constitution. The Ethiopian Constitution in its part of Democratic Rights declares the importance of entertaining diversified thoughts and opinions.

- “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, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any media of his choice.
- 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.
- 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” (Ethiopian Constitution / Article 29/2, 4, 5/).

In its Freedom of the mass media and access to information proclamation the government of Ethiopia also recognizes the indispensable role of the mass media in the process of building the nation.

Aware that a free, independent and diverse mass media with high ethical standards and professional competence plays an indispensable role in the national endeavour to build democratic order in Ethiopia; recalling the role of the mass media in ensuring respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, and promoting peace, democracy, equality and justice (Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information, 2008).

According to Ethiopian Broadcast law it is also mandatory to allocate at least 60% of the weekly transmissions to programs that relate to the local affairs (proclamation No. 533/2007 article 32/3/). However as to Ato Desta Tesfaw, the Director of Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority, in the Ethiopian context there are many media institutions which lacks pluralism in their contents. According to him this is “against to the constitution and the broadcast law”

The right to express idea is the base for freedom of the mass media. Media is fundamentally an instrument that must entertain the different viewpoints of the society. Therefore, the right to own media is not for the broadcasters (owners) only. The public has also the right to use it. But in our context, there are many media owners who are interested and committed to use the media mainly for

the sake of their own interests alone. We observed when they did that (MegenagnaBizuhan magazine, p.6 2013).

According to a document produced by the Federal Governmental Communication Affairs office, there are serious limitations on the public media from the perspective of internal media pluralism.

Sometimes the media gives equal chances to all political parties. Sometimes not like that. The media should do day in and out to entertain different point of views on an issue. There must be a culture of debate regularly. “እንደ መስቀል ወፍ ብቅ በሚል አካሄድ ህዝብን ከሃሳቦች ፍጭት ማስተማር አይቻልም” (Developmental media, communication and the Ethiopian Renaissance, 2012, p.62)

Hence, the assumption of this research project is that there is a need for more internal pluralism to entertain social, cultural and political diversities in the media, including FBC. Therefore, this study attempts to assess the pluralistic nature of FBC’s evening news magazine program beyond the numbers and coverage of the corporate’s outlets in the country.

### **1.3 Objective of the Research**

The main objective of this study is to examine the practice of political, cultural, and geographical (locational) pluralism in the news coverage of FBC.

**The specific objectives of this study are to:-**

- ✓ assess the main internal and external challenges in entertaining the concepts of media pluralism in FBC
- ✓ examine the editorial policy, the programme and news manual of the corporate in their positive or negative role in practising pluralism

## **1.4 The Research Questions**

In an attempt to examine the internal pluralism practice and challenges in the media, the study has been guided by the following research questions:

- To what extent does FBC give emphasis to the importance of pluralism in the media?
- Do news stories in FBC entertain pluralism from the perspective of determinants of media pluralism?
- What are the major challenges to the practice of pluralism in the media?

## **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study mainly focuses on examining to what extent pluralism is practiced (how social and political diversity are reflected) in the FBC's News coverage. In other words it is about the representation of different parts of the society particularly in the areas in which the media covers with their diverse political or ideological opinions and viewpoints.

## **1.6 Limitations of the study**

- One of the limitations of the study is that it does not address other programmes of the station beyond news. It would have been preferred to include the programme contents of the station to examine the topic more in detail. But given the limitation of time and resources it is unfeasible to extend the sampling. Therefore, the findings of the study might not be generalized.
- To analyse the study, a content analysis method was employed. By its very nature, this method has shortcomings. One of the limitations is that it does not tell how the

positive or negative practices of media pluralism influence the audience. To overcome such limitation, in-depth interview was done with selected informants.

Nevertheless, the finding of this study will potentially have important implication for the corporate with regard to the essentials of practicing internal media pluralism.

# Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature

## 2.1 Media and Pluralism

### 2.1.1 Clarifying Media Pluralism

Maintaining media pluralism is an essential condition for preserving the right to information and freedom of expression that underpins the democratic process. As stated by Hardy (2011) “media pluralism is understood to mean the diversity of media supply, use and distribution, in relation to: - ownership and control, media types and genres, political viewpoints, cultural expressions and local and regional interests”.

Asiuzzaman (2010) emphasizes that pluralism is not diversity alone, but the energetic engagement with diversity. It is not just tolerance, but the active seeking of understanding across the lines of difference. To him pluralism is based on dialogue but dialogue does not mean that everyone at the table will agree with one another. Pluralism involves the commitment to being at the table –with one’s commitments. Media pluralism is a concept that embraces a number of aspects, such as diversity of ownership, variety in the sources of information and in the range of contents available in different places. For many analysts or observers, media pluralism has come to mean, almost exclusively, plurality of ownership.

Concentration of ownership, it is feared, may result in a skewed public discourse where certain viewpoints are excluded or underrepresented. Further, because some viewpoints are represented while others are marginalized, abuse of political power can occur through the lobbying of powerful interest groups – whether these are political, commercial or other (Commission of the European Communities, 2007).

In the context of its work in the area of media pluralism and concentrations, the Council of Europe has developed comprehensive descriptions of media pluralism. In the explanatory

memorandum to recommendation number (99) on measures to promote media pluralism, it defines media pluralism as: “diversity of media supply, reflected, for example, in the existence of a plurality of independent and autonomous media (generally called structural pluralism) as well as a diversity of media types and contents (views and opinions) made available to the public”.

Diversity of media types and contents available to the public, resulting in a diversity of choice;

- Segments of society capable of addressing the public by means of media owned by, or affiliated to them;
- Diversity of media contents in relation to:
  - Media functions (information, education, entertainment and others);
  - Issues covered (spectrum of topics, opinions and ideas covered by and represented in the media); and
  - Audience groups served (internal pluralism).

In short, pluralism of the media means a media structure that is:

- comprised of competing media outlets which are independent from each other, a central owner, or other influence;
- diversified on separate but overlapping planes of ownership, political views, cultural outlooks and regional interests;
- able to communicate to all corners of society;

- capable of conveying a great variety of information and opinion and
  - designed to draw information from a wealth of different sources
- (Karstens, 2009).

## **Why Media Freedom and Pluralism Matter?**

Freedom of expression and freedom of information – the freedoms “to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas” are basic human rights as set out in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 19. Since then, international and local human rights standards have acknowledged that freedom of speech must be accompanied by media freedom and media pluralism. Similarly it is also endorsed by the Ethiopian Constitution under article 29/2.

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, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any media of his choice (Ethiopian Constitution).

According to UN Commissioner for human right -Media pluralism is a necessary condition for freedom of speech and contributes to the development of informed societies where different voices can be heard.

Free speech and information do not occur naturally. They are values that are achieved with the assistance of the free media. If media diversity fades, even constitutionally granted speech freedoms can become meaningless and disappear. The pyramid of free expression, free flow of information and pluralism of the media comprises a crucial prerequisite for achieving and maintaining democracy (Hammarbeng, 2009 p, 4).

According to UNESCO (Windhoek Declaration 1991), in some countries there is little genuine media freedom and therefore limited space for pluralism and genuine competition. Other state controls are more discrete. By buying advertising space solely in “loyal” media,

governments can signal to businesses to follow their lead, which means that independent media are effectively boycotted. The increase in bureaucratic harassment and administrative discrimination is also of concern.

The concentration of media ownership in the private sector is yet another problem. If the mass media are dominated by a few corporations, the risk for bias and interference with editorial independence increases. McQuail in his democratic-participant media theory states that:

Individual citizens and minority groups have rights of access to media (rights to communicate) and rights to be served by media according to their own determination of need. The organization and content of media should not be subject to centralized political or state bureaucratic control. Media should exist primarily for their audience and not for media organizations, professionals or the clients of media.

In any case, pluralism is understood here as a positive affirmation of multiplicity and heterogeneity – is something that has a distinctively affective resonance and within this ‘pluralistic consensus’, it might seem that all things plural, diverse and open ended are to be regarded as inherently good. But as McLennan (1995) has pointed out, in deconstructing pluralism, we are faced with questions such as is there not a point at which healthy diversity turns into unhealthy dissonance? Does pluralism mean that anything goes? And what exactly are the criteria for stopping the potentially endless multiplication of valid ideas? Particularly in terms of the media, the unsolved problem remains, how to conceptualize the need for pluralism and diversity, inherent in all normative accounts of the public sphere, without falling in the trap of relativism, indifference and an unquestioning acceptance of market-driven difference and consumerism.

## **Is More Diversity Always Better?**

While the notion of media diversity clearly denotes heterogeneity on some level, it can be defined in any number of ways and it can refer to any aspect of the media: sources, outlets, opinions as well as genres and representations.

In debates on media policy, diversity can refer to the extent in which media contents reflect and serve various interests and opinions of the public, or it can refer to the general diffusion of media power in society on the level of ownership, economic structures, and political influence (Kari Karppinen, p.53-58 2006).

The researcher of the study tried to collect some information about the attitudes of some journalists towards pluralism. Most of them agreed to the importance of pluralism in media. But some of them explained their doubt about its importance. They said that, if several ideas came to the media it may result for diversification rather than unity on common issues that could help to facilitate development. According to a document produced by the communication affairs office (2012) “it is difficult to bring development and democracy by not giving spaces to different views”.

In analyzing the concept of pluralism, two perspectives have to be mentioned: internal and external pluralism.

### **2.1.2 Internal and External Media Pluralism**

**Internal media pluralism** reflects how social and political diversity are reflected in media content. That is, the representation of different cultural groups in the media as well as divergent political or ideological opinions and viewpoints. According to Wauters (2012,p25) “internal pluralism plays an important role in news and public affairs coverage, and also for public broadcasting and media landscapes dominated by one (monopoly) or two (duopoly)

players”. Governments can not only stimulate internal pluralism by facilitating public service broadcasting, but also by means of financial support such as grants, press funds, reduced tax rates, etc.

Whereas internal pluralism focuses on media content, **external pluralism** covers the number of owners, media companies, independent editorial boards, channels, titles or programs. This type of pluralism is also known as the 'plurality' of suppliers. From the perspective of the 'free marketplace of ideas', competition between these media content suppliers is considered to be essential in order to ensure a free choice of media content and the availability of a wide variety of opinions and ideas. This study focuses on internal pluralism (diversity with content) now on wards and does not address media diversity or the external pluralism specifically (Klimkiewicz, 2010).

### **2.1.3 Internal Media Pluralism and Diversity**

Citizen’s access to a wide range of information in the public sphere is unarguably a key condition in theorizing the relationship between media and democracy. As McLennan (1995,7) noted, “the constitutive vagueness of pluralism as a social value gives it enough ideological flexibility, so that it is capable of signifying reactionary tendencies in one phase of the debate and progressive values in the next”. From the perspective of democratic theory, it has, thus, been noted that pluralism is currently one of those values to which everybody refers but whose meaning is unclear and far from adequately theorized.

In both political and analytical discourses, the concepts of media pluralism and media diversity are used more or less synonymously, raising some confusion regarding the difference, or a possible hierarchy, between the two concepts. Media Diversity and Pluralism Diversity stands very close to freedom as a key concept in any discussion of media theory.

