



Addis Ababa University

College of Social Science, Arts, and Humanities

School of Journalism and Communication

**Ideals vs Praxis: Examining the Tensions between
Journalistic Role Conceptions and Performance in the
Ethiopian Public Media Landscape**

Dawit Amogne

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work is mine, and ideas directly or indirectly taken from other authors are duly acknowledged. The study has not been submitted anywhere previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic awards.

Dawit Amogne

May 2025

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Abstract

Journalism has long been practiced throughout the Ethiopian media history. However, journalists' roles, as reflected in their outputs, have remained contentious. This study has attempted to examine the journalistic role conception and practice among the Ethiopian public media journalists. Using the theoretical lenses from the JRP Framework and Gatekeeping Theory, the study collected data from participants (N = 90) who worked for the public media organizations based in Addis Ababa. The survey questionnaire – for conception and perceived enactment - was administered through Google Forms, hard copy, and Word document versions of the questionnaire. It also gathered data from news stories (N = 82) whose contents were analyzed for evidence of enacted journalism practices. The results have shown that the role conception-performance gap was found to be statistically significant for watchdog, civic, and service roles. The watchdog role received a higher degree of importance, but it was observed that watchdog was almost absent. Conversely, the loyal-facilitator role was the most dominant role of the public media house, where journalists' main duty is to promote the government agenda and patriotic reporting in agreement with the state's priorities and national interests. The study also observed a dearth of journalistic autonomy, especially when it comes to making decisions on the final outputs of the newsroom productions. The findings highlight the meddling factors – political and institutional – played key roles in journalistic role performance. The study concludes with recommendations for future research and policy reform.

Keywords: Journalistic Role Performance (JRP), journalistic conception, Ethiopian journalism, public media, journalistic roles

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The main actors at the heart of truth-telling, journalists, are responsible for shaping society while upholding the principles of accuracy, fairness, and impartiality. Their work influences public opinion, informs political discourse, and provides a platform for diverse voices in society. Their outcomes could be shaped by various factors among which the journalists' own conceptions are crucial as they could somehow shape how journalists should think and act in the world of journalism. Thus, I would say that the journalists' conceptions of their roles can play a pivotal role in what would finally come out to be a media content. In a country like Ethiopia where media freedom is highly challenged centrally by the government (Moges, 2024; Skjerdal, 2012), it is compelling to examine what they believe their roles should be - advocates for social change, watchdogs, loyal servants to the state, and so forth. It is also essential if and to what extent such conceptions are translated into practices. Drawing data from both quantitative and qualitative sources, this study does examine the role conceptions by journalists working for the Ethiopian public media and their implementation of these roles. This paper presents introductory elements of the study, presents the literature review, and gives a description of methodological approaches to be followed. This is then followed by the fourth chapter where the results are presented and discussion and interpretations are made. In the fifth chapter, conclusions are presented, and recommendations are forwarded.

1.1 Background

Journalism, in the Ethiopian history, dates back to the period of Emperor Menelik II when the first newspaper, *Aemero*, first came out in 1902, marking the first form of journalism in a print form (Abebe, 2020; Skjerdal, 2012). Skjerdal underscores that the newspaper was identified as a voice for the Emperor himself and his government. While this period was a significant landmark which saw the introduction a printing press called *Berhanena Selam* (Light and Peace) in the

early 1920's and the subsequent production of the newspaper, the newspaper remained to serve the rulers where independent journalism was almost untouchable. With the expansion of electronic media, radio, though short-lived due to the Italian occupation, was introduced in 1935 (Skjerdal, 2012) which was followed by a notable progress towards newspapers from 1941 when the exiled government returned home (Abebe, 2020), marking the printing of a paper called *Addis Zemen* (New Era) which was later followed by an English paper, The Ethiopian Herald. This journey let Ethiopia see a new platform, television, in 1963. (Skjerdal, 2012) underscores that the Imperial regime was marked by a serious restrictive regulations.

In the Derg regime (1974 - 1990), media was mainly supposed to serve the regime's central ideology, there was no room for freedom of speech and other voices except for serving as a weapon for promoting the socialist ideology (Abebe, 2020; Skjerdal, 2012).

The EPRDF period (1991-2018) was an important period whose early years saw the proliferation of lights of the free press, leading to a growth of private-owned media that gradually turned out to be libelous and sensational (Abebe, 2020). These authors agree that though there was some hope initially, government increasingly censored media, leading to private media lamenting and public media becoming EPRDF-supportive.

Then, 2018, when Abiy Ahmed came to power, marked a wider media space including the social media, yet the Ethiopian media landscape was most well understood as polarized in terms of ethnicity where individual journalists themselves tended to serve the ethnic group they belong to (Dessie et al., 2023; Skjerdal & Moges, 2021). It seems that the current open access to information flow and the dynamic face of the digital media, have also given rise to the introduction of information threats such as disinformation, misinformation, and malinformation that might cause chaos among societal groups and/or members of societies.

The question of public or state media could be a point of discussion if seen from the traditional manifestations of the media houses. In Ethiopia, however, the public media is conceptualized by the proclamation as a media as a media house, financed by the government, and is responsible to the House of Peoples' Representatives and regional councils '*with a mandate to provide contents*

that guarantee public interest while remaining neutral and independent of government [emphasis added]’ (Federal *Negarit Gazette*, 2021, Art 11). Accordingly the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), for examples, has identified itself as a public media that is established to meet its missions vested upon it (<https://ebc.et/english/about.aspx>, n.d.). Therefore, the media institutions in this study are those under this definition.

As Kovach and Rosenstiel (2021) write, the primary role of journalism is to provide people with the information they need to be ‘free and self-governing’. They add, in its ideal watchdog role, journalism needs to empower people who are powerless and whose voice is not well heard.

This responsibility, needless to say, is on the shoulders of journalists whose ability to fulfill this duty often depends on their adherence to ethical standards, professional skills, and the freedom afforded by their working environment. For journalists to play such roles, they need to have an enabling working environment, apart from the skills they have accumulated through education and experience. The professional role performance can therefore be measured as a result of the journalists’ own commitment to the truth as it is manifested through objective examination. It does not however mean that the individual journalists’ performance, however it appears to be, is solely dependent on their epistemologies. There could be other factors such as the institutional regulations and the country’s policy pertinent to the profession of journalism. In order to achieve this, journalists ought to be autonomous for a better outcome. ‘... autonomy is contingent on the willingness and ability of journalists to work free from any attempts to censor the press in favor of commercial, political, or managerial goals’ (Waisbord, 2013, as cited in Mellado et al., 2017, p. 1). This can be achieved through journalistic role performance. The role of journalism is generally categorized into six – interventionist, loyal-facilitator, watchdog, service, civic, and infotainment – grouped under three dimensions – journalistic voice, power relations, and audience approach (Mellado, 2015, 2021b).

Journalistic role performance refers to the extent to which journalists fulfill their professional roles which could be revealed in their daily decision making processes and final production of the news stories (Mellado, 2021a; Mellado et al., 2017, 2020; Mothes et al., 2024). The actions of journalists, as mentioned above, is dependent on how they themselves understand journalism and what its roles should be. In other words, the actions are largely guided by, among other institutional and contextual factors, how the journalists conceive journalistic roles. For Ekström, journalism epistemology can be classified into three broad domains. These are:

(1) form of knowledge (What are the characteristics of the knowledge that ... journalism produces and offers its audiences?); (2) production of knowledge (What rules, routines, institutionalized procedures and systems of classification guide the production of knowledge and how do journalists decide what is sufficiently true and authoritative?); and (3) public acceptance of knowledge claims (What conditions are decisive for the public's acceptance or rejection of the knowledge claims of television journalism?) (Ekström, 2002, p. 259).

Ekström adds, the production of knowledge - what journalists actually do (the second domain of knowledge) is a consequence of the '... the cognitive frameworks and systems of classification that guide journalists' understanding and manner of dealing with reality' (p. 261). These cognitive frameworks need to align with the journalists' beliefs of what the roles should be.

The traditional journalistic roles of watchdog, civic educator, and investigative reporter, long considered cornerstones of the profession (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2021) have been challenged, with the development of the digital media, ending in shaping and reshaping the content production, audience expectations and media consumption patterns (Deuze, 2008; Shoemaker & Reese, 2014). Technological, economic, and cultural factors also increasingly shape the dynamic nature of journalistic role performance in the digital age, putting pressure on journalists to be dynamic in fulfilling the demands of globally connected societies.

The media is in charge of bridging between society and those in power, shaping the public opinion towards the truth. According to Mellado (2015), there are six major roles of the media to which journalists are responsible. These roles are: the watchdog role (monitoring those in power

to hold them accountable), the interventionist role (actively advocating for social change or promoting particular agendas), the civic role (engaging the public in democratic processes), the service role (providing practical information and solutions to the public), the infotainment role (giving information while entertaining), and the loyal-facilitator role (supporting the state or institutional agendas). (Each is detailed in the literature review).

Examining how journalists perceive these roles and how they put them into practice would be paramount for understanding journalism integrity. Thus, there are two theoretical lenses for this study: Journalistic Role Performance (JRP) and Gatekeeping Theory.

Journalistic Role Performance (Mellado, 2015) examines observable behaviors of journalists by way of examining how the journalists' epistemic beliefs (ideals) about their roles align with their actual practices in the media. By way of doing this, JRP looks into how internal and external factors could shape the media content output. Mellado believes that the media outputs are influenced by an interplay of complex factors such as individual beliefs, institutional and contextual cultures (e.g. political pressure, newsroom unwritten policies, and media ownership), and societal expectations

The Gatekeeping Theory (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009) deals with the decision making processes at various levels of the newsroom by journalists and editors, emphasizing the influence of individual discretion and other external pressures on the news content selection and delivery.

This study therefore attempts to how journalists in the Ethiopian public media milieu perceive their professional roles and how these perceptions align or misalign with their actual practices.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Journalistic ideals surrounded by telling the truth may encompass various roles that journalism should live up to. Though the roles are increasingly changing due to the dynamic political, social, technological, and institutional cultures, they remain central to the professional identity. While this study aims at examining match and/or mismatch between how journalists in the Ethiopian media milieu perceive their roles and how much those perceptions (epistemological orientations)

shape or relate to their actions in the newsroom, it would primarily employ JRP and the Gatekeeping Theory as foundational mirrors (see Background section).

Mellado's (2015) observation of previous works and her own empirical studies has led her to come up with six major journalistic roles – watchdog (monitoring those in power to make them accountable), interventionist (advocating for social change or promoting certain agendas for society), infotainment role (blending information and entertainment to captivate the audience), civic role (engaging the public in democratic processes), loyal-facilitator (supporting the state and institutional/corporate interests), and service role (providing practical information and solutions).

While each role has different manifestations, Mellado meticulously identifies the various perspectives and have included them in the instruments developed. A closer look into the manifestations can reveal a fuller understanding of the roles and their manifestations (Mellado, 2015, 2021a; Mellado et al., 2020).

On the Ethiopian media landscape, it is not uncommon to hear either acknowledgements or criticisms about the contents delivered. While the social media, mainly Facebook, is a major platform for such audience responses to the content from the mainstream media, there are also informal platforms (such as rumors) for the public to air out their views. Needless to say, I have always been asking myself how the contents that are broadcast are shaped and delivered. If the people working in the media have got rich educational or experiential backgrounds, then they must probably have their own epistemology of how the news media should function and what journalism should do. Be it right or wrong, accurate or inaccurate, objective or biased, fair or unfair, responsible or irresponsible, I ask why journalists do the way they do. Does the output reflect their professional identity and the philosophy they hold? This curiosity drove me to this research idea, aiming at examining the congruence between the journalists' ideals of journalistic roles and their performance.

Research in JRP shows mixed results with regard to the association between journalists' stated beliefs and their actual practices. For instance, studies (e.g. Mellado, 2015, 2021) showed a mismatch between journalists' ideals and their practices. In her studies, Mellado observed that

though journalists claimed to have conceived journalism roles as watchdog and information dissemination, soft news and entertainment outweighed in the actual productions of the news contents. Organizational cultures, economic pressures, and interferences from politicians were found to be the causes for the mismatches. In another study, (Vos & Singer, 2016) found that journalists did not live up to the discourse they had about entrepreneurial journalism, signaling a mismatch between normative ideals and the practices. Unlike these results, objectivity, as an element of good journalism, was examined in a study whose results generally showed that journalists' cognitions of the concept of objectivity and their interpretation had an alignment (Skovsgaard et al., 2013). These authors however witnessed that there existed variations in the journalists' understanding of what objectivity in news production is and how is manifested.

Studies whose bases are within Ethiopia indicate that the practice of journalism is influenced by several factors such as government intervention and control (Moges, 2024; Skjerdal, 2012), ethno-political contexts (Dessie et al., 2023; Skjerdal & Moges, 2021), and political, editorial, and institutional bureaucracies (Ayana, 2022; Skjerdal, 2012). In another study, (Gebreegziabher, 2013) reported that even though the Ethiopian media did show a promising transformation since 1992, the journalists failed to demonstrate their professions fully as they were not able to stand government interventions. The widening media space by then caused the division of the media as private and state-owned. These factors, coupled by other internal and external contexts, shape the Ethiopian media culture. Skjerdal further writes that the Ethiopian media operated under a strict government control and censorship, allowing limited room for journalistic independence. Abdissa and Getachew (2024) have written emphatically that the Ethiopian journalism practice does not conform to the global ideals in multiple forms. This is attributed largely to the confused roles between the media and the state. Another important study was carried out by McIntyre et al. (2023) whose study investigated the journalistic role performance in Ethiopia and Rwanda. They found a significant gap between the journalists' perceived roles and their actual practice. However, they did conclude based on data gathered indiscriminately from state-owned media and private media outlets, nor did they do a comparison of the outcomes from each medial outlet. I would say that the institutional contexts vary greatly. In other words, McIntyre et al. (2023) did not show journalistic roles and realizations in the public media milieu, a politically sensitive environment, which is often seen as unique in terms

of institutional policies and ideological orientations. The media systems variations (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Voltmer, 2013) impacts the journalistic roles, and hence they approach to bring data from all media sorts regardless of the their typology would not lead towards a valid conclusion.

While these are some of the attempts made to explore the perceptions and practices of journalism, there is dearth of research that shows the associations between journalistic roles perception and practice in the context of Ethiopian public media context. While this is the compelling reason for doing this study, I have noticed that research in this field could help in addressing an understanding of the extent to which how journalistic role performances are impacted.

