



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION**

**ASSESSING PUBLIC RELATIONS FUNCTIONS AND  
CHALLENGES IN THE ETHIOPIAN NEWS AGENCY (ENA)**

**BY:**

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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC**  
**COMMUNICATION**

**Assessing Public Relations Functions and Challenges in the**  
**Ethiopian News Agency (ENA)**

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**Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Masters in Public**  
**Relations and Strategic Communication**

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## DECLARATION

I, Engidawork Baye Melaku, hereby declare that the study entitled "Assessing Public Relations Functions and Challenges in the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA)" is my own work, not submitted for a degree at Addis Ababa University or any other university, and that all sources used for this work have been duly acknowledged.

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## **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study is to provide a critical assessment of the function and challenges of public relations in the Ethiopian news agency. To achieve the objective of the study, a mixed research design was used. A total of 268 respondents from ENA, ministries PR and the media were purposively selected to participate in this study. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were used to analyze the data collected through the questionnaire, in-depth interviews, and FGDs. The study concluded that public relations is often a top-down approach and ignores the bottom-up and horizontal approaches. The weak organizational structure of public relations hindered the achievement of ENA's desired goals. In addition, the study found that the biggest challenge in ENA's public relations is the lack of professionalism. The role of ENA's public relations department in connecting its staff with its customers and stakeholders was rated low. The ministries' PR knowledge of ENA requires additional efforts, such as self-promotion through the media, as their knowledge of ENA's services and founding purpose is limited. The organization should therefore be advised to make great efforts to improve its public relations and meet the needs of staff within ENA, clients, stakeholders and the public in general in order to achieve sustainable growth and benefits.*

**Keywords:** public relations, ministries PR, media.

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## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

CEO:	Chief Executive Officer
EBC:	Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation
ENA:	Ethiopian News Agency
FBC:	Fana Broadcasting Corporate
FDRE:	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGCAO:	Federal Government Communication Affairs Office
FGD:	Focus Group Discussions
IPR:	Institute of Public Relations
IPRA:	International Public Relation Association;
PPR:	Practice of Public Relations
PR:	Public Relations
PRMs:	Public Relation Models
PRSA:	Public Relations Society of America
USBLS:	U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study, and organization of the study.

### 1.1. Background of the Study

The history of public relations began with the ancient civilization of the Egyptians and Greeks, although today's concept of public relations is quite different. However, a public relations as a profession and field of study is commonly considered a recent and young phenomenon (Stock, 2007 cited in Tesfaye, 2020: p.7). Nowadays, public relations is spread all over the world and is also practiced in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Europe (Tesfaye, 2020: p.7).

Scholars argue that public relations are now recognized as an indispensable part of modern life. According to (Tesfaye, 2020: p.1), public relations is both a business function and an administrative tool used to establish mutual communication, understanding, acceptance, trust, and cooperation between an organization and its target audiences and to make this environment permanent. (YeoMans, 2006 cited in Sisay, 2018: p.1) supported this idea by saying that public relations is blood and life for governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as private companies. The above statements show that public relations is necessary in organizations to motivate cooperation, promote mutual understanding, growth and benefits, which implies that public relations is a "blood that gives life to governments and organizations" around the world.

In Ethiopia, there is no clear evidence of when and how public relations originated and is used. However, (Shimelis, 2017: p.3) describes that the practice of public relations as a field of study and as a profession is a recent phenomenon. Shimelis added that although public relations as a profession and as a field of study are still in its infancy, the Ethiopian government has given it the attention it deserves in the last 15 years. Evidence of the importance of public relations is the establishment of the Federal Government Communication Affairs Office, which shows that this institution ensures that the government is responsive to the needs of the public by maintaining an

efficient and effective public sector communication and information system (2009, no. 13). PR as a field of study has existed in Ethiopia since 2016 at Addis Ababa University (Getenet, 2019: pp. 2-3). It is an open opportunity for Ethiopians to take international courses in public relations and other fields. Public relations practitioners also have the opportunity to update and improve their profession horizontally and vertically.

Public relations is of utmost importance in getting organizations or businesses to promote their services and products, meet customer demand and ensure that they grow sustainably. It is also of great benefit in building relationships with customers and service recipients that benefit both parties. For this reason, public relations departments have been established in the government and its affiliated organizations, including the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA).

Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the functions and challenges of public relations using ENA as a case. This would provide valuable information to decision makers, public relations professionals, managers, journalists, and even academics to understand the overall performance and the challenges that arise, and to find pertinent and relevant solutions that will ultimately lead to ENA achieving its vision of being a "reliable and competitive media organization in East Africa" by 2025.

ENA's history dates back to 1942 and was established during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I (1930-1974). Despite the country's changing governments, ideologies, and development plans, ENA has been the primary government organization serving the nation and the public through the collection, production, and dissemination of news through broadcast and print media for 80 years.

According to the Proclamation (No. 1115/2019), ENA's mission is to "collect, organize, analyze, and disseminate balanced and accurate news and news-related reports and programs to promote development and democracy building."

ENA's headquarters are located in northern Addis Ababa, near *Semein Mazegaja*<sup>1</sup>. ENA currently consists of a Board of Directors, a Chief Executive Officer and three Deputy Executive Officers, and ten Directorates, each with specific functions, duties and responsibilities. Among

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<sup>1</sup> It is the local (Amharic) term for urban services of the inhabitants of Addis Ababa.

these directorates, the Public Relations Directorate is the one the researcher is concerned with for the purpose of this study. ENA also has 36 branches in different parts of the country that carry out the functions and responsibilities assigned to them by headquarters.

Since ENA is one of the oldest state media institutions practicing PR and has gone through three governments, from the monarchical to the current Prosperity Party led government, it is not well known compared to FBC, Walta and EBC, which have a much better reputation and name recognition. Stakeholders and the public are not willing to give ENA the news information it needs. These are some of the reasons that led the researcher to study the functions and challenges of ENA's public relations and suggest invaluable recommendations to make ENA one of the most vibrant media in the country.

ENA does have a peculiar feature as it feeds other media with information contrary to their acts, since they produced by themselves. Since the public, scholars, officials and other pertinent bodied who are giving news information are not well aware of the proper functions of ENA and it doesn't have its own transmission center, the general public is not willing to feed it with the required information. This condition incurs the Agency much.

Still some have known ENA and EBC interchangeably as they fail to distinguish the clear demarcation of these media houses. This also initiated me to conduct the study.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

ENA as an organization has encountered a number of problems in its public relations efforts. One of the critical problems is that stakeholders, customers, politicians, civic societies, organizations and even scholars are not willing to provide news information to ENA, but are often interested in providing information to other media. The Public Relations Directorate has not attempted to conduct a survey to determine the public's actual attitudes toward ENA. Another critical challenge is that ENA does not have a clear communication channel for sharing and exchanging information between different departments.

The Directorate of Public Relations, which is supposed to serve as a bridge between ENA and its stakeholders and customers, does not play an active role in creating a system and improving communications to promote ENA's services and increase its revenues. Getenet (2019: p.4) has

shown that successful public relations practice and function in a given organization usually requires proactive communication, a professional communication strategy, two way symmetrical communication, and mutual understanding between stakeholders and public relations professionals. However, this is not the case at ENA, which will require a concerted effort to improve public relations in the coming years. Moreover, ENA is not well known compared to EBC, Walta, FBC and other media operating in the country, as it has been operating for over 79 years.

There are some studies in the field of communication conducted at ENA. A study by (Tigist, 2020: p.5) focused on the study of internal communication and neglected the role of external communication in achieving the desired goal of ENA. It also neglected the role of ENA's public relations aimed at connecting employees with stakeholders and customers. Another study by (Fitsumeshet, 2019: p.7) addressed ENA's corporate culture, strategic communication, and organizational performance, ignoring ENA's public relations practices and challenges. Similarly, Biniyam (2006: p.10) examined the use of PR information to produce news and the role of journalists in balancing that news information, which is far from the goal of this study.

Although there are a considerable number of studies on public relations in governmental organizations, none of them reflect the current socioeconomic dynamics and realities of ENA. The studies have not measured the factors that influence public relations, or their mandates or organizational goals are very different from those of ENA, so the practices and challenges identified may not be relevant to ENA's current missions, functions, and challenges.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to fill the identified gaps and critically assess the functions and challenges of ENA's public relations in order to provide valuable information to decision makers, public relations professionals, managers, journalists, and even scholars, and to seek solutions that will ultimately lead ENA to achieve the vision of its foundation.

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1. General Objective**

The general objective of the study is to examine the public relations functions and challenges in Ethiopian News Agency.

#### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the study include the following:

- Analyze the public relations functions at the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA);
- Evaluate the functions of ENA's organizational structure whether or not it is achieving the desired goals of public relations;
- To identify the main challenges of public relations in ENA; and
- To examine the extent to which public relation directorate plays in connecting ENA's staffs and its customers.

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

The fundamental inquiries below, among others, are answered at the study's conclusion:

1. How is public relations done in the ENA?
2. Why does the weak organization PR in ENA contribute to the failure to achieve the desired goal of public relations?
3. What are the major challenges in public relations in ENA?
4. To what extent does a public relations play a bridging role between ENA and its internal employees and external customers?

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The study would help ENA assess the strengths and weaknesses of its outreach efforts. This is important to adjust the system to be responsive to providing quality services. It would also raise awareness among stakeholders (PR practitioners, academics, researchers and government, media organizations, policy makers, media) of the current status of public relations activities in ENA. It would provide researchers with ideas for further research in this area. Last but not least, the recommendations of the study are going to provide clues as source of information to strengthen

public relations functions and practices in the organization. The study also highlights the major challenges that face the profession and how they can be overcome.

### **1.6. Scope of the Study**

The study focuses on assessing the functions and challenges of public relations in the Ethiopian News Agency at the headquarters, located in Addis Ababa. It is here that Public Relations Directorate is established and has a rich archive to access all important resources which would assist me conducting the study. Incorporating other regional branches of ENA as a part of study was very cumbersome for the researcher given financial difficulty and time constraints. It is very important to note that all the necessary data for this study was collected from December to April, 2021.

### **1.7. Limitations of the Study**

The functions and challenges of public relations in the Ethiopian News Agency were analyzed through self-reporting. Respondents from ENA branches were not included in the study due to lack of time and resources. Another limitation was that the under and over estimation of the respondents could possibly influence the results of the study. Other factors that impacted the study were the prevalence of COVID-19. As a result, respondents were not willing to fill the questionnaire and even difficult to enter organizations. Due to this, some questionnaires are not returned, and the resulting inability of potential respondents to participate in the study. However, great efforts were made to minimize these limitations by conducting in-depth key informant interviews and focus group discussions.

### **1.8. Organization of the Study**

The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter one deals with the introduction, background of the study, formulation of the research problem, objectives of the study and research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, and limitations of the study. Chapter two mainly deals with the literature review, the meaning and concept of public relations, and theoretical and empirical research. Chapter three deals with the research methodology reflecting systems, approaches, data collections, and how the study was conducted. Chapter four addresses the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data. Chapter five provides a summary of key findings, conclusion, and recommendations.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter basically presents the meaning and definition, theoretical and imperial literature review of public relations. The theoretical and imperial literature reviews were carefully selected after reviewing so many scholarly research papers. Although there is so much academic literature on public relations, only a few that are particularly relevant to the functions and challenges of public relations were selected to be useful for the study.

Accordingly, the first part mainly deals with the definition of the concept of public relations and its connection to the current study. The second part deals with the theoretical framework in which excellence theory and four basic public relations models are adequately addressed. The third part focuses on the review of the related empirical studies that have a direct relation to the functions and challenges of public relations.

#### **2.1. Meaning and Definition of Public Relations**

As a number of literatures indicate, public relation has been defined in many ways at different times. One of the problems in public relations is getting an agreeable definition among scholars (Tench and Yeoman, 2009: p.35). Different scholars and practitioners have given different definitions in different times. The suggestions given by many PR associations and scholars are listed below.

In 1988, the Public Relations Society of America formally adopted the following definition of public relations. “*Public relations help an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other.*”

The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA, 2012) tried to reach a common definition of the practice by requesting over 200,000 people in the united states and the those and of others overseas who practice public relations, the effort was greeted, The PRSA received 927 suggested definitions from Public relations professionals, academics, students and the general public, finally selecting the winning definition: “*public relation is a strategic communication process*

*that build mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics*” (Seitel, 2017: p.32), It is really good and updated definition.

A number of definitions are given to Public Relations (PR) at national and international levels. National and international public relations organizations define PR: the Institute of Public Relations (IPR) is the UK’s leading professional body for public relations practitioners and was established in 1948. The definition framed by the IPR in 1987 is still useful: *“Public Relations is a planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and understanding between an organization and its publics,”* (Tench and Yeomans, 2006: p.6).

One of the most widely quoted definitions of IPR is that of Wilcox et al. (2001: p.283), Who defined PR as *“the planned and organized effort of a company, institution or government to establish mutually beneficial relations with the public’s of other nations.”*

British Institute of Public Relations also stated that *“Public Relation is influencing behavior to achieve objectives through the effective management of relationships and communications.”*

As learnt from Wilcox et al. (2003: p.6), the 1978 World Assembly of Public Relations Associations in Mexico agreed that: *“Public relations is the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organization leaders and implementing planned programs of action which will serve both the organization’s and the public interest.”*

As cited in Andy, (2012: p.11), Edward Bernays defined PR like, *“Public Relations is a management function which tabulates public attitudes, defines the policies, procedures and interest of an organization followed by executing a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance.”*

The definitions ranged from the simple *“Doing good and getting credit for it,”* to more wordy definitions (Pearson, 2016: P.7). As Seitel (2017:p.35), many researchers analyzed and given definitions for public relations which is mentioned as follows. The American public relation scholar and professional leader, the late Rex F. Harlow, collected almost 500 definitions written between the early 1900s and 1976. He then produced the first all-inclusive definition of PRs. This definition includes both the conceptual and operational aspect of PR.

*PR is defined as a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinions; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change; serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools.(Seitel, 2017:p.35).*

This long definition of PR comprises at least seven distinctive functions of PR. These are presents as following in a concise manner.

- ❖ *Public relations is the distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics;*

This means it is a professional management function maintaining relationships between an organization and its publics, a mutually beneficial relationship entertaining a two-way communication process through which the organization will act in the interest of both itself and its publics. PR professionals should invest their time and money to connect their company with external world with a view to securing public trust and social consensus about the goals of organization.

- ❖ *It involves the management of problems or issues;*

PR practitioner is also duty bound to monitor issue that affect organization such as political, social, economic and technological aspects as well as manages factors affecting the organization and clients.

- ❖ *Helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinions;*

A PR expert is expected to well inform the management about crucial issues revolving around the organization, and serves as a bridge between administration and public.

- ❖ *PR defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest;*

*It makes management aware of all means to serve public interest as strategic management needs to be societal-oriented, not market oriented.*

❖ *It helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change:*

In addition, the public relation society of America (PRSA) describes providing advice to management concerning policies, relationships and communications as one of key process, The management uses PR as a viable source of crucial information fostering change.

❖ *It is serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends;*

PR professional tries to anticipate emerging issues and respond to them before they get out hand. PR practitioners are obliged to explain issues to the public before these problems become crisis. It is to deal with issues before the get out of hand.

❖ *PR uses research and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools:*

PR practitioners are responsible for the extensive use of scientific public opinion research. Environmental research and evaluation to determine the action or adjustment needed for social harmony. PR professional must always engage in Public opinion research - what people think about an organization its policy, service etc. and why they think so as well as their attitudes towards the organization.