Glasser in McQuail (2000) presupposes most generally that the more, and the more different, channels of public communication, there carrying the maximum variety of (changing) content the greatest variety of audiences the better.

Karpinnen, (2006) defines the difference between pluralism and diversity in an explicit way. He says, the notion of media diversity is generally used in a more empirical or tangible meaning, whereas pluralism refers to a more diffuse societal value or an underlying orientation. In the broadest sense, the concept of media diversity refers to the heterogeneity on the level of contents, outlets, ownership or any other aspect of the media deemed relevant.

#### **2.1.4 Internal Media Pluralism, Democracy and Development**

In theorizing the relationship between media and democracy, citizens' access to a wide range of information in the public sphere is unarguably a key condition. Media pluralism is one of the most vital components of a democratic society, which in turn is a prerequisite for sustainable social and economic development. This fact has become more and more widely understood and accepted in May 1991, when African journalists gathered in the Namibian capital, Windhoek, for a regional seminar on promoting independent and pluralist media. The Windhoek Declaration became the first in a series of commitments, region by region; to uphold the freedom of people to voice their opinions, and their access to a variety of independent sources of information (UNESCO, 1991). Hitchens (2006) formulates this as follows:

Notwithstanding their entertainment role, particularly obvious in the case of television and radio, the media have an important function providing information, and facilitating and promoting the public debate which is seen as essential to the proper functioning of a democracy. There is an intimate relationship between democratic debate and the media.

Governments, politicians, and public figures are rarely able to gain access to citizens in sufficiently large numbers except through the media. The media have become the town square. For citizens, the media is a major source for information and commentary on public issues. “To be an effective contributor to this democratic process, the media, as a channel for ideas and information and generator of debate, must be able to offer a variety of voices and views, and operate independently, without undue dominance by public or private power” (ibid).

According to Asiuzzaman (2010), pluralism focuses on an engagement with diversity; tolerance with the active seeking of understanding across lines of difference; dialogue that reveals common understandings; independence or autonomy of the groups to enhance the openness in the system; consensus or widespread agreement among political activists and leaders on democratic principles and values.

As stated well, in a document produced by Ethiopian office of governmental communications affairs office titled *Developmental Media, Communication and Ethiopian Renaissance* (2012) -the media’s role in democracy is varied. After all, it acts as additional mechanism to check and balance on government activities; creates an enabling environment for accountability when public figures stray from the track and provides issues for public discussion by inviting citizens to actively participate in the issue of their country. In such scenario media can strengthen and benefit democracy. However, if the media fails to accomplish these responsibilities, and instead acts as mouthpiece for the interest of particular group such as the government or large corporations, it does not only fail to do its role to secure democratic governance, but it can also undermine it.

A vibrant democracy needs an independent and pluralistic media. Here, independent means media independent from governmental, political or economic control or from control of materials and infrastructure essential for the production and dissemination of media products and programs. By this process, 'public opinion' forms and influences government. The media are seen as essential to the operation of a public sphere of open debate. The press constituted a public sphere in which an open political debate could take place (Curran and Gurevitch 1996, 2000).

In general in the process of building democracy, particularly in developing countries, by its very nature the media should be plural to entertain different viewpoints, voices and culture. The same goes to issues of development. There are several definitions for the term development. For instance, Wang and Dissanayake (1984:5) describe development from a social change point of view.

Development as a process of social changes which have as its goal the improvement in the quality of life of all or majority of the people without doing violence to the natural and cultural environment in which they exist and which seeks to involve the majority of the people as closely as possible in this enterprise making them the masters of their own destiny.

The Late Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere (1974) had a different perspective of the development. He said roads, buildings, increase of crops output and other things of this nature are not development. They are only tools of development. For him development mean the development of the people (Nyerere (1974:26) cited by MulatuAlemayehu (2007).

For the late Ethiopian Prime Minister MelesZenawi -Development is not as such an alternative choice to be negotiated in any society especially for the third world country like Ethiopia. It is the issue of survival. No matter what a country has a great history or great people it does mean nothing to survive in the current globalized world. For him to resist

influences which may come from local and international conditions being developed is unquestionable. The more a country has a strong economic, social and political base, the more it becomes powerful state and would be able to influence others in various aspects (Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's speeches on Parliament, 2009)

The Panos Eastern Africa (2007) also regards media pluralism as a precondition for sustainable development. "The media is a key player in coalition of actors working to effect change". Yet for the media to play a crucial role in the development of the region it must have the capacity and space for diverse views within society and diverse channels of communication. These channels facilitate balanced information flows between and within societies on the issues affecting the poor. According to Maina (2010) the role of media in facilitating development is indispensable. "In this regard media take the key role in realizing sustainable development by informing the public to support the development process and informing the public about the barriers such as corruption, abuse of power and lack of good governance".

To carry out this role, the media should entertain political, cultural and social differences openly by representation of the public at large. Bessette, (2004 cited by Cadiz, 2005) defines participatory communication as a planned activity, based on the one hand on participatory processes, and on the other hand on media and interpersonal communication, which facilitates a dialogue among different stakeholders, around a common development problem or goal, with the objective of developing and implementing a set of activities to contribute to its solution, or its realization, and which supports and accompanies this initiative.

Siebert (1963) also agreed about the positive role of the media in development and democracy. As to him, “media role is different related with the ideology of the governments in the country”.

In authoritarian government, the media function is helping the ruler to stay in the power. The day to day activities of the media is highly related with propaganda, propagating the people about positive aspects of the government and invite people to be part of the government system. The media can be taken as benevolent authoritarian. On the other side in a democratic government the main business of the media is serving the interest of the citizens (Siebert et al, 1963).

According to UNESCO most African countries perceive media pluralism as a threat (UNESCO 1991). There is similar tendencies in Ethiopia also. But media scholars argue that it is rather an engine of growth as far as the dissemination of information is concerned and this can be achieved only through support to create a pluralistic media structure in which public, private and community media performs mutually exclusive and complementary functions. Media pluralism is incomplete unless adequate structures to facilitate community voices at the grassroots level are assured.

## **2.2 Determinants of Media Pluralism**

Independent study on Indicators for Media Pluralism in the Member States, prepared for the European Commission Directorate-General Information Society (2009), identifies five dimensions of media pluralism. These are political pluralism, cultural Pluralism, geographic/local pluralism, pluralism of media ownership and control, pluralism of media types and genres. For this thesis I want to focus only the first three dimensions.

### **2.2.1 Political Pluralism in the Media**

A free and plural media are an indispensable part of the democratic process. They provide the multiplicity of voices and opinions that informs the public, influences opinion, and engenders political debate. They promote the culture of dissent which any healthy democracy must have. In so doing, they contribute to the cultural fabric of the nation and help define our sense of identity and purpose.

Political media pluralism can be described as fair and diverse representation of and expression by (i.e. passive and active access) the various political and ideological groups in the media, including minority viewpoints and interests. This definition is thus twofold.

On the one hand, it encompasses the capacity and possibility of all social segments having diverse political/ideological forms or interests to address/reach the public by means of media (owned by, or affiliated to them, or owned by third parties) and on the other hand, the spectrum of (political and ideological) viewpoints, opinions and interests covered by and represented in the media (Lefever, et.al 2012).

In the vein of anti-essentialism, Keane (1992), for instance, has argued that political values of democracy and freedom of speech themselves should be conceived as means and necessary preconditions of protecting philosophical and political pluralism, rather than as inherent principles themselves. Political pluralism is about the need, in the interests of democracy, for a wide range of political opinions and viewpoints to be represented in the media. “Democracy would be threatened if any single voice within the media, with the power to propagate a single political viewpoint, were to become too dominant” (ibid)

According to a number of authors, accounting for a radical socio-political pluralism and accepting multiplicity and pluralism in all social experiences, identities, aesthetics and moral standards have become the main thrusts of social and political theory (McLennan, 1995).

Hence, the attraction of pluralism in media policy would seem to be closely linked to the attacks on universal quality criteria or other unambiguous scales for assessing media performance. Respectively, it can be argued that the normative theories and concepts on which media policy lean have generally taken a marked pluralistic or anti-essentialist turn in recent decades. Instead of a singular notion of the public sphere, national culture or the common good, theorists today prefer stressing the plurality of public spheres, politics of difference, and the complexity of ways in which the media can contribute to democracy (Keane, 1992, Mouffe, 2000).

### **2.2.2 Cultural Pluralism in the Media**

Cultural media pluralism refers to fair and diverse representation of and expression by (*i.e.* passive and active access) the various cultural, linguistic, religious, ethnic groups, disabled people, women and sexual minorities in the media. It comprises plurality and a variety of themes and voices brought to the media, socialisation through multiple forms of media access and participation, choice between different forms of interaction and representation of diverse values, viewpoints and roles, in which citizens belonging to various national, ethnic, cultural, linguistic groups, including women, disabled people and sexual minorities, can recognise themselves (Lefever, et.al 2012).

With the idea that all forms of culture contain their own criteria of quality and no definition of quality can legitimately repudiate another, Nielsen (2003, p238) argues as follows.

The universal basis for defining cultural quality has unavoidably been broken. This applies particularly well to the sphere of media where the paternalism and elitism often associated with traditional public service values have come under increasing criticism, consequently spurring the need for new legitimating principles.

### **2.2.3 Geographical (locational) Pluralism in the Media**

Geographical media pluralism refers to fair and diverse representation of and expression by (*i.e.* passive and active access) local and regional communities and interests in the media. It comprises plurality and variety of themes and voices brought to the media, socialisation through multiple forms of media access and participation, choice between different forms of interaction, and representation of diverse values, viewpoints and roles, in which local and regional communities can be recognised. Such pluralism may be read through the spatial dimension (media contents are produced and distributed within a local and regional community) or the social/content dimension (Napoli, 2013, p.159). This study have been guided the two theories which are discussed with the next sub section.

## **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.3.1 Public Sphere Theory**

The public sphere is an area in social life where people can get together and freely discuss and identify societal problems and through that discussion influence political action. In his definition of the concept, Hebermas (1996, p. 398) writes:

By the ‘‘public sphere’’ we mean first of all a domain of our social life in which such a thing as public opinion can be formed. Accesses to the public forum are open to all citizens. A portion of public sphere is constituted in every conversation in which private persons come together to form a public. When the public is large, this kind of communication requires certain means of dissemination and influence: today, newspapers, radio and television are the media of the public sphere. We speak of a political public sphere when the public discussions concern objects connected with the practice of state.

The theory of public sphere has its own belief. According to Seyla (1992), the basic belief in the theory is that political action is steered by the public sphere, and that the only legitimate

governments are those that listen to the public sphere. “The public sphere has also great democratic values. Democratic governance rests on the capacity of and opportunity for citizens to engage in enlightened debate” (Hauser 1998, p. 83).

For facilitating and implementation of governance public sphere has its own value. Mcloughlin and Scott (2010,p.9) also noted the value of public sphere as “the public sphere is important in governance not only because it can facilitate civic action and public participation in decision making, but critically because it is also the space where public opinion is formed and articulated.”