Therefore this study will attempt to examine the alignment or mismatch between journalists' role conceptions and their actual role performance. It also attempts to identify the factors that moderate these bonds.

1.3 Research Questions

Below are the major research questions this study aims to answer:

- What journalistic roles do Ethiopian public media journalists conceive most important?
- What do journalistic practices reveal about the roles that journalists actually perform, as reflected through their own perceived enactments and the media productions?
- To what extent the journalists' role conceptions align/misalign with their journalistic performance?
- To what extent structural and institutional factors impede/facilitate the journalists' role performance?

1.4 Research Objectives

The overall objective of this study is to trace the alignment and/or the misalignment between how journalists perceive their roles in the Ethiopian public media landscape and how they translate these roles into practice. By way of doing this, the study aims:

- to examine journalists' degree of conceptions of the journalistic roles in the Ethiopian public media ecosystem.
- to investigate journalistic practices as reveal in their media productions.
- to analyze the extent to which the journalists' role conceptions align or misalign with their journalistic performance.
- to assess the impact of factors – contextual and institutional - on journalistic role performance.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study, as highlighted earlier, intends to examine the degree to which journalists understand their professional roles as they are engaged in journalistic works in the Ethiopian mainstream media landscape. Hence, the study is believed to contribute to knowledge, practice, and research.

First, the study can contribute to the body of knowledge by showing the perceptions of journalists about their roles in the media. While this is a fundamental issue that is believed to shape their practice, the study will also assess how the media productions (including content, selection, framing, and delivery) are shaped by other contextual factors such as editorial policy, unwritten office cultures, and government interventions. Thus, this understanding can highlight important manifestations of the thoughts of the Ethiopian journalist.

Second, the study would also benefit media organizations, educators, and policy-makers better understand how journalists navigate their roles and how their conceptions shape their performance. Such institutions can thus be informed about how and what they can do or modify with regard to journalism education, media policies, and ethical standards, based on the outcomes this study reveal.

Third, research in this particular area is dearth, implying the need for a better understanding of the conceptions or perceptions of the main actors, journalists, about their roles. Therefore, this study would serve as a foundation for future studies on journalism in Ethiopia in general and the association between journalistic role conception and performance.

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CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to the Chapter

This chapter presents the literature review of the study where the goal is two-fold. First, it aims to help readers understand the foundations of journalistic role performance including theoretical tenets that help describe the ideals, i.e. how journalists conceptualize their roles and the performance, i.e. how the roles are translated in practice. The chapter also aims to establish the relevance of studying journalism role performance as perceived and enacted in the Ethiopian public media milieu where socio-political and institutional factors could play a key role. Further, this chapter aims to indicate the research gap by highlighting the effort that has been made so far with regard to understanding journalism roles in Ethiopia. In the remaining sections of this chapter, conceptual and theoretical issues are presented. These issues are further discussed in relation to the Ethiopian context. Ultimately, the research need in the field together with the gap is indicated.

2.2 Introducing to Journalistic Role Theory

Journalism is both an art and a science. It requires an amalgamation of the artistic features of journalism such as story-telling and human connection on the one hand and the scientific principles of journalism such as fairness, accuracy, and ethics on the other.

In 2007, a seminal paper by Hanitzsch (2007) who highlighted that the roles journalists perform are shaped by various cultural, political, and institutional factors. He justifies this by taking examples from the democratic and authoritarian societies where in the former the media's role may tend to be watchdog, in the latter it could be something like serving the state. Hanitzsch criticizes the Western-model of journalism and puts emphasis on cultural and contextual diversities to define what the role of journalism should be. On the contrary others (see Schudson, 2003), while acknowledging the role of contexts, emphasize more on the need to establishing global standards for journalism.

In introducing the initial thoughts towards the journalism role, Hanitzsch's (2007) article classified seven role dimensions (interventionism, power distance, market orientation, objectivism, empiricism, relativism, and idealism) categorized under three constituents (institutional roles, epistemologies, and ethical ideologies).

Journalistic role theory seeks to understand the roles journalists perform in a certain professional, social, institutional, and political context. It also looks into how journalists perceive their roles in society. The way journalists conceptualize their roles within a given society greatly matters including how they perform, including how they interact with power, inform the public, and reflect societal values.

It does not however mean that the journalists live up to their beliefs. Their beliefs or professional standards could be influenced by several factors such as professional ethics, political pressures, and institutional norms, while their actual performance may be influenced by these same forces. In an effort to making the initial categories of Hanitzsch, Claudia Mellado, a professor of journalism at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso (PUCV) in Chile, further developed a framework to better understanding journalistic roles. She is known for her work in leading the Journalism Role Performance (JPR Project). An important distinction she has made is between two key variables - role perception - the normative beliefs and ideals that journalists hold regarding their responsibilities - and role performance - the actual enactment of these roles in through the media content; this performance, as I have mentioned earlier, may be constrained or shaped by external and internal factors (Mellado, 2015, 2021a; Mellado et al., 2020)

In the context of journalism role perception is a concept that refers to how journalists believe they should behave to fulfill what they think is right

In this context, role perception refers to how journalists conceptualize their ideal professional identity and the societal functions they think they should fulfill. These roles might include being a disseminator of information, a watchdog on governmental power, an objective reporter, or a facilitator of public discourse (Deuze, 2008; Mellado, 2015; Mellado et al., 2020; Mothes et al., 2024; Örnebring, 2017). On the other hand, role performance represents the manifestation of the journalism in the newsroom, i.e. how journalists balance their ideals with the reality of constraints such as institutional practices, audience demands, and political pressures (Hanitzsch, 2007; Mellado, 2015).

Other important figures who are considered to be pioneers in the introduction of journalistic role theory are Weaver and Wilhoit who in 1996 identified journalistic roles (Weaver & Wilhoit, 2020). They identified a range of roles that journalists perceive as important, including the *watchdog*, *interpreter*, *disseminator*, and *populist mobilizer*, among others. The effort to categorizing journalistic functions is essential because it helps such functions from informing the public to holding those in power accountable or representing the interests of the public. However, Weaver and Wilhoit's framework, like the one by Schudson (2003), was heavily shaped by the Western media system, where press freedom and the autonomy of journalists were more pronounced. Like what is mentioned earlier, Hanitzsch strongly believes that journalistic cultures and roles are defined by the contextual factors within each country and each media. So he says the enactment is largely dependent on contextual and institutional factors (Hanitzsch, 2007).

It was then Mellado's (2015) work that further developed the initial role conceptions and enactments towards a more comprehensive framework that defines what is now called journalistic role performance.

A major thought that is widely accepted in the literature is that there is nothing static about the profession of journalism. In the context of countries where the media and information flow

tradition is yet premature, the media's roles are influenced by market liberalization demands and audience expectations, apart from other forms of influences. In such countries where authoritarianism is prevalent and democratization is suppressed for some reasons, some journalists dare to challenge those in power and make them accountable while the majority stay loyal to the political elites (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, 2012). Even if the news industry and the journalism profession in general have encountered difficulties, journalists worldwide continue to collect information and create news. When confronted with ongoing demands, disruptions, and transformations, journalists may tend to modify their work to meet the different obstacles. They are always changing, experimenting, and they are always on becoming (Mellado et al., 2017, 2020). Therefore it is worth noting that journalism passes through deaths and rebirths as it always lives in the face of dynamics of multifarious forms – social, political, economic, institutional, cultural, and most importantly technological where disruptions of the roles occur as the already established norms change.

2.3 The Hierarchical Influence Model

The Hierarchical Influence Model (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014) is a framework of analysis in journalism and communication studies, and it stipulates how media contents are influenced at various levels.

Shoemaker and Reese have identified five levels of influence on media contents: individual characteristics routine practices, media organizations, social institutions, and social systems. Media content is impacted by each of these levels, and their effects are hierarchical. The most direct influence on content comes from the individual media worker and their unique traits. However, due to structural patterns, practical limitations, and professionalized standards, that journalist frequently has to follow specific standard procedures. The media organizations frequently decide what is published in the media. Social institutions like governmental authorities or market forces frequently regulate or have an impact on those groups. Lastly, people who oversee institutions operate within a broader social structure, which consists of the general, sometimes unquestioned presumptions found in a certain culture or cultures.

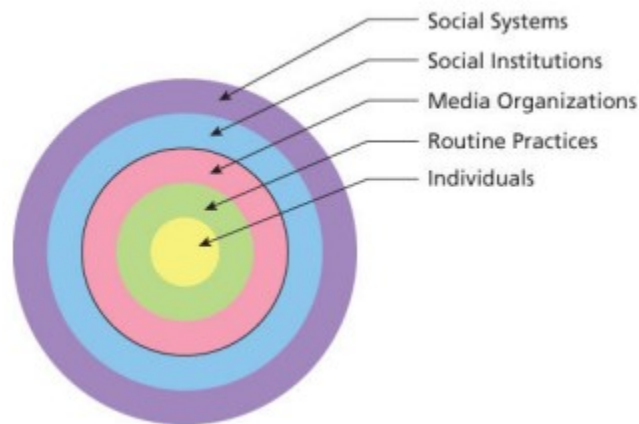


Figure 1: Hierarchy of Influences Model (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014, p. 9)

The first level, the individual level of influence, states that the individual journalists' themselves have their own identity, beliefs, education, or experience which ultimately has some form of influence in news content selection, framing, and/or presentation, impacting the final output. The second level, routine practices, refers to the norms and conventions such as news values like timeliness and prominence, sourcing, and editorial principles like deadlines and formats that influence on what should be covered in the news and how it should be framed and presented. The third level of influence, media organization's influence, refers to factors pertaining to media ownership structure (ownership, public, and independent), economic goals, internal media policies, and organizational culture and hierarchy where decisions tend to shape the outputs. In the fourth place to influence media contents are social institutions such as government, political parties, advocacy organizations, and other stakeholders that have interests. In the fifth level, we find the broadest of all, influence of social systems, where influences come due to ideological orientations, cultural and historical values.

If one considers that journalism requires a distinctive set of procedures and practices in the creation of news, this framework implies two further paths for analysis: the impact of the organization on these procedures and the effect of the procedures on the individual.

Nevertheless, the model merely offers a structure for examining media production. It helps in understanding how different elements of media production interact, yet it does not deliver more theoretically rich explanations concerning the nature of those elements.

This model is especially useful when examining the media landscape in Ethiopia, where state control over public media outlets has often restricted journalistic independence. The public media system in Ethiopia, for instance, has faced challenges related to state intervention, where editorial policies may dictate the framing of news, limiting journalists' ability to act as independent watchdogs or adversarial critics of government actions.

Therefore, this model is chosen as a valuable framework to help me explain the concepts in the study – the journalists' ideals and the actual practices of journalism as each of the five levels has can best explain why media contents are the way they are. For example, though he individual journalist may aspire to uphold the belief that the media content should manifest objectivity, fairness, balance, and accuracy while serving the public interest, this may be impacted by layered influences. The influences ranging from individual to societal systems some way would impact the media contents. All the five levels of influence constrain or redirect journalistic behavior, implying that the journalistic works are one way or the other the outcomes of these forms of influence. This study, through applying the hierarchical influence model, situates the observed discrepancies in journalistic role performance (JPR) within a broader context, allowing for a more nuanced analysis of how structural and contextual forces interact with personal ideals in shaping media output.

The two theoretical frameworks outlined above theoretical frameworks outlined above, viz. the Journalistic Role Theory and the Hierarchical Influence Model - provide a comprehensive lens through which to examine journalistic role performance. These theories or frameworks help explain the tension between what journalists think should be done and what they actually perform. These theories are particularly relevant for understanding the Ethiopian media context, where political interests are supposed to prevail across all journalistic works. Therefore, this study uses the two theoretical lenses to examine JPR in the Ethiopian public media milieu.

2.4 Journalistic Roles

A major question one might have when it comes to the question of journalistic roles can be if journalists have specified roles. While I acknowledge that that there are perpetual transformations of journalistic roles due to social, political, institutional, and/or technological changes, there is a well-established body of literature as to what journalists do. One can see that the roles along contexts and across time may not remain the same. However, through an increasing engagement in the exploration of the journalistic roles, researchers have come up with a set of roles that journalists should adhere to in their routines even if these roles, like mentioned before, evolve in response to changing conditions (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2018a; Mellado, 2015)

Traditionally, the term role, originally from Greek, represented the part of a character performed on a theater stage (Mellado, 2021b). Later, it began to appear in other fields including journalism. Mellado contends that journalism is one of the professions that tend to be revealed through the performance of the actors (journalists) and she conceptualizes professional role as “... the expected behavior of people” in the newsroom. She states that the term role in journalism refers to the routines of journalists. More specifically, journalistic roles mean “... the outcome of concrete newsroom decisions and the style of news reporting when considering different constraints that influence the news product” (Mellado et al., 2017, p. i). Hence, it is worth exploring what journalists think their roles should be (normative ideals) and what they actually do (performance) as a visible newsroom content (Mellado, 2020, p. 2015).

Popular studies have come to recognize that there are four levels of role perception-performance bond, viz. role conception, role perception, role enactment, and role performance (Mellado, 2021b; Mellado et al., 2017). These approaches to professional roles basically differentiate between the perceptual level, attitudinal level, and the behavioral level, in accordance with normative demands.

According to Mellado (2021b), there are three broad layers of influence, unlike the five categories identified by (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014), there are three dimensions where journalistic roles are embedded in. These are norms, ideals, and performance.

2.4.1 Journalistic Norms

In relation to the norms, Mellado mentions that the four major theories of the press, viz. authoritarian, libertarian, Soviet, and social responsibility would dictate what the role of the press should be, implying that governments and the media regulatory systems would shape the media the content somehow. Whether they like it or not, journalists could be coerced to function under a certain political system in a particular context. Such political systems and the corresponding policies of regulatory bodies would impact the journalistic norms (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). While this is an important point indicating how the journalistic roles are defined centrally by the norms (contextual, institutional, and political systems) surrounding it, this would sometimes be unrealistic as journalists have their own ways of thinking shaped by education and experience, leading to a formation of journalistic roles as defined by the journalist's own perception or conception.