Grunig and Hunt (1984: p.6), for example, went to the opposite extreme from Harlow and defined PR in one sentence as *'the management of communication between an organization and its publics.'* This definition still includes important elements, such as the management of communication and the focus on external relationships.

Pearson, (2016: P.8) further said that it is more important to look at the key words that are used in most definitions that frame today's modern public relations. The key words are:

- **Deliberate.** Public relations activity is intentional. It is designed to influence, gain understanding, provide information, and obtain feedback from those affected by the activity.
- **Planned.** Public relations activity is organized. Solutions to problems are discovered and logistics are thought out, with the activity taking place over a period of time. It is systematic, requiring research and analysis.
- **Performance.** Effective public relation is based on actual policies and performance. No amount of public relations will generate goodwill and support if the organization has poor policies and is unresponsive to public concerns.

- **Public interest.** Public relation activity should be mutually beneficial to the organization and the public; it is the alignment of the organization's self-interests with the public's concerns and interests.
- **Two-way communication.** Public relation is not just disseminating information but also the art of listening and engaging in a conversation with various publics. Management function. Public relations are most effective when it is a strategic and integral part of decision making by top management. Public relations involve counseling, problem solving, and the management of competition and conflict.

According to Cutlip and Center as cited in Andy (2012: p.13), "*PR is a planned effort to influence opinion through good character and responsible performance based upon mutual satisfactory two-way communication,*" and Cutlip, Center and broom (2006: p.5) added that "*PRs is the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends.*"

Furthermore, a recognized definition for today's modern practice is offered by Lawrence and Vincent as cited in Pearson (2016:p.7), who defines PR as "*a communication function of management through which organizations adapt to, alter, or maintain their environment for the purpose of achieving organizational goals.*" .

As L'Etang (2002 cited in Shimelis, 2017: p.50) then, PR is narrowly defined within the context of government organization as a bridge between the government bodies and the citizens. It is defined as it follows:

*A specialized skill and service, an intellectual and practical training, a high degree of professional autonomy, a fiduciary relationship with the client, a sense of collective responsibility to the profession as a whole, an embargo on some methods of attracting business and an occupational organization testing competence, regulating standards and discipline.*

The above written definition of PR in the context of government organization clarifies that the government uses different PR strategies with intent of creating positive environment that allows policy dialogue with citizens whose needs must be met. As a result, the researcher of the study

has adopted this definition to be used during the course of the study because it is conducted in Governmental Institution: a critical analysis the practices, functions and challenges of public relation at Ethiopian News Agency.

## **2.2. The Practice of Public Relations**

According to Pearson, (2016: P.8), practice of public relation (PPR) is the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organization leaders, and implementing planned programs of action which serve both the organizations and the public's interest. The PPR defined as the establishment of two-way communication to resolve conflicts of interest and the establishment of understanding based on truth, knowledge and full information: from this perspective PRs requires execution of communication program designed to bring public acceptance and common understanding (Banik, 2004 cited in Getenet, 2019: P.8).

In addition, dissemination of information is crucial to know the level of the organization and get feedback from the public and vice versa (Getenet, 2019: p.14). However, public relations professionals cannot always freely publish information about their organization due to the political interference of the government. Dahl (1998 cited in Getahun (2005: p.33)) describes that citizens must have access to alternative sources of information that are not under the control of the government or dominated by another group or viewpoint. Citizens will not be able to participate effectively in political life if all the information they can obtain comes from a single media source.

## **2.3. Needs for Practice of Public Relations in Organizations**

It is obvious that almost all organizations need public relations so as to enable an organization to function more efficiently. The need for Practice of Public Relations (PPR) at government organization has been documented in literature (Peyronel and Awniczak, 2000 cited in Gege, 2020: P. 29). For example, the needs for PPR in any organizations supports to increase public awareness; persuade the public to view the organization positively; discover and target on relevant audience; change personnel attitudes in favor of the organization; extinguish doubts and create appropriate external and internal environment for an organization (Onsongo et al., 2017: P. 160).

In connection with the role of PRs in a given organization or agency has become very controversial issue as the literatures show. On the One hand, the growth of public relations in institutions has become very important in recent years.

Scholars argue that the main role of PRs administrator is to be involved in institutional decision making at organizations. And also, PRs are basic function of a modern organization's management (Peyronel and Awniczak, 2000; Tianping, 2003 cited in Gege, 2020: P.30; Moore and Kalupa, 2007: P. 339). On the other hand, Bruning and Ralston (2001: p.338) assert that the practice of public relations at most institutions has been demoted to a single office concerned primarily with managing institutional reputation.

Scholars for example, Erica and Bruca, P. (2006: P.6) further indicate that, the practice of PRs at organizational level is wrongly perceived about what makes PR is different from the role of advertisement and marketing. However, the key elements of PR that differentiate it from advertising include the need to improve skills for handling issues and crisis management, internal communications, and providing strategic communications advice. Those unique elements of public relations are adequately reviewed below under the sub-heading of the function of PRs at organizational levels.

The practices of PRs are designed to build trust and credibility with groups that are important to the organization. PRs develops and implements program to meet organization's objectives: sustainable image, brings customer loyalty, and other relevant public including employees, suppliers, stockholders, governments, labor groups, citizens, action groups and the general public (Belch and Belch, 2007:p.95). Effective public relations practice can also promote the organization and help communicate during a crisis or defend its reputation from attacks that people make on it in the media (Getenet, 2019: p.28).

However, the functions of PR on which this research focuses are not well translated into practical actions as lack of skilled professionals, lack of due attention to the section by the management and absence of well-organized facilities are hindering Agency's effectiveness.

## 2.4. Functions of Public Relations

Scholars have commonly agreed to list down a number of functions of PRs although the way in which they present the functions of PRs varies across different organizations. Some of them said that huge tasks of PRs should be divided into smaller pieces and the others tend to present the function of PRs in a very short and précised narration of public relations.

As Seitel (2017: p.11) clearly delineated that an essential difference between the functions of PRs and the functions of marketing and advertising. A researcher defines marketing and advertising as promotes a product or a service, whereas PRs promotes an entire organization. We can see that PR related works are different from the marketing and advertising. Accordingly, (Seitel, 2011: p.44), and (the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011:p.7) have identified following major functions of public relations:

**Community relations:** positively putting forth the organization's messages and image within the community.

**Media relations:** Working with journalists and bloggers in seeking publicity or responding to their interests in the organization. It is creating and dissemination of news worthy information to the media to attract and gain attention of the organization products or services.

**Counseling:** in dealing with management and its interactions with key publics.

**Corporate communication:** Promote the understanding of the organizations and its products and services; they undertake external and internal communication.

**Crisis Communication and Management:** is often applied by an organization when it has faced with a major crisis that threatens its institutional reputation. Various crises would be occurred that attribute to internal or external factors.

**Research:** the public relations practice desperately needs research. The strategic plan itself cannot be prepared without research. It helps to understand the organization overall activities.

**Strategic Planning:** Public relations practitioners, who operate at the top level, participate in the formulation of organizational missions, policies and goals by doing effective plan. It must be done before the beginning of a new budget year.

**Management:** Public relations practitioners engage in management work. Public relation is a distinctive management function which helps to maintain mutual lines of communication between an organization and its publics. PR practitioners manage people, communication, and, media, events etc.

**Corporate Counseling:** Public relations practitioners advise management on matters concerning their organizations relationships with their various publics.

**Coaching:** PR practitioners also engage in training, advising and coaching top management staff on public speaking and press interviews.

**Employee relations**—refer to the way of communicating with the all-important internal publics of the organization, those managers and employees who work for the firm.

**Web site development and web interface:** creating what often is the organization's principle interface with the public: its web site. Also important is monitoring the World Wide Web and responding, when appropriate, to organizational challenge.

**Internal Communication:** is one part of strategic communication that takes place within the organization or group among people, among different groups of employees and between employers and employees. Employees are communicated with through a variety of methods, including newsletters, notice boards, staff briefings and intranets, which are designed to inform employees about the business. It could be oral or written, visual or audio visual, formal or informal, and upward or down ward.

As Hallahan (2007 cited in Fetsumeshet, S. (2019:p.17) describes the term strategic communication as the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission. We can see that it is a communication process and procedure that focuses on the duties of communication in follows as of an organization's strategic plan and focuses on the role of communication in assisting and permitting the organization's strategic goals and objective. Thus, it is defined as an aligned with the company's overall strategy to attain its mission and goals.

## **2.5. Public Relation and Crisis Management**

Crisis management is one of the special activities of the public relations. Public relations consultants are trained in the arts of crisis management. The management of crisis through public relations is done in various stages. According to Coombs, (2007: P.273), crisis management as a set of factors designed to combat crises and to lessen the actual damages inflicted. Moreover, crisis management seeks to prevent or lessen the negative outcome of a crisis and thereby protect the organization, stakeholders and, or industry from damage.

Even though crisis management and communication is essential for all organizations, the natures of crisis differ according to political and other views. As Solomon (2015: pp.8-9) clearly notes that, during and before a crisis a PR officer is anticipated to execute the following sequential duties that involve: the PR officer has to create awareness about the crisis, do assessment, team building, positioning and Strategy, readiness, action, evaluation, follow-up to closure sequentially and professionally.

## **2.6. Theoretical Framework**

According to Abend (2013:p.183), *“Theories are formulated to explain, predict, and understand phenomena and, in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding assumptions. The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists.”* (Ravitch, and Matthew, 2017: P.121) also elucidated that a theoretical framework consists of concepts and, together with their definitions and reference to relevant scholarly literature, existing theory that is used for your particular study.

Under this section, the study reflects the Excellency Theory which is a general theory pertaining to this study. In view of that, this study is attached on Excellence Theory. It is quite tough to find one grand theory in the study of PRs. Scholars who are actively involved in the study of PRs and are required to look in to theories from different perspectives.

According to Willacy (2016: p.3), *“there is no one unifying public relations theory or model because theorists see from different angles.”* Different scholars make use different theories in

PRs; some of the most outstanding scholars Grunig, J. E., & Grunig, L. A, Hunt are the pioneers. They contributed to the excellence theory which has been applied in practice of PRs that starting from a 16-year study of best practices in communication management. The Excellency theory is adequately reviewed in the following part.

### **2.6.1. Excellence Theory**

As deduced from (Gege, 2020: P.118), the excellence theory is a general theory of public relations that resulted from a 16-year study of best practices in communication management funded by IABC Research Foundation. The Excellency theory basically shouldered that the core value of PRs underpins in the relationship between the organization and its publics. The question that this theory attempts to answer is, *“How must public relations be practiced and the communication function organized for it to contribute the most to organizational effectiveness?”* (Grunig, J. E., & Grunig, L. A., 2000: P.304).

As to Gege (2020: P.118), the origin of this theory is derived from a project entitled the Excellence Study, also pointed to as the Excellence Theory, undertaken by Grunig J. E, & Grunig, L. A. In the Excellence Study, they attempted to answer three critical questions, namely *“how, why and to what extent does communication affect the achievement of organizational objectives.”* The study was carried out in two stages, namely a theoretical stage and an empirical stage.

The result of this theory shown that there is an integration of the many theories in the literature of various fields such as communication, PR, management, organizational psychology and sociology, social and cognitive psychology, feminist studies, political science, decision making and culture focused on measuring the ideal of communication excellence (Grunig, J. E., & Grunig, L. A, 2000: P. 1- 2).

In addition, Grunig (1992: p.3) distinguished that in order to answer the empirical question of *“how PR must be practiced and the communication function be organized for it to contribute the most to organizational effectiveness?”* He said that *“The focus falls on the “program” level and how PR should be managed. The focus, according to him, also falls on the “departmental” level, explaining the characteristics of a department that manages communication in a particular way.*

*At “organizational” level, organizations and their environments were researched in order to determine the conditions associated with excellent PR departments. ”*

Subsequently, Grunig (1992:P.4) found that PR excellence is universal across countries and types of organizations. The reason provided was that PR excellence involves knowledge that trespass any public, organizational unit, industry, organizational type or national setting.

Furthermore, the excellence theory is said to be a normative theory which intends to generate an idealistic framework of how PR practice should be performed so as to serve public interest. The excellence in PR describes the ideal state in which knowledgeable communicators seek symmetrical relations through the management of communication with key stakeholders (Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, 1995 cited in Gege, 2020: P.119). The contributions the PPR to organizational effectiveness is influenced by the organizations’ independence by building and maintaining quality relationships with key stakeholders. Besides, the effectiveness of the organization is possibly attained if PPR functions are subsumed under a management level so that it is able to participate in the decision making. The aim of participation of PR at management is to provide information about the environment of the organization, the organization itself and the relationships between the organization and its environment (Grunig, 1992, p. 11-12).

The theory of excellence or excellence theory identifies four major categories of effective PRs applications (Grunig, J. E., & Grunig, L. A, 2000:p.306)

*First, goal attaining (organizations are effective when they meet their goals), second, systems approach (organizations are effective when they survive in their environment and successfully bring in resources from the environment that are necessary for their survival), third, strategic constituencies (these are the elements of the organization’s goals or help to attain them), and fourth, competing value approach (provides a bridge between strategic constituencies and goals).*

In line with the last category (provides a bridge between strategic constituencies and goals) provides several communication models or modes of how an organization can communicate with its publics: Distinctively, Press A-gentry /Publicity Model, Public Information Model, One-Way Asymmetrical Model, and Two-Way Symmetrical Model (Grunig and Hunt, 1984; Grunig, J. E.,

& Grunig, L. A, 2000: P. 306). These models are categorized by two communication traits, one-way or two-way communication, between the company and its publics. .

This theory is directly related to the present study, as it describes the main functions of PR in each agency. For example, PR was not well used in ENA to satisfy the agency's public. Since the PR directorate wants the agency to have two-way communication with its clients and other stakeholders, it has addressed the core functions. This aspect is clearly highlighted in the theory. Therefore, examining the extent of current public relations activities in ENA by linking it to the theoretical framework of PR would have significant functions and practices of PR in the media institution.

### **2.6.2. Public Relations Models**

The main concern of Public Relations Models (PRMs) is to take a look at the nature of communication. For instance, Van Ruler (2018 cited in Getenet 2019: P.30) stated that there are at least three different views. The first is communication as a one-way process of meaning construction that attempts to construct or reconstruct the meaning developed by the receiver. The second is communication as a two-way process of meaning construction in which two or more people construct new meanings together. The third is communication as an omnidirectional diachronic process of meaning construction, in which the focus is on the continuous development of meaning itself.

In addition to, as Ralph Tench and Liz Yeomans (2006: p.35) define the PRs as a characteristic of management role which supports to institute and sustain mutual understanding and acceptance between an organization and its publics. It assists management team to keep its promise and reactive to public informed on and responsive to public sentiments and it weights the accountability of top official to oblige the public interest and working as an early notice system, uses research and ethical communication techniques as its principle tools (Harlow, 1976: p.36). It is the communication practice which is a line of two-way communications system that assists management team has built mutual understanding and positive relationship between organization and their publics.

As Grunig, J.E. and Hunt, T. (1984: p.22) noted that, there are four models of PR practices which provide a picture of a set of methods and approaches that are performed by practitioners, firms,

institutions, colleges, universities, governments and etc. in managing and sustaining good working relationships with their publics. To put in to effect the PPRs, Grunig and Hunt (1984: p.22) advised that, these models are conceptual image of reality that provide worthy perceptions as regard to the PPRs. it is important think that these models are comprehensive enough to grab the diverse nature of PPRs utilized by practitioners, governments, businesses and non-governmental organizations all over the world.