In his later work, *Between Facts and Norms*, Habermas improved his notion of the public sphere to include and reflect the working of contemporary democracies. Habermas’s updated notion of the public sphere implies that audiences have the power to stir up critical debate and that the media have the ability to be the vehicle of that debate. Habermas’s conception of the public sphere (and the role of the media in contemporary democracies) suggests that the public sphere is an impartial space in society and free from both state and corporate control (Habermas, 1996).

According to Banda,(2009, p.17) the concept of a pluralistic public sphere is increasingly used to denote how the media should be structured in order for them to perform the types of function that the eighteenth-century public sphere performed. As such, the media is expected to be organized in such a way that it:

- can be open to all people, regardless of their standing or position in society. As such, the media must be accommodating to women as well.

- must encourage voluntary participation of those who want to participate in the formation of public opinion.
- must be open to all shades of opinion.
- must facilitate discussion of matters of state policy and action.
- must allow for the criticism of the way state power is organized, or whatever else may be criticized.

The public sphere approach also fails to explain how issues such as economic and political status, race, gender geographical location, etc., help to privilege certain opinions as “public opinion” and suppress opposing views.

### **2.3.2 Development Journalism Theory**

This theory recognizes the press as an instrument of social justice and a tool for achieving beneficial social change. In other words, the media should carry out positive development tasks in line with nationally established policy. Development journalism follows the former discussion about development politics that fundamentally presumes development as a central social objective, and the mass media play a decisive role in the process. Development journalism comprises the reporting on ideas, programs, activities and events, which are related to an improvement of the living standard, mainly in the rural regions. Basically, it is assumed that journalism is able to influence the development process by reporting on development programs and activities.

Murthy (2006) put development journalism as the promotion of development process rather than events, development news covers the entire development of socio-economic and cultural

development in its treatment it is not different from regular news/investigative reporting. Accordingly, it is “the journalist’s duty to critically examine and evaluate the relevance of a development project to national and local needs, the difference between a planned scheme and its actual implementation, and the difference between its impact on people as claimed by government officials and as it actually is”.

Banda (2007) defines the practice through five characteristics:

- ✓ it reports on achievements and shortcomings in development;
- ✓ it focuses on long-term development;
- ✓ it stays independent from government and criticizes its leaders;
- ✓ it focuses on development issues while working constructively with the government in nation-building; and
- ✓ it empowers ordinary people

In authoritarian type of development journalism, the opinion and involvement of the government are more important criteria for reporting than the development projects themselves. Ultimately, this journalism can make a contribution to the stabilization of unfair power structures and become a servant of governments. Kunczik (1995) (cited in Wimmer and Wolf, 2005:2).

Development journalism has attracted considerable antagonism over the years. This is because the practice has been blamed for promoting political agendas instead of people’s interests. The strong dependency on the state, especially the African version of development journalism, has roused worries from press freedom organizations. The media’s contribution

to development occurs simultaneously along several storylines. According to Locksley (2008, p.5) the media's development impact includes the following.

**Plurality and transparency-** the contribution that a plural media environment makes to good governance and transparency and the functioning of market and inspiring beneficial changes in the behaviours of individuals, groups and organizations.

**A plural media environment-** a participating (sometimes two-way) process and a large of media provides across an array of contents enables increased access to information and wider diffusion of knowledge within a country (ibid,p.6).

Therefore a media institution which has a mission to contribute in the process of development and democracy needs to practice the principles of pluralism. This was why development Journalism was selected as a theoretical frame work of the study.

### **3. Brief History of Mass Media in Ethiopia**

#### **◆ Print Media**

Though Ethiopia is believed to have started writing since the fourth century and introduced the printing machine at the 17th century, the establishment of the mass media in the country has a very short history. Newspaper publications started in Ethiopia by the time of Emperor Haile Selassie I with a few other publications. However, modern mass media was introduced in Ethiopia a century ago, during the regime of Menelik II. The first medium to be introduced was a weekly newspaper (La Se-mained' Ethiopie, 1890), published in French by a Franciscan missionary living in Harar (Population Media Centre, 2006).

However, some historical evidences suggest that the hand written sheet produced by BlatagebreEgziabher around 1900 probably was exists before both of the above papers. In 1966 the governmental BerhanenaSelam Printing Press was established. The enterprise played a role in the publication of two national weekly newspapers, Addis Zemen in Amharic (1941) and its English counterpart the Ethiopian Herald, in 1943. These two served as the main official press organs of the state and as the main source of information for literate people.

During the seventeen years of military rule, the government-and party-owned publications Meskerem ("September"), SertoAder ("Worker"), and the pre-DergueYezareyitu Ethiopia ("Ethiopia Today") were published in addition to the two previously mentioned newspapers. For the most part, these print media were controlled by the military ruled government, subject to official censorship and string-pulling. Until the 1990's, the Socialist government, controlled the publication of newspapers and used the press for propaganda purposes (Shimels, 2000).

In October 1992 the proclamation of the Press Freedom Bill by the Ethiopian Transitional Government came to appear for the first time. After the proclamation of the Press Freedom Bill, hundreds of new, private newspapers and magazines developed, particularly in the capital, Addis Ababa. This period could be termed as the flowering point of the Ethiopian media, especially the private media.

According to research work by Population Media Centre (2006), the 1991 change of government has been given a unique place in the history of Ethiopian journalism because of two main events. The first one is that pre- published censorship was outlawed, and this led to the publication of different presses. Secondly, press ownership, which had been monopolized

by government and the ruling party for many years, was permitted to private citizens with the exclusion of radio and television.

However, most of the newspapers and magazines have vanished as dramatically as they have appeared leaving some 89 newspapers and 32 magazines circulating mainly in the national and regional capitals (Former Ministry of Information, 2004). The main reasons for what happened were financial problems and some newspapers are against the public norms. Nerveless, after the 2005 national election and the crackdown that followed it, nascent of media development environment began to deteriorate. A number of newspapers became out of market for various reasons.

### ◆ **Broadcasting Media- /Radio and Television/**

In developing countries like Ethiopia where the illiteracy rate is so high, radio has the potential to reach millions. McLeish enlists some of the benefits the medium offers as follows:

- It acts as a multiplier of change, speeding up the process of informing a population, and heightening an awareness of key issues.
- It acts as a watchdog on power holders, providing contact between them and the public.
- It disseminates ideas. These may be radical, leading to new beliefs and values, so promoting diversity and change-or they may reinforce traditional values, so helping to maintain social order through the statuesque.
- It enables individuals and groups to speak to each other, developing an awareness of a common membership of society (McLeish 2005 p11).

This important mass media technology came into Ethiopia in 1933 only 14 years after the introduction to the world (government communication affairs, 2004). An experimental radio station existed in the 1930s which was stopped during the Italian invasion in 1936. After Ethiopia chased out the Italian invading force, Radio Ethiopia started broadcasting in 1941. Radio Voice of the Gospel also started its operation in 1963 owned by World Lutheran Federation and later nationalized by the Dergue regime in 1980. Currently, there are a number of regional, federal, commercial and community radio stations in the country. According to the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority (2012), about fourteen community, eighteen governmental (including branches), and thirteen commercial stations were licensed by authority.

Regarding Television service, it was introduced to Ethiopia during the Emperor Haile Selassie. Ethiopian Television started its broadcasting service on November 2, 1964 (Population media centre, 2008). Until the 2008 the establishment of Oromia Television, Ethiopian Television was the only television station in Ethiopia. Today there are some additional TV stations in the eastern part of the country such as Harar, Dire Dawa, and Somali owned by the respective regional states. However, till now there is no any privately owned TV station rather the state owned Ethiopian radio and television agency working to own more channels (Broadcast Authority, 2012).

In conclusion, during the three regimes of Ethiopia /the Imperial, the Dergue, and the EPRDF regime/, television and radio have been monopolized by government, except for a recent effort to provide licence for some four commercial and sixteen community radio stations. In this regard, Ethiopia has not exhibited a significant media development like that of several other African countries.

## **Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

Under this section, the methodology that was undertaken in the study is briefly discussed. The major points include are the methodology, samples, the sampling procedures and the techniques; the unit of analysis, analytical categories, reliability of coding and data analysis process.

### **3.1 Data Collection Methods of the Research**

The purpose of this study is to examine the media pluralism practice and problems of FBC particularly related to its news magazine coverage. In terms of method, quantitative content analytic approach has been employed as a main method, while adding a qualitative method of in-depth interview to it. Using such pair of methods is commonly known as ‘triangulation’ or “mixed methods”.

The next sub-sections elaborate why these methods of enquiry have been selected and how much they are relevant in answering the questions raised by this study.

#### **3.1.1 Quantitative Content Analysis**

Quantitative research method is the most empirical methods in the discussion of textual (content) analysis. Content analysis has been able and continues to be one of the most widely used research methods dealing with media and communication studies (Hansen et al., 1998; Berger, 2000). This familiar method will be employed in this study because it aims at systematic analysis of news content, which is also the aim of this study. Since it is a persuasive method that can generate reliable, replicable facts, the findings of this study will be easily endorsed.

## **Definition of Content Analysis**

Different scholars give several definitions to the term content analysis. The classic and frequently quoted definition of content analysis is given by Berelson (1952, as cited in Stone et al, 1999, p.323) as “content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication”. The “manifest” content communication is anything spoken (and recorded), written, published, broadcast, presented as a graphic or on film, or digitized (Stone et al, 1999). Generally, Berelson’s definition is supported by many scholars of the area; for instance, Fiske (1990, p.136) suggested that ‘content analysis is designed to produce an objective, measurable, and verifiable account of the manifest content of messages.’

Berelson’s definition is criticized by some (e.g., Gunter, 2000) for its pure restriction on quantitative analysis and its concern with manifest content only. Taking these limitations into account, other scholars rather presented alternative definitions of the term content analysis. According to Walizer and Wienir (1978, as cited in Gunter, 2000, p.56), “content analysis is any systematic procedure devised to examine the content of recorded information.” Kerlinger (2000, as cited in Wimmer and Dominick, 2006, p.150) defines it as “a method of studying and analysing communication in a systematic, objective and quantifiable manner for the purpose of measuring variables”. However, critics say that content analysis could never be objective in a value-free world. Because human beings by their nature are subjective and thus cannot be absolutely value-free in their judgments.

The content analysis of various media messages can serve us as an insight to know the socioeconomic and political situations, policies and strategies, and the style of political communication of different governments. Content analysis, thus, as a research technique has

a number of functions or purposes. According to Gunter (2000; 2002), the central thrust of content analysis is to provide a descriptive account of what a media text (i.e. TV programme, newspaper report, magazine feature) contains, and to do so in a form that can be repeated by others.

However, content analysis by its very nature has got some shortcomings. It tells only the 'what' of the content studied and leaves out the 'why'. The survey can generate data of a broad scope but little context; In order to fill some of the gaps the researcher will use some in-depth interviews to gather additional data.

### **3.1.2 In-depth Interview**

In-depth interviews are most appropriate for situations in which a researcher wants to ask open-ended questions, that elicit depth of information from a relatively few people. According to Kvale (1996) in-depth interview is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation. Kvale (1996) further notes the importance of in-depth qualitative interviews as excellent tools to use in gathering qualitative data. They use an open-ended, discovery-oriented method, which allows the interviewer to deeply explore the respondent's feelings and perspectives on a subject. It helps acquire rich background information that can shape further questions relevant to the topic.