2.4.2 Journalistic Ideals

There are two interconnected but different ideas surrounding journalistic ideals. These are journalistic conception and journalistic perception. While journalistic role perception and conception are interchangeably used terminologies, these two concepts are different in the way each can stand as a separate variable in a study involving journalistic role performance (Mellado et al., 2017; Örnebring, 2017) regardless of where they are used.

The concept of role conception refers to "... the purposes of the profession that journalists conceive as more important at the individual level, where the locus of role evaluation is not necessarily related to social consensus" (Mellado et al., 2017, p. 6). In other words, the term role conception is what journalists understand most important.

Role perception refers to what the journalists think the society expects them to perform; it is not necessarily that journalists understand it that way. The following citation can further illustrate the concept of role perception:

Role perceptions do not necessarily have a location in the conceiver, but might be a followed script that has been internalized and is located in the larger social structure, but did not form a mental representation of that role for a particular journalist. Any journalist may perceive role expectations at any time, but journalists do not always have a self-conceived role, but follow role expectations. For example, journalists perceiving a watchdog role internalize the behavior that is expected as the role was conceived in society. (Mellado et al., 2017, p. 6)

The other concept in the category of news output is role enactment, what journalists think they do. Role enactment refers to what journalists state that they are capable to do something that is important for them or for their media outlet; it does not necessarily refer to the actual products (news stories they publish or present finally) (Mellado, 2020; Mellado et al., 2017). Mellado states that this role is about the journalists' autonomy to put into practice what they think is most important in their careers. Role enactment is considered to be an evaluative concept where journalists appraise their own determination to action.

The final phase, role performance, refers to the actual demonstration of the ideals in the newsroom.

2.4.3 Roles as Performance

The three concepts discussed earlier - role conception, role performance, and role enactment – emphasize on the evaluative, not the actual, side of journalism profession. The performance, on the other hand, is what is actually produced and delivered, involving interactions between decision makers in the newsroom. Role performance, hence, deals with behaviors or actions that are influenced by other decision makers such as editors and directors in the final news production processes. The role performance is the result of the interactions and negotiations between internal and external actors and influencers in the news production process. Mellado et al. (2017) underscore a key point that “... an individual journalist's role performance that differs from the characteristics of his or her role conception, perception, or perceived role enactment is not per se an indicator of a malfunctioning news organization” (p. 8). This primarily because

one cannot attribute the final output to a particular journalist's performance as this is likely to be an output, unlike the journalist's conflicting interest, that is produced through the shaping and reshaping endeavors of the others in decision making process.

2.5 From Role Conception to Role Performance

The association between role conception and performance is examined in a way that role performance is measured as the match or mismatch between "role conception/perception/perceived enactment, ... and his or her professional practice" (Mellado et al., 2017, p. 8).

Regarding the measurement of role conception-performance, it should be noted that the survey type of questions for measuring the importance of role categorized under the six roles identified. While these statements measure the conception (ideals), there is a need to use self-reported frequency items to measure the practice.

Survey studies have yielded much important knowledge about journalists' role conceptions, particularly in the (cross-national) comparative sense. But if surveys are to tell us anything about epistemic practices, new questions are necessary, for example, how often do journalists make phone calls/look up things online in order to verify knowledge claims, what kinds/types of knowledge claims are viewed as necessary to verify and which are not, what kinds/types of sources are viewed as authoritative (and their knowledge claims thus not in need of further verification), and so on. (Örnebring, 2017, p. 86)

Studies on journalistic roles perception, Örnebring adds, would benefit from employing multiple methods of data collection, including interviews and content analysis.

2.6 The Journalistic Role Performance – Dimensions and Types of Roles

The journalistic role performance explains six overlapping but distinct journalistic roles identified (Mellado, 2015). These roles are grouped under three broad dimensions – journalistic voice, power relations, and audience approach, each capturing a distinct aspect of journalistic practice. Following is a presentation of the six roles under these broad domains.

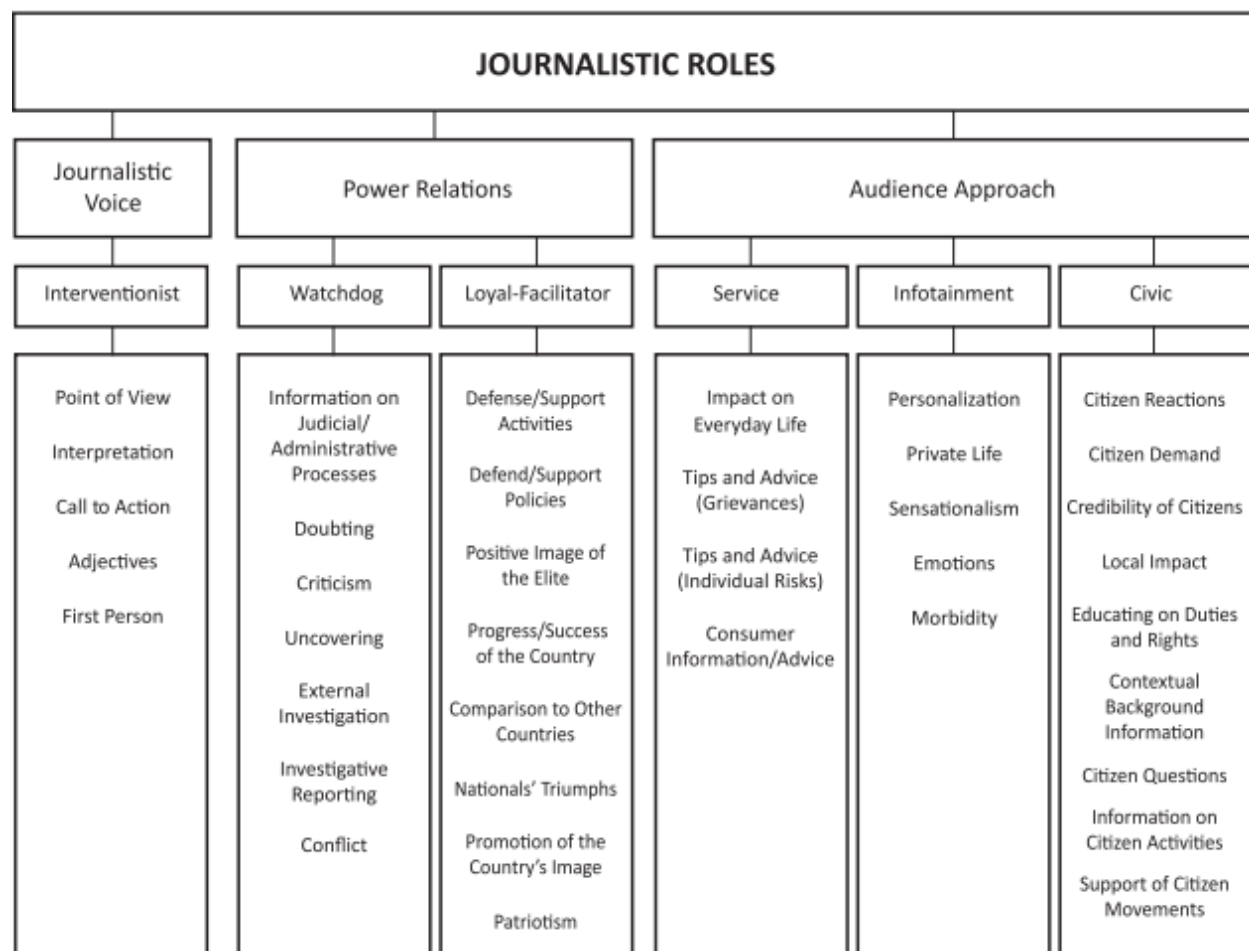


Figure 2: Dimensions of Journalistic Roles (Mellado, 2015, 2021b)

2.6.1 The Journalistic Voice

The journalistic voice domain contains one role, *the interventionist role* which is manifested through a first person point of view, where journalists comment, call to action, and use adjectives to add their own perspectives. Here, two perspectives are identified – the passive and the active

roles of the journalist. While the passive role is where the journalist serves as neutral or disseminator, the active role signifies participant, advocate, and missionary roles where the journalist demonstrates their own views and perspectives on the news item.

The more journalistic voice a media entertains, the more it gives autonomy for individual journalists to find out the truth deeper. Conversely, the absence of such autonomy would likely detach the journalists from fact-seeking and fact-checking, impacting the quality of the news. Put differently, a greater degree of journalistic voice implies higher degree of intervention (Mellado, 2015).

2.6.2 Power Relations

The roles pertaining to power relations refer to the relationships between journalism and those in power – those who possess political, economic, and social power. The journalists' roles under this dimension may fall into either watchdog or loyal-facilitator, which can reflect contrasting alignments between journalism and political power (Hanitzsch, 2007). Hanitzsch further notes that the normative ideal (adversarial independence) is what journalism is due to live up to, assuming a watchdog role while making the ones in power accountable. While this is a manifestation of a democratic society, journalists, on the contrary, may tend to play a loyal-facilitator role especially when they fail to meet the requirements of the watchdog role. However, journalists may exhibit both roles simultaneously depending of the existing social and political contexts in a particular system (Mellado, 2015). Hallin & Mancini (2004) state that the loyal-facilitator role is the manifestation in countries or contexts where pluralist media polarization is predominant, where the media system is closely entangled with the state and serve partisan or state-aligned functions.

So journalists could live in tensions between balancing their ideals of autonomy, what they think should be done in relation to putting those in power accountable regardless of any forms of pressure, and the institutional and contextual requirements.

2.6.3 The Audience Approach

The domain of the audience approach has three roles in it – service, infotainment, and civic roles. The origin of the roles under this dimension is established on the thesis the whether the media should serve the public interest or live for the commercial purposes.

The first role, the service role, represents the roles journalists take towards giving information and services to the audience. Journalism's role here is to help or tip the audience about information they need (Mellado, 2015). For instance, a media content that presents where pharmacies are located in vicinity or how a drug should be taken can be considered as service role as the content in such presentations intend to inform the audience about such important matters in their daily routines. This role is based on liberal-democratic values and is strongly associated with the practices of traditional public interest journalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Mellado, 2015).

The second role, the infotainment role, under the umbrella of audience approach, is the infotainment role where journalism acts as an entertaining weapon while keeping people informed about things around them. The journalists performing this role may use soft news style to attract the audience (Mellado, 2015). The journalist performing this role may also rely on audio-video productions or as they see the audience as consumers. A typical example to this definition of infotainment role is the police crime reports that are broadcast on many Ethiopian public and private media. Such programs aim to inform while dramatizing the incident of a crime either using an appealing story telling technique or a role-plays (drama's performed by actors showing the incident).

The last role, the civic role, emphasizes on making the audience active participants who are engaged in democratic processes. It then promotes and opens the media space for dialogues, creating a bottom-up approach of information flow where citizens interact and share information about their rights and duties while empowering the marginalized groups (Mellado et al., 2020).

Journalists adopting this role take a citizen journalism approach through empowering the voiceless and ordinary people to take part in citizenry matters.

By and large, the audience approach emphasizes how journalists materialize the ideals towards the expectations of the audience. Collectively, the audience approach dimension highlights how journalists' role perceptions are not only ideological but also deeply structured by the media system in which they operate.

The JPR approach offers a robust, empirically grounded framework for studying journalism across different social and political cultures. By examining the journalists' philosophies about their roles and looking through the lenses of the actual practice, this study attempts to decipher the tensions and realities that shape news production in contemporary public media systems in Ethiopia.

2.7 A Review of Previous Studies

Journalistic role performance has long been a topic of research globally. Several studies (see the Table 1) attempted to examine the association between journalists' ideals of the journalistic roles and the actual performance. Results vary across different contexts and media systems.

Table 1: A Synthesis of Previous Studies

Author(s)	Methods	Major Findings
(McIntyre et al., 2023)	Survey (N=83) and content analysis of news stories from 10 media houses in Rwanda and Ethiopia	Found gaps between journalists' role conceptions and performance, especially in Watchdog role; bigger gaps in Rwanda
(Hallin et al., 2023)	Content analysis of COVID-19 news coverage in 37 countries	Shift from Watchdog and Infotainment roles toward Service and Civic roles during the pandemic; trend stronger in countries with higher political deference and cooperation.
(Mellado et al., 2024)	Content analysis of 148,474 news stories from 365 media organizations across 37 countries	Platform influences role performance: online media showed better roles in service and infotainment roles; traditional media focus more on public service roles; political system affects role enactment across platforms.
(McIntyre & Abdenour, 2024)	Content analysis of 2,644 Rwandan news stories	Independent outlets produce higher-quality news (better sourcing) than government-aligned outlets, supporting the link between editorial independence and quality.
(Hanitzsch, 2007)	Cross-national survey of journalists from 18 countries	Defined five key journalistic role orientations (e.g., interpretative, disseminator, adversarial) and showed how cultural and political contexts shape the prevalence of these roles worldwide
Mellado (2015)	Survey and content analysis of journalists in Chile	Political polarization influences journalists' role performance, with higher emphasis on advocacy and partisan roles in polarized media environments.
(Hanitzsch & Vos, 2018b)	Looked at the discursive practices in the Western-oriented media	Reported 18 roles in six major political functions (This is naturally a different study in conceptualization of the roles)

These studies highlighted that the journalistic roles performance are examined under different contexts where results revealed that the contexts – social or political or any other form would impact the roles journalism can play in society. With the exception of a single study (see McIntyre et al., 2023), there has not been any other attempt to examine the journalistic roles in the Ethiopian public media milieu. This single study aimed at bringing data from two countries – Ethiopia and Rwanda. It did not also specifically dealt with data from one media system; it mixed up role data from almost all types of media ownership. This would greatly impact the validity of the study, making it difficult to conclude. Hence, this study aimed at examining the Ethiopian public media by examining how the journalists' role conceptions and performance align or misalign.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.1 Paradigmatic Stance

This study is centrally guided by a pragmatist worldview where reality can best be understood and interpreted by employing various forms of data collection. Ontological and epistemological considerations of pragmatism emphasize on the practicality of knowledge, getting data from both empiricist (quantitative) and interpretivist (qualitative) angles. Put differently, pragmatism, a pluralist perspective, combines two worldviews - positivism and constructivism – and it attempts to get what works, by employing mixed methods.