The practitioners are required to identify the best fitted methods and approaches so that the PPRs can be relied on one of these models. Grunig and Hun's four models of PPRs are distinctively reviewed hereunder (Ibid).

#### **2.6.2.1. The Press A-gentry/Publicity Model**

The major distinctive focus this model of communication is on sending message from the source to the receiver. Tesfaye (2018: P.31) comments that, it is relatively the oldest form of communication model where one-way traffic is assumed to be productive. As Seitel (2011: p.81) put it, *"This model is basically one-way communication where messages will be sent from a source to a beneficiary with the express aim of winning great media consideration."*

This model was marked by manipulation, exaggeration and deception which only is characterized by one-sided argument (Sriaramesh, K. and Vercic, D. 2009: p.192). Accuracy, ethics and truth are not seen as an essential factor in this model only shameful deception was related to the assertion public relation to achieve its goal (Solomon, 1998: P.10). The attention of researchers and scholars given to this model is very little.

#### **2.6.2.2. Public-Information Model**

As literature indicates, the need for development of public-information model is the result of organizational crisis. The early 1900's, was a time when huge business organizations were under serious attack from the media on issues of corruption and other forms of injustice. This situation has forced private organizations to establish PRs offices and hire practitioners (Teskaye, 2018: P.31). This is another early type of one-way communication planned not really to influence yet rather to inform. Both this and the press a gentry's model have been connected to the common notion of public relations as publicity (Seitel, 2017: p.81).

As Solomon (1998 cited in Getenet, 2019: P.31), further elucidates that, this stage was identified as public relations practice having a significant influence on public opinion. However, the major intent of the practice of public relation by means of this type model is to provide “information” rather than “publicity” and to avoid practicing “Public relations”. Now a day, the practices of public relation through this form of communication are essentially limited in government organization (Grunig, 1992: p.37).

### **2.6.2.3. Two-Way Asymmetric Model**

This model seems to be different from the two models discussed previously. The asymmetric model recognizes that communication is a two-way approach between the sender and receiver. The trust of this model is scientific persuasion. Tesfaye, (2018: P.31) stated that the idea of two ways communication was instigated with the intention of looking for a feedback for information disseminated that began to be considered as part of the communication process. The PRSA’s 2012 definition as Seitel, (2017: p.35) noted that *“PR is a planned process to influence public opinion, through sound character and proper performance, based on mutually satisfactory two-way communication.”* According to Otubanjo, Amujo, and Melewar, (2010: P.3), it is largely relied on research to establish the nature of the public’s attitude in order to develop a more effective public relations campaign to reveal how best persuade the public towards the organization’s point of view.

Seitel, (2011: pp.81-82), however, stated that the purpose of seeking feedback wasn’t to change position that has been seized by an organization, instead the feedback was to be used to introduce another form of persuasion so that the audience would accept the interest of the organization. This third model of public relation is known as the period of propaganda and persuasion. It is also a period when some social science research such as opinion polling, random sampling and organized feedbacks and the likes were introduced to the public relations practice, (Tesfaye, 2018: P.31).

### **2.6.2.4. Two-way Symmetric Model**

This model’s advocates present it as the preferable model of public relations. As specified by Seitel (2011: P.85), the symmetric model encourages for free and equal information transfer between an organization and its publics based on common understanding. Two-way symmetric

model of public relations as propounded by Grunig and Hunt (1984: p.22), it is centered on a two-way communication mechanism which emphasizes using public relations to bring organization and their publics together through a mutual two-way beneficial communication. According to Grunig and Hunt (1984: p.22), the key characteristic of this model is that organizations engage in a real dialogue with stakeholders, not just to persuade, but also to listen, learn and most importantly, to adapt organizational behavior as a result of the communication process. In contrast to linear one-way communication models this is intended to be a circular two-way process, with the parties engaged in communication on equal terms.

Above and beyond, Gege (2020: P.130), a two-way symmetric public relation is supposed to rely on an honest two-way communication with a give and take fashion rather than one-way persuasion. It is also focusing on mutual respect and efforts to achieve a mutual understanding between parties.

Moreover, the two-way symmetrical model for communication maintains both the organization's best interests and its audiences' best interests at the forefront in the fairest and balanced way possible. Through the use of this model, both the organization and its audiences can collaborate together to both grow and strengthen an overall organization, leading it to greater success.

Following the Second World War, professionalism in public relations has begun to take shape as public relations offices flourished almost everywhere. The emergence of professionalism, the demand for further refinement and expansion of professionalism together with consolidation of research work in quality and quantity as well as public relations education, created conducive environment for the popularization of the symmetric model of public relations (Grunig, 1992: P. 289; Seitel, 2011: P. 85).

## **2.7. A Brief History of Public Relations**

The history of public relations may go back to the ancient Egyptians and Greeks, but the concept of public relations as we know it today is different across the world. According to Stock (2007 cited in Tesfaye 2020: P.16), public relations is commonly considered to be a 'young profession' a type of communications byproduct of twentieth-century capitalism. But the techniques of organized and persuasive communication are in fact as old as human societies. Recently, in worldwide, public relation practices widely accepted as important organ of the modern societies

and have made substantial contribution in private, government organization and different agencies. However, there is very little empirical evidence on the practice of public relations in the world (Vercic, 2009 cited in Tesfaye 2020: P.16). It indicated that practice of public relation is young up till now. Even though PRs is considered as a young discipline in the world the practices of public relations related to a day-to-day activity of human being and its environment. Globally, public relations practices depend on the key factors of political system of the nation, level of economic development of the country, cultural diversity, activism and media industry (Ibid).

## **2.8. Functions of PR in Global Level**

Nowadays world is extensively a source of communication and billions of information correspondences are exchanged in the world. In the meantime, development of human life improves, as a result need to information and communication every second increased and nowadays having accurate and recent information for people is the important and people with more information will be more fruitful. Hence, PR unit requires PR practitioners to provide updated and accurate information to people in the world as (Opukah, 2003 cited in Van H. G 2004: P.10).

PR is an important subsystem of an organization and its effective practice is integrally bound to the success of an organization. As Rawjee et al., (2012 mentioned in Tesfaye, 2020: P.2) PR provides an opportunity for organizations to efficiently monitor, cooperate and respond with other key groups within the organizational environment.

Furthermore, as Rex F. Harlow as cited in (Seitel, 2017:p.35), the practices and functions of PR as follows:

*Public relation is a distinctive management function which helps in the understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics. It also involves the problems or issues of the management. Furthermore, public relation helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinions; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management to effectively utilize change; serves as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools.*

As mentioned above, PR build and enhance healthy relationships between an organizations and its publics.

## **2.9. Practices and Functions of PR in Africa Level**

Many researchers attempted to explore historical development of modern PR in Africa since started in the 1940's. For instance, Okereke (2002 cited in Van, H. G 2004: P.2) stated however, practices and functions of PR have not efficiently performed in the continent due to the lack of knowledge and understanding of the public relation practices in Africa.

In addition, Van H. G (2004: P.8) stated that there was no empirical evidence on the practice of PR in Africa has been recorded so as to the most information obtained in this literature review is based on documents delivered at PR practitioners conferences in Africa and non-accredited journals focusing on practice and not theory.

Similarly, Opukah (1992 cited in Van H. G 2004:p.6) he defines the position and role of PR in Africa has limited space as revealed directly quoted below:

*During the early 1980's the PR profession in Africa had no focus and was relegated to the lowest realms of management in most organizations. PR activities included the role of being a personal assistant to the CEO or the press or information officer and often referred to as the "gin and tonic" PR on the continent. The beginning of the practice of PR emerged from the press a-gentry model as organizations saw media relations as the most critical skills. The era of democratization and the global attempt to increase transparency and accountability have been one of the greatest influences behind the PR scene in Africa.*

Beginning of the democratization in Africa, PR has greatest influence on PR engagement. Of course, the public relation scene has been influenced by public power across the worldwide leading to increased transparency and accountability. As Opukah (1992 cited in Van H. G 2004: P.7) explanation, public relation is one of the most direct by-products of democracy.

As Ogbuagu (2003 cited in Van H. G 2004: P.8), PR is defined in terms of listening to the public and acting accordingly. The researcher has found that PR has the management function which

assesses public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an organization with the public interest, and executes programs of action to earn public understanding and acceptance. However, the political situations including other factors limited and hindered the practices and functions of PR in Africa.

## **2.10. Brief History of Practices and Functions of PR in Ethiopia**

Many researchers revealed that the PR practice and function has long history. As Van, H.G (2004: P.108) notes that in many African countries the families of these individuals are respected by passing messages from generation to generation. The philosophy behind this is to ensure that the skills of communication are passed on easily and passionately.

The issues of PR in Ethiopia, most researchers believe that there is no evidence of when and how the PRs began in Ethiopia. However, they confirmed that there were activities in the country that have similar content and form with PRs for many years as cited in Zewdu A. (2019:P.20).

In the same way, the researchers believe that the PRs practice in Ethiopia has a long history, because the country passed through ancient civilization in the world history and plays its roles in diplomacy. The task of the spokesman at the top level representatives in the villages and the king's message dissemination way is very similar to PRs activities reported in Ermiyas (2009) cited in Netsere, (2019: p.21) notes that the Kings who led the country in the early years used PR skills to persuade the people. The kings were to have used their speeches and to gather information from the societies and then to answer societies questions. During ancient period individuals were known to be well skilled in the traditional practices of the society and were highly respected by the societies.

It is too difficult to mention exactly when and where the beginning of modern public relation in Ethiopia dates back; it is believed that it might have been in 1960s (Solomon, 1998 as cited in Shimelis, 2017:p.1). As the Ministry of Information (2003) describes, the beginning of newspapers carrying advertisement space for business organizations have been witnessed since 1900's associated with the introduction of printing press, telecommunication and the rail way by Emperor Menilik-II in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, which has in turn further paved the way for the development of mass media and communications in all aspects including the emergence of modern public relations.

According to Solomon (1998 cited in Netsere, 2019: p.10), PR practices has been started in 1960's and acting as a modern public relation. He added that the beginning of the practice of modern relations in the Ethiopia emanated from the establishment of the Ministry of Pen in 1940's. Under this ministry there was a section called 'Press and information department' responsible for carrying out advertisement and information provision as well as controlling public printing enterprises and newspapers sections. Besides, it was undertaking a task of censorship according to the information secured from National Archives and Libraries Agency.

As to Shimelis (2017: p.1), the then media organizations such as Radio, News Agency and Television services were organized and administered under the ministry of Pen, which was later replaced by Ministry of Information and Tourism in 1950's E.C.

During the 1960's, the major purpose of the public relations was only serving the interest of the ruling class/group. As the public relations at those times were so unprofessional, it was unable to respond to the situations arising in those times. The foundation of different international and national organizations and institutions in Ethiopia created significant change in the history of public relation practice. The establishment of the UN Economic Commission for Africa in 1958 and African Union in 1963 as its head quarter in Addis Ababa was among the significant dynamics that were worth mentioning (Solomon, 1998: p.22).

As to Netsere (2019: p.21), dealing with modern public relations in Ethiopia, government practice has a wide coverage and more emphasis on public relations, because government prepared a job specification in its offices. The major problem seen both in Government and NGOs seems that the practice is functioning by different departments and persons as additional practice, not as a separate self-governed sub organizational practice.

The practice of PR in Ethiopia, however, as professionalism and as field of study is a very recent phenomenon, and its practice in government public offices has gradually been strengthened over the last fourteen years following the establishment of Government Communication Affairs Office. It is also believed that a number of public relations firms and businesses have been established since the political ideology of the current Ethiopian government is not against such practices (Shimelis, 2017: p.3).

Here, PR as field of study has been given in Ethiopia since 2016 by Addis Ababa University (Getenet, 2019: pp.2-3). It is an open chance for Ethiopians to take international courses of public relations and fields. Public relations practitioners have also got chance to update and upgrade their profession horizontally and vertically.

Mekonnen (2001 cited in Netsere, 2019: p.22) stated that a public relations in Ethiopia is less significant in the eyes of top level managements in an organization. As a result, the consistency of the public relations practices may not be on the right track. Geremew, ( 2017 cited in Netsere, 2019: P.11) explained that in spite of significant changes in the focus and practice of public relations during the last decade in Ethiopia, the term is still misused and misunderstood in many organizations.

Currently, the name public relations is expanding and growing rapidly in many organizations in Ethiopia, however the profession is still suffering from many problems (Ibid).

According to Haimanot (2018: p.13), The Federal Government Communication Affairs of Ethiopia reorganized public relation in federal institute since 2001 E.C. It has stated by proclamation the public relation head should be the member of top management and also decides the public relation structure with its staff number and it has been executing its duties and responsibilities.

However, the attitude and outlook about public relation has two views; the attitude of public about the public relation assuming that PR head is officially assigned by government authority the thought as propaganda or agent of government rather than institution (Ibid). The researcher added that related to attitude and outlook on PR as follows, “internal client doesn’t have trust in public relation. The other opinion is the attitude from PR itself that means PR head is assigned by other some thought themselves as unique rather thinking as part of that institution” (Ibid).

This research study believes that practices of PR in organization or agency create a bridge of communication and mutual understanding and also good will between the organizations and its clients. In addition to, PR has its role and responsibilities in facilitating meaningful communication between organization and publics, identifying problems and conducting research in order to develop positive communication among government and publics.

## 2.11. Practices of Public Relations in Organizations

Public relations as a profession is duty bound to discharge various responsibilities both inside and outside of organizations. PR in organizations assists organization management in achieving organizational goals via ensuring accountability and transparency, respecting citizen's right, identifying duties and responsibilities of government to serve citizens through a range of programs and practices.

Public relations service interventions are the preferred choice of actions planned the organization to realize public relations goals. According to Banik (2002 cited in Shimelis, 2017: P.20), the need for public relations service involvements in government is essential to attain the organizational goals. He sum-up into the following:-

- PR support the structure and strategic mission, vision and goals of the organization;
- PR prepare to respond to the increasing problem faced by the organization both internally and externally,
- PR helps build a desirable image of the organization by suitable PR strategies and actions.

According to Cutlip, Center and Broom, 2006 cited in Zewdu, 2019: P.10) PR practitioners conduct his/her work to build the image reputation of the organization and to achieve its mission according to the organization's planning and management policy. In some organization's PR practitioners are responsible for monitoring and are an accountable their external partners. In the same way, PR practitioners guide and coordinate for the internal affairs of the organization and the PR profession in government organizations is in different levels of performance and standards (Ibid). According to Cutlip, Center and Broom (2006: p.411) government public affairs is stated as:

*The overall goals for government public affairs, regardless of the level, and to some extent, type of government, have at least seven purposes in common. It includes informing constituents about the activities of the government agency, ensuring active cooperation in government programs, fostering citizen support for established policies and programs, serving as public's advocate to government administrators, managing information internally, facilitating media relations, and building community and nation.*

Based on above stated information, PR has responsibilities of updating information about services and activities in government agencies, ensuring active cooperation in government programs that the government should demonstrate and collaborate on the day to day activities, focus on raising citizen support for established policies and program. It is believed that PR has responsible to help the public in advocating to the government organizations based on the interest of the public. As PR professional it has been managing internal information and should organize and disseminate the information in a matter that is systematically. It is major functions of the public relation profession it has responsible to create a relation with different public and media outlets. It is required that PR also plays its role in nation building and keeping the interest of the public.