According to Jensen & Jankowski (1991), interview has a number of advantages. One is that it can cover variety views on a given subject. This could be done either by interviewing different informants in order to get diversified opinions or by preparing interview questions that cover over a wide area of subjects. Interview can also be useful as "heuristic devices"; leading to new perspectives and generating questions for later inquiries.

Thus interviewing is one of the most widely used data collection methods in media and communication research (Gunter, 2002), and it is mainly applied in the qualitative research method. There are a number of different types of interviews, such as informal conversational interview, investigative, personal, and in-depth and focus group interview and others. But, the focus of this study is limited to in-depth interview alone, as a qualitative research method for data collection.

In the literature, though the term in-depth interview is used interchangeably with terms like unstructured interview, non-directive interview (Gray, 2004) or intensive interview (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006); strictly speaking they are not the same. In an in-depth interview, the interviewer develops a framework called an interview guide, within which to conduct the interview. Within this structure, the interviewer formulates questions spontaneously during an interview (Kumar, 1999). Thus, should comprise the central topic and usually the key open-ended list of questions that will help the researcher (interviewer) to keep focus on the topic that is deemed to be investigated during the interview process.

In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives, (by implication their country's stand), on a particular idea, program, or situation (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Respondents are allowed to talk freely around the subject, while the role of the interviewer is mainly confined to checking on any doubtful points and rephrasing answers to check for accuracy of understanding (Gray, 2004).

For the purpose of this study, an in-depth interview was used for the following three reasons. First, it is used to triangulate or complement the data gained through quantitative content analysis from those selected news contents so as to verifying the credibility of their results.

Second, in depth interview is employed to assist in exploring the deeper understanding of the topic related to the corporate, i.e. FBC particularly to examine one of the determinants of media pluralism, Pluralism of Media Ownership and Control. At last, it is suitable to investigate some of the research questions raised in this research.

The participants for the in-depth interview were selected based on their relevance for the study. This includes the Chief and Deputy Executive Managers of FBC, Director of news and current affairs Directorate an expert from media study and editorial quality Directorate were selected. Those informants from FBC were selected due to their direct involvement on the news contents in one or another way. Besides this, among the opposing political parties leaders of Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) and Ethiopian Visionary parties were interviewed to cross check the responses of those selected informants from FBC, particularly about the practice of political pluralism in the news magazine coverage. These political parties were selected based on their availability and willing to give information to the study.

### **3.2 Sampling and Sampling Procedures**

Samples are taken from populations. In research, the term ‘population’ can refer to people, aggregates of texts, institutions, or anything else being investigated. The size of a population can thus be small or large depending on what the researcher is investigating (Deacon et al., 1999). In principle, it is desirable to study all of the units that form the population of interest in a given study. However, in practice this is rarely done or it is often not practicable because of the following main reasons: cost, feasibility, time and quality (Lynn, 2002). As a result, sampling has been taken as a solution to the aforementioned problems. A sample is any subset or representative of a total subject from which sample is drawn in order to generalize the finding of a given study to the population as a whole (Stone, et al, 1999).

In this study, the researcher directly selected news magazine broadcast for a period of six months that is from September 11, 2012 to February 28, 2013. The selection of the news magazines includes the news realised on odd calendar dates excluding the weekends and holydays. This is because the station does not have news magazine on these days. Odd calendar days were those which are counted with odd numbers such as the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> days of the selected months. It might be helpful to have taken large sample to generalize the findings. But, due to time constraints and some difficulties to get the necessary documents of the sample, the researcher has got it infeasible. However, to compromise such limitation with the sample 75% of the magazines within the decided time period were taken.

As stated before the sample size covers six months from September 2012 to February 2013. The reason behind this decision was that to examine the current status of the corporate related to practicing media pluralism. In addition to this, there were several serious political, religious and economic activities during the selected period of time which could be considered as the turning point of the country. This includes the replacement of the Prime Minister after the death of the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, high inflation rate, and election of the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Council and new Patriarch for the Orthodox Church. These big issues of the time were the concerns of the majority. There were different points of views regarding the issues. The local media including FBC gave large coverage about those issues. This all makes the selected sample in the period of time proper for this study. Here, a purposive sampling technique was employed.

Thus sixty one news magazines have been chosen out of ninety five (2/3) of the total programmes. Each news magazine item on the selected days were collected and analysed according to the analytical categories which were identified to examine the practice of pluralism in the news magazines. In other words, all items of the selected sixty one news

magazine programmes were taken in to consideration. According to the data collected from the news room of the station a news magazine program consists of four to five news items on average. Therefore about 324 news items were coded for this study. This was done to compare and deeply analyse the determinants of media pluralism practices and challenges in the corporate's news coverage. Furthermore, additional information was explored by the in-depth interview. This is to mean, the impact of the time period limitation on the final findings were too minimal.

After having the complete documents of the news magazines, the researcher decided to identify different dimension of the pluralism categories in the news magazines. These includes content of each news, format of the news, the priority given to the news item, air time (length), sources, and some other issues which are discussed broadly in the sub section of unit of analysis and analytical categories.

### **3.2.1 Rationalizing of the Selection**

Fana Broadcasting Corporate were selected purposefully based on the ownership type, its relatively better geographical coverage capacity and popularity particularly from other commercial broadcasting media institutions in the country. The selection also considered the editorial policy and the current motto of the corporate. Its editorial policy (1992) incorporates the importance of diversity and pluralism in the media. Its current motto also underlines this issue. "Free thinking, for a better life!" Thus to entertain the concept of free thinking at least a plural idea has to get enough spaces from the perspective of political ideologies , views, cultural differences and geographical locations. To this end the issue of pluralism of the media ownership and Control also matters. Hence, these are the determinants of media pluralism.

On the other hand, as Ethiopia is one of the countries with a population of about 85 million with very diversified culture, political views, geographical locations, it is crucial to examine the current status whether FBC as a nation-wide media has given due attention to the issue of pluralism in the media. Even though the station is broadcasting a number of programmes and news for 18 hours a day with the national (SW and MW) and 9 FM radio stations on five local languages, this study focuses on the Amharic language evening news magazine only.

The rationale behind the decision of this is that:-

- The corporate gives much emphasis for this particular program;
- The selected news magazine was broadcast with all the outlets that FBC has SW, MW, the nine FM stations and the internet. Therefore its reaches to the mass audience is expected to be high;
- The selected programme has the very nature of entertaining the concepts of media pluralism;
- As several research findings on the media indicates, audiences are more attracted to the news related to other media programme formats to get current local and global information, the news has a better possibility to create impact (Media, Communication, and the Ethiopian Renaissance, 2012).

### **3.2.2 Unit of Analysis**

After the media type, dates or time frame and story/content type have been determined, the next step is to decide on and select the unit of analysis, which is an important part of content analysis. The unit of analysis is the entity that is counted in a content analysis.

Taking into account what has been said before, the unit of analysis for this specific study is combination of items and their themes in advance which represent the whole determinants of

media pluralism in each news story of FBC that explicitly or implicitly deals with practicing the concept of pluralism in the media.

In terms of news content of the units of analysis; content of each news, format of the news piece, priority of the news, air time length (duration), the persons or the type of organizations involved in the news, the aim of the story, the source of the news, the place where the news focused and some other additional units were tested. These are more elaborated in the next sub topic, analytical categories.

### **3.3 Analytical Categories**

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2006), at the heart of any content analysis is the category system that is used to classify media content. They further note that to be practical, all analytical categories should be mutually exclusive (when a unit of analysis can be placed in one and only one category), exhaustive (there must be an existing category or slot into which every unit of analysis can be placed) and reliable.

On the other hand, as Stempel III (1989), states that, analytical categories must be pertinent to the objectives of the study, must be functional and manageable.

Taking these into consideration, for this study, the researcher has decided on the following main categories presented along with their operational definitions.

**3.3.1 Theme (content) of the news:** - this refers to the central idea, message or main focus of the news. The major themes of the stories related to the media pluralism were coded as politics, culture, economic, social, business and others.

**3.3.2 Format of the story:** - refers to the type of the format in which a story belongs to. This includes ‘news in brief’, ‘feature’, and ‘expertise /interview’. Priority and duration of the news: - stands for the priority and the air time duration given to the news respectively. Prime, middle and end were associated with priority and the duration was measured in terms of minutes. A story with a format of feature or expertise interview and prime time with relatively long duration were regarded as most important, while others were viewed as more and less important respectively.

**3.3.3 Participants in the story:** - this category indicates some of the determinants of pluralism in the media. For this research the participants were coded as officials from the federal, ‘developed’ or ‘developing’ regional or zonal administrates, opposing political parties, civil societies and NGOS, grass roots in Addis Ababa or out of Addis.

**3.3.4 Producer of the news:** - The main types of producer were coded as; staff reporters from the main office or from the regional FM stations, news agencies, information and communication offices and mixed contributors.

**3.3.5 Location in the story:** - it refers to the geographical location where the news was focused. The locations were coded as; Addis Ababa city administration, ‘developed’ regional states including zones and weredas, ‘developing’ regional states and mixed.

### **3.4 Data Analysis Process**

The data analyses process began with the presentation of the findings of the selected media contents in terms of the previously described analytical categories. To describe the findings of the collected data, the researcher utilized tables and figures. Following the preliminary data descriptions, the researcher has proceeded to analyse, interpret and compare the results and focus of the selected news coverage in relation to the issue of media pluralism.

Later, the findings from the in-depth interviews were analysed thematically, in terms of their major ideas or themes. The researcher has also tried to correlate the findings of the selected news magazines along with their content analysis vis-à-vis the data gathered through an in-depth interview. In addition to these, some cues from the theoretical framework of this study and other previously conducted researches also used as additional inputs to fertile the analysis and discussion part.

## **Chapter Four: Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion**

The data gathered from the subject of the study are presented with their analysis and discussion under this section. This research has focused on the practice and challenges of internal media pluralism in FBC's "News Magazine" program. News magazine is a television or radio program that presents a variety of topics, usually on current events, in a format that includes interviews and commentary (Hullen 2006, p.2006). The samples of the program were coded with their respective news item. Thus contents in the duration from September 11, 2012 to February 28, 2013 have been selected for the discussion. In addition to this, in-depth interview were conducted with several informants who are working in FBC at higher position, experts and some political party leaders. The findings of the research have been presented in the following sub sections.

### **4.1 Presentation and Analysis of data**

Sixty one news magazine programs were selected in the time ranging from September 11, 2012 to February 28, 2013, among the total of 324 news items which focused on different issues. These stories were further examined in relation to the seven analytical categories identified for the study. The discussion also examines the categories to examine the categories with the three identified determinants of media pluralism.

