



**SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**

**Assessing the Practice of Professional code of Ethics in Journalism Profession:**

**A Case Study of Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN).**

**BY**

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**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**Assessing the practice of Professional Codes of Ethics ethical in journalism profession:  
A case Study of Oromia Broadcasting Network**

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Abdo Teshita with a title: **Assessing the practice of Professional Codes of Ethics in journalism profession: A case Study of Oromia Broadcasting Network** and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in journalism and communication was done in line with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards, in terms of originality and quality.

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### *Abstract*

*This study has evaluated the adherence to ethical journalism principles at the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) focusing on accuracy, fairness, objectivity and accountability among others. It also tries to identify challenges OBN journalists face in maintaining these standards and suggests relevant training and enhanced editorial independence. Key questions in the study include the impact of insufficient training and lack of relevant knowledge on ethical practices and the influence of external bodies on journalistic objectivity. Using qualitative content analysis the Researcher examined 51 news stories aired from late November 2023, to February 2024 and conducted interviews with OBN reporters, editors and management member. This focused period allows for a close look at the OBN's coverage during that specific timeframe. To assess and find out the extent of journalistic professional practices, the research has attempted to analyze and interpret the selected news items presented with in the mentioned period of time. Three OBN reporters, two editors and one management member of the Institution have been interviewed. As the finding of the study has indicated most of the news production and presentation made by the state owned media in Ethiopian in general and the Oromia Broadcasting Network in particular, do not comply with the set professional quality and standards. Several limitations have been witnessed regarding meeting the professional codes of ethics in news reporting, production and selection of sources among others. Bias, subjectivity, focusing only on success and positive stories, dependency, impartiality, plagiarism and not giving due attention to the truth are the major problems observed in the media house under the study in this regard. In general, findings revealed significance shortcomings in meeting professional ethical standards including bias, subjectivity, and a lack of focus on truth. The study has indicated recommendations for improving journalistic practices at the Oromia Broadcasting Network based on the findings.*

## **ACRONYMS**

CPJ: Committee to Protect Journalists

EBC: Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation

ETV: Ethiopian Television

OBN: Oromia Broadcasting Network

OMMO: Oromia Mass Media Organization

ORTVO: Oromia Television Organization

PR: Public Relations

SPJ: The Society of Professional Journalists

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# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the research provides an overview of the study. It introduces the background of the study, states the problem that the study focuses on, and discusses the scope and significance of the research. It also addresses (states) the limitations and introduces the overall highlights of the study. Besides, it examines the application of core principles in the journalistic practices of the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN).

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Journalism without a strong ethical code and core professional principles such as accuracy, accountability, fairness, verification and objectivity among others cannot achieve its professional objectives as a required. In order to implement and meet such professional principles, journalists and media practitioners need to be equipped with relevant educational background, training, skills, knowledge and experience required by the profession.

This is why researchers and scholars of the sector strongly recommend the importance of applying professional media ethics while writing and reporting news and related issues.

Scholars argued for decades that a strong code of ethics is the backbone of credible journalism. Some of the scholars mention these code of ethics as follows:

- **Trust and Public Good:** Denis McQuail(1992) emphasizes that journalism's power comes from its claim to truth, adding ethical practices build trust, and are vital for functioning democracy.(1992:175).
- **Accuracy and Avoiding Harm:** Clifford Christians et al. (2014) stress the importance of Accuracy and Avoiding harm. They argue that journalists strive for accuracy, minimizing sensationalism or privacy violations. (2014:92).
- **Accountability and Independence:** Journalists should be free from external pressure or influence, answer for their work, and avoid conflicts of interest. Theodore Glasser

(2019:128). ) This code ensures journalists act as watchdogs and reliable information providers, essential for a healthy society.