The ENA public relation and strategic partnership directorate is responsible for developing strategic and operational plans and distributing them to work teams reporting to the directors. It is responsible for collecting, organizing, and compiling performance reports from the work teams and submitting them to senior executives. It is responsible for developing a platform to implement strategic partnerships and build awareness and consensus among partners and stakeholders, as well as providing necessary information to external partners or stakeholders on behalf of the agency. It is responsible for collecting and organizing feedback from the public, documenting it well and submitting it to the Executive Director. It is responsible for identifying national and international stakeholders, organizing a common platform, and implementing partnership and cooperation among different stakeholders to create a favorable environment for achieving ENA's vision without harming national interests.

It is responsible for gathering up-to-date information on current issues, preparing news for print and broadcast media, and forwarding it to the media for broadcast. It is the only directorate responsible for developing a public relations and communications strategy and implementing it accordingly. It is responsible for publishing information, except for information that threatens national security. It is responsible for developing project proposals and submitting them to the Executive Director for decision-making in order to implement the activities agreed upon with the stakeholders. In accordance with the affiliated institutions, it is responsible for organizing events to present, disseminate and raise awareness of best practices.

## 2.12. Major Challenges of Public Relations

Nowadays, a Public relations has become one of the most practiced and influential communication tools in organizations. However, there are reported challenges faced by public relations in developing countries seems to delay its dominance or growth.

A Public relations in Africa has faced many changes in recent years. Changes in communication, technology, politics and management are all challenges that affect and impact public relations practices as Opukah (1993 cited in Van H. G 2004: p.21) stated PR by embracing both the practitioners and the professionals in public relations.

As a result, PR seems most determined to remain at the forefront of this effort towards the professionalization of public relations practice in all its difficulty. There are thus various challenges that hinder the practice of public relations successes in the African continent as Joseph, (2017 cited in Mohammednur, 2020: pp.36-38). When the factors affecting PR practices and functions are put with little modification:

*The main factors attributable to the ineffective status of PR in ENA include Poor Understanding of Public Relations Concept, lack of Specialization in the Profession, language Barrier as it is hard to define a common or national language to pass the information to the masses, lack Technological Know, infrastructural Limitations, absence of ethical gesture among Professionals and Organizations as well as Negative Cultural Habits, Attitudes.*

Particularly, in Ethiopia context, the practice of public relations is found at the infant stage, and this mainly emanated from lack of having skilled manpower in the form of division in relation to the profession. PR activities are limited to repetitive assignments other than containing various parts of the profession like public affairs, employee relations, financial relations and investor relations. As a result, the planned objectives of the discipline might be failed to be accomplished.

### **2.13. Challenges of Public Relations in Ethiopia**

PR in Ethiopia recently shows a little progress even though they have various challenges and factors in government including private sectors. It has recognized and got attention from government as an important profession to achieve its objectives in government and private organization. As Federal Government Office Public Relation Instruction and Structure Manual (2006 cited in Zewdu, 2019: p.8), the role of PR has two basic missions as follows to create national consensus through the nation and to introduce Ethiopia throughout the world or to show Ethiopia's good image and to attract investment, and create good opportunity for the citizen and country.

However, PR practices encircled with serious challenges that hinder its practices independently professional work in organization. Among serious challenges low understanding of public relation concept, absence of adequately specialized person in the profession, lack of sufficient staff in the profession, lack of research finding to solve existing problems, lack of advanced technological know-how were mentioned as challenges as (Fuller, 2017 cited in Zewdu, A. 2019:p.8).

Furthermore, lack of ethics by the existing professionals and organization, negative cultural habits and attitude stated as (Ibid). As Liu and Horsley (2007 cited in Zewdu, A. 2019: p.15), identified points that affect the public relations in organizations. Those points listed below are as politics, mainly emphasis on serving only the public, legal constraints, extreme media and public inspection, absence of managerial support for public relation practitioners, poor public perception of government communication, lagging professional development. The overall understanding of the community about the government public relation knowledge and insight of public relation has also played its negative role in the development of PR profession (Ibid). The PR profession is believed that building a close relationship between the government and the public focusing on serving the public to achieve the public interest and needs of the organization. Based on above mentioned challenges and gaps in understanding the practice and function of PR and also other related challenges in Ethiopia hinders the PR practices and functions.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter discusses the general procedures and methods used to conduct the study. Therefore, it contains the following basic components: Research design, data sources, population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection procedures and instruments, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

#### **3.1. Research Design**

A research design is basically the framework or plan for a study, often used to show direction for data collection and analysis. It is a plan that is followed when conducting a study. The research design is the plan for collecting, measuring, and analysing data (Prabhat and Meenu, 2015:p. 18).

This study intends to critically analyse the public relations functions and challenges of ENA. Consequently, a mixed research methods model is used. At this point, Creswell (2007: p.25) described the mixed model as follows:

*A researcher is able to collect the two types of data simultaneously in a single data collection phase. It provides a study with the benefits of both quantitative and qualitative data. Moreover, by using the two different methods in this way, the researcher can gain perspectives from the different types of data or from different levels within the study.*

In light of this, the study adopted a mixed methods approach that included both quantitative and qualitative research methods that allow the researcher to use different methods of data collection so that they are able to validate the data. The quantitative data were collected using a questionnaire, while the qualitative data were collected from ENA`s managers, journalists, and PR public relations through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, to assess the functions and challenges of public relations at ENA.

### **3.2. Sources of Data**

Both primary and secondary sources of data were employed to fully answer the research questions. The primary sources of data were journalist, public relation practitioners, senior management team, experts and other staffs of ENA. Government organizations which are news source for ENA, different public and private Media also other respondent of the study. The study also used secondary sources of data relating to various documents such as books, journal articles, thesis, government released report, and other related materials. Secondary data was also collected from different documents of Ethiopian News Agency and retrieving from Internet.

### **3.3. Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques**

According to Christine and Immy (2011: p. 210), the term "population" refers to "a set of entities such as people, organizations, communication departments, brands, media reports, or advertisements." According to the information obtained from the Human Resources Department of the Ethiopian News Agency, there are 300 employees of ENA, consisting of in-house journalists, PR practitioners, and the management team. Out of the total 300 employees of the agency at the beginning of 2021, 172 were selected for the study using the formula of Yamane Taro (1967) indicated as follows:

$$n = N / [1 + (Ne^2)]$$

Where n = the sample size

N = the population

e = the margin of error (0.05 based on a 95% confidence level).

In addition to ENA staff, 71 respondents from the ministries PR and 25 respondents from media who are users of ENA news were included in the study. As shown above, 172 respondents were selected based on the Yemane`s formula. However, respondents from the ministries PR and the media were purposively selected to make the data collection manageable and to complete it in a timely manner. Accordingly, a total of 268 respondents were selected as the sample size for data collection through a questionnaire.

The total number of internal staff, which includes ENA journalists, PR professionals, experts and management team, and the number of respondents who have worked in internal mainstream media companies and ministries (news source organizations) is 268, which is considered as the population of the study.

The study uses only non-probability sampling methods to select respondents. In terms of deciding who to include in the sample, Christine and Immy (2011: p. 212) recommend that:

*Decisions about who or what to include or exclude in the study should be based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. Sample members generally share certain characteristics and experiences that are important to the development of the study (inclusion criteria), but you may also include some "deviant cases," for example, those whose experiences are very different. Their inclusion may challenge the standard and allow you to consider alternative explanations for the evidence collected.*

The sampling technique was selected based on the adequacy of the sampling technique to allow the study to obtain the necessary data from the right respondents who met the eligibility criteria. From the total population of the study, those respondents who met the eligibility criteria were included in the sample.

### **3.4. Purposive Sampling**

The selections of respondents were done by means of purposive sampling technique after the registration had been made. The respondents who fulfilled to meet the inclusion criterions were recruited and listed in sampling frame. Those who were listed in the population but failed to meet the objective criterions were excluded from sample framework. Nevertheless, the use purposive sampling technique requires a great deal of attention to be paid because it is often influenced by personal biasness (subjective preference) of the researcher. The researcher preferred to use purposive sampling method for qualitative research methods. As a result, the researcher decided to utilize purposive sampling method for selecting respondents who participated in the survey questionnaire, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. It can be substantiated as Kothari (2004) argues that non-probability sampling has problems related to

selection bias, in small inquiries and researches by individuals, the sampling technique can be adopted and can be done wisely. As Singh, (2006: p.100) explicitly indicated that:

*Purposive sampling is selected by some arbitrary method because it is known to be representative of the total population, or it is known that it will produce well matched groups. The idea is to pick out the sample in relation to some criterion, which is considered important for the particular study.*

As it can be seen from above quotation, the researcher used purposive sampling to make decision on selecting respondents depending on the inclusion criterion and some significant variables. It also helped a researcher to build cooperative link between the researcher and respondents. The study was largely relied on the data gained from questionnaires and an in-depth interview. It was used to acquire related information to the practices of public relation in ENA, assess the functions of the organizational structure of ENA whether to achieve the desired objectives of PR or not; identify major challenges of the practice and function of PR in ENA and seek answers for those identified problems so as to address.

The information collected through questionnaire was deliberately utilized to supplement missed information that couldn't be collected via in an in-depth interview and triangulate credibility and trustworthy of the data obtained from in-depth interview.

### **3.5. Data Collection Procedure and Tools**

The process of data collection entirely was undertaken through following three consecutive steps. First, in connection with semi-structure questions for executive officers and PRs practitioners, who have worked in the Public relation and Strategic cooperation directorate of Ethiopian News Agency, were interviewed. Second, the actual data collection was carried out by using a self-administered questionnaire. The researchers distributed at the working time and collected questionnaires on days after appointments were arranged. Finally, related documents which were written, produced and published in public relation directorate of ENA were purposefully collected for critical analysis.

Before data was collected by using tools, the researcher had held discussion with respondents so as to create awareness on the objective of the study. The researcher also confirmed that their response was confidentially utilized on purpose of the study. The required data was methodically collected by employing semi-structure interview guideline which contained both open-ended and close-ended question, close-ended questionnaire and purposefully selected related documents. The data collection procedures through those tools are separately mentioned on following sub-sections.

### **3.5.1. Data Collection Procedure**

The questionnaires were prepared in the medium of English language. Earlier to the administration of the questionnaires, the researcher was made contact with the ENA, Minister Offices and Different Media bodies in order to gain full co-operation which is very essential to obtain meaningful data. Then the researcher would give them the letter written by the University to facilitate some pre-conditions for the effective utilization of time and resources. Then, the questionnaires were disseminated for the selected subjects and interview would be held with interviewee. Lastly, the distributed questionnaires would be collected for further analysis.

### **3.5.2. Data Collection Tools**

The data gathering tools for this study were questionnaires, interview, FGD and documents. Questionnaires were presented for 268 sample respondents. The researcher using multiple sources of data and so as to gain in-depth interview held with 3 top managers and one PR director. FGD were held.

#### **3.5.2.1. Questionnaire**

As Kathleen, M. (2005: p.13) mentioned that with quantitative methods- questionnaires the researcher asks all research participants same questions in the similar instruction. The response groups from which participants may choose are closed-ended or fixed. He added that the advantage of this inflexibility is that it allows for meaningful comparison of responses across participants and study places. It is relevant to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of number. A questionnaire was considered as a key data gathering instruments and was managed to the sample study participants. The quantitative methods- questionnaires were preferred due to

it were allowed to collect the required data from numerous people and it was expected to be suitable to collect the research data.

Accordingly, the researcher used questionnaire that has section of both close and open-ended questions with boxes or tables to tick, scale or rank, and open ended questions for more detailed responses. As to (Wimmer & Dominick (2011) cited in Ameyu E. 2015: p.59), ‘*A descriptive analysis attempts to describe or document current conditions or attitudes that is, to explain what exists at the moment*’. As a result, descriptive analysis was conducted by employing different techniques. Five points Likert Scale were used which include weights for agreement: - 1: strongly disagree; 2: disagree; 3: neutral; 4: agree and 5: strongly agree as Dawson (2002) cited in Getenet, (2019: p.51). ‘*The scale of measurement for the study is interval scale. An interval scale of measurement is based on ordered interval that is of equal length and the zero value is arbitrary*’.

The data that were gained from the questionnaires were analysed and interpreted using statistical package of social science (SPSS) software. Using it the researcher can easily and quickly produce as abundance of statistical information.

### **3.5.2.2. In-depth Interviews**

In-depth interview was additional tools that used in this research for qualitative data collection. The in-depth interview was used to complement the data that were gathered through the use of questionnaire. Qualitative data collection methods include the use of in-depth interviews for key informants. As Kothatri (2004: p.2), qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behavior. Such an approach is viewed well in the researcher’s understandings and impressions. It studies about experiences, behaviors and attitudes from the respondents.

Key informants qualitative, in-depth interview nominated for their first-hand knowledge and experience about a topic. The in-depth interviews are relying on a list of topics to be discussed and allowing a free of ideas and information. As Kathleen, M. (2005: p.14), stated that the in-depth interviews are useful for learn from the perceptions of individuals. They are effective qualitative method for getting people to talk about their personal feelings, opinions, and

experiences and also provide others with opportunity to gain insight into how people interpret. In qualitative method, in-depth interview also mainly appropriate for addressing sensitive topics that people might be unwilling to discuss in a group setting. The interview typically takes the form of an open-ended dialogue in which the nominated informants are stimulated to air their sights on the problem or topic that is under study. Thus, the researcher listens wisely to what participants say and probes them to elaborate on their answers.

The aim of in-depth interview is to find out the extent to which ENA PRs practitioners practices, functions and challenges in organization. Interviewing management team and senior experts was found to be the best technique to attain required information. The interviewees of management team and PR director are dominant one in which the required information capturing from them in detail of PRs practices and function and challenges in the organization. Management team has a decision role in all activities of organizations including the news-making process and the actual news gathering and releasing process. The interviewee journalists are engaging in news gathering and news-making process daily base and they might have ample experiences due to this they need to be interviewed and asked follow-up questions independently. Thus, the researcher prefers in-depth interview to achieve anticipated results.

### **3.5.2.3. Focus Group Discussions**

Focus group discussion (FGD) is a qualitative data collection technique in which researcher and participants meet as a group to discuss a given research topic. The FGD consists of expertly moderated small-group discussion embraces seven to eleven people in one discussion session. The participants' perceptions and experiences are stimulated via carefully structured but open-ended questions. As Kathleen, M. (2005: p.65) mentioned that *'the FGDs are usually one method among many that are used to create a complete picture of how a given issue affects a community of people'*. The purpose of the FGDs is to triangulate participants' point of view on the PRs practices, functions and challenges of PRs in ENA. It is allowed the researcher to conduct questions and answers on the research topic aimed to discuss in-depth. In this study, journalists were participated as participants in FGDs.



**Picture showing the participants of the focus group discussions**

### **3.6. Data Analysis**

Data collected using various instruments are analyzed and interpreted both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data collected through questionnaires are coded, counted, tabulated, organized, and treated with various statistical techniques for analysis. Different statistical tools such as frequency, mean, percentage and standard deviation were used depending on the research questions and the specific type of data collected to show the average agreements and disagreements of the respondents. The Statistical Package for Social Science (version-20) was used for the analysis. The thematic analysis technique was also used to analyze the qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

### **3.7. Ethical Consideration**

Respondents were clearly aware of the purpose of the survey and were asked to willingly provide the necessary information. Respondents were confident that the information they provided would be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of the research. Therefore, the researcher was mindful of the privacy of the respondents and felt that the data sources were kept secure and handled only by responsible individuals.