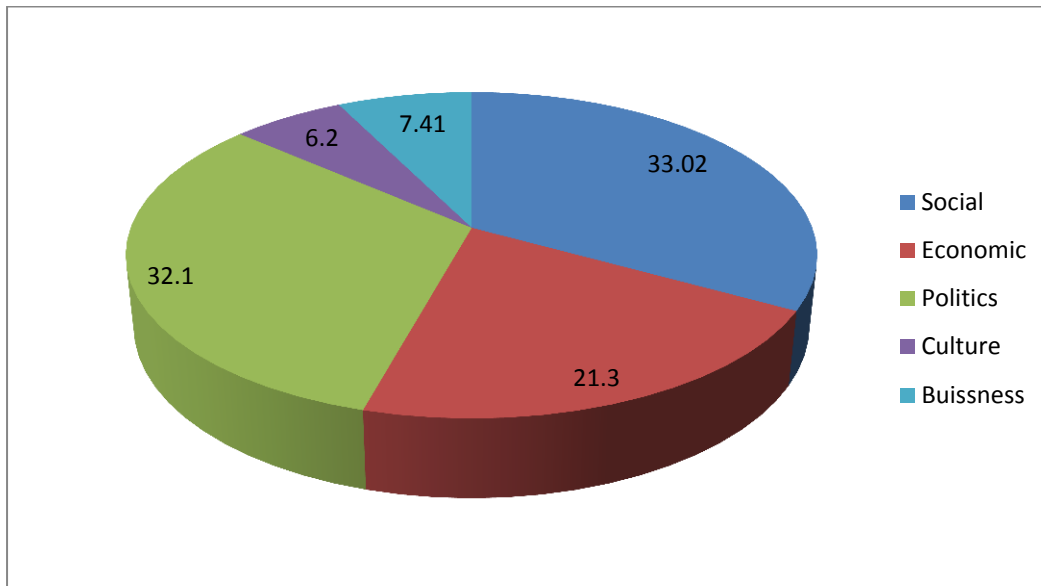
### **4.1.1 Content of the News Item**

Based on the research question which was asked, “Do news stories in FBC entertain pluralism from the perspective of determinants of media pluralism?” it was very important to examine the content of the news items. The analysis of this category was particularly related to the two determinants of media pluralism, political and cultural pluralism.

Out of the total of 324 (100%) stories 107(33.02%) have focused on social issues, i.e., health, education, traffic, house construction, human trafficking, natural disasters, court decisions, and others. Other programmes were politics 104(32.1%), economic 69 (21.3%), business 24 (7.41%) and culture 20 (6.2%). They were rated from second to fifth respectively. Regarding the political news content, local and international elections, terrorism, parliament reports, issues of good governance, Ethiopian foreign relation and global political issues were the common issues in the news magazine.

Issues related to banking services, saving, sales of bond for the great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, inflation, tax, infrastructural developments, agriculture, mining and economic crises of the Euro zone were among the most repeatedly covered issues in the selected news magazine programmes in economics report section. Among the contents identified as cultural news, most of them were focused on election of Islamic council and patriarch of Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Issues related to copy rights, nations and nationalities day, the resigning of the Roman Catholic Church pop were also other issues covered with in the duration.

**Figure 4.1** Percentages of News Content Distribution

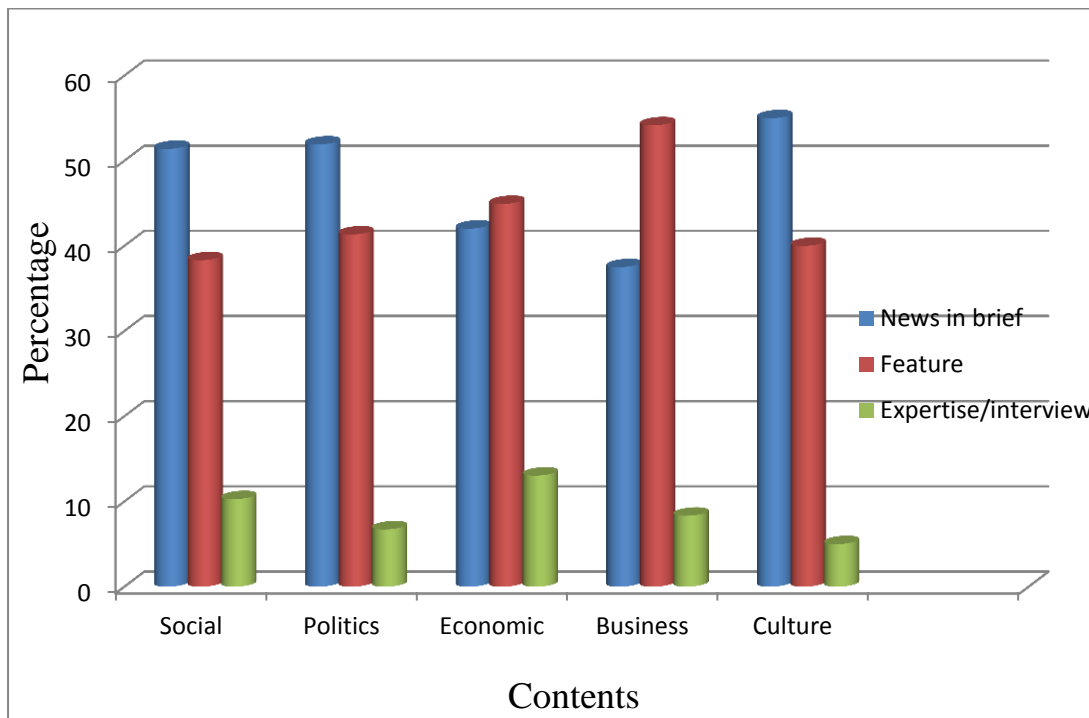


As it can be easily observed from the above pie chart, about 86% of the news contents are related to social, economic, and political issues. Hence, the emphasis was given for the social, economic, and political issues.

#### **4.1.2 Formats Used for the News Pieces**

The formats for the news magazine programmes in FBC were basically three types. There was news content produced in a much summarized manner, which they called “news in brief”. “News feature” was the other format. In this format the news items were produced in a more detailed way, including different stake holders. The last one is with an interviewee. The interviewee can be an expert or an official who is concerned on issue. The interviewee is invited to explain questions which are raised from the journalist, usually it is live transmission. The formats applied on the news item have been presented with respective content as follows.

**Figure 4.2** Formats used with the respective news content

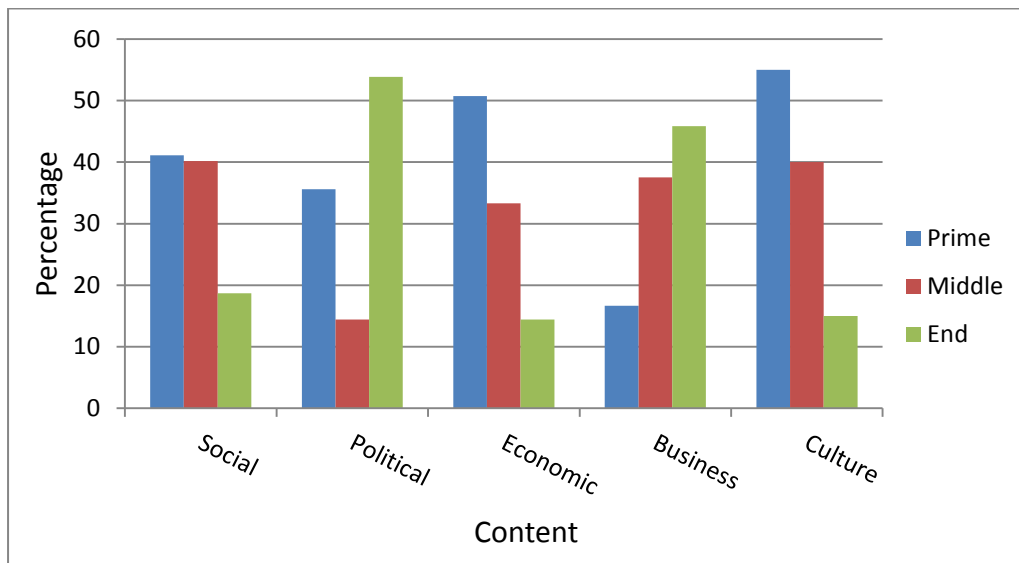


The formats of the news were indicators to the emphasis given to the news item. News content which was believed to be most important by the news editorial was presented in feature, inviting an expert or responsible official in interview format.

### **4.1.3 Priority of the News Item**

Regarding the priority given to news, clear differences were revealed among the news items on the news magazine. According to Ato Abraham Haile who was the Director of news and current affairs directorate, the process of ordering the news items basically depends on the importance of the story for the audience and its significance to facilitate changes in various perspectives throughout the country, mainly focused on development and democratization.

**Figure 4.3** Percentage of the priority given with respective news content



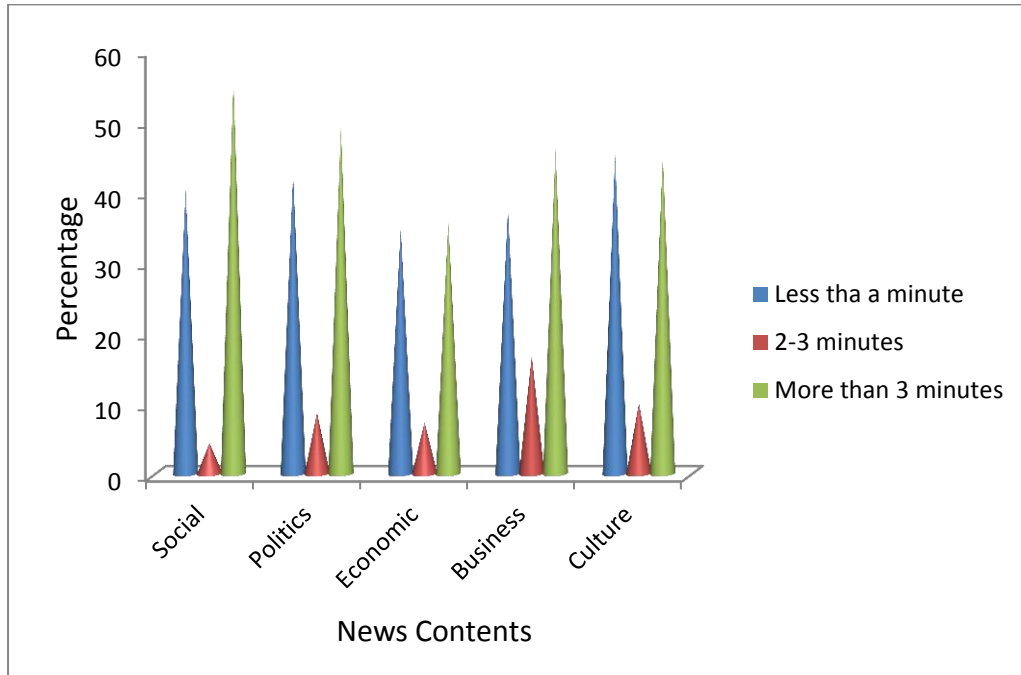
In this regards those news with economic content were mostly primary news followed by social and political news. Here, it was noticed that local political news was most of the time prime news. Among the total 104 political news items 25 (24.04%) of them were international political news. Hence, the presence of this international political news in the sample decreases the priority on the political issues because such news was always presented at the middle or end of the news magazine program.