The insights provided by Kibrom and other researchers shed light on the critical importance of professionalism in Ethiopia. Kibrom, (2019). Covach and Rosentiel(2007) believe that complying with journalistic professional principles and ethics qualifies journalists to be good professionals. Their foundational book entitled “The elements of Journalism: What News people should know and the public should expect “(2007) emphasizes that following journalistic principles is crucial for ensuring:

- ✓ Accuracy and truthfulness in reporting
- ✓ Public trust in journalism
- ✓ A strong democracy informed by reliable information

Several researchers have highlighted the challenges faced by Ethiopian journalists in adhering to professional practices, revealing significant deficiencies within the media landscape. Birhanu (2006) identifies a notable disparity among journalists in Ethiopian media organizations regarding the application of professional standards, stating that “there is a wide gap among journalists” (p. 133). Similarly, Amare (2009) and Gebremedhen (2006) report a chronic shortage of qualified journalists, which ultimately undermines the overall quality and vibrancy of journalism in the country.

Despite a recent boom in Ethiopia's media sector, characterized by the emergence of numerous television and print outlets, concerns persist regarding the professionalism and ethical standards of these organizations. Yohannes Negussie(PhD), a prominent media expert, has called for a thorough examination of the professionalism within Ethiopian media, particularly emphasizing the need to evaluate regional broadcasters such as the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN). His remarks highlight the urgent nature of this study, which aims to assess the adherence to journalistic professionalism at OBN.

By focusing on OBN as a case study, this research seeks to explore the specific challenges and opportunities that regional media organizations encounter in their efforts to uphold journalistic

standards. Through this investigation, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the current state of journalism in Ethiopia and provide recommendations for enhancing professional practices within the sector.

While the scholarship on media professionalism is expanding, a critical gap exists in the form of empirical studies focused on the practices and challenges faced by regional broadcasting media houses in Ethiopia. As such, this research not only contributes to filling this gap but also aligns with the comments made by the above mentioned and others scholars of the sector who advocate for a more nuanced understanding of professionalism in the Ethiopian media context.

Taking the above mentioned comments and views about media ethics and professionalism in to consideration, this study offers valuable insights for different stakeholders such as journalists (media practitioners), scholars and policymakers. Media practitioners can learn from the findings of the study how to strengthen their ethical practices. Scholars will gain new perspectives to inform their research and Policymakers can leverage the study's conclusions to develop frameworks that promote responsible journalism.

This research delves into the specific practices of the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN), drawing insights that can illuminate broader issues in Ethiopian regional media. By doing so, it aims to provide valuable recommendations for strengthening journalistic standards and ethical practices across the entire Ethiopian media landscape.

However, it is important to acknowledge that this study has certain limitations, including constraints related to access to internal organizational data and potential biases in participant responses.

Despite these limitations, the study endeavors to offer a comprehensive analysis of journalism code of ethics within OBN, guided by the imperative articulation and comments made by experts of the sector.

Giving emphasis to the importance of complying with media code of ethics another Scholar Kibrom (2019) says lack of professionalism is among major factors disabling journalism practice in Ethiopia. Journalism thrives on ethical principles that ensure the public receives accurate and unbiased information. These principles form the cornerstone of public trust and foster a well-informed society.

The Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) which is the focus of this study occupies a significant space in the Ethiopian media landscape, particularly for the Oromo people. However, questions have arisen regarding its adherence to core journalistic code of ethics. This study aims to evaluate OBN's commitment to fundamental ethical principles in journalism. Analyzing OBN's approaches to news gathering, reporting, and editorial decision-making is essential for assessing the following professional principles:

- **Accountability and Transparency:** A thorough examination of OBN's practices promotes accountability, ensuring that its journalistic activities adhere to established ethical codes. Transparency in reporting is vital for building public trust and enhancing the credibility of the media organization.
- **Public Interest:** The Oromo people represent a significant portion of Ethiopia's population. Understanding OBN's ethical practices is crucial for assessing the quality of information they receive and its potential impact on their understanding of current events.
- **Social Responsibility:** Media outlets have a social responsibility to provide truthful and balanced information. Evaluating OBN's adherence to these ethical principles contributes to a broader understanding of media ethics within Ethiopia's socio-political context.
- **Challenges and Opportunities:** Investigating potential shortcomings in OBN's ethical practices can reveal the challenges faced by journalists in the region. Identifying these challenges will facilitate the proposal of solutions, ultimately fostering a more ethical media environment.