3.2 Research Design

This study was designed to be a survey-type mixed methods design where data from public media journalists (N= 90) were collected through a questionnaire that developed and validated by a large group of researchers (see Mellado et al., 2020; Mothes et al., 2024). The qualitative data came through the content analysis which actually revealed some quantitative data showing the frequency of the roles in the newsroom. The contents were generated from 82 news stories from the EBC's (Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation) news archive over the period between mid

3.3 Data Sources and Participants

The study was carried out in the Ethiopian public media landscape. Because of difficulty in mobility to different parts of the country, I chose to limit the study setting to media institutions that had stations in the capital city, Addis Ababa. Hence, one national media house (Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation) and three regional media houses that had working offices in Addis Ababa (Addis Media Network, Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN), Amhara Media Corporation (AMC)) were included in the study. The total number of journalists (only estimated) in these media houses was 1012, with varying numbers with some of them, making it difficult to get the exact number of journalists. So I considered it like a set of population that is infinite (meaning where the exact number was not known or uncertain).

Hence, the following formula was used to determine the sample size

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot q}{e^2}$$

Where:

n = required sample size

Z = z-score (1.96 for 95% confidence level)

p= estimated proportion of an attribute (0.5 is used for maximum variability)

q=1-p

e= acceptable margin of error (e.g. 0.05 = 5%)

When calculated with margin of error falling approximately $\pm 10.33\%$ at the 95% confidence, the total number becomes 90, which is considered to be valid (Kothari, 2004)

Participants were taken from each media house using convenient sampling where I distributed as many questionnaire papers as possible in three different alternatives including the Goggle Forms platform. Then, the selected journalists having diverse experiences in multiple media platforms (digital, radio, and TV) were included in the study. Their experience ranged from novice reporters to editors or senior-editors and directors, whose jobs are directly linked with news content production.

3.4 Data collection instruments

Below is a brief description of the data collection instruments that are used in the study.

3.4.1 Survey questionnaire

To get numerical data about journalists' role perceptions and performance, a survey questionnaire that has 40 items were used and filled out by the respondents. I obtained permission from Claudia Mellado, the first author and key figure in the JRP global research project, to use the entire instrument. The questionnaire which is based on data drawn from 37 countries was generally checked to be valid and reliable (Mellado et al., 2020). The authors reported that the total items were grouped into the six roles – interventionist, watchdog, loyal-facilitator, service, infotainment, and civic roles. The reliability of each item for role conception and perceived role enactment was calculated to be Cronbach alpha scores of 0.76 (interventionist), watchdog (0.83), loyal-facilitator (0.83), service (0.71), civic (0.74 for role conception and 0.76 for perceived role enactment or practice), infotainment (0.71 for role conception and 0.74 for perceived role enactment or practice). These reliability scores are acceptable for use in similar other studies (Cohen et al., 2017). They state that scores exceeding 0.7 are indications for a tool's sufficient degree of reliability to measure the variable. Not only have that, the reliability checked was made on data gathered from 37 counties that have variations in cultural experiences, making the instrument trusted and acceptable.

The survey measures the journalists rating of the importance of each role using a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (extremely important). In the same way, to indicate how these roles are commonly practiced, journalists should respond to the same items and they indicate their ratings of each statement using another Likert scale ranging from 1 (not common at all) to 5 (extremely common). These two types of responses make up the journalists role conceptions and practices in quantitative forms.

The 40 items are grouped into the following categories.

Table 2: Quantitative coding scheme

Role category	Items
Interventionist role	2, 6, 16, 20, 23, 30
Watchdog role	3, 7, 13, 17, 25, 33, 34, 39
Loyal-facilitator role	8, 12, 18, 19, 22, 31
Service role	5, 15, 21, 32, 36
Civic role	1, 9, 10, 14, 26, 27, 29, 35, 38, 40
Infotainment role	4, 11, 24, 28, 37

Then, the results were summed up for each role and were divided to the number of items in each role category so that it would be possible to get the mean score in each of the variables (conception and performance).

3.4.3 Content Analysis

The aim of the content analysis whose results was to describe the journalistic role performance put in both qualitative and quantitative forms is to get a deeper understanding of the practice of journalism. To this end, selected broadcasts from television, radio, and online news were collected from Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation between mid-March through April 2025. The selection of the news alos included news stories that were identified as most frequently watched or read. Thus a total of 82 news stories were collected for content analysis. The number was limited to 82 because I found similar trends repeating themselves so I learned that the analysis reached the level of data saturation. This was because there was no new type of news story coming out . The content analysis helped to identify the major and minor areas of the news stories (themes and codes), with details of how these were presented (framing). Most importantly, the purpose of examining the news stories helped the identification of the roles as performed, showing what journalism actually did. This was thought to help find the bridges between how journalists' conceptions/perceptions are realized in the newsroom. To categorize news stories into roles like interventionist, watchdog, loyal-facilitator, service, civic, and infotainment, follow these steps (see Richards, 2015).

- i. Data was collected: The news stories were selected and archived in QDA Miner Lite, a software for qualitative data analysis. In this case the transcripts of the news stories were

stored and made ready for analysis. Pictures and images were removed as these were not part of the content analysis in the study. So the preprocessing was carried out.

ii. Coding scheme developed: Definitions and description of what each role meant was given based on the literature. Below are very brief descriptions of each role:

- Interventionist: Journalist's personal opinions or interpretations are evident
- Watchdog: Investigative reporting, holding those in power accountable
- Loyal-Facilitator: Promoting national interests or unity; alignment with the government's interest and activities
- Service: Providing practical information to the public
- Civic: Encouraging public participation and engagement
- Infotainment: Entertainment-focused content

iii. Content analysis done: Using QDA Miner Lite software, the coding was carried out. This was done by myself and later verified by another colleague from a journalism research field. Each of the news article content was coded according to the defined categories.

iv. Results analyzed: The results on QDA Miner Lite appeared in two forms a quantitative result showing the frequency of each of the roles in the news contents.

3.5 Data analysis methods

The first cohort of the quantitative data (i.e. data on journalists' conceptions of their roles and their perceived enactment or implementation) were collected and tabulated under each of the six roles identified by Claudia Mellado (Mellado, 2015; Mellado et al., 2020). This helped to carry out an objective measurement of the roles conception and performance. The result from each of the 5-point Likert scale item was calculated and understood as mean scores of each of the role domains. After this descriptive statistics, a paired samples t-test was computed using SPSS to examine the gap or difference between journalists' epistemological beliefs (role conceptions) and their enactments of these roles. This analysis aimed at measure the degree to which journalists lived up to their beliefs in practicing journalism. In the same way, a descriptive analysis of the factors was measured through 7 items on a Likert scale to measure the degree of journalistic

autonomy. These data are self-administered questionnaire results, yet it might be imperative to further understand the dynamics attributed to JRP and role conception in the context of Ethiopia. Thus, the actual understanding of the news content performance was based on a meticulous reading of the broadcast contents (news stories). Ultimately, by taking the data from both quantitative and qualitative sources, the results have been reported through sequential quantitative-qualitative methods where the quantitative results are presented first and this was followed by qualitative outcomes from the content analysis.

The ethical considerations were all taken care of. Respect for person, beneficence, and justice were considered and translated throughout the data collection process. Through the informed consent, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, and they were allowed to withdraw or refrain from participating. Those participated were informed that their identities will never be revealed in any form. So confidentiality principles were strictly respected.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the data, analyzes them, and in the end discusses them in light of the literature and previous studies. There are two major sections in the chapter. The first section presents the quantitative data results from the survey. The second section presents the results of the content analysis. These are followed by a discussion section that briefly interprets what the results mean.

4.1. Journalists' Background

Before the main journalistic role conception and performance survey, the respondents were asked about their demographic and professional background.

Table 3: Profile of respondents

Background items	Category	Number (Percentage)
Media journalists work in	Radio	51 (56.7%)
	Online	45 (50.0%)
	Television	22 (36.7%)
	Print (newspaper or magazine)	9 (10.0%)
Position	Director	6 (6.7%)
	Senior Editor	39 (43.3%)
	Editor	24 (26.7%)
	Reporter	21 (23.3%)
	Presenter (anchor)	3 (3.3%)
	Other	3 (3.3%)
Sex	Male	72 (80.0%)
	Female	28 (20.0%)
Age Group (years)	25–29	18 (20.0%)
	30–35	36 (40.0%)
	36–45	27 (30.0%)
	46–60	9 (10.0%)
Experience as a journalist	1-5 years	24 (26.67%)
	6-10 years	24 (26.6%)
	11-15 years	30 (33.33%)
	16 years or over	12 (13.33%)
Education Level	Master's degree	51 (56.7%)
	Bachelor's degree	39 (43.3%)
Field of Study	Journalism and/or Communication	54 (60.0%)
	Language and/or Literature	33 (36.7%)
	Social Science	9 (10.0%)
	Other	3 (3.3%)

Journalists worked across various media platforms. While the vast majority (56.7%) worked for radio, half of the respondents (50%) to this study were from online media. Journalists involved in television accounted for 36.7% while only 10% of the respondents. Journalists were thus represented across both traditional and digital media platforms.

The respondents represented almost all positions in the media houses studied. The majority of the respondents held editorial positions accounting for 43.3% and 26.7% senior editors and

editors, respectively. Respondents in the two positions together made up 70% of the respondents. This was followed by reporters whose number accounted for 23.3%. Only 6 individuals (6.7%) held directors' positions, assuming a much higher responsibility. Anchors and others accounted 3.3% each. The sample suggests that editors were well-represented, suggesting an insightful data reflecting decision-making in the media house.

Regarding the sex and age categories of the respondents, it can be seen from the data that quite a large size of the respondents (72%) were males, and the remaining (28%) were females. The other demographic variable, age, was also crucial in understanding the age groups of the respondents in the study. While a fifth of the respondents' age ranged from 25 to 29, people whose age ranged between 30 and 35 doubled (40%). The journalists aged 36-45 were 30%. The least number of journalists were in the age brackets between 46 and 60. The data on sex and age demonstrate that the respondents were across different age and gender categories, reflecting diversity among the nature of the respondents.

The respondents differed in their years of experience in the media. The largest group of respondents (33.3%) had 11-15 years of experience, followed by the journalists whose experience ranged between 1 and 5 years and 6 and 10 years, each making up 26.6%. The smallest size, 13.3%, had 16 or more years of experience.

Regarding the educational background, one can see that a greater proportion (56.7%) of the respondents had master's degrees while the remaining (43.3%) held bachelor's degrees. These respondents were also asked to indicate the field of study they majored at university. The responses show that a large majority were from journalism and communication. This was followed by 36.7% of the respondents whose education was in language and literature. The remaining respondents were from social science and other disciplines, making up 10% and 3.3, respectively.

4.2 Journalistic Role Conception and Performance

Below are two tables that display the results from the survey on journalistic roles conceived by the journalists and the enactments of these roles in the media. Data were gathered through a survey questionnaire that had two columns for the same statements. On the first column, journalists (i.e. respondents) were asked to indicate the degree of importance, and on the other column, they were asked to indicate how often they practice those ideals in the newsroom. Results for each variable (role in this case) were summed up, and the mean scores were calculated. The final results are presented in two separate tables – a table showing the overall means scores of conception and performance for each of the role and another table for showing the statistical test of differences between the two.

Table 4: Mean Scores of Journalistic Role Conception and Performance

Role	Items	Conception mean	Performance mean
Interventionist	[2, 6, 16, 20, 23, 30]	2.87	2.82
Watchdog	[3, 7, 13, 17, 25, 33, 34, 39]	3.46	2.69
Loyal-facilitator	[8, 12, 18, 19, 22, 31]	3.47	3.55
Service	[5, 15, 21, 32, 36]	3.53	3.09
Civic	[1, 9, 10, 14, 26, 27, 29, 35, 38, 40]	4.04	3.24
Infotainment	[4, 11, 24, 28, 37]	2.46	2.41

Table 4 shows the levels of alignment between journalistic role conception and performance. Overall, the civic role received the highest degree of conception, reflecting that the journalists showed a high degree of importance to it. This was followed the service, loyal-facilitator, and watchdog roles, accounting mean scores of 3.53, 3.47, 3.46, respectively. The least important

roles for journalists were found to be intervention and infotainment roles at mean values below average, 2.86 and 2.46, respectively.

Looking at the performance column, one can see that intervention and infotainment roles were, according to the self-reported practice indices, the least practiced roles, suggesting that these are less central to journalists' perceived and enacted roles. In the same vein, this kind of agreement was exhibited between the conception and performance of the loyal-facilitator role, indicating that journalists emphasized the serving the state and national agendas in their ideals (3.47) and daily practices (3.55). By contrast, the watchdog role, while receiving a high value in journalists' conception (3.46), showed a low degree of performance (2.69), reflecting that there existed a noticeable gap between the ideal and the actual performance, as reported by the journalists. The service role received higher rating in conception (3.53), but did shower a little lower performance (3.09).

Overall, the results highlight a pattern where normative ideals - especially those associated with civic and watchdog roles - are more strongly endorsed than enacted.

However, this data alone cannot show the statistical significance between the journalists' role conception and performance in the Ethiopian public media. Hence, a paired samples t-test was computed to determine whether the observed differences in conception and performance are statistically significant across six journalistic roles – interventionist, watchdog, loyal-facilitator, service, civic, and infotainment.

Table 5: Paired samples t-test of journalistic role conception and journalistic role performance

	Role	Variable	Mean	SD	Mean diff	t	df	Sig. (p-value)
JV	Interventionist	Conception	2.87	0.86	0.05	0.51	89	0.61
		Performance	2.82	0.52				
PR	Watchdog	Conception	3.46	0.66	0.77	7.86	89	0.000
		Performance	2.69	0.46				
	Loyal-facilitator	Conception	3.47	0.91	0.08	0.82	89	0.42
		Performance	3.55	0.41				
AA	Service	Conception	3.53	0.82	0.44	4.50	89	0.000
		Performance	3.09	0.24				
	Civic	Conception	4.04	0.49	0.80	8.17	89	0.000
		Performance	3.24	0.36				
	Infotainment	Conception	2.46	0.74	0.05	0.51	89	0.61
		Performance	2.41	0.52				

- P-value is calculated at 95% confidence level
- JV= Journalistic Voice, PR= Power Relations, AA= Audience Approach

The paired samples t-test allowed a statistical test of the mean scores for the conception and performance of the roles for each category, highlighting the congruence and the mismatch.