The researcher recognized and respected the consents of the study participants and adhered to the ethical principles for research. Informed consent was obtained verbally from all study participants and was regulated by explaining the nature of the proposed research. The researcher protected the identity of the respondents during the research process and in publication. The researcher made efforts to maintain a good relationship with all interviewees to ensure the trustworthiness and reliability of the data collected. Finally, the researcher took notes during the interviews to ensure that the data provided by the interviewees was available for data analysis.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA**

The purpose of the study is to examine the functions and challenges of public relations in Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) with special attention to the practices of public relations, organizational structure-whether the desired goals of PR can be achieved, the major challenges of PR and to determine the extent to which public relation department plays in connecting ENA`s staffs and its customers.

A mixed-methods research design was used for the study. The quantitative findings of the study are presented in frequency tables, mean, and standard deviation, while the qualitative findings (in-depth interviews with key informants and focus group discussions) were thematically summarized and presented as narratives in separate sections. The discussions and interpretations of the findings are presented in an integrated and coherent manner.

Survey data were analyzed using a five-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4= agree, and 5= strongly agree. Therefore, it is assumed that 3= "neutral" is the mean value that marks the boundary between "disagree" and "agree". Accordingly, the respondents' agreement rate above the mean of three is labeled as "agree", while a value below the mean of three is labeled as "disagree".

#### **4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

A total of 268 respondents were selected to participate in the survey of which 172 respondents were from ENA, 71 from PR Offices of various ministries and 25 from different media outlets in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. As shown in Table 1 below, the composition by gender, age groups, education level, and work experience were taken into account to make the data collected more reliable and acceptable.

Accordingly, the percentage of male respondents in all ENA, in the different ministries PR offices and in the different media was higher than the percentage of female respondents, 80%, 79% and 76% respectively. This could mean that much needs to be done to improve the representation of women in the ENA and organizations where the data were collected.

Most of the respondents were in the age category of 31 to 40, which shows that the respondents are in the active age category, and if properly handled, trained and qualified, they could help improve the practices and overall performance of public relations in ENA, various ministries of the PR offices and other media in the coming years. However, the age group of 51 to 60 years old was very small at ENA, 1 (6%), while there was not a single respondent in this age group in the various ministries PR offices and the media. This supports the thesis that most of the respondents who participated in the study were below the active age group of 31 to 40 years.

As for the educational level of the respondents, most of them had a first degree or a master's degree, while the percentage of graduates of vocational training or diplomas was the lowest, below 2% of the total respondents. This shows that most of the respondents are well trained and have the necessary theoretical knowledge and technical skills, provided that other factors that negatively affect the practices and performance of public relations are eliminated and controlled as much as possible.

The experience of most respondents in ENA and various media was between 6 and 10 years (34% and 56%, respectively), while the experience in various ministries of PR offices was between 11 and 15 years (33.8% of respondents). The experience shows that most of the study participants have a good experience in conducting PR works and would potentially support and guide staff and professionals with less experience and lack of technical know-how.

In summary, the demographic characteristics show that the proportion of women is low and much needs to be done to improve their participation in the work related to PR in ENA and other ministerial offices and the media where the sample data were collected. The educational level and experience of the respondents were found to be adequate to perform the activities associated with PR when other factors affecting ENA were controlled as much as possible.

**Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents**

No.	Item		ENA staff		Ministries PR staff		Media staff	
			Freq.	Per (%)	Freq.	Per (%)	Freq.	Per (%)
1	Sex	Male	138	80.2	56	78.90	19	76
		Female	34	19.8	15	21.10	6	24
2	Age	20 – 30	47	27.3	14	19.70	4	16
		31 – 40	70	40.7	33	46.50	17	68
		41 – 50	38	22.1	17	0.24	4	16
		51 – 60	16	9.3	7	9.90	-	-
		Above 60	1	6.00	-	-	-	-
1	Level of education	TVET	2	1	-	-	-	-
		Diploma	4	2	2	2.80	-	-
		First Degree	95	55	37	52.10	16	64
		Masters	71	41	30	42.30	9	36
		Ph.D.	-	-	2	2.80	-	-
2	Work Experience	Below 6	29	16.9	8	11.30	2	8
		6 – 10	59	34.3	22	31.00	14	56
		11 – 15	44	25.6	24	33.80	5	20
		16 – 20	13	7.6	9	12.70	4	16
		Above 20	27	15.70	8	11.30	-	-

Source: Survey data, 2021

## **4.2. Functions and Challenges of Public Relations in ENA**

### **4.2.1. Functions of Public Relations in ENA**

As shown in Table 2 item 1, most of the respondents (73, 42.4%) disagreed with the statement about developing a public relations strategy. The mean of 2.65 also underscores that this finding is pertinent and relevant. The agreement of 32 (18.6%) of the respondents, which is the lowest percentage is clear evidence that the design and implementation of internal and external public relations strategies to strengthen relationships with employees and customers was minimal. Another indication is that 67 (39%) of the respondents answered "neutral", meaning that ENA does not have a clear internal and external communication strategy to build a dynamic relationship with the internal public (employees) and the external public. In same Table, item 2, respondents were asked whether PR activities are more protocol or not. While the majority of 60 (34.8%) respondents disagreed with this question with a mean of 2.95, 58 (33.7%) answered neutral and only 54 (31.4%) agreed. This shows that most PR activities are no longer in line with protocol.

In response to the question included in Table 2, item 3, whether PR activities do not have more of an advertising function (promotion and publicity), 78 (45.3%) of the respondents agreed by majority, 52 (30.3%) disagreed, and 42 (24.4%) neutral. This indicates that most PR activities in ENA can no longer be seen as advertising and public relations. PR activities are limited to the production of newsletters, newspapers and magazines, and the preparation of speeches for high-ranking officials at events. 59 (34.3%) respondents agreed with this statement, followed by 40 (23.3%) respondents who were neutral and 73 (42.4%) who disagreed with this statement. From this result, it can be concluded that public relations is mainly limited to the production of newsletters, newspapers, magazines, and speeches at events for high-ranking ENA officials.

In Table 2, item 5, respondents were asked about identifying stakeholder interests and work, and the majority, 71 (41.2%), agreed with this question, followed by 56(32.6%) of the respondents disagreed. The rest 45(26.7%) remained neutral. This means that in most cases, ENA public relation directorate identifies the interests of its stakeholders and works to achieve this goal. However, how effective this is requires further investigation.

Regarding the statement of whether PR is effective in creating win-win situations, a majority of 71 (41.3%) respondents agreed with this statement, followed by 51 (29.7%) respondents who were neutral on this point. The rest 50(29.1%) of the respondents disagreed. This shows that PR is effective in creating win-win situations and long-term perspectives. However, most of the respondents, 119 (69.2%), agreed that public relations is useful in building a positive image, as shown by several studies.

Most of the respondents confirmed that public relations in ENA does not have a management and advisory function in the organization as most of the respondents 73(42.5%) agreed with the statement, 62(30%) replied neutral and only 37(21.5%) disagreed. This could be from the PR department's own weaknesses or from other internal and external issues. In Table 2, item 9, The lack of effective communication strategies in the ENA public relations prevented it from attracting stakeholders and customers to support its sustainable comparative advantage. The rate of most of the respondents, 71 (41.3 %), showed that strategic communication did not support or oppose (remained neutral) strategic communication in ENA did attract stakeholders. Only 34 (19.8%) agreed with statement and 67 (39%) disagreed in this point. This may be related to PRs in ENA's inability to effectively act as a link between ENA and its clients. It is here that the role of PR Department in connecting ENA with its customers would be questionable, because most of the respondents, 99(57.5%), agreed that PR department did not play its role in connecting ENA with customers and stakeholder, 64(37.2%) agreed, while the rest 9(5.2%) of the respondents replied “neutral.” Furthermore, the disagreement of the majority of the respondents, 76(44.2%) assured that there is no open and two way communication among department, while 67(39%) remained neutral and only 29(16.8%) of the respondents agreed with statement (Table 2, item 11).

In conclusion, it is important to pay close attention to the functions and roles that ENA plays in the field of public relations in order to enhance it and prepare it to successfully carry out its duties and responsibilities and ensure its long-term benefits. These functions and roles should satisfy the needs and interests of both ENA's internal customers and its external clients. The PRs in the ENA are in need of reforms and readjustments in this situation so that they can be proactive in advancing their interests. The role of PR department in connecting ENA with its customers and stakeholders were found minimal, and needs improvement ahead of time.

**Table 2: Public relations functions in ENA**

No	Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	ENA has a clear internal and external communication strategy to build a dynamic set of relationship with its internal (employees) and external publics	25	14.5	48	27.9	67	39	26	15.1	6	3.5	2.65	1.09
2	PRs activities are more of protocol	14	8.1	46	26.7	58	33.7	43	25	11	6.4	2.95	1.05
3	PRs activities are not more of promotion and publicity function	8	4.7	44	25.6	42	24.4	63	36.6	15	8.7	3.19	1.07
4	PRs activities are more of preparing newsletter/newspapers/magazines/event speeches	15	8.7	58	33.7	40	23.3	44	25.6	15	8.7	2.92	1.14
5	ENA identifies its stakeholders' interest and work for that	12	7	44	25.6	45	26.2	57	33.1	14	8.1	3.1	1.09
6	The PR is effective in creating win-win situation and long-term perspectives	6	3.5	44	25.6	51	29.7	55	32.0	16	9.3	3.18	1.03
7	Public relations is very useful for image building	8	4.7	24	14.0	21	12.2	50	29.1	69	40.1	3.86	1.22
8	Public relations do not play management and advisory role in the organization	7	4.1	30	17.4	62	36.0	44	25.6	29	16.9	3.34	1.08
9	Stakeholders are attracted by ENA's strategic communication	17	9.9	50	29.1	71	41.3	24	14.0	10	5.8	2.77	1.01
10	PR department is a bridge between management and publics inside (employees) and outside ENA	47	27.3	52	30.2	9	5.2	39	22.7	25	14.5	3.11	1.15
11	There is open and two way communication between employees in different departments	22	12.8	54	31.4	67	39.0	25	14.5	4	2.3	2.62	.963

Source: Survey data, 2021

## **4.2.2. Challenges of Public Relations in ENA**

### **4.2.2.1. Public Relations Professionalism in ENA**

As per Table 3 item 1, respondents were interrogated about whether or not PRs in ENA are used in professional settings. As a result, the majority of respondents 71 (41.3 %) did not agree, followed by 64 (37.2 %) who were neutral, and only 37 (21.5 %) who did. This is further supported by the mean score, 2.74, which suggests that ENA's PRs do not practice in a professional manner. The majority of respondents 73 (42.4 %) were neutral on the subject of whether PR practitioners are professionals in public relations, while 50 (29.1%) disagreed. Only 49 (28.5%) of respondents agreed, with a mean score of 2.96 (below the midpoint average), indicating that the majority of PR practitioners are not public relations professionals.

As shown in Table 3 item 3, respondents were asked whether or not PR professional of ENA are capable of their works, a majority of 77 (44.80%) respondents neutral with this statement, followed by 48 (27.90%) respondents who were agreed on this point. The rest 47(27.3%) of the respondents disagreed.

Regarding the acquisition of the required knowledge and skills, most of the respondents, 77 (44.8%), remained in a neutral position, as also confirmed by the mean of 3.01, which is almost equal to the mid-point average of three, while 81 (47.1%) agreed with the statement. However, the rest, 45 (25.5%) of the respondents, disagreed with the statement that PR professionals have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform public relations. This is an indication that ENA's PR professionals do not have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform the tasks expected of them. Presumably, the institution is forced to provide capacity building training to equip PR professionals and staff with the necessary knowledge and skills.

In short, because PR professionals and staff lack the necessary skills and knowledge for outreach, ENA must give due attention to collaborating with organizations and higher educational institutions that provide training for their PR professionals and staff. Without offering capacity building training and some other outreach, ENA would likely not achieve the desired success and serve clients and stakeholders in a professional manner.

**Table 3: Public relations professionalism in ENA**

No	Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	PRs in ENA is practiced in professional lines	12	7	59	34.3	64	37.20	35	20.30	2	1.20	2.74	0.901
2	PRs practitioners are professionals of public relations	10	5.8	40	23.3	73	42.40	45	26.20	4	2.30	2.96	0.907
3	PRs professionals of ENA are capable of their works	14	8.1	33	19.2	77	44.80	46	26.70	2	1.20	2.94	0.912
4	PRs professionals have the necessary knowledge & skills of public relation profession	11	6.4	34	19.8	81	47.10	34	19.80	12	7.00	3.01	0.973

Source: Survey data, 2021

**4.2.2.2. Additional Elements of PR Professionalism in ENA**

In this section, elements that promote professionalism in public relations are discussed as a continuation of the topics mentioned in 4.2.2.1. This is done intentionally to increase readability and appeal.

As shown in Table 4 item 1, respondents were asked whether or not public relations follow professional principles, standards, and ethics. The majority, 70 (40.7%) of the respondents, answered that it takes a neutral position, which is confirmed by the mean of 2.76, which is below the mean of three, while a considerable number of respondents, 66 (38.3%), disagreed with the statement. This shows that public relations in ENA do not follow and adhere to professional principles, standards and ethics. This is a critical issue that the institution needs to address. Only 36(30%) of the respondents agreed with the idea, which confirms that PR professional principles, standards and ethics are threatened in ENA.

Regarding Table 4 item 2, the majority of respondents, 107 (62.2%), answered that an independent public relations association can contribute to professionalism. Additionally, the mean value of 3.53 shows that an independent professional association for public relations is fundamental to promote professionalism PR in ENA. The analysis also shows that ENA does not use and follow formal and procedural communication tools. This confirms that the majority of the respondents, 95 (55.2%), were against it, and 38 (22.1%) of the respondents answered "neutral". The mean score of 2.63, which is lower than the median mean score of three, clearly indicates that ENA does not use formal and procedural communication tools when communicating strategic issues.

When asked to the professionals from PR whether education is helpful for their professional development, the majority of the respondents 131 (76.2%) agreed, while 21 (12.2%) of the respondents remained neutral to this statement, confirming that education is helpful for professional development in Ethiopia.

In conclusion, to promote professionalism, there should be training and independent PR association, which in turn would solve profession- related problems and pave the way for strict adherence to PR professional principles, standards and ethics.

**Table 4: Additional elements of public relations professionalism in ENA**

No	Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	PRs is done under professional principles, standards & ethics	19	11.00	47	27.30	70	40.70	29	16.90	7	4.10	2.76	0.996
2	An independent public relations association can help bring professionalism	11	6.40	32	18.60	22	12.80	68	39.50	39	22.70	3.53	1.21
3	Formal and procedural communication tools commonly used in ENA.	14	8.10	81	47.10	38	22.10	33	19.20	6	3.50	2.63	0.998
4	PRs education is helpful for its professional development in ENA	9	5.20	11	6.40	21	12.20	71	41.30	60	34.90	3.94	1.1

Source: Survey data, 2021

### **4.2.2.3. Organizational Structure of PR in ENA**

The majority of respondents, 93 (54%) as shown in Table 5 item 1 below, agreed that PRs are not regarded as a core component in ENA. The average score of 3.52, which is higher than the midpoint mean value of, further supports this reality on the ground. This may be caused by the fact that PRs are a secondary concern inside the organization or that high ranking officials are not as focused on making improvements. Additionally, a sizable portion of respondents, 44 (25.6%), were hesitant to approve or disagree with the statement that raised whether PRs could be considered a core process.