This study employed a critical framework to assess OBN's practices against established ethical standards in journalism. By doing so, it aims to provide valuable insights for journalists, media organizations, and the public at large.

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

Journalism, a vital pillar of democracy, empowers citizens through accurate, unbiased information, fostering informed decision-making and robust public discourse. Ethical principles, such as accuracy, fairness, objectivity, and minimizing harm, are the foundation of trustworthy journalism, ensuring the public can rely on the information they receive. However, the contemporary media landscape faces numerous challenges that can compromise these core principles. Political and economic pressures, sensationalism, and the rise of social media as a news source can contribute to a decline in ethical journalism practices.

Birhanu (2006) highlights that Ethiopia's weak journalism extends beyond government interference. Journalists often lack essential skills, up-to-date technology, and strong connections between media institutions and universities. To address these challenges, Birhanu recommends closer collaboration between Ethiopian media outlets and universities to enhance journalists' ability to uphold journalistic ethics and perform their professional duties effectively. Resonating Birhanu's call for collaboration, Carpenter (2009) emphasizes the need for a well-rounded journalist and argues that journalists must possess not only the practical skills demanded by the field, but also a strong foundation in media theory. (2009:298).

Studies conducted by Amare (2009) and Gebremedhin (2006) reveal that Ethiopian media outlets usually prioritize writing, speaking, presenting, and production skills when hiring journalists and this can lead them to overlook formal education and qualifications.(2009:270) and (2006:11). In a similar account Birhanu (2006), indicates that majority of journalists in Ethiopian media houses have language and literature backgrounds.(2006:117).

In Ethiopia, the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) occupies a significant space in the media sphere, particularly for the Oromo people, a substantial portion of the nation's population. The institution plays crucial role in shaping public understanding on current affairs and issues. However, concerns arise regarding it's adherence to established ethical principles of journalism. Despite the crucial role the Oromia Broadcasting Network plays, a comprehensive understanding of its practices and their alignment with ethical principles is lacking. Here lies the research gap this study aims to address. Existing research might offer fragmented insights into specific aspects of Ethiopian media or address broader issues facing journalism at a national level. However, a focused investigation into OBN's adherence to ethical principles is yet to be conducted.

This gap is concerning due to the following reasons:

- **Accountability and Transparency:** Lack of understanding of OBN's ethical practices hinders accountability. Without scrutiny, potential deviations from ethical codes can go unchecked, eroding public trust in OBN and journalism as a whole.
- **Public Interest:** The Oromo people rely heavily on OBN for information. Therefore, Understanding its ethical practices sheds light on the quality of information they receive and its potential impact on their perception of current events and decision-making.
- **Social Responsibility:** Media outlets carry a significant social responsibility to deliver truthful and balanced information. Evaluating OBN's practices in this regard, contributes to a broader understanding of media ethics within the specific social and political context of Ethiopia.

By investigating OBN's practices and identifying potential shortcomings in its adherence to ethical principles of journalism, this study aims to address the challenges facing its journalist in this regard. This knowledge can be used to propose solutions and advocate for a more ethical media environment.

Furthermore, the findings of this study can be valuable for Oromia Broadcasting Network journalists, media organizations, policymakers and the public at large. The detail is highlighted below:

- **OBN Journalists:** By understanding the ethical concerns surrounding OBN's practices, journalists can be empowered to advocate for and implement more ethical approaches to news gathering, reporting, and editorial decision-making.
- **Media Organizations:** The study's findings can serve as a catalyst for discussions and potential reforms within Oromia Broadcasting Network and inspire other media organizations in Ethiopia to strengthen their commitment to ethical journalism.
- **Policymakers:** Understanding the challenges faced by media outlets like OBN can inform policy decisions that support a more ethical and responsible media landscape in Ethiopia.
- **The Public:** The public deserves access to reliable and trustworthy information. This study can contribute to a more informed citizenry by raising awareness about potential ethical shortcomings within OBN and the importance of ethical journalism in general.