Civic, watchdog, and service roles exhibited significant discrepancies between the journalists' conceptions and their practice. The civic role, which emphasizes engagement with the public and fostering democratic participation, had exceptionally the highest mean conception score ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 0.49$), but the performance received a significantly lower score ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.36$). This difference was statistically significant ($t = 8.17$, $df = 89$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that while journalists strongly identify with the civic ideal, they did not put the ideals into practice, perhaps due to structural or contextual factors.

Similarly, the watchdog role showed a significant difference with the highest gap in mean difference (0.77), suggesting journalists rated a watchdog role is highly important ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 0.66$), but the enactment of this role in the journalistic works was minimal ($M = 2.69$, $SD = 0.46$), suggesting that there existed a statistically significant gap between what journalists felt important and what they actually practiced ($t = 7.86$, $df = 89$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that although journalists recognize the normative importance of the watchdog role, they were not able to enact it fully, signaling that the watchdog is largely rhetoric, not an action – like the civic role.

Another role, the service role, which focuses on informing and assisting the public with practical information, also exhibited a difference between journalists' conception ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.82$) and performance ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 0.24$). This difference was found to be statistically significant ($t = 4.50$, $df = 89$, mean difference = 0.44, $p < 0.001$), signifying that public oriented or democratic functions are more endorsed than acted.

On the contrary, journalists' ideals and the practices of journalism did not show significant discrepancies on three other journalistic roles - the interventionist, loyal-facilitator, and infotainment roles.

The interventionist role, characterized by the journalist's active involvement in shaping public opinion, commenting, expressing their views, or advocating for specific causes, had low scores in both conception ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.86$) and performance ($M = 2.82$, $SD = 0.52$), with a non-significant mean difference of 0.05 ($t = 0.51$, $df = 89$, $p = 0.61$). Likewise, the infotainment role,

which is associated with the media's soft news style and entertainment content, was both weakly conceived ($M = 2.46$, $SD = 0.74$) and performed ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 0.52$), with a non-significant value ($t = 0.51$, $df = 89$, $p = 0.61$), a similar result like the interventionist role.

Interestingly, the loyal-facilitator role, which entails supporting national development and aligning with government's interests, showed a difference between conception ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.91$) and performance ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.41$), which was found statistically non-significant ($t = 0.82$, $df = 89$, $p = 0.42$). The mean difference between the two was only 0.08. This role was seen both normatively and practically relevant. The alignment between conception and performance in this role could reflect journalistic routines that are rather meaningfully influenced and shaped by national priorities and state interests.

Taken together, the results from the survey data highlight the patterns of what journalists define their ideals and what they routinely practice in relation to the six roles identified by Claudia Mellado. Accordingly, journalists were observed to have fallen short of implementing their ideals in some roles – civic, watchdog, and service roles. While the journalists embrace the normative ideals, they could not come to put these roles as high as they imagined, likely due to institutional, political, and/or structural factors, which require a further and deeper investigation. By contrast the journalists' perception and practice of the three other roles – loyal-facilitator, interventionist, and infotainment roles showed no conflicts. There was congruence between what the journalists needed to prioritize and what they actually put in place. The journalists rated interventionist and infotainment roles are the least important, and these were also the least performed roles in practice. However, it should be noted that the journalists rated the loyal-facilitator role highly and enacted a similar level of commitment, suggesting a strong match between the normative beliefs and professional practices in supporting national interests and aligning with the state preferences.

4.3 Autonomy in Journalistic Roles Performance

In order to understand the journalists' working autonomy, participants were asked to rate their rating to the statements in Table 6 Accordingly, the participants indicated their ratings on a five-

point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The mean scores and standard deviations of these ratings calculated show varied degrees of autonomy across the editorial decision-making, safety, and self-censorship. Looking at the mean scores to each category, one can see that the range is between 2.13 and 3.20, with higher values indicating greater autonomy and lower values showing lesser autonomy.

Table 6: Journalistic autonomy

No.	Items	Mean	SD
1	When I have an idea about a topic that I consider important, I am able to develop/cover the story	2.9	0.99
2	I have freedom to select the news/stories I work on	3.00	0.45
3	I have freedom to decide which aspects of a news story I should emphasize	3.17	1.55
4	The final versions of my stories <u>are not</u> impacted by the editorial opinions/actions of others	2.33	1.03
5	I feel safe from verbal threats/attacks from external individuals and/or organizations that occur in response to my work	2.87	0.49
6	I feel safe from physical threats/attacks from external individuals and/or organizations that occur in response to my work	3.20	0.70
7	I do not use self-censorship practices at work	2.13	0.69
	Total mean	2.80	0.84

A look at the total mean score shows that journalists had altogether a moderate degree of autonomy (mean= 2.80, SD= 0.84). This shows that even though there is a certain degree of autonomy for journalists to enjoy a moderate but clearly limited degree of autonomy. The seven items tested the journalists' degree of freedom on various aspects and the results varied across variables. Hence, the results can further be analyzed.

Journalists reported a moderate or a little less moderate degree of autonomy to develop or cover stories on topics they consider important (mean = 2.9, SD = 0.99), suggesting some limitations in editorial autonomy. Likewise, perceived freedom to select news stories was moderate (mean = 3.00, SD = 0.45), having the lowest standard deviation which means that the respondents'

freedom towards news writing tasks including news selection and framing enjoyed a shared perspective. Also, journalists reported a fair degree of autonomy towards which aspect of the news stories they had to emphasize (mean= 3.17, SD= 1.55).

Items 5 and 6 asked about whether journalists experienced any physical or verbal threats or attacks. While safety from verbal attacks did receive a lower mean score (2.87, SD= 0.49), the safety from physical threats received a somewhat higher mean score 3.20 with a standard deviation of 0.70. One can understand that safety concerns are not acute; they existed and potentially affected how journalists approached their journalistic duties.

By contrast, when asked about the degree to which their works (stories) were free from editorial filtering and decisions, journalists indicated the presence of a substantial degree of influence impacting the final versions. One can understand therefore that the journalists ability to make decisions on the final output was highly limited (mean = 2.33, SD = 1.03), indicating that the final form of the story (i.e. what comes out at the end – published or broadcast) is largely influenced, shaped, and/or altered by the decision of the editors or other actors within the newsroom. This reflects a broader pattern in which editorial structures impose constraints on individual journalists' control over their content.

The most striking result was seen with the seventh item that is on self-censorship. The item, 'I do not use self-censorship practices at work.' Received the lowest score of all items (mean = 2.13, SD = 0.69). One can understand that the journalists tended to self-censor quite greatly, meaning that they felt less confident fear of constraints such as repercussions, political backlash, and other external pressures. Such behavior represents a critical barrier to full journalistic autonomy, reflecting deeper institutional and sociopolitical pressures that influence reporting practices.

Overall, while journalists reported some level of autonomy in the early stages such as story selection and framing, their autonomy was curtailed around final stages – publishing or broadcasting due to organizational oversight and external pressures that foster a culture of caution and self-regulation. Put differently, the results highlight that journalistic practice was influenced by pressures from within and without.

4.4 Results from Content Analysis

The content analysis, as mentioned in Chapter Three, intended to bring together journalistic news productions from Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation News Archive. A total of 82 news stories were deposited into the QDA Miner Lite, a free software program to analyze contents of any sorts. Hence, the six role categories – interventionist, watchdog, loyal-facilitator, service, civic, and infotainment were put under three overarching journalistic role dimensions – journalistic voice, power relations, and audience approach. Under this section are two tables – one presenting the frequency count made to each role and the other a sample of the contents representing each role.

Table 7: Frequency of contents in the news

Dimension	Role	Count	% Codes	% Cases
Journalistic Voice	Interventionist	2	2.1%	100.0%
Power Relations	Watchdog	1	1.0%	100.0%
	Loyal-facilitator	54	55.7%	100.0%
Audience Approach	Service	22	22.7%	100.0%
	Civic	10	10.3%	100.0%
	Infotainment	8	8.2%	100.0%

As can be seen from Table 7, the distribution of journalistic role performance reveals a highly uneven pattern across the six journalistic roles.

Accordingly, one can read from the data that the interventionist role which reflects the journalists' active role in shaping opinions and commenting on the news contents was minimally represented with only 2.1% of the total coded text, implying that advocacy-oriented journalism is rarely practiced in the Ethiopian public media milieu.

In the power relations dimension, the watchdog role which is conventionally considered to be the central role of journalism, with its primary focus on holding those in power accountable, was the least frequently practiced role with only 1% of the codes. In contrast, the loyal-facilitator role overwhelmingly dominated the journalistic role performance in the Ethiopian public media

landscape, comprising 55.7% of the total codes, implying that the great majority of the media's content complies with the government's interest, supporting the political system, and promoting the legitimacy of the government and the ruling political system.

Roles under the audience approach showed a more balanced but uneven distribution compared to the roles in the journalistic voice and the power relations dimensions. Compared to the roles in the dimension of audience approach, the most prevalent role was service role, holding a second rank as the most important role performed (22.7%) next to the loyal-facilitator role. The service role's dominance implies that journalism gave a significant place to the provision of practical and helpful information to the public to help them navigate their daily lives better. The civic role, on the other hand, went down half that of the service role accounting for only 10%, which reflects the amount of emphasis, put on public participation and civic engagement. In the same way, the infotainment role, which promotes entertainment, sensationalism, and personalization while employing soft news style, accounted for 8.2% of the news coverage, reflecting that the media had a modest engagement with entertainment-driven content.

All in all, the results underscore that the journalistic role performance landscape predominantly adopted the loyal-facilitator and service roles, which are then followed by civic and infotainment roles. Paradoxically, the media's salient roles - watchdog and interventionist roles – appeared to have been significantly underperformed.

Table 8: A Demonstration of Cases from the Content Analysis (Sampled from 82 news stories)

Role	Description	Amharic Example(s)	English Translation(s)
Interventionist	Journalists intervene in discourse by proposing solutions, taking sides, or giving normative evaluations of problems.	በጉዳዩ ላይ ማብራሪያ ለመስጠት ፈቃደኛ የሆነ የተቋሙን ኃላፊም ሆነ ተወካይ ሐሳብ ለመቀበል ኢቢሲ ዝግጁ ነው።	The EBC is ready to receive comments from any institution's head or representative who is willing to provide clarification on the matter.
Watchdog	Investigative journalism that critiques power, exposes corruption, or monitors the behavior of elites. Not found in this sample (0 stories).	-ሚኒስቴር መሥሪያ ቤቱ “AIM ULTRA CONSULTANCY” በሚል ስም ለሚሠራ ተቋም የሰጠው የውጭ ሀገራት የሥራ ስምሪት ፍቃድ አለመኖሩን የሕዝብ ግንኙነት እና ኮሙኒኬሽን ሥራ አስፈጻሚ አበበ ዓለሙ ገልጸውልናል።	Public Relations and Communications Executive Officer Abebe Alemu explained to us that the ministry did not issue a foreign employment permit to an institution operating under the name ‘AIM ULTRA CONSULTANCY’.
Loyal-Facilitator	Journalism supports national interests, unity, or state institutions. Content is often uncritical and patriotic.	-Ethiopia, Africa's second most populous nation, is experiencing a period of significant economic growth, fueled in part by its burgeoning energy sector. - ጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር ዐቢይ አሕመድ (ዶ/ር) የመሰብ የአንድ ማዕከል አገልግሎትን በዛሬው ዕለት መርቀው ከፍተኛዋል። - የስምምነቱ መጽደቅ የሁለቱን ሀገራት የሁለትዮሽ ግንኙነት ይበልጥ የሚያጠናክር፣ ለአየር መንገዳችን ተጨማሪ የገቢያ ዕድል የሚፈጥር - ኢትዮጵያ በስኬት ጉዞዋ እጅግ አስፈላጊ አገር እየሆነች ነው- ሚኒስትር ለገሰ ቱሉ(ዶ/ር) የፕራቶሪያው ስምምነት ኢትዮጵያ የአፍሪካን ችግር በአፍሪካ መፍታት ይገባል የሚለውን ጽኑ አቋሟን በተግባር የገለጠ ነው - ፕሬዝዳንት ታየ አጽቀሥላሴ	[English source] -Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Dr.) inaugurated the Mesob One Center service today. -The ratification of the agreement will further strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries and create additional market opportunities for our airline. - Ethiopia is becoming a very important country in its journey to success - Minister Legesse Tulu (PhD) -The Pretoria Agreement is a practical demonstration of Ethiopia's firm stance that African problems should be solved in Africa - President Taye Atsekeslassie

		እንደዚህ ያሉ ሥርዓቶችን ማበልፀግ ለዜጎች...ትልቅ አስተዋጽኦ እንደሚኖራቸው አስገንዝበዋል።	-He noted that the development of such systems would have a great impact on citizens.
Service	Provides practical or useful info (e.g. health, transport, education). Often solution-oriented and aimed at improving daily life.	አሽከርካሪዎች በዝናብ ወቅት የሚደርሱ አደጋዎችን ለመቀነስ... 12 ተቋማት በአንድ ጣሪያ ሥር 40 የተለያዩ አገልግሎቶችን መስጠት መጀመራቸውን የገለፁት ጠቅላይ ሚኒስትሩ፤ ይኸው ዜጎች ጊዜያቸውን እንዲቆጥቡ እና አገልግሎቶችን በተሻለ ውጤታማ መንገድ ለማግኘት ያግዛል -ኦቲዝም በማንኛውም የዕድሜ ክልል ሊታወቅ የሚችል መሆኑን እና በአብዛኛው ግን በመጀመሪያዎቹ ሁለት ዓመታት ውስጥ ምልክቶቹ የመታየት ዕድላቸው ከፍተኛ ነው ይላሉ።	Drivers are urged to reduce accidents during the rainy season... - The Prime Minister announced that 12 institutions have started providing 40 different services under one roof; this will help citizens save time and access services in a more efficient manner. -They say that autism can be diagnosed at any age, but symptoms are most likely to appear in the first two years.
Civic	Journalism that empowers citizens, encourages participation, and includes public voices. Often highlights inclusion, dialogue, or education.	የተለያዩ ዓለም አቀፍ ድርጅቶችና የሀገራት ተወካዮች በትግራይ ክልል እየተካሄደ ያለውን የቀድሞ ተዋጊዎችን መልሶ የማቋቋም ትግበራ ሂደት ተመልክተዋል። - የህዝቦች ትብብር፣ የዜጎች ክብር፣ ሰብዓዊ ብልጽግና፣ ሀገራዊ ልዕልና የኢትዮጵያ ህልም መሰረታዊያን መናቸውን ጠቅሰው፤ ይህ እንዲሳካ ዜጎች በሰፈር እና በብሔር መከፋፈል የለባቸውም ብለዋል።	-Representatives of various international organizations and countries have observed the ongoing rehabilitation process for former combatants in the Tigray region. - He mentioned the fundamental values of people's cooperation, citizen dignity, human prosperity, national sovereignty, and the Ethiopian dream; he said that for this to be achieved, citizens should not be divided by region or ethnicity.
Infotainment	Journalism that entertains through soft news, celebrity stories, or emotional human-interest narratives.	የዲሲው የማደያዎች ጌታ - ኢዮብ ማሞ ካቻ ሕይወት አጋጣሚ እ.አ.አ በ1981 በ13 ዓመት ዕድሜያቸው ከኢትዮጵያ ወደ አሜሪካዊ ኖርዝ ዳኮታ ሲሄዱ ዛሬ የደረሱበት ከፍታ ላይ ደርሰው የታላቋ አሜሪካን ዋና ከተማ ተፅዕኖ ፈጣሪ ይሆናሉ ብሎ ያሰበ ማንም አልነበረም። - የጦና ልጆች አንድ አባባል አላቸው። "አቃና ካታ ባምባሬ ውረሴስ" ይላሉ በወላይትኛ፤ ትርጉሙም ሊያድር የነበረውን ምግብ ዳታ ጨረሰው እንደማለት ነው።	Iyob Mamo Kacha, the Gas Station King of D.C. When he moved from Ethiopia to North Dakota, America, at the age of 13, no one imagined that he would reach the heights he has reached today and become an influential figure in the great American capital. -The children of Tona have a saying: "Aqana kata bambare wareses" (Aqana kata bambare wareses) in Wolayta language; the meaning is that the food that was supposed be left is consumed by 'Data' [a strong spice made of Chili papers].