Only 26 (15.1 %) of respondents disagreed with the statement that PR directors do not have a lot of power in the ENA, while the majority of respondents, 82 (47.7%), agreed with the statement. However, 64 (37.2%) of respondents indicated that they had a neutral position. This showed that public relations heads or directors either don't have a lot of power or don't use the power that is granted to them to the level that they can influence the institution to make lasting changes in their public relations efforts.

The majority of respondents, 88 (51.2%), said that they had a neutral stance on budget allocation, whereas 46 (26.7%) agreed with the statement. 37 (22.1%) of the remaining respondents disagreed, which suggests that the majority of respondents might not be aware of the amount and fairness of the budget allocated for public relations at ENA, which is further supported by the mean value of 3.09, which is roughly identical to the mid-point value of three.

The respondents were also questioned about whether or not there are few public relations professionals and whether or not they are assigned on a professional basis. As a result, 68 (39.5%) respondents agreed, 70 (40.7%) were neutral, and 34 (19.7%) respondents disagreed. This finding suggests that there are few public relations professionals and that they are not employed in the right field of studies. Furthermore, the majority of respondents, 64 (37.2%), agreed that PR professionals and employees in ENA were not provided with a job structure, while 43 (25.0%) disagreed and 65 (37.8%) were neutral with a mean score of 3.15. This shows that the majority of PRs do not have superior job arrangements (better salaries and incentives) within the institution (Table 5 item 4).

In terms of the importance of PRs, 87 respondents (50.6%) took a neutral stance, followed by 45(26.1%) disagreed, while the rest 40(23.2%) agreed with statement, making it exceedingly challenging to assess the significance (importance) of the PR office's existence in the ENA.

In order to strengthen PRs and meet the needs of ENA and its clients, difficulties such as insufficient attention, lack of capacity to exercise authority, lack of accountability and transparency in the distribution of budgetary resources, the size of the professional staff, and the role of low-level employees must be adequately addressed. This is crucial for improving the organizational structure of the Public Relations Department in the ENA.

**Table 5: Organizational structure related public relations challenges in ENA**

No	Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	Public relations is not considered as a core process	4	2.3	31	18	44	25.6	57	33.1	36	20.9	3.52	1.08
2	The public relations heads or directors do not have much power	6	3.5	20	12	64	37.2	55	32	27	15.7	3.45	1
3	There is enough and fair budget allocation among ENA different directorate.	12	7	26	15	88	51.2	27	15.7	19	11	3.09	1.01
4	The number of Public relation professionals is low and they are not professionally assigned	4	2.3	30	17	70	40.7	52	30.2	16	9.3	3.27	0.936
5	PRs is not given better job structures in the organization	7	4.1	36	20.9	65	37.8	52	30.2	12	7.0	3.15	.968
6	The Organizational managers do not believe in the importance of PRs	<b>10</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>20.3</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>50.6</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>2.97</b>	<b>0.92</b>

Source: Survey data, 2021

### 4.3. Forms of Communication in ENA's Public Relations Activities

As shown in Table 6 item 1, Meetings were rated as the most common type of communication by the majority of respondents, 66 (38.4%). Interpersonal communication was considered the next most common form of communication by 44 (25.6%) of the respondents. Group communication

was identified as the least used ENA communication method according to the study participants' responses.

About 90 (52.3%) of the respondents rated the function of the PR department in connecting their employees with customers as low, while 68 (39.5%) of them rated it as medium. This indicates that considerable attention needs to be paid to improving the role of the department in connecting ENA employees with their customers.

In summary, according to the respondents, meetings are the most popular form of communication at ENA, ignoring how much time and money Internet communication currently saves. This is a major problem. In addition, the function of the PR department as a communication channel between ENA employees and their customers must be strengthened and treated as an important issue from the outset.

**Table 6: Forms of communications in PR Directorate**

No	Questions		Frequency	Percent (%)
1	What types of communications more practically used in PRs directorate/ departments of your organization?	Online communication	23	13.4
		Interpersonal communication	44	25.6
		Public communication in the form of meetings	66	38.4
		Group communications	14	8.1
		Media communication	25	14.5
		<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100</b>
2	To what extent has the public relations department played a key role in connecting the institution to its internal staff and external clients by acting as a bridge?	Very High	8	4.7
		High	6	3.5
		Medium	68	39.5
		Low	58	33.7
		Very Low	32	18.6
		<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Survey data, 2021

### 4.3. Ministries PR and Media Awareness of ENA`s Services

#### 4.3.1. Ministries PR Awareness of ENA`s Services

The respondents were questioned if ENA is a business that simply produces and distributes news, as shown in Table 7 below. In light of this, the majority of respondents, 31 (43.6%),

agreed, followed by 30 (42.3%) of the respondents who disagreed. A considerable number of respondents agreed that ENA is only known as a news maker and distributor to public and private media outlets, as indicated by the mean value of 3.14. It is likely accurate that ENA's only goal is to produce and distribute news. The remaining 10 (14.1%) respondents had no opinion on this matter. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents 45 (63.4 percent), agreed that ENA offers services in addition to creating and disseminating news, which suggests that the respondents' evaluation above is incorrect. This shows that ENA is an organization that offers a variety of services in addition to creating and broadcasting news, necessitating additional research in this area.

About 56 participants (78.9%) disagreed, 31(4.6%) agreed and 10(14%) remained neutral with the assertion that ENA and the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation are one entity (institution), which was further supported by the mean score of 1.92, which is just below the mid-point value of three. This suggests that ENA and the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation do not constitute a single entity (institution), and that ENA is not, in any way, affiliated with the EBC. Practically speaking, the purpose of ENA's establishment is to produce and distribute news, whereas the purpose of EBC's establishment is to disseminate news, educational content, and infotainment to the public. This contrasts the two organizations' organizational structures and demonstrates how distinct and independent they are.

About 33 (46.5%) of the respondents disagreed with this statement about how ENA introduced itself to stakeholders and the community, whereas 20 (28.1%) of the respondents agreed. However, 18 (25.4%) of the respondents had a neutral position, which suggests that despite being a long-standing news organization, ENA was unable to effectively market the work it performs and the services it provides to both stakeholders and the community.

The respondents were asked to rate whether or not the services, roles, and goals of ENA are comparable to those of Fana, Walta, OBN, and other media, as shown in table 8 items 5. As a result, 25 (35.3%) respondents agreed with the respondents' positions, 31 (43.7%) disagreed, and 15 (21.1%) were neutral. The mean value of 2.86, which is much lower than the midpoint mean value of three, serves as additional evidence for this. This suggests that the majority of ENA's services, roles, and goals are distinct from those of Fana, Walta, OBN, and other media organizations. Although the majority of respondents indicated that the Ethiopian news service's

services, aim, and function were distinct from those of other media, but 25 (35.3%) of the respondents continued to believe that ENA was no different from other media. This implies that the institution must work on self-promotion.

The responses from the PR offices of various ministries indicate that there is a need for additional efforts, such as self-promotion via media outlets, since their knowledge of ENA's services and founding goal is limited.

**Table 7: Ministries PR awareness of ENA`s Services**

No	Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) is an institution only making news and distributing.	8	11	22	31	10	14	14	19.7	17	23.9	3.14	1.4
2	In addition to producing and disseminating news, ENA is an institution that provides various services	5	7	4	5.6	17	24	30	42.3	15	21.1	3.65	1.1
3	ENA and the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation are one entity (institution) / ENA is part of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC).	34	48	22	31	5	7	7	9.9	3	4.2	1.92	1.2
4	As you are a stakeholder in ENA, ENA has introduced itself to both stakeholders and the community properly as it is a long serving news agency.	11	16	22	31	18	25	15	21.1	5	7	2.73	1.2
5	ENA's services, function and purpose are similar to those of Fana, Walta, OBN, and other medias	11	16	20	28	15	21	18	25.4	7	9.9	2.86	1.3

Source: Survey data, 2021

### 4.3.2. Relationship between Ministries PR and ENA

As shown in Table 8, item 1, respondents were asked whether or not, in times of crisis, when their institution organizes a press release, a press conference, and an interview with media representatives, ENA takes the information and passes it on to other media. 37 (52.1%) of the

respondents agreed with the statement, but 23 (32.4%) disagreed on this question. The remaining 11 (15.5%) respondents were neutral on this issue. This means that in times of crisis, when different ministries organize a press release, a press conference and an interview with media representatives, ENA takes the information and passes it on to other media. Regarding ENA journalist comes to their institute and asks for information on their own, the majority of 47 (66.2%) respondents agreed with this statement, while 14 (19.7%) of them disagreed, and the rest 10 (14.1%) held a neutral position. This shows that if an ENA journalist asks for information from different institutes on his own initiative, he will receive information.

When asked whether the relationship between their organization and ENA is close and based on mutual benefit or not, the majority of the respondents 44 (62%) agreed, while 9 (12.7%) disagreed and 18 (25.4%) of the participants answered that they are neutral. This indicates that the relationship between the various ministerial offices and ENA is close and based on mutual benefit.

In Table 8 item 4, respondents were also asked whether ENA collects information from local international companies (e.g., Coca-Cola, MIDROC, Ethiopian Airlines, BGI, Diageo, Heineken, etc.) and shares it with the public and foreign media. In this regard, they are satisfied or not with the work that is done here. Accordingly, 24 (33.8%) of the respondents disagreed, 34 (47.9%) were neutral and 13 (18.3%) of the respondents agreed. From this result, it can be concluded that ENA collects information from local international companies (e.g. Coca-Cola, MIDROC, Ethiopian Airlines, BGI, Diageo, Heineken, etc.) and disseminates it to the public and foreign media. Thus, they are not satisfied with the work that is done there.

In summary, the relationship between the Ministries PR and ENA seems to be good, as ENA journalists made visits to seek information or participate in press releases, press conferences or interviews for news productions. However, how good the relationship is needs further investigation.

**Table 8: Ministries PR relationship with ENA**

No	Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	When your institution organizes a press release, a press conference, and an interview with media professionals in times of crisis, ENA will take the information and distribute to other media outlets.	4	5.6	19	26.8	11	15.5	22	31	15	21.1	3.77	1.02
2	When an ENA journalist comes to your institute and asks for information on his or her own initiative, he or she will receive information.	5	7	9	12.7	10	14.1	30	42.3	17	23.9	3.63	1.19
3	Your organization relationship with ENA is strong and based on mutual benefit.	-	-	9	12.7	18	25.4	30	42.3	14	19.7	3.69	0.94
4	ENA collects information from local international companies (e.g. Coca-Cola, MIDROC, Ethiopian Airlines, BGI, Diageo, Heineken, etc.) and disseminates it to the public and foreign media. With this we are satisfied with the work that is being done here.	11	15.5	13	18.3	34	47.9	12	16.9	1	1.4	2.70	0.98

Source: Survey data, 2021

### 4.3.3. Ministries PR preferences of ENA`s Services

When asked if their institution organizes a press release, press conference and interview when the institution is in crisis, majority 37 (52.1%) of the respondents agreed that ENA is primarily used for reporting, 23 (32.4%) of the respondents disagreed on this question. The remaining 11 (15.5%) respondents were neutral on this point. This means that in times of crisis, when different ministries organize a press release, a press conference or an interview with media representatives, ENA takes the information and passes it on to other media.

About 36 (50.7%) respondents agreed with the statement that they invite ENA when holding or organizing events and create a conducive environment for reporting. This shows that ENA journalists are always available when different organizations organize a visit program or event organized by your institution. Most respondents, 34(47.92%) agreed that they prefer ENA while organizing national and international events. The rest 21(29.6%) agreed, and 16(22.5%)

remained neutral in this regard. This implies that for various national and international current affairs and events, the ministries PR mostly prefer ENA to get the latest news..

It is possible to conclude that ministry offices PR inform ENA when opening events such as press releases, press conferences or organizing events in order to participate and report on them, which shows that ministry offices PR prefer ENA in most cases.+

**Table 9: Ministries PR preferences of ENA`s services**

No	Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	When your institution organizes a press release, a press conference and an interview, and when the institution is in crisis, ENA is primarily called for reporting	4	5.6	19	26.8	11	15.5	22	31%	15	21.1	3.35	1.24
2	ENA journalists are always available when you have a tour program / event organized by your institution.(You invite ENA in your event and tour program)	2	2.8	16	22.5	17	23.9	25	35.2	11	15.5	3.38	1.09
3	When there are various national and international current issues and events, I prefer ENA to get the latest news	8	11.3	13	18.3	16	22.5	28	39.4	6	8.52	3.15	1.17

Source: Survey data, 2021

#### 4.3.4. Media Awareness of ENA`s Services

As shown in Table 10, item 1, majority of the respondents, 12 (48%) agreed that they were aware of the various services offered by ENA, 8(32%) of them said “neutral”, while 5 (20%) of the respondents disagreed on this issue. As far as recognition of ENA by other media is concerned, majority of 12 (48%) respondents agreed, 8(32%) replied “neutral”, but only 5 (20%) disagreed with the statement. This shows that in most cases, ENA is well known and recognized by other media in the country.

In Table 10, item 3, respondents were asked whether ENA makes good use of social media (Facebook, website, Twitter, blog, etc.) to inform the public. Accordingly, a majority of 16

(64%) agreed, while 3 (12%) of the respondents disagreed and 6 (24%) were neutral, with a mean of 3.56. This entails that respondents from media were aware of ENA`s services.

In short, the media representatives assert that ENA is known for its services and uses social media platforms to provide the public with the latest news.

**Table 10: Media awareness of ENA`s Services**

No	Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	Your institution is well aware of the various services provided by ENA	2	8	3	12	8	32	4	16	8	32	3.52	1.30
2	ENA is well known and recognized from all other media outlets in the country.	1	4	4	16	8	32	9	36	3	12	3.36	1.04
3	ENA is making good use of the social media (Facebook, website, Twitter, blog, etc.) to provide information to the public	1	4	2	8	6	24	14	56	2	8	3.56	0.92

Source: Survey data, 2021

#### 4.3.5. Relationship between Media and ENA

Table 11 item 1, indicates that most of the respondents 15 (60%) agreed with the statement of the ENA`s relationship with media was based mutual benefit and cooperation, which is also confirmed by a mean of 3.56, well above the mid-point mean value of three. Only 3 (12%) of the respondents disagreed with this issue. The remaining 7 (28%) respondents were neutral on this point. This means that the working relationship between the different institutions and ENA is based on mutual benefit and cooperation. The respondents were asked whether or not there is an ongoing process in case of gaps in reporting by the Ethiopian News Agency that can be jointly discussed and corrected. Accordingly, 9 (34%) of the respondents agreed, 8(32%) of them disagreed with the statement and the rest 8 (32%) answered “neutral.” This shows that in most cases where there is a gap in the reporting process of the ENA, there is an ongoing process that can be discussed and corrected together, but sometimes there is not.

The majority of the 22 respondents (88%) agreed that their media always cites ENA as a source for every news story, none of them (0%) said neutral, while only 3 (12%) of the respondents disagreed. It seems that most media outlets use ENA as a source of information.

Most media use ENA news for this question and cite ENA as a source. However, the reality is quite different. In a group discussion with journalists and in interviews with executives; As ENA staff, the media often does not cite ENA as a source. The researcher hypothesized two ways that most media claim to cite ENA as a source. The first is that when the media use ENA news, they agree to cite ENA as a source. Therefore, the fear is that they will be held accountable under this agreement if they do not always mention (cite) the source. The second hypothesis is that the researcher is an ENA employee and fears that the results may reach the institution. For these reasons, many of the respondents in the study indicated that they would cite ENA as the source.