The issue of journalistic professionalism is complex, and scholars continue to debate whether journalism qualifies as a true profession. Nonetheless, there is widespread agreement that a significant lack of professionalism affects journalism globally, including in Ethiopia. While scholars do not universally agree on a precise definition of journalism, there is a common understanding that it serves the public by providing truthful information.

Berhanu (2006) posits that formal training is essential for harnessing this potential. He characterizes effective journalists as "knowledge warriors," equipped with the latest technology, a keen eye for newsworthy stories, and an unwavering commitment to public service (p. 18). Supporting this perspective, Carpenter (2009) emphasizes that successful media professionals require a robust arsenal of skills, industry knowledge, and a profound understanding of the media landscape. (p. 298).

### 1.3. Objectives of the study

#### 1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of this research is investigating how Oromia Broadcasting Network news reporting upholds journalistic professionalism and ethical principles.

#### 1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives are:

- ✓ To evaluate OBN's adherence to journalistic standards and codes of ethics.
- ✓ To analyze OBN's Journalistic Practices such as news gathering method by journalist, source selection and evaluate the decision-making criteria used by OBN editors for selecting and prioritizing news stories.
- ✓ To identify the factors that hinder OBN's commitment to ethical journalism practices and to explore the opportunities available for enhancing its adherence to these principles.
- ✓ To explore the possible relationship between the educational backgrounds and professional experiences of journalists of the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) and their dedication to upholding journalistic ethics.

### 1.4 Research Questions

The research attempts to answer the following questions:

- To what extent does OBN adhere to journalistic standards and codes of ethics?
- How do OBN journalists gather news, select sources, and prioritize news stories?
- What factors hinder OBN's commitment to ethical journalism practices, and what opportunities exist to enhance its adherence to these principles?

- Is there a relationship between the educational backgrounds and professional experiences of OBN journalists and their dedication to upholding journalistic ethics?

### 1.5. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on evaluating the practice of basic ethical principles of journalism profession and professionalism among journalists of the Oromia Broadcasting Network. Furthermore, it aims to assess whether the journalists of the OBN follow basic professionalism and journalistic principles, such as objectivity, truthfulness, accuracy, impartiality, fairness, and public accountability, among others in their news reporting.

The researcher has decided to limit or confine his study to news production for the purpose of this research, although the organization produces various informative and entertainment programs and documentaries.

### 1.6. Significance of the Study

The researcher has identified a shortage of research conducted regarding the practice of professionalism being applied by journalism of the Oromia Broadcasting Network. Therefore, this study aims to provide additional input and serve as a reference for researchers interested in further studies in this area and for those seeking to understand how journalistic ethical principles is implemented by its journalists. In general this study will have the following potential impact:

- Suggesting the Oromia Broadcasting Network to address the gap between its current practices and established ethical principles seek the way forward.
- Encouraging the media house to respect and abide professional ethical standards and practice them as required.
- Serving as a source or additional input for those who are interested to conduct further research on the matter. In general this chapter has stated the objective (both general and specific) and finally highlights the significance of this study.

## 1.7. Limitations of the study

The researcher has faced limitations such as resource constraints and shortage of relevant existing research during the study.

- ❖ **Resource Constraints:** Time and financial limitations restricted access to all potentially relevant materials and prevented a wider study encompassing more Ethiopian media houses.
- ❖ **Limited Existing Research:** The scarcity of research specifically focused on journalistic ethical practices within Oromia Broadcasting Network, which is the study's focus area was also one of the challenges faced by the researcher.