		- ማርያም መግደላዊት ይህ ቀረሽ የማይሏት ቆንጆ ነበረችና ሰዎች ያደንቁዋት፤ ወንዶች ይከተሏት እንደነበርና አጋንንት ተጠግተው ዝሙት ያሠሯት እንደነበር ይነገራል -የክርስቶስ ሆኖ የተገኘ ሁሉ ይቀጠቀጣል። የሐናና ቀያፋን ያህል ጉልበት ያገኘ ማን አለ? የጭካኔያቸውን ልክ ሁሉ በአይነት በአይነቱ እያወረዱት ነው። ይህን ተመልከቶ ከክርስቶስ ጋር የሚቆም “አብሬው ነበርኩ” የሚልስ ማን ይኖራል?	-It is said that Mary Magdalene was so beautiful that people admired her, men followed her, and demons possessed her and committed adultery with her. -All who belong to Christ will be crushed. Who has gained as much power as Annas and Caiaphas? They are bringing down all the limits of their cruelty in every way. Who will stand with Christ and say, “I was with him”?
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The table presents the six journalistic roles alongside roles together the illustrative examples, testimonies or instances that are directly drawn from the news stories that were selected for analysis. As can be seen from the table, each journalistic role is briefly described, followed by concrete examples or instances how it was manifested in the Ethiopian journalistic practice. In other words, each journalistic role is contextualized through representative contents from the news stories, offering insights into its realizations in the newsroom.

The interventionist, one of the least exercised roles, was almost rare, implying that it was not the typical feature of journalism in the Ethiopian media landscape. An example drawn from the dataset ‘በጉዳዩ ላይ ማብራሪያ ለመስጠት ፈቃደኛ የሆነ የተቋሙን ኃላፊም ሆነ ተወካይ ሐሳብ ለመቀበል አቢሲ ዝግጁ ነው።’ (*The EBC is ready to receive comments from any institution's head or representative who is willing to provide clarification on the matter*).

While this is coded as interventionist role among the very few, the journalist attempted to further add intervened stating that the media would be ready to accept any comments. Though does not seem to be a stronger version of the interventionist role, it is possible to consider that it is where the a manifestation of the role is revealed, implying that advocacy positions, are extremely limited, but are apparently exercised as the excerpt suggests a further dialogue on the matter presented. This excerpt taken from a news story that attempted to do a sort of investigation on a

private firm called ‘Aim Ultra Consultancy’ that was alleged to have illegally solicited money by promising to give assisting people migrate to foreign countries.

The watchdog role, where journalism in a democratic society is responsible to monitor and hold those in power accountable, was found with only one of the news stories coded. It was really very hard to get a watchdog role throughout the sample news stories analyzed. Albeit arguable, the watchdog role was seen with the news story on ‘Aim Ultra Consultancy’. It is where the media attempted to debunk an allegation (money solicitation for a false cause).

ሚኒስቴር መሥሪያ ቤቱ 'AIM ULTRA CONSULTANCY' በሚል ስም ለሚሠራ ተቋም የሰጠው የውጭ ሀገራት የሥራ ስምሪት ፍቃድ አለመኖሩን የሕዝብ ግንኙነት እና ኮሙኒኬሽን ሥራ አስፈጻሚ አበበ ዓለሙ ገልጸውልናል።
(Public Relations and Communications Executive Officer Abebe Alemu explained to us that the ministry did not issue a foreign employment permit to an institution operating under the name ‘AIM ULTRA CONSULTANCY’.)

Though this cannot be fully taken as a watchdog role manifestation, it is considered as watchdog in the entire context of the news story. The journalist, in this case, attempted to reveal wrongdoings by the private firm mentioned.

In general, though somehow seen in a single case, the watchdog role is almost absent in the news practice, signaling a gap in critical media practice or editorial caution in confronting institutional power.

The loyal-facilitator role, the most prevalent role of the Ethiopian public, media was exhibited in over half of the codes, reflecting that it was the salient role manifested throughout. As can be seen from the data, it was the most visible role manifested among the coded categories. The role prioritizes the state through emphasizing on roles such as building national pride and portrayal of the government’s positive images. In other words, stories under this category lacked critical or investigative elements, and instead promote patriotism that is aligned with the state’s priorities.

The following excerpts represent the loyal-facilitator roles in the media.

- **ጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር ዐቢይ አሕመድ (ዶ/ር) የመሱብ የአንድ ማዕከል አገልግሎትን መርቀው ከፍተዋል።**
Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Dr.) inaugurated the Mesob One Center service today.
- **ኢትዮጵያ በስኬት ጉዞዋ እጅግ አስፈላጊ አገር እየሆነች ነው – ሚኒስትር ለገሰ ቱሉ (ዶ/ር)**
Ethiopia is becoming a very important country in its journey to success – Minister Legesse Tulu (Ph.D.).
- **የስምምነቱ መጽደቅ የሁለቱን ሀገራት የሁለትዮሽ ግንኙነት ይበልጥ የሚያጠናክር፣ ለአየር መንገዳችን ተጨማሪ የገበያ ዕድል የሚፈጥር**
The ratification of the agreement will further strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries and create additional market opportunities for our airline.

These examples reflect a role performance that emphasizes national achievements including Ethiopia's international stature, emphasizing on how the government's leadership played key roles in uplifting Ethiopia in many ways. This is done without critiques , comments, and alternative voices. The frequency and thematic repetition of such content suggest the dominance of this role within the state media's news coverage.

Service, that aims to provide the audience information for them to live a quality life through the provision of practical advice, was another dominate role of the media next to the loyal-facilitator role, albeit here existed a significant gap between the two. For instance, the news story 'አሽከርካሪዎች በዝናብ ወቅት የሚደርሱ አደጋዎችን ለመቀነስ. ... [Drivers are urged to reduce accidents during the rainy season] apparently aims at informing what drivers ought to do to avoid or reduce the occurrence of traffic accidents. The other example '–ኦቲዝም' በማንኛውም የዕድሜ ክልል ሊታወቅ የሚችል መሆኑን እና በአብዛኛው ግን በመጀመሪያዎቹ ሁለት ዓመታት ውስጥ ምልክቶቹ የመታየት ዕድላቸው ከፍተኛ ነው ይላሉ። [They say that autism can be diagnosed at any age, but symptoms are most likely to appear in the first two years.] presents the audience with information pertaining to a children health issue – autism. It provides practical information for parents, caregivers, and the general public. The goal is solution-oriented – to increase early awareness and intervention. The service role also

presented information that could also come through government institutions such as ‘12 ተቋማት በአንድ ጣሪያ ሥር 40 የተለያዩ አገልግሎቶችን መስጠት ... [12 institutions providing 40 different services...]. Though the dominant features of these examples appear to be service, they could also have some overlaps with loyal-facilitator as they may also reflect the institutional efficiency from the government’s side. Therefore, the service role can be said to have been well-represented as numerous news stories elements focused on providing practical solution oriented information to the public. These included coverage of information on road and traffic safety, health awareness (the case of autism), and new government service.

The civic role, reflected in a tenth of the news stories coded, was also a manifestation in the media. Through covering the rehabilitation of the former combatants in Tigray Region of Ethiopia, the news story highlighted the need to protect citizens and establish peace and stability

In the coverage of the rehabilitation of former combatants in Tigray, the news highlights ideals such as citizen dignity, people’s cooperation, and unity beyond ethnic or regional divisions. By framing these themes as prerequisites for achieving “the Ethiopian dream,” the story promotes a national dialogue rooted in civic values. While the article does not directly quote citizens or foster participatory engagement, it symbolically centers the public interest through its emphasis on social healing and collective identity. Thus, the civic role here is more rhetorical than participatory, serving to educate and align citizens around shared democratic ideals. For instance the news story involving ‘የተለያዩ ዓለም አቀፍ ድርጅቶችና የሀገራት ተወካዮች በትግራይ ክልል እየተካሄደ ያለውን የቀድሞ ተዋጊዎችን መልሶ የማቋቋም ትግበራ ሂደት ተመልክተዋል።’ [Representatives of various international organizations and countries have observed the ongoing rehabilitation process for former combatants in the Tigray region.] accentuates the need for opening the space for post-conflict reintegration, which ultimately leads to peace and stability in the country. It also highlights transparency through external observers. In another news story, ‘የህዝቦች ትብብር፣ የዜጎች ክብር፣ ሰብዓዊ ብልጽግና፣ ሀገራዊ ልዕልና የኢትዮጵያ ህልም መሰረታዊያን መናቸውን ጠቅሰው...’[He mentioned the fundamental values of people's cooperation, citizen dignity, human prosperity, national sovereignty, and the Ethiopian dream...] was coded under civic role. This is because this excerpt signifies elevating citizenship, dignity and inclusion, It also highlights the constitutional values such as collective

identity, participation and cooperation. Generally, though not sufficient, the civic role is among the roles fairly manifested in the news contents.

The infotainment role that is characterized by blending information presented through entertainment had a fair representation on the Ethiopian public media contents through soft news, emotional human-interest angles, or culturally resonant anecdotes. This is well reflected through the story about Iyob Mamo Kach, who, according to the story, became a business celebrity in the United States. His story reflects a human interest story presented in a soft narrative mode. The other story coded infotainment is the anecdotal story that begins as ‘የጦና ልጆች አንድ አባባል አላቸው፡፡’ [The children of *Tona* have a saying ...]. This story culturally resonant story presents the wisdom on the Tona people in preparing *ዳጣ* (*dat’a*), a spicy chili made of chili papers]. The story that begins with a *Wolayita* [an ethnic group in Ethiopia’s south] proverb maintains a cultural flavor, adding a soft narrative touch that entertains while embedding deeper social meanings accessible to those familiar with the language and traditions. The following was also coded infotainment:

- ማርያም መግደለዊት ይህ ቀረሽ የማይሏት ቆንጆ ነበረችና ሰዎች ያደንቁዋት፤ ወንዶች ይከተሏት እንደነበርና ...

[It is said that Mary Magdalene was so beautiful that people admired her, men followed her ...]

This mythical human-interest story that discusses Mary Magdalene’s beauty blends historical and biblical story telling with emotional and sensational tone. It tells the audience the story of a woman from the Bible through a description of her physical and emotional characteristics.

In sum, the infotainment story elements presented storied while informing the audience through sensationalism and soft story telling angles, as opposed to straight hard news story telling technique. The public media presented such contents through not only entertaining the audience but also deepening audience connection by appealing to shared values, stories, and emotions.

4.5 Discussion

The study aimed at examining the tensions between the journalists' conceptions and practices of doing journalism in the Ethiopian media landscape. Particularly, this study examined how the journalists working for the public media perceived the role of journalism and what they actually practiced in the newsroom. The study also examined the degree to which journalists enjoyed journalistic autonomy, which is a crucial component based on which their beliefs and practices are founded. Data was gathered through a survey questionnaire that was developed by the Global JRP Project. The survey tool was validated by the project itself for measuring six different but interrelated journalistic roles – interventionist, watchdog, loyal-facilitator, service, civic, and infotainment. The other important tool used to collect data was content analysis which enabled the observation and coding of the roles, as per identified by Mellado (2015). The latter tool, content analysis, was primarily used to assess the news productions, taking a collection of the news stories ($n = 82$) from mid- March through April. The selection of the news stories also included the top news stories that had frequent viewers during the same period.

The results from the quantitative survey have indicated that there existed statistically significant difference between watchdog, service and civic roles. The significant gap with the watchdog role is consistent with other studies (Mellado et al., 2017; Mellado & Van Dalen, 2014). These studies observed that while journalists normative roles were found to be more of watchdog, they tended to fall short of putting this into action due to several factors including political and institutional. Such journalists, when they fail to become watchdog, would otherwise become loyal-facilitators (Mellado, 2015) where they would stand as a safeguard to the state, while merely spending much of their time and energy on reporting on the good achievements of the government. As seen in this study, the vast majority of contents in the news had a loyal-facilitator role's feature. This is particularly seen in countries and media systems where democracy is yet in its infancy (Mellado, 2015). The loyal-facilitator role that covered 55.7% of the news contents was the most pervasive role of the media. However, it is quite a surprise that journalists showed favorably a higher degree of conception towards loyal-facilitator. This could be attributed to the reason that journalists gradually acquainted themselves with the government propaganda and editorial influences. Contrary to what is seen from this study, a study (Skjerdal,

2016) reported that the journalists in Ethiopia were seen to have a lesser degree of conception towards investigative and adversarial reporting, leaving room for further inquiry into the perceived roles of journalists in Ethiopia. In the same way, McIntyre et al. (2023) reported that there existed a significant gap between journalists' conceptions and practice of the watchdog role, especially in Rwanda. This dominance suggests that journalists more frequently align their work with state narratives, developmental agendas, or institutional interests, which may be shaped by national media policies, regulatory frameworks, or professional cultures that emphasize cohesion over critique.