#### **4.1.4 Air time length**

According to FBC's program and news manual, the news magazine has a total of thirty minutes air time. Within this duration, four to six news items will be presented in feature and either interview or expert formats. News presented in brief share two to three minutes of the allocated air time. The duration given for the news items indicate the importance of the issue according to Abraham Haile the news Director .As stated on the program and news manual of FBC, the air time will be allocated by considering the importance of the news item and

content. News which was labelled as current, more important and issues that need clarification or justification might take to the maximum five to seven minutes per news.

**Figure 4.4** Percentage of air time length with respective news content



As indicated in the above figure, more than half of the news (55.14% of the sample), i.e., related to social issues were covered with an air time of more than three minutes. Only 4.36% of news items belonged to this content were covered with less than a minute. In a similar way, 49.04% of political, 35.58% economic, 45.83% business and 45% cultural news also have been covered with more than three minutes. Hence, the priority has still given for social issues and then to politics, economics, business and cultural issues respectively.

#### **4.1.5 Type of Sources (Participants in the News)**

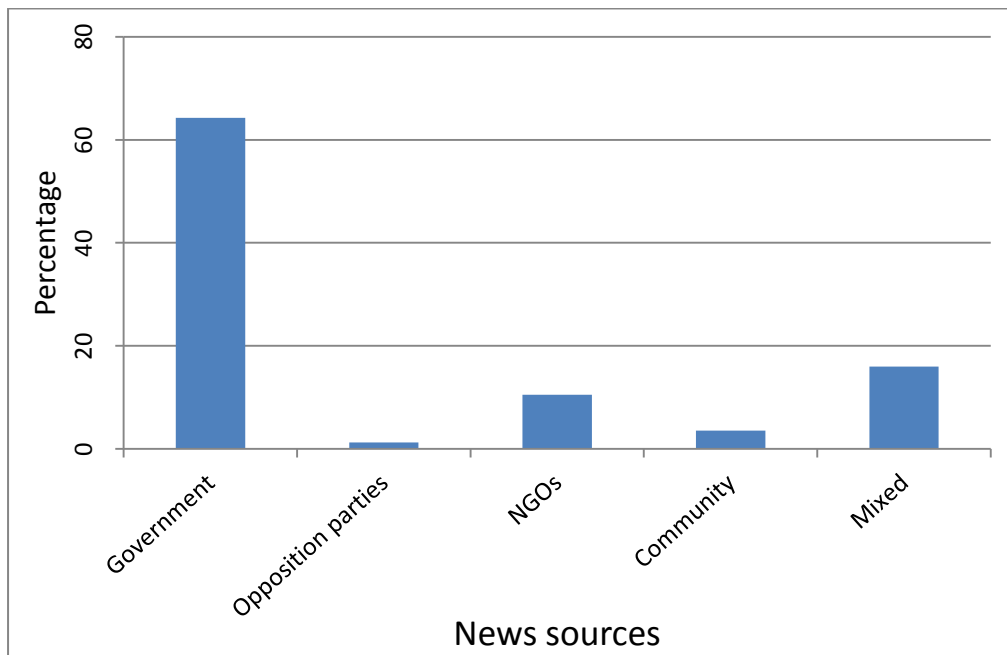
In all news contents, government officials have been used as a major source of information, particularly officials from the Federal Government and Addis Ababa City Administration. Other sources identified in this study such as government officials from developing regional

states, opposing political parties, NGOs and communities from outside Addis Ababa were almost nil particularly in political, economic, and business news.

**Table 4.5** Sources of information used according to the news contents

Sources	Contents									
	Social		Politics		Economic		Business		Culture	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Federal government officials	27	25.23	44	42.31	25	36.23	8	33.33	2	10
Developed regional states	7	6.54	4	3.85	3	4.35	0	0	0	0
Developing regional states	3	2.8	3	2.88	1	1.45	0	0	1	5
Officials from Addis Ababa	16	14.95	21	20.19	6	8.69	3	12.5	0	0
Opposition political parties	0	0	5	4.81	1	1.45	0	0	0	0
NGOS	6	5.61	0	0	2	2.89	1	4.17	8	40
Community members in Addis Ababa	3	2.8	0	0	1	1.45	1	4.17	1	5
Community members outside Addis Ababa	0	0	3	2.88	1	1.45	1	4.17	1	5
Mixed	29	27.1	5	4.81	12	2.89	6	25	4	20
Governmental organization	16	14.95	11	10.58	17	24.64	5	20.83	4	20
Non specified sources	0	0	8	7.69	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Figure 4.5** Percentage of sources quoted in the news



As presented on the table 4.5, particularly the participation of relatively developing regional states (Afar, Somali, Benishangul Gumuz, and Gambella), opposition political parties, NGOs and community members at the grass roots were very less. Even the representativeness of ‘developed’ regional states (Amhara, Oromya, Tigray, Harari, South Nation and Nationalities People) and Dire Dawa City Administration was very low.

In the contrary, officials from the Federal Government and Addis Ababa City Administration have taken the lion shares, followed by sources of the governmental organizations concentrated in and around the capital city. The reason, why does this happen and what it’s positive or negative impact on media pluralism are, will be discussed under the discussion section of the study.

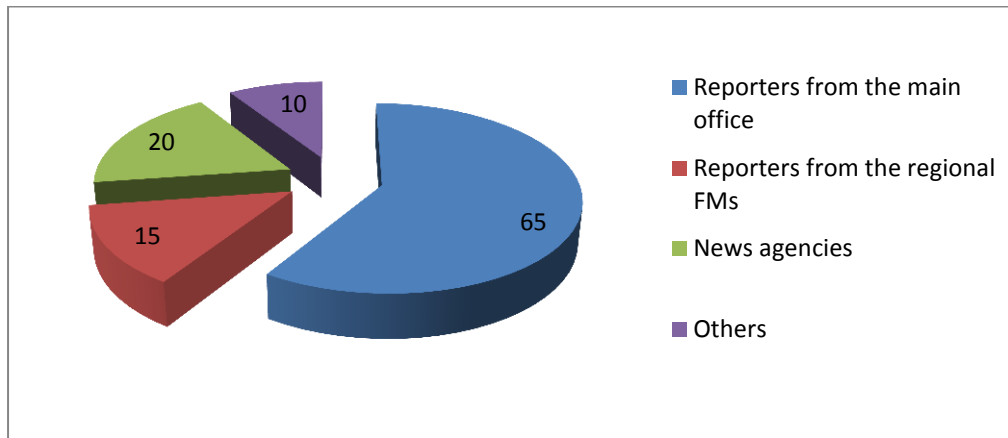
#### 4.1.6 Producer of the News

Staff reporters from the main office were the major actress in reporting or producing news. Among the sample news 86.92% of the social, 44.23% of political, 81.16% of economic, 87.5% business and 85% of cultural news were reported by staff reporters from the main office. The role of reporters from regional FMs of FBC was very insignificant. Only 2.8% of social, 0.96% of political and 7.25% of economic news were covered by reporters from regional FMs. In addition, their participation was almost nil in cultural and business news.

**Table 4.6** Participation of Reporters in News Coverage

Covered by	Social		Politics		Economic		Business		Culture	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Staff reporters from the main office	93	86.92	46	44.23	56	81.16	21	87.5	17	85
Reporters from regional FMs	3	2.8	1	0.96	5	7.25	0	0	0	0
News agencies	9	8.41	58	55.77	8	11.59	2	8.33	3	15
Information & communication offices	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
others	0	0	2	1.92	0	0	1	4.17	0	0

**Figure 4.6** Percentage of News by Producers



#### **4.1.7 The Place Where the Information was obtained**

The media pluralism determinant factors that are related with geographical locations have been discussed under this section. It has stated in the literature review of the study that the more news has become localized, the more plural they are. The locations were coded as Federal, Addis Ababa City Administration, ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ regional states, mixed and abroad. The mixed category used to refer when the news content focused on two or more identified places. It was also necessary to distinguish news content focused on the federal government and Addis Ababa city administration while it has its own administration and independent activities which were the focus of the news magazine program.

**Table 4.7-**The locations where the information was obtained

Location	Social		Politics		Economic		Business		Culture	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Federal government	41	38.32	36	34.62	33	47.83	13	54.17	8	40
Addis Ababa city administration	51	47.66	18	17.31	18	26.09	11	45.83	8	40
Developed regional states	31	28.97	9	8.65	12	17.39	0	0	2	10
Developing regional states	1	0.93	3	2.88	2	2.89	0	0	0	0
Mixed	1	0.93	3	2.88	2	2.89	0	0	2	10
Abroad	0	0	25	24.04	0	0	0	0	0	0

Based on the data collected, 38.32% of social, 34.62% of political, 47.83% economic, 54.17% of business and 40% of cultural news were focused on the federal government /about 42.98% of the total sampled news/, followed by the capital city (35.38 %). News contents which were focused on ‘developing’ regional states were very limited and almost nil on business and cultural news coverage. Only one (0.93%) out of 107 social, out of 104 political news only 3 (2.88%) and out of 69 economic news only 2 (2.89%) of the news were focused on those ‘developing’ regional states.

## **4.2 Discussions of Findings**

### **4.2.1 Contents of the News Items**

As stated by Karsters (2009) pluralism of media contents in relation to issues covered (spectrum of topics, opinions, and ideas covered by and represents in the media) is one of the feature of internal media pluralism. In other words media pluralism requires the ability to communicate to all the concerned society as well as “the capability of conveying a great variety of information and opinion from a wealth of different sources”.

Social and political issues constitute about 65% of the total news magazine items. The rest were economic, business and culture respectively. Here the gap between the social or political news content and business or culture was very wide. As the researcher observed in the study, it was also somewhat difficult to categorize the news items specifically in one of the categorized content. There were times in which a news item may share some features in common. For example, a news item may have an economic content and political at the same time. Hence, the news was categorized based on the dominant content and tone in it.

As Ato WelduYimesil, Chief Executive Manager of FBC has explained to the researcher the type of contents were not problems by themselves in the practice of pluralism in the news. “Since the country is poor and struggling to overcome this poverty, it was obvious that most of the activities are tuned on those important issues”. Ato Abraham Haile, Director of news and current affairs directorate also assured this. However, he believes that other issues should be entertained according to their importance and contribution to change in the country, i.e., political, economic and social changes. Ato Biruk Kebede Deputy General Manager of FBC described why the news magazine contents focused on these issues mainly as follows.

FBC has a mission to assist and is part of the effort to bring development, democracy, sustainability and peace throughout the country. We focus to those social, political, and economical issues because we believe they are the major sectors that needs to be changed, so that to bring development and democracy in the country (Interview with Ato Biruk Kebede, May 19, 2013).

Wang and Dissanayke (1984, p5) describe development as a process of social changes which has a goal of improving the quality of life of all or majority of people. The media is key player in collaboration with stakeholders working to bring about change. According to Maina (2010), media can take the key role in realizing sustainable development by informing the public to support the development process and informing the public about the barriers such as corruption, abuse of power and lack of good governance. But for a media to play such crucial role in development and democracy, it must have the capacity and space for diversified views within society.