In Table 11, item 4, respondents were also asked whether the results of ENA's media interest surveys would be available to your organization. Consequently, 14 (56%) respondents disagreed, 6 (24%) were neutral and 5 (20%) agreed. From this result, it can be concluded that the results of the ENA surveys on media interest are not available in most organizations.

Regarding conducting of researches on the view of media professionals or official on ENA, 9 (36%) of the respondents disagreed, 15 (60%) were “neutral” and only 1 (4%) of the respondents agreed. This result suggests that the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) has not been improved by conducting research on the views of media professionals or officials or organizing a discussion forum on its work.

In conclusion, the relationship between the media and ENA seems to be quite good, but the relationship between the two parties should have been supported by research, which requires much attention in the years to come.

**Table 11: Media relationship with ENA**

No	Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	Your institution's working relationship with ENA is based on mutual benefit and cooperation.	3	12	-	-	7	28	10	40	5	20	3.56	1.20
2	When there is a gap in the reporting process of the Ethiopian News Agency, there is an ongoing process that can be discussed and corrected jointly	5	20	3	12	8	32	7	28	2	8	2.92	1.26
3	Your media will always cite ENA as a source for every news item that your organization uses.	1	4	2	8	-	-	8	32	14	56	4.28	1.10
4	The results of surveys by ENA on media interest will be available to your organization.	6	24	8	32	6	24	3	12	2	8	2.48	1.23
5	ENA makes improvements by conducting research on the views of media professionals or officials or organizing a discussion forum on its work.	4	16	5	20	15	60	1	4	-	-	2.52	0.82

Source: Survey data, 2021

#### 4.3.6. Media Preferences of ENA`s Services

As shown in Table 12 item 1, a majority of 17 (68%) respondents agreed that their respective organizations use ENA news regularly, while 3 (12%) respondents disagreed at all on this issue. The remaining 5 (20%) respondents indicated that they have a neutral position. This means that different media organizations regularly use the latest news from ENA.

As for the credibility and acceptance of ENA as the mouthpiece of the government in Africa and other international media, a majority of 11 (44%) of the participating media organizations disagreed on this statement, 9(36%) neutral and only 5(20%) of the respondents agreed, which is also confirmed by the mean score of 2.64, which is significantly lower than the median mean score of three.

As for ENA`s acceptance and credibility constantly growth, about 13(52%) of the respondents answered that they agree, 5(20%) of them disagreed, and the rest 7(28%) remained neutral. This shows that the growth of credibility and acceptance of the ENA news services is consistent among media professionals participating in this study. Regarding the advantages of ENA in in-depth analysis of background information, 13 (52%) of the respondents disagreed and the rest answered “neutral" and "disagree".

In summary, media use ENA services mainly to get latest news information, which is quite good. Even though the credibility and acceptance of ENA is growing consistently, its coverage at continental and global level is not widely accepted, which needs further improvement.

**Table 12: Media preferences of ENA`s services**

No	Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	SD
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	Your company regularly uses the latest news from ENA	1	4	2	8	5	20	9	36	8	32	3.84	1.11
2	ENA is considered as a government mouth and its coverage is widely accepted in Africa and other international media.	4	16	7	28	9	36	4	16	1	4	2.64	1.08
3	The acceptance and credibility of the ENA services is constantly growing.	1	4	4	16	7	28	11	44	2	8	3.36	0.99
4	ENA reports on events and provides in-depth analysis of background work beyond news work; You benefit from this.	6	24	7	28	6	24	5	20	1	4	2.52	1.20

Source: Survey data, 2021

#### **4.4. In-depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions**

This subsection contains two basic elements: in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs), which are treated separately to make clear and understand the qualitative aspects of this study. A thematic analysis is conducted for both the in-depth interviews and the FGDs.

#### **4.4.1. In-depth Interviews**

During the in-depth interviews, seven questions were developed to gather all the necessary information to complement the quantitative analysis. The key informants were the CEO and the two deputy CEOs of ENA. The data were analyzed thematically and presented in the following manner:

##### **Question 1: How do you assess the general activities of the Directorate of Public Relations and Strategic Partnership of the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA)?**

**Respondent 1:** The PR directorate is not doing a sympathetic and timely public relations job. We cannot say that it is working because there is a gap in this regard. The first reason is the insufficient staff in the directorate (only three people). In view of the media's behavior, the question arises as to what tasks the public relations department should fulfil. What quality of media service of PR is not properly addressed in the study? There are some efforts by the Public Relations Directorate to build a partnership for ENA. However, this is not enough, more efforts are needed.

**Respondent 2:** Since the Directorate of Public Relations has only been in existence for a few years and lacks staff, it cannot be said that it is fully fulfilling its role. The Directorate is responsible for ensuring that the external and internal communication of the institutions is effective. In the institutions, the Directorate is responsible for ensuring that the different departments communicate with each other to improve the performance of the organization. It has to publicize the services of ENA and play its part in generating revenue.

In view of this, it has not done as well as required but to some extent there is effort on the part of the department. The activities initiated by the Directorate to establish contacts with partners and stakeholders are very good: for example, ENA is strengthening and expanding its relations with foreign intelligence services. The Directorate needs to establish an internal communication system to improve organizational performance and also introduce the ENA service to generate revenue.

**Respondent 3:** The main task of the Directorate for Public Relations is to build and strengthen ENA's relations with domestic and foreign media. The work of the Directorate for Media

Communication consists of providing training for other institutions, carrying out advisory activities, promoting the services offered by ENA and serving as a bridge for ENA's cooperation with other institutions. PR does not fulfil the expectations placed on it in this respect. There are good beginnings, but much remains to be done.

The three interviewees believe that the PR directorate does not conduct public relations to the extent it is expected to.

**Question 2: How do you see the role of the PR directorate in terms of generating revenue for the Institute by introducing the various ENA services to shareholders?**

**Respondent 1:**

*“From our experience in terms of revenue generation, the directorate has not done very well. We cannot say that it is professional. Instead of the partnership created by the PR directorate, the partnership created by the marketing and individual levels is much higher and better”* (Interview, 10 April 2021, ENA headquarters, Addis Ababa).

**Respondent 2:** It's at the initial level. The directorate itself is structured like a new office and doesn't have enough staff, so it's difficult to make a difference. The human and financial capacity needs to be strengthened to effectively relate to the people. The work of generating income by building an institutional function isn't only done in outreach.

**Respondent 3:** The promotion of the institution is not limited to the PR directorate, but also to the work to be done by the business development and corporate branding directorate. Therefore, the task of promoting the institution is a joint activity of the different departments. Since this is not left to the Public Relations Directorate alone, it cannot be said with certainty that the PR Directorate has not fulfilled its responsibilities in this way.

The three respondents have shown that revenue raising should not be left solely to the PR directorate. It should be done in coordination with other departments, such as Business Development and Corporate Branding. However, it is an undeniable fact that the PR directorate has not done much in terms of increasing ENA's revenue.

**Question 3: The ENA is a media institution that some say does not need public relations to promote itself. How do you see that? Do you think it does not need public relations?**

**Respondent 1:**

*“There is a way for the media to introduce itself to the work it disseminates. The Ethiopian News Agency has much to do beyond news and program work. A public relation is needed to introduce them.”* (Interview, 10 April 2021, ENA headquarters, Addis Ababa).

**Respondent 2:** The ENA has its own website, Facebook and Twitter pages, as well as messages to various media at home and abroad. In this way it reaches out to people and creates influence. The media, which may or may not have broadcast media, reach people with the work they are allowed to do in the broadcast media. But PR must also introduce other services in the institution. It is good for any institution to have public relations. So there is no doubt about the existence of PR in the institution.

**Respondent 3:**

*“ENA creates the opportunity to present itself and communicate with people through its daily work with news and documentaries. PR doesn't need an organization, in my opinion.”* (Interview, 10 April 2021, ENA headquarters, Addis Ababa).

Two of the respondents agreed that while ENA promotes itself through its services, public relations is also very important. However, one respondent stated that public relations is not as useful because ENA promotes itself through its work - possibly through news information and documentary programs.

**Question 4: The Ethiopian News Agency has its own communication strategy (does it have a communication system where it runs the business in a way that is polished?**

**Respondent 1:** One of the most important tasks of public relations is to facilitate internal communication. This requires a systematic communication strategy to coordinate the different departments and the different aspects of the work to be done for the same purpose. Without it, it

is impossible to be effective at all. For this to happen, the institution's communication strategy needs to be carried forward. However, it has not been worked out yet. The reason is that it requires experience. It requires up-to-date knowledge. It requires a thorough understanding of the institution and the external environment. It is a situation where management decisions reach staff by means other than public relations. Sometimes there is no way to be sure that the information has reached subordinates beyond department heads. Generally, nothing has been done for the communication strategy.

**Respondent 2:** The institution does not yet have a management and communication strategy. Since its establishment, the PR directorate has not been properly organized in terms of staff and other resources. At the national level, there is a gap in the communication strategy. To fill this gap, a communication strategy is currently being prepared by high-level foreign experts, which will be implemented in the ENA once completed.

The above respondents indicated that ENA does not have a communication strategy that is essential for improving internal communication and external communication with customers and stakeholders.

**Question 5: Does the head of Public Relations work as a member of the Executive Board and participates in matters that require a decision by the top management?**

The three respondents agreed with the statement that the head of Public Relations is not a member of the Board. However, Respondent 3 added that the Director of Public Relations is directly accountable to the Chairman of the Board. Furthermore, respondent 3 added that matters that require a decision from top management can come from any department, not just the Board. Similarly, public relations can also consult the idea through the CEO. The director of PR is not a member of the board of directors, which is essential for addressing issues at the top management level.

**Question 6: How well has public relations worked by regularly exploring the stakeholders' views of ENA and the services ENA provides, and providing solution-oriented information? How much it has helped the institution by doing so?**

**Respondent 1:** This work is not done by the Public Relations Directorate. There is a Research and Advisory Department that is tasked with carrying out marketing activities. It is this department that does this research, not the Directorate of Public Relations. The reason is that the Public Relations Department has not been strengthened and is not effective in the current situation.

**Respondent 2** answered the question in a similar manner. However, the reason given by respondent 2 seems to be quite different from that of the first respondent, whose excerpt stated that:

*“The Directorate is responsible for connecting the institution as a bridge from the inside to the outside, which it does not do because it is new and not well organized”* (Interview, 10 April 2021, ENA headquarters, Addis Ababa).

**Respondent 3:**

*“The news center conducts feedback surveys. There is also a department for study, counseling and research. There will be a situation where the public relations department prepares a platform based on the results of the study and identifies the gap. It may also indicate what kind of communication method to use”* (Interview, 10 April 2021, ENA headquarters, Addis Ababa).

Respondents' perception shows that public relations at ENA is not done by exploring stakeholders' views, so it is considered that public relations does not play a significant role in this regard.

**Question 7: Can it be said that the ENA's relationship with media is effective and based on mutual benefit?**

**Respondent 1:** Yes, it is effective. ENA has signed an agreement with various media institutions to produce news. There are media outlets here that have started paying money for the news they

have taken from ENA and are in the process of doing so. Of course, it may happen that the media does not accept the news from ENA. In such cases, the ENA management calls the media and gets them to use the news. But this is not always the case.

**Respondent 2:** Without media support and help, ENA would not be where it is today. However, this does not mean that the relationships are at a sufficient level. So far, they have acknowledged the need for ENA in various media. Private and state media also adopt and use ENA news. However, the media sometimes use ENA news without properly citing ENA as a source. This has nothing to do with the effectiveness of our relations.

**Respondent 3:** There is a problem with some media using ENA news and not quoting the source correctly. There are several reasons for this. Some media do not indicate the source of the news they receive from ENA because they consider the impression they give to the audience and want to protect their reputation. Sometimes the source of the news is also not mentioned because of the personal interest of the journalist employed. Apart from this problem, ENA's relationship with the media can be described as successful.

The respondents show that even though ENA's relations with the media are effective and play an important role, further attention and rigorous follow-up is needed in some areas, such as in the appreciation of ENA's achievements as presented by the three interviewees mentioned above.

In brief, the in-depth interviews of key informants revealed that it is necessary to integrate public relations among ENA's customers, particularly the media. To improve connections inside ENA and serve the interests of its clients, the PR directorate must put into practice effective communication techniques. This will ultimately promote growth and benefit for both parties.

#### **4.4.2. Focus Group Discussions**

Focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with 10 journalists working for ENA. The analysis and main findings of the FGDs are therefore summarized as follows.

One of the problems journalists raised that affect their news making process is the cooperative of public relations practitioners who are working in different ministries. They said if you have problem with the public relations practitioner of an organization, then it will close every possible ways of getting news information from that organization.

They were also asked that to how much has the ENA Public Relations Directorate done to ensure that the ENA has a mutually beneficial relationship with the various media outlets that receive and distribute its news? Accordingly, more than half of the discussion team members said they could not say that ENA is working on a strategic partnership with the media outlets that broadcast the news. ENA news will be broadcast in various media. Although some media outlets use ENA news, they do not cite ENA as a source. They distribute the news as if it were their own.

Some members of the group also stated that some media outlets see ENA as a strategic enemy rather than a strategic partner. Many media outlets misrepresent the source in order to promote themselves and increase their value. As a result, only the mainstream media will benefit from the news. ENA journalists said they feel morally lacking in value. They said that media outlets think that they are competing with ENA instead of partnering. So they do not want ENA to emerge. They do not want to give credit to ENA for their work, as their acceptance decreases as ENA becomes known. Because of media competition, the media does not cite the source of news. According to team members, the ENA Public Relations Directorate has identified why the media do not want to cite ENA as a source? If there is a problem, it should be resolved. The public relations department is also involved in solving the problem. The reason for the problem is that there is no mutual benefit-based relationship. They said the focus should be on mutual benefit.

The FGDs noted that the lack of communication between departments was due to the fact that journalists were sent from the center to the region, and that the journalist at the regional branch did not receive any information in advance. They also mentioned that there is an opportunity for two journalists from the same institution to participate in an event. They have repeatedly called for this to be rectified, but the problem remains. According to team members; this can sometimes be a waste of resources and time. Another issue that rose by the FGDs was that the relationship was not consistent through time- raises at one time and falls at another time. They indicated that the relationship is usually top-down, not horizontal or bottom-up. Sometimes, they say, there is a tendency to not respond quickly when information comes bottom- up.

In short, the FGDs revealed the need to improve public relations within ENA and with customers. The top-down communication approach should be complemented by bottom-up and

horizontal communication. At this point, it is worth mentioning that the PR department has an important role to play, not only in solving internal communication problems, but also in reaching consensus with stakeholders and media houses when it comes to recognition and mention of ENA's news and documentary program.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1. Summary

The overall objective of the study was to critically analyze the functions and challenges of public relations in the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA). The study used mixed methods to conduct the analysis of primary and secondary data collected from ENA, ministries PR and the media. Data collected using questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions were subjected to descriptive statistics and thematic analysis.

Key findings of the study:

- An interactive communication approach that includes top-down, horizontal, and bottom-up is not used. Because ENA typically communicates only top-down with its subordinates and employees.
- The development and implementation of a communication strategy to strengthen the relationship between ENA employees and its customers was found to be minimal. This is supported by the finding that 32 (18.6%) of the respondents, which is the lowest percentage, is clear evidence that the development and implementation of internal and external outreach strategies to strengthen relationships with employees and customers was minimal.
- Formal and procedural communication tools were not commonly used in ENA.
- Most of the time ENA identifies its stakeholders' interest and work for that.
- The in-depth interviews and focus group discussions revealed that the poor organizational structure of the public relations directorate impedes the achievement of the institution's desired goals.
- Whether PRs is not given better job structures in the organization or not, the majority of respondents 64 (37.2%), agreed and some 43 (35.4%) of the respondents disagreed, as well as 47 (25%) were neutral.
- One of the major challenges of public relations is that it is not conducted within a professional framework. Most of ENA's respondents, 71 (41.3%), confirmed that PR's professionals and staff lack the necessary skills and knowledge for public relations.