The civic and service roles also showed statistically significant differences where journalists put a higher degree of importance, their enactment of these roles was below what they anticipated to do. But in another study (Hallin et al., 2023), the shift towards the civic role was exhibited during the Covid-19 pandemic. This implies that the roles change depending on the politico-economic, environmental, and institutional factors.

The Intervention and infotainment roles received a lesser degree of importance. Journalists believed that these two roles were less important, and their corresponding enactment shows that they were not practiced often. However, this report does not agree with the results from the content analysis which has revealed a fair amount of infotainment content coverage. This limited enactment suggests that advocacy-oriented journalism is rarely prioritized in the professional routines of the sampled journalists, possibly due to normative constraints or institutional disincentives (Mellado, 2015; Örnebring, 2017). So This striking underrepresentation of the watchdog role indicates significant limitations in adversarial reporting, potentially reflecting political pressures, self-censorship, or editorial risk aversion.

The content analysis matches to the self-reported enactment of loyal-facilitator and watchdog roles where the dominant manifestation of journalism was seen to be loyal-facilitator while there existed few watchdog roles. So the watchdog role is just rhetoric, not a realization, but the loyal-facilitator was a kind of both – existed in both the journalists' faith and practice as well.

With regard to the journalistic autonomy, it was general observed that journalists enjoyed a moderate degree of freedom towards the initial stages of news writing (e.g. news topic selection, framing, and drafting), yet the final forms of the news were greatly influenced by editorial decisions and self-censorship.

In sum, the findings are corroborated by the general literature in journalistic role performance, highlighting that factors such as political pressure and editorial decisions could influence the final news productions. The results underscore a professional environment where supportive and service-oriented roles thrive, while critical and interventionist roles remain marginalized.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions and Recommendations

In this master's thesis, I have tried to examine the journalistic role performance in the Ethiopian public media landscape, using a JRP Framework. The study sought to assess how the journalistic conceptions and practiced aligned by examining the roles categorized under three major dimensions – journalistic voice, power relations, and audience approach. In the sections that follow, I would present the conclusions and recommendations separately.

5.1 Conclusions

The results altogether have shown that there existed statistically significant gaps between roles conceptions and performances, especially in the watchdog, civic, and service roles. While journalists out a higher importance on these roles, their perceived enactment was much lesser showing significant gaps. Studies (Alemayehu Moges, 2024b; Dessie et al., 2023; Mohammed, 2021; Skjerdal & Moges, 2021) reported that the Ethiopian public media sector is generally attached to the state-interest, it is influenced by several social, political, and editorial factors. Thus, in the Ethiopian context, this gap is understood as a consequence that might have resulted from political and structural constraints, limiting journalists from putting into practice what they think is most important.

It is understood that the loyal-facilitator role is the most important role that dominated the media contents, implying that the media's central role is to support national agenda while promoting with the legitimacy of the state and the ruling political party.

The civic and service roles also showed a significant gap, implying that journalists rated their actions are quite below what they thought should have been covered in these roles. The two other

roles, interventionist and infotainment, were perceived less important and less practiced event though the infotainment was exhibited to be among the fairly covered contents.

The journalists autonomy was fairly good during the initial stages of news preparation – selection, framing, and drafting, yet the final outcomes are largely determined by the editorial decisions, reflecting that the journalists did have limited voice to make decisions in the news room’s final productions. Added to this is the high self-censorship that implies the journalists had a low level of journalistic autonomy as they might feel uncertain about the consequences of their news productions.

Generally, the findings in this study appeared to have been in agreement with the general literature even though there are variations with the results reported in other studies.

5.2 Recommendations

Even though it is hard to make a final point of recommendation due to several limitations in this study including limited sample size, exclusion of the private media, and absence of comparative angles in each media house, I would like to forward a few points of recommendations.

This study cannot be considered as a comprehensive and final one. Hence, further research should be carried out to fully understand the meddling variables in the journalistic independence and journalistic role enactment. I would also like to recommend that government should reexamine its commitment to democracy and bring possible actions forward to opening a wiser space for the journalists to gradually work under the principles of independence. Needless to say, journalism schools should initiate large-scale studies in JRP and come up with workable intervention and training mechanisms to help people in the media industry help themselves.

Actors including the Ethiopian Media Authority and professional associations should sit down and hold dialogues for better outcomes in the realm of journalism in the Ethiopian media context. Bringing this into effect may require institutional reforms and broader structural changes. Yet Like I mentioned earlier, further research is required to deepen our understanding.

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Appendix A: JRP Scale (questionnaire)

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

የጋዜጠኝነትና ኮሚዩኒኬሽን ት/ቤት

የጋዜጠኝነት ሚና ዳሰሳ

ይህ ጥናት የሚካሄደው ለአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ድህረ ምረቃ ጥናት ማሟያ ይሆን ዘንድ ነው። አላማው የጋዜጠኝነት ሚና በኢትዮጵያ ያለበትን ሁኔታ መዳሰስ ነው። ትእዛዞችን በጥንቃቄ አንብበው መልስዎን እንዲያስፍሩልኝ ስጠይቅ ለሚያደርጉልኝ ትብብር ላቅ ያለ ምስጋና በማቅረብ ነው።

- ምላሾችዎ ሁሉ በምስጢር የሚጠበቁ ናቸው። መረጃውም ለምርምር ስራ ብቻ የሚውል ነው።
- ስምዎን ወይም ማንነትዎን መግለጽ አያስፈልግም።
- እባክዎ ፈቃደኛ ከሆኑ ከዚህ በታች ለሰፈሩት መጠይቆች ምላሽዎን ይስጡ።

የመረጡትን፣ የፃፉትን፣ የዘገቡትን ወይም ያዘጋጁት ይዘት በየትኛው የሚዲያ መድረክ (ዎች) ነው የሚያቀርቡት? (ከአንድ በላይ ምላሽ መስጠት ይቻላል)

ቴሌቪዥን		
ሬዲዮ		
ህትመት (ጋዜጣ/መጽሐፍ)		
አንላይን (ኢንተርኔት)		

አሁን ያሉበት ሃላፊነት ምንድን ነው

1. ስራ አስኪያጅ/የዜና ዳይሬክተር
2. ከፍተኛ አዘጋጅ
3. አዘጋጅ/አርታኢ
4. ሪፖርተር
5. አቅራቢ (ዜና አንባቢ)
6. ሌላ (ይግለጹ) _____

ሚዲያ ውስጥ የሰሩበት የስራ ልምድ (በአመት) _____

ጾታ ወንድ _____ ሴት _____

እድሜ _____

1. የትምህርት ደረጃ _____
2. ሁለተኛ ደ/ት/ቤት _____
3. ዲፕሎማ _____
4. ባችለር ዲግሪ _____
5. ማስተርስ ዲግሪ _____
6. ፒ ኤች ዲ _____

ያጠኑት ትምህርት ምንድን ነው?

- 1 ጋዜጠኝነት/ኮሚዩኒኬሽን
- 2 ቋንቋ/ሰነድ-ጽሑፍ
- 3 ሌላ (ይግለፁ) _____

ክፍል 1

በግራ በኩል የተሰጡትን አረፍተ ነገሮች በማንበብ እያንዳንዳቸው በጋዜጠኝነት ውስጥ ለአርሲዎ ምን ያህል ጠቀሜታ እንዳላቸው ምላሽዎን በመካከለኛው አምድ ውስጥ ካሉት አማራጮች ይህንን ምልክት (✓) በማስቀመጥ ያሳዩ፡፡

1 ማለት በፍፁም አስፈላጊ አይደለም፤ 2 ያን ያህል አስፈላጊ አይደለም ፤ 3 በመጠኑ አስፈላጊ፤ 4 በጣም አስፈላጊ እና 5 እጅግ በጣም አስፈላጊ ነው፡፡ ስለዚህ ከ 1 ወደ 5 ሲሄዱ አስፈላጊነታቸው ይጨምራል፡፡

ከዚያ ቀጥሎ የሚሰሩበት የሚዲያ ተቋምዎ በሚያደርገው ነገር ላይ በመመስረት መግለጫዎቹን ደረጃ ይስጡ፡፡ በዋናነት በሚሰሩበት ሚዲያ የሚወጡ ፕሮዳክሽኖች እነዚህ ተግባራት ምን ያህል የተለመዱ ተግባራት እንደሆኑ ለእያንዳንዱ ከተሰጡት ደረጃዎች ውስጥ አንዱን በመምረጥ ምላሽዎን ምልክት (✓) በማስቀመጥ ያሳዩ፡፡

1= በፍፁም የተለመደ ተግባር አይደለም፤ 2 =ያልተለመደ ተግባር ነው፤ 3 =አንዳንዴ ይተገበራል፤ 4 =በጣም የተለመደ ተግባር ነው እና 5= እጅግ በጣም የተለመደ ተግባር ነው፡፡

- እባኩትን በመካከለኛው አምድ ላይ ያለውን እያንዳንዱን ጥያቄ ስለ ጋዜጠኛ ሚና ያለዎትን ግንዛቤ መሰረት በማድረግ እና በቀኝ በኩል ደግሞ የሚሰሩበት የሚዲያ ተቋም በሚያወጣው ይዘት ላይ በቀኝ አምድ ላይ ይመልሱ፡፡

No.	ጥያቄዎች/ጉዳዮች Items/Issues	እርስዎ እንደ ጋዜጠኛ እነዚህ ጉዳዮች ምን ያህል አስፈላጊ ናቸው ብለው ያምናሉ? In your opinion, how important are these journalistic tasks?					እነዚህ ጉዳዮች በሚዲያችሁ ውስጥ ምን ያህል ይተገበራሉ? How frequently are they practiced in the media you work in?				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		በፍፁም አስፈላጊ አይደለም Not important at all	የን ያህል አስፈላጊ አይደለም Not very important	በመጠኑ አስፈላጊ Somewhat important	በጣም አስፈላጊ ነው Quite important	እጅግ በጣም አስፈላጊ ነው Extremely important	በፍፁም የተለመደ ተግባር አይደለም Not common at all	የተለመደ ተግባር አይደለም Not common	አንዳንድ ይተገበራል Sometimes	በጣም የተለመደ ተግባር ነው Quite common	እጅግ በጣም የተለመደ ተግባር ነው Extremely common
1	በዜናዎች ውስጥ የዜጎችን ድምጽ ማካተት Including the voice of individual citizens in the news.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2	በሚያቀርቡት ሪፖርት ውስጥ የራስዎን አስተያየት (ለምሳሌ የሪፖርቱን ጉዳይ በተመለከተ ማጽደቅ አለያም ማጣጣል) ጨምረው መስጠት Providing your opinion on the issues you are reporting, as an expression of approval or disapproval.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
3	በህብረተሰቡ ውስጥ ያሉ ተሰሚነት ያላቸው ግለሰቦች ወይም ቡድኖች (ፖለቲከኞች እና የፖለቲካ ፓርቲዎች፣ የአስተዳደር አካላት፣ የንግድ ድርጅቶች፣ የእምነት ተቋማት እና ልሂቃን የሚሉትን እና የሚያደርጉትን አውነተኛነት መመርመር Questioning the truthfulness of what powerful individuals or groups in society such as politicians and political parties, governing bodies, business, the church, and the cultural elite, say or do.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

4	በዜና ውስጥ ግለሰቦችን ማሳየት - ስለ አስተሳሰባቸው አካላዊ ወይም ማህበራዊ ባህሪያቸው መረጃ መስጠት Featuring individuals in the news, by providing information on their intellectual, physical, or social characteristics.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
5	አንድ የተወሰነ ክስተት ወይም ድርጊት እንዴት በተራ ሰዎች የዕለት ተዕለት ሕይወት ላይ ተጽዕኖ እንደሚያሳድር ማመላከት። Indicating how a particular event or action might influence the day-to-day lives of ordinary people.	1	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1
6	ፖሊሲዎችን ወይም ለችግሮች መፍትሄዎችን በተመለከተ የራስዎን ሀሳቦች ወይም ሀሳቦች ማቅረብ። Providing your own proposals or ideas regarding potential policies or solutions to problems.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
7	በህብረተሰቡ ውስጥ ያሉ ተሰሚነት ያላቸው ግለሰቦች ወይም ቡድኖች (ፖለቲከኞች እና የፖለቲካ ፓርቲዎች፣ የአስተዳደር አካላት፣ የንግድ ድርጅቶች፣ የእምነት ተቋማት እና ልሂቃን የሚሉትን እና የሚያደርጉትን ሕገወጥ/ሥነ-ምግባር የጎደለው ድርጊትን ማጋለጥ። Uncovering illegal /irregular behavior of powerful individuals or groups in society, such as politicians and political parties, governing bodies, business, the church, and the cultural elite.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
8	ስለ ሀገርዎ የሚከሩበት ነገር አዎንታዊ ስሜቶችን መግለጽ Expressing positive feelings about being a citizen of your country.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
9	የህዝብ አስተያየት መረጃን በመጠቀም የዜጎችን አስተያየት ማጋራት Using public poll-data to share the opinions of citizens	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
10	አንድን ክስተት ወይም ጉዳይ በተመለከተ ህዝቡ በተወሰነ መልኩ እንዲንቀሳቀስ ጥሪ ማድረግ Calling on the public to behave in a certain way	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

	regarding an event or issue.										
11	የሰዎችን ስሜት የሚገልፁ ምስሎችን ማሳየት (ምሳሌ፡ በፓርላማ ውስጥ ያለ የተኙ ሰዎችን ምስል ማሳየት) Including explicit references to emotions of people.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
12	የህዝብ ፖሊሲዎችን ወይም የመንግሥት ባለስልጣናት ይፋዊ እንቅስቃሴዎችን በአዎንታዊ መልኩ ማቅረብ። Presenting in a positive light public policies or official activities of governing elites.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
13	በህብረተሰብ ውስጥ ያሉ ተጽእኖ ፈጣሪ ግለሰቦችን ወይም ቡድኖችን በተመለከተ በፍትህ ወይም በአስተዳደር ሂደቶች ላይ መረጃን ጨምሮ ማቅረብ (ለምሳሌ ሙስና ወይም ብልሹ አሰራር) Including information on judicial or administrative processes regarding powerful individuals or groups in society.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
14	ሰዎችን ኢኮኖሚያዊ፣ ማህበራዊ እና/ወይም ፖለቲካዊ ግዴታቸውን እና መብቶቻቸውን ማሳወቅ Informing people of their economic, social and/or political duties and rights.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
15	የዕለት ተዕለት የኑሮ ችግሮችን እንዴት መቆቀም እንደሚቻል ለህዝብ ምክሮች እና ተግባራዊ መመሪያ መስጠት። Giving the public tips and practical guidance on how to deal with everyday life problems.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
16	በዜና ዘገባዎ ውስጥ ስለ ክስተቶች ወይም ሰዎች የአራስዎን እይታ የሚጠቅም የማምጣት ቃላትን መጠቀም። Using evaluative terms about events or persons in your news reporting that reveal your own way of seeing things.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
17	በራስዎ ጥያቄ እና ጥናት ላይ በመመስረት ስልጣንን ያለአግባብ መጠቀም ወይም በደል ላይ ያተኮረ መረጃ መስጠት Providing information on abuses of power or wrongdoing based on your own extensive inquiry and research.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