The dominant contents of the news magazine were almost issues of development. These are supported by the Development Journalism theory. According to Murthy (2006), development news covers the entire development of socio-economic and cultural development. But this does not mean the contents were well diversified. According to the council of Europe media committee, plurality of media contents have to be also explained in relation to issues covered i.e. spectrum of topics, opinions and ideas covered by and represented in the media.

This researcher did not find problem with the contents of the news magazine. Nevertheless, the way pluralism entertained on different political viewpoints, cultural expressions and local and regional interests depicts the existence of limitation. Thus, the next section will be concerned on these points.

## **4.2.2 Formats, Priority, and Air Time Length**

Political, cultural, local and regional issues were considered as indicators to the emphasis given to the news item in the news magazine program. Those issues, which were considered as most important according to the corporate editorial policy and editors decisions, were prioritized and they were given more than three minutes air time length and they have been produced by a feature or expertise/interview format. As shown in figure 4.3 of this study, most of social, cultural and political news contents have been given better priority, longer air time, with a feature or expertise/interview formats. The researcher has tried to investigate why the few news items categorized as cultural have got such priority and longer air time. Most of the news items, in the category were related with Islamic religious ‘extremism’ and election of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church patriarch and members of the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Counsel. In other words, they were about religious, and they were very hot issues in the country at the time.

## **4.2.3 Sources of Information Used**

According to the UN (2007) commission for human rights – media pluralism is a necessary condition for freedom of speech as well as it contributes to the development of informed societies where different voices can be heard. Ato Biruk Kebede, Deputy Executive Manager at FBC, has also expressed his similar view on the idea.

It is impossible to realize development and democracy by not giving enough spaces to different people with different political ideas, cultural differences of people living in different areas. Therefore, there must be mechanisms that enable to make the floor comfortable for them. We believe in and stand for pluralism by any means (Biruk Kebede May, 2013).

But as stated before in table 4.5, in all news contents, government officials have been used as a major source of information very dominantly. About 65% of the news sources were

government officials mainly from the federal government and Addis Ababa city administration. As a source of information even the representation of the developed regional states was very less. It is also the same for opposition political parties, NGOs, and community members. Their representation in the media has been found out very low. The NGOs were involved on religious issues that are mentioned before. Therefore, there were unbalanced representations on the news sources in the news magazine, as far as media pluralism practices are concerned.

Sources of information used in the news have a significant role to determine the type and quality of the information in the news. According to Banda (2009), in order to serve as a public sphere for the public, the media should be open to all people regardless of their standing or position in the society. In short, “must be open to all shades of opinion”.

On the other side, according to Development Journalism theory, one of the characteristics of Development Journalism is empowering ordinary people through active participation and involvement. In addition to reporting developmental activities, the media has the responsibility to criticize those activities which are obstacles for development such as corruption, problems related to transparency with government and other stakeholders. To carry out these functions the media should create enabling environments for the community at the grass roots, NGOs and opposing political parties, not only to criticize the government but also to exploit alternatives and recommended solution to tackle problems.

#### **4.2.4. Producer of the News**

Currently FBC has about 153 journalists at the main office and 67 in regional FMs radio stations. Some of them were working with different language other than Amharic such as Afan Oromo, Somali, Sidama, Welayta and Afar. As AtoWelduYimesil, the Chief Executive

Manager, the corporate believes using those reporters at regional FM radio stations with their maximum efficiency will have a significant positive impact in terms of practicing media pluralism. Of course, the saying “two birds with a stone” asserts that it will fill the gap which could be created because of the geographical location.

As the collected data indicated, out of the 324 news items examined, 207 (65%) were covered by the reporters at the main office particularly in the news room. The contribution of reporters in the regional FMs is very less; it is only 15%. As the result it will have a negative impact to the practice of internal media pluralism in any aspect of its determinants.

#### **4.2.5 Geographical Location**

Geographical location was considered as one of the determinant factors for media pluralism. It is impossible to generalize that all news issues are common for all audiences. A problem which might be serious in one place may not be a headache for others. The political and the economic features are not also uniform. Regarding pluralism, on a work shop for journalists on the role of media in educating citizens on constitution which was held on January 2013 at Adama, in which the researcher take part, the speaker of the house of federation H.E Kassa Teklebrehan stated the following.

The extremes of the two, i.e., federalism and unitary system are too dangerous. When federalism is very extreme it is a risk for integrity of a nation. So it has the danger of disintegration. In the contrary when the issue is only about unity (similarity) it is danger for diversity and pluralism. In this case the one who has power will dominate others. This will result in conflict and the rise of question for independence. So the media should be at the golden mean, since Ethiopia is a federalist country.

This view is supported by Napoli (2013). According to him plurality and variety of themes and voices brought to the media “are basics for socialization”, there should be representation of diverse roles, values and viewpoints from citizens living in different geographical

locations. This in turn is very important for the development of democratic culture in the society. According to Doyle (2002), “all points of view need to be heard if society is to be truly democratic”.

As the data collected revealed, 43% of the news with various contents was about the federal government. The justification given for this by the Chief Executive Manager and his deputy was “issues and activities of the federal government are common for others regional states, too”. On the other hand, 35.4% of the news with various contents was about Addis Ababa city administration. Here it is appropriate to raise a question why Addis has got the lion share of news coverage? The same logic may not work. Ato Weldu responded as follows.

We have other alternatives to entertain local issues through our regional FMs. But regarding Addis Ababa city administration, it might get large coverage unfairly. This is due to its proximity to our reporters and because it is the seat of the federal government. There might be news from regions those were better and worthy than the capital city from the perspective of news values.

#### **4.2.6 Aim of the News**

According to the council of Europe diversity of media contents is also related to the media functions i.e. information, education, entertainment and others. As stated on Encyclopedia of Journalism (2009, p588) “the primary function of news media is to be a conduit of information to the public”. With this regard the news magazine was effective. About 66.24% of the news had the aim of informing. There was also news which were broadcast with the aim of persuasion (to educate), agitation (campaign to arouse public concern about an issue), mass mobilization and propaganda.

### **4.3 Assessment of FBC's News Magazine in terms of the three**

#### **Determinants of Media Pluralism**

All the responsible persons interviewed at FBC agreed about the importance of internal media pluralism and its practice. They said that the corporate is working to serve the society with their own differences in political viewpoints, culture and geographical locations. Ato Biruk noted to the researcher during the interview the importance of pluralism.

Pluralism is the inherent historical element of FBC. We stand for plurality in its any form. We believe that it is possible to bring democracy and development through entertaining different ideas of the society from all corners of the country.

Among several core values of the corporate the following are directly related to the topic of this study.

- Provide national and international news and current affairs that support and mobilize citizens for development and democratic change so as to bring about national prosperity and good governance.
- Proactively promote and protect equality among Ethnic, Gender and faith based communities and Nations and Nationalities to foster their values, languages, and culture and history with respect and to effect improvement based on their own choice.

Ato Kidanu Zeleke, an expert of program and news quality in the media research and quality directorate explained that the directorate was monitoring to the plurality of the news magazine as pluralism is considered as a key measurement for news quality.

We have tried to examine how much the news magazine is plural. As what we observed, the news magazine usually focused on issues of the federal government and Addis Ababa city. Sometimes there were conditions on which the whole thirty minutes of the magazine will have been end up with the issues of the two. As whole, the representativeness of the regional states was too limited (Kidanu May 10, 2013).

The following sections will discuss on the practice of pluralism in the news magazine, from the perspective of the three main determinants of media pluralism.

### **4.3.1 Political Pluralism**

Political media pluralism was described as fair and diverse representation of and expression by the various political and ideological groups in the media, including minority view points and interest (Lefever, et.al 2012). As discussed in the section before, issues which were related to politics constitute about 32.1% of the total news contents in the news magazine and about 80% of the news makers were government officials at different levels. The participation of the opposition political parties was less than 5%, community members and civic society attendance also was not more than 10%.

The opposing parties often complain about the media practices in Ethiopia particularly about the broadcast media. Most of them believe that the door is closed to entertain various political views or opinions. In short, the media is the mouth piece of the government and the party on power, i.e. EPRDF (Reporter newspaper, Amharic version edition 1347). The researcher of this study has got the chance to collect the opinion of some opposing party leaders about FBC regarding with political pluralism. Ato Ayele Chamiso, chairperson of Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) noted that “Fana was relatively better than other media to give air time for my party. Even for 2013 regional and local election my party gets the time to express its political viewpoint. But still more has to be done to make the media more participatory and balanced”.

Ato Teshale Sebros, the president of Ethiopian Visionary Party was the other Politician who expressed his opinion about the political plurality of FBC on a live debate of political parties on the April 2013 election in FBC studio.

The government media, Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA) has the responsibility to allocate air time for political parties as what was written in the constitution. But they are not working accordingly. FBC is relatively better for my party when comparing particularly with ERTA.

Here, it should be underlined that both politicians' comments were regarding the programs of FBC rather than the news magazine which was the focus of the study. The Chief Executive Manager and his deputy also were unsatisfied with the political plurality of the media. They have mentioned two major reasons for this.

- ❖ **Low awareness of the public**- the literacy rate is very low. It is progressing gradually. As the result of this, the culture of making dialogue and believing on idea conflict is not satisfactory. With these and other limitations we did not believe that we did well to ensure media pluralism.
- ❖ **Under developed democratic culture**- the democratic culture and practice of making dialogue is not developed. The opposing political parties are not well organized with their own ideology and alternative policy. Most of the time they focus on the limitation and weakness of the ruling political party, EPRDF.

### **4.3.2 Cultural Pluralism**

As defined in the literature review of this study, cultural pluralism is all about the fair and diverse representation of and expression by the various cultural, linguistic, religious, ethnic groups, disabled people, and women in the media.

As presented in the data presentation section, only 6.2% of the news magazine items were related to culture. Perhaps out of them most were counted as issues which were related to religious elections and extremists. Out of the very limited issues which were related to culture, the participation of women and people with disabilities were very insignificant. The

researcher also found that FBC is trying to address the issue of language pluralism /Afan Oromo, Welayta and Sidama/ as cultural pluralism via its different regional FM radio stations .But when the news magazine examined by itself in the mirror of cultural pluralism it was still far away from what is expected to be.

### **4.3.3 Geographical (Locational) Pluralism**

Geographical media pluralism comprises plurality and variety of themes and voices brought to the media, socialization through multiple forms of media access and participation in which local and regional communities can be recognized. FBC is the second media in coverage capacity next to ERTA. Based on the data collected and presented in this research 43% of the news items were focused on the federal government and 35.4% were about Addis Ababa city administration. This means from the various news contents about 85% were about the federal government and Addis Ababa city administration .In addition to this, about 65% of the news was produced by reporters who were working in the main office news room. Even the participation of regional FMs reporters was not more than 15%.

In conclusion, when the news magazine examined from the aspect of geographical plurality, it has been found unqualified. But it was difficult to conclude that the corporate was in serious problem regarding to this determinant of media pluralism. Because there were conditions in which local issues were entertained by the local FM radio stations and programs other than news magazine.