Without capacity building training and other outreach activities, ENA would likely not achieve the desired success and serve clients and stakeholders in a professional manner. Public relations activities were conducted in accordance with professional principles, standards, and ethics.

- Meetings are the most popular form of communication in ENA, while interpersonal communication is considered the second most popular form of communication, as confirmed by study participants' responses.
- The ministries' PR knowledge of the ENA requires additional efforts, such as self-promotion through the media, as their knowledge of the ENA's services and founding purpose is limited. However, the media confirmed that they are well informed about ENA's services and explore ENA's news, even using social media platforms to provide the public with the latest news.
- Different media institution's working relationship with ENA is based on mutual benefit and cooperation.
- ENA's public relations is not consistent: sometimes it goes better, sometimes it goes worse, which shows that public relations is not aligned with strategies, policies, and rules to meet the needs of staff and customers.
- The extent to which PR directorate play a role in connecting their staff with customers was rated low by the majority of respondents. The PR directorate of ENA was unable to build bridge between people inside and outside the organization.
- Most of the partnerships created by the ENA are based on the nature of the marketing division and individual relationships rather than those that come through public relations.
- Public relations in ENA are not considered as a core process. This is supported by the finding that the majority of respondents, 93 (54%) agreed that PRs are not regarded as a core component in ENA. This may be caused by the fact that PRs are a secondary concern inside the organization or that high ranking officials are not as focused on making improvements.
- Based on findings that some of PR practitioners in ENA did not have sufficient knowledge, experience, skills and attitude the profession needs
- ENA has not introduced itself to both stakeholders and the community properly as it is a long serving news agency.

## **5.2. Conclusion**

The study found that an interactive communication approach that included top-down, horizontal, and bottom-up was not used because ENA's usual communication with its subordinates and employees was top-down. This could be due to the lack of a communication strategy to strengthen the relationship between ENA employees and its customers. In addition, the poor organizational structure of the PR directorate, such as the lack of necessary facilities and better work structures (salaries and incentives), has hindered public relations to achieve ENA's desired goals.

The study found that the biggest challenge of ENA public relations is the lack of professionalism. The theoretical and imperial literature shows that promoting professionalism is essential for organizations such as ENA to effectively engage with customers and achieve sustainable and mutual growth and benefits. The empirical studies show that offering in-service, mid-term, and long-term training opportunities through higher educational institutions could be a solution to promote and support professionalism in public relations. Public relations should be supported by research and evaluation and take remedial actions based on the results. This is important to bring ENA to life on a continental and global level.

The study showed that ENA's outreach efforts are minimal in retaining employees and customers. This is a clear indication that the Public Relations Directorate has not played a significant role in creating a strong connection between ENA employees and customers. Therefore, the Public Relations Directorate needs to be reformed to increase its level of performance. The reform would enable the Public Relations Directorate to improve its organization, be competent, meet the needs of customers and employees, and conduct coherent public relations that are consistent with the strategy and policies, rules, and regulations.

In general, much needs to be done to improve ENA's public relations in collaboration with stakeholders, staff, and customers. This should be ENA's concern if it wants to be an effective bridge between its employees and customers.

### 5.3. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made to improve ENA's public relations efforts and address the associated challenges:

- ENA should strive to create its own communication strategy. The communication strategy must be based on an interactive communication approach that includes top-down communication, bottom-up communication, and horizontal communication, and should take into account that customers and the general public are reached through the most visited social media platforms. This would overcome the arbitrary system of public relations that sometimes works better and sometimes works worse.
- Using appropriate communication channel, that facilitates two-way symmetrical communication to enable the top management communicate with the employees is crucial for solve internal communication problem.
- The Public Relations Directorate should be reformed, i.e., its organizational structure should be adjusted, more professionals should be hired, the Directorate should be empowered to play the role of its institution, and it should be supported in acquiring the equipment necessary for its work.
- Training should be provided to improve the professionalism of public relations, whether for service, medium-term, or long-term. Training on the technical aspects of public relations should be offered not only to the professionals of the Public Relations Directorate, but also to the department heads and managers of ENA.
- ENA is expected to develop viable means of motivating PR professionals so that ENA can satisfy public interest and build trust for the future.
- ENA should promote itself through the media so that clients, stakeholders, public relations professionals, and the general public know who it is and what its benefits are when the time comes. This would increase awareness among the public and media representatives and certainly promote mutual growth and development. To promote ENA and its services, the Public Relations directorate must have a sufficient budget and its own website
- ENA Public Relation and strategic partnership directorate needs to establish ongoing and open communications that help share and communicate organizational vision, mission, and core values with management, staff, and external stakeholders.

- Public relations should be supported by research and evaluation and take corrective action based on the results. This is important to bring ENA alive on a continental and global scale. It is also vital to know the interests of the general public and its stakeholders. Thus, ENA's public relations could be improved so that ENA's services are recognized and its revenues increase accordingly.
- Anyone who wants to do more research can study the relationship ENA does have with other news sources and media outlets at regional level.

In general, it is necessary to integrate public relations with ENA's customers, especially the media. To improve connections within ENA and serve the interests of its clients, the PR directorate must use effective communication techniques. The PR directorate also needs to plan its internal communication activity to create good relationship between organization and employee. This will ultimately promote growth and benefit for both parties. Therefore, the recommendations should be implemented as much as possible to ensure that public relations is a complete two-way symmetrical communication between ENA and its staff and between ENA and its clients and stakeholders, making ENA a vibrant medium in Ethiopia and East Africa in the years to come. This should be a concern for ENA if it wants to be an effective bridge between its staff and customers.

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## Appendix 1: Questionnaire filled by ENA`s staff

Dear Respondent:

This questionnaire is designed to solicit the relevant information for the research carried out on the topic “Critical Analyzes the Public Relations Functions and Challenges in Ethiopian News Agency (ENA). Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to investigate the Public Relations Functions, Practices and Challenges in Ethiopian News Agency (ENA). Besides, the study is conducted for academic purpose for partial fulfillment of the requirements of MA/MSc Degree in public relations and Strategic Communication. Hence, your responses will be kept confidential. The soundness and the validity of the findings highly depend on your kind and genuine responses. Therefore, I kindly request you to fill the questionnaire carefully and back to me as much as possible as per the indicated time. /To be returned within three days/

Thank you in Advance for your co-operation!

### General Directions

1. No need of writing your name
2. Please put a tick (✓) mark in the box  for your answer and for the number of your choice for the alternatives given 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in part II.

### Part I. Information about Demographic Data

1. Gender Male  Female
2. Age 20 - 30  31 -40  41 -50  51-60  Above 60
3. Education Level  
TVET  First Degree  PhD   
Diploma  Masters  Other
4. Your work position in the organization \_\_\_\_\_
5. Years of Experiences \_\_\_\_\_
6. Educational Qualification: \_\_\_\_\_

## Part II: About Public Relations Functions, Practices and Challenges

This questionnaire is to describe your general view about Public Relations Functions, Practices and Challenges. The five point scales of the alternatives represent from a score of one being the lowest possible score to a score of five being the highest possible score five. Please indicate your turnover intention with various facets of Public Relations Functions, Practices and Challenges by making “√” mark in the box under the alternatives given 1,2,3,4, and 5.

Use the following rating scale:

1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree s 5= Strongly Agree

Sn	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
<b>I</b>	<b>Public Relations Professionalism in ENA</b>					
1	PRs in ENA is practiced in professional lines					
2	PRs practitioners are professionals of public relations					
3	PR professionals of ENA are capable of their works .					
4	PRs professionals have the necessary knowledge & skills of public relation profession					
5	PRs is done under professional principles, standards & ethics					
6	An independent public relations association in Ethiopian can help bring professionalism					
7	Formal and procedural communication tools commonly used in ENA.					
8	PRs education is helpful for its professional development in Ethiopia					
<b>II</b>	<b>Public Relations Roles &amp; Functions in ENA</b>					
9	ENA has a clear internal and external communication strategy to build a dynamic set of relationship with its internal publics (employees) and external publics					
10	PRs activities are more of protocol					
11	PRs activities are not more of promotion and publicity function					
12	PRs activities are more of preparing newsletter /newspapers/magazines/event speeches					
13	ENA identifies its stakeholders' interest and working on that					
14	The PR is effective in creating win-win situation and long-term perspectives					
15	Public relations is very useful for image building					
16	Public relations do not play management and advisory role in the organization					
17	Stakeholders are attracted by ENA's strategic communication					

18	PR department is a bridge between management and publics inside (employees) and outside ENA.					
29	There is open and two way communication between employees in different departments					
III	Public Relations Challenges and Problems					
20	Public relations is not considered (seen) as a core process					
21	The public relations heads or directors do not have much power					
22	There is enough and fair budget allocation among ENA different directorate					
23	The number of Public relation professionals is low and they are not professionally assigned					
24	PRs is NOT given better job structures in the organization					
25	The Organizational managers do not believe in the importance of PRs					

### Part III: Basic Questions

1. Which type of communication is more practically used in PRs directorate/department of your organization/institution? (Only one answer)

A) Online communication B) Interpersonal communication C) Public communication in the form of meetings D) Group communications E) Media communication

2. To what extent has the public relations department played a key role in connecting the institution to its internal staff and external clients by acting as a bridge?

A) Very high B) High C) Medium D) Low F) Very low

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire filled by ministries PR

Dear Respondent:

This questionnaire is designed to solicit the relevant information for the research carried out on the topic “Critical Analyzes the Public Relations Functions and Challenges in Ethiopian News Agency (ENA).Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to investigate the Public Relations Functions, Practices and Challenges in Ethiopian News Agency (ENA). Besides, the study is conducted for academic purpose for partial fulfillment of the requirements of MA/MSc Degree in public relations and Strategic Communication. Hence, your responses will be kept confidential. The soundness and the validity of the findings highly depend on your kind and genuine responses. Therefore, I kindly request you to fill the questionnaire carefully and back to me as much as possible as per the indicated time. /To be returned within three days/

Thank you in Advance for your co-operation!

### General Directions

1. No need of writing your name
2. Please put a tick (✓) mark in the box “ for your answer and for the number of your choice for the alternatives given 1,2,3,4,5 in part II.

### Part I. Information about Demographic Data

4. Gender Male Female  Male
5. Age 20 - 30  31 -40  41 -50  51-60  Above 60
6. Education Level  
TVET  First Degree  PhD   
Diploma  Masters  Other
4. Your work position in the organization \_\_\_\_\_
5. Years of Experience \_\_\_\_\_
6. Educational Qualification: \_\_\_\_\_

## Part II: About Public Relations Functions and Challenges

This questionnaire is to describe your general view about Public Relations Functions and Challenges. The five point scales of the alternatives represent from a score of one being the lowest possible score to a score of five being the highest possible score five. Please indicate your turnover intention with various facets of Public Relations Functions and Challenges by making “√” mark in the box under the alternatives given 1,2,3,4, and 5.

Use the following rating scale:

1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree

Sn	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
<b>I</b>	<b>Public Relations Professionalism in ENA</b>					
1	Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) is an institution only making news and distributing.					
2	In addition to producing and disseminating news, ENA is an institution that provides various services					
3	ENA and the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation are one entity (institution) / ENA is part of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation.					
4	When your institution organizes a press release, a press conference and an interview, and when the institution is in crisis, ENA is primarily called for reporting.					
5	As you are a stakeholder in ENA, ENA has introduced itself to both stakeholders and the community properly as it is a long serving news agency.					
6	When your institution organizes a press release, a press conference, and an interview with media professionals in times of crisis, ENA will take the information and distribute to other media outlets.					
7	ENA journalists are always available when you have a tour program / event organized by your institution.(You invite ENA in your event and tour program)					
8	When an ENA journalist comes to your institute and asks for information on his or her own initiative, he or she will receive information.					
9	Your organization relationship with ENA is strong and based on mutual benefit.					
10	ENA's services, function and purpose are similar to those of Fana, Walta OBN, and medias					
11	When there are various national and international current issues and events, I prefer ENA to get the latest news.					
12	ENA collects information from local international companies (eg Coca-Cola, MIDROC, Ethiopian Airlines, BGI, Diageo, Heineken, etc.) and disseminates it to the public and foreign media. With this we are satisfied with the work that is being done here.					

### Appendix 3: Questionnaire filled by media

Dear Respondent:

This questionnaire is designed to solicit the relevant information for the research carried out on the topic “Critical Analyzes the Public Relations Functions, Practices and Challenges in Ethiopian News Agency (ENA).Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to investigate the Public Relations Functions, Practices and Challenges in Ethiopian News Agency (ENA). Besides, the study is conducted for academic purpose for partial fulfillment of the requirements of MA/MSc Degree in public relations and Strategic Communication. Hence, your responses will be kept confidential. The soundness and the validity of the findings highly depend on your kind and genuine responses. Therefore, I kindly request you to fill the questionnaire carefully and back to me as much as possible as per the indicated time. /To be returned within three days/

Thank you in Advance for your co-operation!

#### General Directions

1. No need of writing your name
2. Please put a tick (✓) mark in the box ““ for your answer and for the number of your choice for the alternatives given 1,2,3,4,5 in part II.

#### Part I. Information about Demographic Data

1. Gender Male Female  Male
2. Age 20 - 30  31 -40  41 -50  51-60  Above 60
3. Education Level  
TVET  Firs Degree  PhD   
Diploma  Masters  Other
4. Your work position in the organization \_\_\_\_\_
5. Years of Experience \_\_\_\_\_
6. Educational Qualification: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part II: About Public Relations Functions, Practices and Challenges**

This questionnaire is to describe your general view about Public Relations Functions, Practices and Challenges. The five point scales of the alternatives represent from a score of one being the lowest possible score to a score of five being the highest possible score five. Please indicate your turnover intention with various facets of Public Relations Functions, Practices and Challenges by making “√ “ mark in the box under the alternatives given 1,2,3,4, and 5.

Use the following rating scale:

1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree s 5= Strongly Agree

		1	2	3	4	5
I	<b>Different Media Organization’s Perspective on ENA</b>					
1	Your company regularly uses the latest news from the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA).					
2	Your institution's working relationship with ENA is based on mutual benefit and cooperation.					
3	When there is a gap in the reporting process of the Ethiopian News Agency, there is an ongoing process that can be discussed and corrected jointly.					
4	Your media will always cite ENA as a source for every news item that your organization uses.					
5	Your institution is well aware of the various services provided by the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA).					
6	The results of surveys by ENA on media interest will be available to your organization. (There is a way to get it)					
7	The Ethiopian News Agency is considered a government mouth and its coverage is widely accepted in Africa and other international media. (Media outlets cite ENA as a source)					
8	The acceptance and credibility of the Ethiopian News Agency's news services is constantly growing.					
9	ENA well known and recognized from other media outlets in the country.					
10	The Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) makes improvements by conducting research on the views of media professionals or officials or organizing a discussion forum on its work.					
11	ENA is making good use of the new media (Facebook, website, Twitter, blog, etc.) to provide information to the public.					
12	ENA reports on events and provides in-depth analysis of background work beyond news work; You benefit from this.					