18	የመሪ ተቋማትን፣ የኢኮኖሚ መሪዎችን እና የጋራ ልሂቃንን የአመራር፣ የአስተዳደር ክህሎት ወይም ግላዊ ባህሪያትን ማጥቅ። Favorably stressing the leadership, management skills or personal characteristics of institutional powers, economic leaders, and powerful elites.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
19	የሀገርዎን ማህበራዊ፣ ስፖርት፣ ፖለቲካዊ ወይም ኢኮኖሚያዊ ስኬቶችን ለመጋራት እድሎችን መፈለግ (ምሳሌ፡ ሃገሪቱ ያሳካቸውን እድገት ማጥቅ፣ ማጋራት) Looking for opportunities to share social, sporting, political, or economic achievements of your country.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
20	የተወሰኑ ክስተቶችን ወይም ጉዳዮችን መንስኤዎችን፣ አንድምታቸውን ወይም የሚያስከትሉትን ውጤት ማብራራት Explaining the causes, meanings or consequences of specific events or issues.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
21	ስለ አዳዲስ ምርቶች ወይም አገልግሎቶች ለተጠቃሚዎች መረጃ መስጠት Providing consumer information about trends, advances and new products or services.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
22	በክልልዎ ወይም በአገርዎ ውስጥ የግለሰቦችን ፣ ቡድኖችን ወይም ድርጅቶችን ስኬት ማሞላስ Praising the achievement of individuals, groups or organizations in your locality or country.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
23	ለፖለቲካዊ ወይም ማህበራዊ ጉዳይ ዘመቻ (ምሳሌ፡ የሰራተኛ የደመወዝ ጭማሪ አስፈላጊነትን ማንሳት) Campaigning for a political or social cause	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
24	በዜና ውስጥ ስለተካተቱ ሰዎች የግል ሕይወት መረጃን ጨምሮ ማቅረብ (ምሳሌ፡ 'አቶ አበበ በወር 2 ጊዜ በሽርሽር ያሳልፋሉ') Including information on the private lives of people being covered in the news.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

25	የገገርዎችን ወይም ተጥእኖ ፈጣሪዎችን/አሳዳሪዎችን ጥፋት የሚጠይቁ፣ የሚተቸ ወይም የሚያጋልጡ ምንጮችን መጥቀስ Quoting sources that question, criticize or uncover wrongdoings of powerful groups or individuals in society.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
26	በዜና ውስጥ ያሉ የተወሰኑ ክስተቶችን በተመለከተ ለዜጎች ዳራ (background) እና አውዱን ማሳወቅ Including background information and in-depth context for citizens regarding specific events in the news.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
27	ውሳኔዎች ከዋና ዋና ከተሞች ባለፈ በሌሎች ዳር አካባቢዎች ያላቸውን ተጽእኖ መጥቀስ Mentioning the impact of decisions on the periphery of your country beyond the capital city and other main cities.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
28	ስለ ብጥ-ብጥ፣ ወንጀል፣ አስከፊ ድህነት፣ ፆታዊ ግንኙነት፣ ወዘተ ተጽእኖቸውን ለማሳየት ሃታዎችን መጨመር Including details to heighten the impact of stories about violence, crime, extreme poverty, sex, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
29	በዜናዎች ውስጥ የተለያዩ አመለካከቶችን ማካተት (ምሳሌ፡ በአንድ ጉዳይ የሁሉም ወገኖች እይታዎችን ማካተት) Including different perspectives in the news to inform citizens.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
30	በህብረተሰቡ ዘንድ ሰፊ ተቀባይነት ባይኖረውም የተለዩ እጅጋዳዎችን መደገፍ (ዛፍ መትከልን) Supporting specific agendas even if they are not widely endorsed by the society.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
31	የሀገርዎን ብሄራዊ እሴቶች መጠበቅ (ምሳ. እንደ ነፃነት፣ ብልጽግና፣ እኩልነት፣ የባህል ልዩነት፣ ቅርስ ያሉ) Defending your country's national values, such as freedom, prosperity, equality, cultural diversity, heritage and so on.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

32	ግላዊችን ግሮች ያለባቸውን ስዎች ለመርዳት እድምጭ/እንባቢ/ተመልካችን ይግባኝ ማለት (እንዲያውም መለመን) Appealing to the audience to help other people with specific and personal problems they may be facing.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
33	እምነትዎ በሪፖርትዎ ላይ ተጽዕኖ እንደማይኖረው እርግጠኛ መሆን Making sure that your beliefs do not influence your reporting.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
34	በህብረተሰብ ውስጥ ያሉ ተጽእኖ ፈጣሪ ግለሰቦች ወይም ቡድኖች የሚናገሩትን ወይም የሚያደርጉትን (በድፍረት) መተቸት ወይም መፍረድ Criticizing or judging what powerful individuals or groups in society say or do.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
35	የባለሥልጣናት ውሳኔዎች በልዩ ማህበራዊ ደረጃ በተገለጹ ማህበረሰቦች ላይ በአንዳች ማህበራዊ መደብ (ብሄር/ጾታ)፣ ጾታ፣ ወዘተ ላይ የሚያሳድሩትን ተፅእኖ ማሳየት Depicting the impact of authorities' decisions on specific socially defined communities such as particular social classes, sexualities, races or ethnicities.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
36	የአንዳንድ ምርቶችን ወይም አገልግሎቶችን ጥራት (ጥሩ እና መጥፎ ገፅታ) ህዝቡ እንዲያውቅ መርዳት Helping the audience to recognize the good and bad quality of specific products or services.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
37	አዝናኝ በሆነ መንገድ መረጃ ለማቅረብ ቀልድ፣ ግነት፣ ሰላቅ ወይም ሌሎች የተረከ መንገዶችን መጠቀም Using humor, exaggeration, sarcasm, or other storytelling devices to provide information in an entertaining way.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

38	ሰለዘጎች እንቅስቃሴ ማሳዎቅ (ምሳሌ፡ ሰላማዊ ሰልፍ፣ የማህበረሰቡ ሁኑዮችን ሲኖር) Informing the public about citizens activities.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
39	በአርስዎ እና/ወይም በምትሠሩበት የሚዲያ ድርጅት፣ እና በሥልጣን ላይ ባሉ አንድ ወይም ከዚያ በላይ ግለሰቦች ወይም ቡድኖች መካከል ግጭት ማሳየት (ለምሳሌ፡ መረጃ አልሰጥም ያለን አንድ ባለስልጣን በዜና ማጋለጥ) Depicting conflict or confrontation between you, and/or the media organization where you work, and one or more individuals or groups in power.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
40	የዜጎችን እንቅስቃሴ እና ጥያቄዎችን በግልፅ መደገፍ Explicitly supporting citizen movements and demands.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B: Journalistic Autonomy and External Pressure

ክፍል 2፡ በዚህ ክፍል ውስጥ ስለ ሥራዎ ሌላ መግለጫዎች ዝርዝር ያገኛሉ። እባኩን እነዚህ መግለጫዎች በዕለት ተዕለት እንቅስቃሴዎ ላይ ምን ያህል እንደሚተገበሩ ከዚህ በታች በሰፈረው ስኬል መሰረት ያመልክቱ።

1=በፍፁም

2= ከስንት አንዴ

3= አንዳንዴ

4= ብዙ ጊዜ

5= ሁልጊዜ

In this section, you will find another list of statements about your work. Please tell us to what extent these statements apply to your daily practice.

Please follow the 5-point scale where 1 is “never”, 2 is “seldom”, 3 is “sometimes”, 4 is “often”, and 5 is “always”.

	ጥያቄዎች/ጉዳዮች Items/Issues	በፍፁም Never	ከስንት አንዴ Seldom	አንዳንዴ Sometimes	ብዙ ጊዜ Often	ሁል ጊዜ Always
1	ጠቃሚ ነው ብዬ የማስበውን ርዕስ በተመለከተ ሀሳብ ሲኖረኝ፣ ታሪኩን መሸፈን እችላለሁ When I have an idea about a topic that I consider important, I am able to develop/cover the story	1	2	3	4	5
2	ዜና/ ታሪኮች የምስራባቸውን ጉዳዮች የመምረጥ ነፃነት አለኝ I have freedom to select the news/stories I work on	1	2	3	4	5
3	የትኛውን የዜና ታሪክ አፅንዖት መስጠት እንዳለብኝ የመወሰን ነፃነት አለኝ I have freedom to decide which aspects of a news story I should emphasize	1	2	3	4	5
4	የምጽፋቸው/የማቀርባቸው የዜና ታሪኮች የኤዲቶሪያል ሃሳብ ይም የሌሎች ተጽእኖ አለባቸው። The final versions of my stories are impacted by the editorial opinions/actions of others	1	2	3	4	5
5	ለሥራዬ ምላሽ ከሚሰጡ የውጭ ግለሰቦች እና/ወይም ድርጅቶች የቃል ዛቻ/ጥቃት ነጻ ነኝ። I feel safe from verbal threats/attacks from external individuals and/or organizations that occur in response to my work	1	2	3	4	5

6	ለሥራዬ ምላሽ ከሚሰጡ የውጭ ግለሰቦች እና/ወይም ድርጅቶች አካላዊ ዛቻ/ጥቃት ነጻ ነኝ። I feel safe from physical threats/attacks from external individuals and/or organizations that occur in response to my work	1	2	3	4	5
7	በስራ ላይ ራሴን ሳንሰር አደርጋለሁ። I use self-censorship practices at work	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C: Mean scores- Conception and Practice

1	Including the voice of individual citizens in the news.	4.73	3.75
2	Providing your opinion on the issues you are reporting, as an expression of approval or disapproval.	1.53	2.23
3	Questioning the truthfulness of what powerful individuals or groups in society such as politicians and political parties, governing bodies, business, the church, and the cultural elite, say or do.	3.9	2.47
4	Featuring individuals in the news, by providing information on their intellectual, physical, or social characteristics.	2.27	2.13
5	Indicating how a particular event or action might influence the day-to-day lives of ordinary people.	4.07	3.27
6	Providing your own proposals or ideas regarding potential policies or solutions to problems.	2.8	2.48
7	Uncovering illegal /irregular behavior of powerful individuals or groups in society, such as politicians and political parties, governing bodies, business, the church, and the cultural elite.	4.38	2.55
8	Expressing positive feelings about being a citizen of your country.	3.87	4.07
9	Using public poll-data to share the opinions of citizens	4.52	3.46
10	Calling on the public to behave in a certain way regarding an event or issue.	3.13	3.04
11	Including explicit references to emotions of people.	2.31	2.13
12	Presenting in a positive light public policies or official activities of governing elites.	3.17	3.72
13	Including information on judicial or administrative processes regarding powerful individuals or groups in society.	3.41	2.73

14	Informing people of their economic, social and/or political duties and rights.	4.65	3.63
15	Giving the public tips and practical guidance on how to deal with everyday life problems.	3.94	3.1
16	Using evaluative terms about events or persons in your news reporting that reveal your own way of seeing things.	2.23	2.53
17	Providing information on abuses of power or wrongdoing based on your own extensive inquiry and research.	3	2.57
18	Favorably stressing the leadership, management skills or personal characteristics of institutional powers, economic leaders, and powerful elites.	2.1	2.97
19	<i>Looking for opportunities to share social, sporting, political, or economic achievements of your country.</i>	4.14	3.73
20	Explaining the causes, meanings or consequences of specific events or issues.	4.06	3.53
21	Providing consumer information about trends, advances and new products or services.	3.81	3.14
22	Praising the achievement of individuals, groups or organizations in your locality or country.	2.74	3.06
23	Campaigning for a political or social cause	3.07	2.51
24	Including information on the private lives of people being covered in the news.	1.57	1.89
25	Quoting sources that question, criticize or uncover wrongdoings of powerful groups or individuals in society	2.93	2.29
26	Including background information and in- depth context for citizens regarding specific events in the news.	4.13	3.55
27	Mentioning the impact of decisions on the periphery of your country beyond the capital city and other main cities.	4.1	3.03
28	Including details to heighten the impact of stories about violence, crime, extreme poverty, sex, etc.	3.6	3.25

29	Including different perspectives in the news to inform citizens.	4.47	3.29
30	Supporting specific agendas even if they are not widely endorsed by the society.	3.54	3.66
31	Defending your country's national values, <i>such as freedom, prosperity, equality, cultural diversity, heritage and so on.</i>	4.77	3.73
32	Appealing to the audience to help other people with specific and personal problems they may be facing.	1.97	2.67
33	Making sure that your beliefs do not influence your reporting	4.53	3.63
34	Criticizing or judging what powerful individuals or groups in society say or do.	2.57	2.93
35	Depicting the impact of authorities' decisions on specific socially defined communities such as particular social classes, sexualities, races or ethnicities.	3.22	2.53
36	Helping the audience to recognize the good and bad quality of specific products or services.	3.87	3.27
37	Using humor, exaggeration, sarcasm, or other storytelling devices to provide information in an entertaining way.	2.56	2.67
38	Informing the public about citizens activities.	4	3.23
39	Depicting conflict or confrontation between you, and/or the media organization where you work, and one or more individuals or groups in power.	2.93	2.37
40	Explicitly supporting citizen movements and demands.	3.46	2.84