## **4.4 Internal and External Challenges in Practicing**

### **Pluralism in FBC's News magazine**

#### **4.4.1. Internal Challenges**

Based on the collected data, the general understanding through the process of this research and the information gathered from the informants, the following points have been identified as major internal challenges in practicing pluralism particularly in the news magazine.

##### **4.4.2.1 Limitation in Capacity**

This can be expressed in terms of skilled man power, financial resources and inefficient capacity of exploiting the maximum potential that the corporate has. The investment required to produce original and diversified content is increasing from time to time, and unless there is no strong commitment, pluralism fall apart. The corporate has the technological capability to integrate regional resources such as reporters so that to improve its pluralistic nature in any aspect of media pluralism. But there were limitations regarding to this.

##### **4.4.2.2 Poor Planning**

Most reporters in the news room were with limited exposure and experience on the part of citizen's needs, successes, and problems they faced in reality. They were not well equipped with the information and professional knowledge which might be base for planning news projects. As the result, they usually focus on issues of the federal government and the nearest alternative, city of Addis Ababa.

##### **4.4.2.3 Understanding of the importance of pluralism**

In the information gathered through the in-depth interview, some respondents believed that, there was nothing wrong with the focus of the news magazine particularly on issues of the federal government. According to the media research and quality experts Ato Kidanu Zeleke,

“there were also limitations on taking some corrective measures on problems reported in relation to lack of pluralism in the news magazine”.

### **4.4.3 External challenges**

#### **4.4.2.1 Low awareness of the public**

In Ethiopia the illiteracy rate is still high. About only 42.7% were literate (UN Human Development report 2011). As a result, the culture of making dialogue on different ideas is not satisfactory, particularly in explaining opinions using the media outlets. There is limited exposure on the part of citizens to diverged information and opinions.

#### **4.4.2.4 Weak computation in the media industry**

In Ethiopia, the media industry is not well developed. The institutions were very few in number and concentrated in the capital city. As the result there were no strong competitions that can push media institutions to provide best content with practising pluralism. However, if there is a strong competition, the audience will have choices (the option to listen) to what he/she wants. In situations with strong competition, pluralism will become a comparative advantage to win the market.

#### **4.4.2.5 The Understanding of Democracy and level of the Democratic Culture in the Country**

According to the 1994 Ethiopian Constitution, the political system of the country allows multi-party system. Even there are reports indicates some improvement of democratic culture in the country (UNHCR, 2013), still it is too far beyond what it needs to be. As Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn report to the House of People, (April, 2013), his government was not successful in realizing democracy and good governance as per the need of the people. According to the Ethiopian Electoral Board Secretariat, there are about seventy political parties which are licenced by the board. But they are not strong enough to actively participate

in the process of democracy. Currently there is only one representative of opposing parties in the parliament.

According to Ato Lidetu Ayalew the former president of Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP), “the opposing political parties and civic society in the country were not well organized with their own ideology and alternative policy. The scholars are not also active to catalyse the democratic process” (Lidetu Ayalew, 2011). Ato Biruk Kebede (May (2013) Deputy Chief Executive of FBC also mentioned that the poor democratic culture in the country was one of the reasons for the lack of political plurality in the media, particularly in the news magazine. “The status of the democracy that we are currently has its own contribution not to have a vibrant media in the country that could hinder to entertain various political, social and cultural differences”.

# **Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

## **5.1 Summary**

Pluralism in media must express various objectives, ideological and political orientations and audiences with different cultural background on different geographical locations. As stated by the UNESCO, “pluralism is one of the most vital components of a democratic society” which intern is a perquisite for sustainable social and economic development (UNESCO, 1991). There are different forms of media pluralism. Among them the focus of this study was on the internal media pluralism, which reflects how social, political, cultural and geographical diversity are reflected in the media contents.

The main objective of this study was to examine the practices of political, cultural, geographical (locational) diversity of FBC’s news magazine. To achieve this objective samples were selected from the news magazine broadcast from September 11, 2012 up to February 28, 2013 a total of 324 news stories were coded with the respective analytical categories. In addition, several informants were also interviewed. Due to this, it can be said both quantitative and qualitative content analysis approaches were applied with quantitative content analysis as pivotal research method for this study.

To analyse the practice of internal media pluralism in the news magazine quantitatively, several analytical categories were formulated and sample subjects were examined accordingly. The following are the research conclusions based on the findings of the study.

## 5.2 Conclusions

- The finding of the study disclosed that 65% of the news content items were about social and political issues. The economic issues were 21.3% and the remaining issues were 8%. As far as pluralism is concerned, there were some limitations on the diversity of the news contents.
- Regarding the sources of information used, across all the news contents government officials were used as a major source of information. Most of them were officials of the federal government and Addis Ababa city administration. This implied that the practice to use various sources such as community members, NGOs, opposing political parties and others were very less. Most of the news items were also produced by reporters at the main office of the news room.
- In relation to geographical location, the findings of the study indicated that most of the news items were focused on the federal government and the capital Addis Ababa. The representation of either ‘developed’ or relatively ‘developing’ regional states in the news were insignificant.

The major informants from FBC also share the limitations of the news magazine from the perspective of internal media pluralism. But they also expressed that this study which focus on the single news magazine program may not show the whole pictures of the station. All the informants have expressed that they are working on the practice of pluralism in other programmes, such as educational programmes on the national service, and the local radio stations with different languages. (Ato Weldu, Ato Biruk, Ato Abraham and Ato Kidanu, May 2013).

According to Karstens (2009) for a media to be plural, it should full fill at least the following three important features. It must:-

- Able to communicate to all corners of the society in the coverage areas
- Capable of conveying a great variety of information and opinion and
- Draw information from a wealth of different sources.

Taking the overall findings of the study into account and the determinants of internal media pluralism, the study concludes that FBC's news magazine coverage tended to focus issues and activities of the federal and Addis Ababa city administration using government officials as a major source, covered by reporters at the main office news room mainly. Thus concerning the practice of internal media pluralism, it lacked pluralism. The studying the implication of this conclusion is beyond the scope and objective of this study. More research needs to be done. The next sub section of the study deals about some recommendations based on these conclusions.

## 5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following major points were recommended to improve the poor practices of internal media pluralism in the news magazine.

- ✓ In FBC's news magazine the dominant source of information were government officials. Therefore, it needs to entertain diversified views in the news by participating other sources such as community at the grass roots, opposing political parties, researchers, NGOs and other relevant information sources. This will help to produce news with balanced views.
- ✓ Most of the news items were reported by reporters in the news room of the main office. This has a negative impact on addressing geographical, political and cultural differences. But, fortunately FBC has regional stations with their own reporters. It is better to use those reporters by enhancing their capacity and participation to report to the centre, i.e., to the news magazine through a serious system.
- ✓ The news magazine did not give enough coverage for the regional states particularly to the relatively developing states. Hence, there should be mechanisms to address them in the news magazine starting from the planning stages.
- ✓ The democratic culture and awareness of the public was very low. Thus, FBC should take its part and play meaningful role in the building process of democracy and development through entertaining diversified cultural, social and political opinions.
- ✓ There were no professional training focused on the importance and how to implement pluralism in the news. Therefore, capacity building trainings should incorporate in the media house so that to empower journalists and media practitioners in practicing pluralism.

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## Appendices A

### FBC news magazine content analysis code sheet

- **Date of broadcast** -----
- **Number of items** -----
- **Content of the news**
  - A. Politics
  - B. Social
  - C. Economic
  - D. Culture
  - E. Business
- **Format of the pieces**
  - A. News in brief
  - B. Feature
  - C. Expertise/interview
- **Priority of the news**
  - A. Prime (first news)
  - B. Middle
  - C. End
- **Air time length**
  - A. Less than a minute
  - B. 2-3 minutes
  - C. More than 3 minute

- **Who are involved in the news piece?**
  - A. Officials from the federal government
  - B. Officials from developed regional or zonal administrative
  - C. Officials from developing regional states
  - D. Officials from Addis Ababa
  - E. Opposition political parties
  - F. NGOS
  - G. Community members in Addis Ababa
  - H. Community members out of Addis Ababa
  - I. Mixed
  - J. Governmental organizations
  - K. Others
  
- **Aim of the story**
  - A. Informing
  - B. Entertaining
  - C. Propagating
  - D. Sensationalizing
  - E. Mass mobilization
  - F. Agitation
  - G. Persuasion

- **Who covered the news?**

- A. Staff reporter from the main office
- B. Reporter from regional FMs
- C. News agencies
- D. Information and communication offices
- E. Others

- **From where does the information obtained?**

- A. The federal government
- B. Addis Ababa city administration
- C. Developed regional states
- D. Developing regional states-including zone and weredas
- E. Mixed
- F. Abroad

- **The agenda**

- A. Media agenda
- B. Public agenda
- C. Policy agenda

## Appendices B

### Questions for key informants

#### ◆ Director of news and current affairs directorate

Name -----

Responsibilities in the station -----

1. How do you get news ideas?
2. What is the focus in producing news stories?
3. What are the basic themes (perspective or view point) of stories in the news magazine?
4. What kinds of stories are getting priority in the news magazine? Why?
5. What are the main sources for stories? Why?
6. Do you give attention to issues of regional states (relatively developed and developing regions)?
7. Do you cover the political activities of opposition political parties? How?
8. How do you assign reporters to cover a story? Why?
9. Do you think the issue of media pluralism (political, cultural, geographical differences) well entertained in the news magazine?
  - A. if yes, what are the parameters?
  - B. if no, why?
10. What are the challenges?
11. What are the possible solutions for these challenges?

◆ **Chief Executive Manager**

Name -----

Responsibilities in the station -----

1. What kinds of stories are most likely to get priority in the interest of the institution?
2. How do you define the concept of media pluralism in your institution?
3. What is the position of FBC towards pluralism in the media?
4. What must be the role of the news magazine to prevail democracy and development in the country?
5. Do you think the issue of media pluralism (political, cultural, geographical differences) well entertained in the news magazine?
  - A. if yes, what are the parameters?
  - B. if No, why?
    - What are the challenges?
    - What are the possible solutions for these challenges?

◆ **Deputy Chief Executive**

Name .....

Responsibilities in the station .....

1. When projecting news idea what are the bench marks (spring boards)?
2. Do you think the issue of media pluralism (political, cultural, geographical differences) well entertained in the news magazine?
3. What is the role of the news magazine for development and democracy in the country?
4. What are the challenges?
5. What are the possible solutions for these challenges?

◆ **Media study and quality officer**

Name -----

Responsibilities in the station -----

1. What is the importance of being pluralistic in the news magazine?
2. How do you monitor and evaluate the news magazine from determinants of media pluralism i.e. political, cultural, and geographical (regional) issues?
3. Do you think the issue of media pluralism (political, cultural, geographical differences) well entertained in the news magazine?
  - A. if yes, what are the parameters?
  - B. if No, why?
4. What are the challenges?
5. What are the possible solutions for these challenges?

◆ **Opposition parties**

Name -----

Position -----

1. Does your party have a chance to be part of news in the last six months at FBC?
2. How do you evaluate FBC's news magazine in entertaining different political viewpoints?
3. If you are not satisfied what should be done?