To overcome the challenges he faced in connection with time and financial issue, the researcher has tried to follow different communication mechanisms like phone call and email message to reach its informants and access other relevant sources instead of traveling to Adama town where the headquarters of OBN is located.

## 1.8 Organization of the Study

This study has comprised of five chapters in general. Chapter one of the study states the general picture of the research; objective of the study, statement of the Problem, Significance of the study, as well as limitations and organization of the study. Chapter two of the study, deals with the review of related literature in which terms such as profession, journalism, and journalistic codes of ethics are defined and addressed.

Chapter three states methodology of the research and finally, Chapter four and chapter five discuss the analysis and presentation of data and deal with the summary, conclusion and recommendations respectively.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the presentation of literature that deals with journalism professionalism and its practice among the Ethiopian Media in general and the Oromia Broadcasting Network in particular. It also attempts to assess the evolution and background of professionalism and journalism as well. Besides, the chapter presents the available literature on the topic under investigation.

#### 2.2. The Evolution of Journalism as a profession

Journalism holds a special place in society. However there is no consensus among scholars on whether it is a profession or not. Some believe that it clearly qualifies as a profession, while others have doubts. Stichler (1922) describes the existence of ethical standards as key factor that distinguishes professions from occupations. Regarding whether journalism is a profession or not he forwards the following points.

- ❖ **Arguments for Journalism as a Profession:**
- ❖ **Specialized Knowledge and Skills:** Journalists require a strong foundation in research, writing, critical thinking, and ethical principles. They also need to stay current with evolving technologies and communication methods.
- ❖ **Formalized Training:** Journalism education programs at universities provide the necessary knowledge and skills. Additionally, many journalists participate in ongoing training and professional development opportunities.
- ❖ **Code of Ethics:** Established codes, like those from the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) or the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), guide ethical conduct and ensure responsible reporting.

- ❖ **Service Orientation:** Journalism serves the public good by providing accurate and reliable information, fostering informed decision-making, and holding powerful institutions accountable.
- ❖ **Societal Importance:** A well-functioning democracy relies on a free and independent press to inform citizens and promote transparency. (1922:40).
- ❖ **Arguments against Journalism as a Profession:**
- ❖ **Lack of Licensing:** Unlike many professions (e.g., medicine, law), journalism doesn't require a mandatory license to practice.
- ❖ **Limited Control over Entry:** There's no single governing body that controls who can identify as a journalist, potentially leading to variability in skills and adherence to ethical principles.
- ❖ **Varying Degrees of Autonomy:** Journalists working in corporate media outlets might face pressure from advertisers or editorial bias, limiting their autonomy in reporting certain stories.
- ❖ **A troubling trend** is emerging where some media outlets prioritize ideology over objective reporting. This blurs the lines between journalism and activism, raising concerns about the ability of audiences to discern fact from opinion. This prioritization of ideology can mislead the public and undermine trust in media as a whole.
- ❖ **The degree of the Debate:**

The debate surrounding journalism as a profession highlights the challenges faced by the media industry in today's world. However, the core principles of ethical journalism – accuracy, fairness, objectivity, and minimizing harm – remain essential for a healthy democracy.

Even though the notion of professionalism in journalism still remains controversial, journalists tend to agree that membership of any profession forces (commits) one to work or act in line with ethical obligations.

Meadows (2000) argue that professionals are bound by a distinct set of ethical obligations, setting them apart from non-professionals. Meadows cited in Daniel (2008) says: *“being a member of any profession commits one to ethical obligations’ that are different than those that apply to non-professionals.”*(2001a:73)

According to Schultz (1998), the historical concept of journalism as the "fourth estate" played a crucial role in legitimizing the profession. This idea empowered journalists and media outlets to resist state control and advocate for self-regulation.(1998:7) In essence, the "fourth estate" concept fostered ethical practices by encouraging journalists to govern them, ultimately strengthening journalism's legitimacy as a profession that holds others accountable. As to him, apart from the ethical dimension of fundamental importance to its legitimacy, journalism and journalists continue to be of paramount importance to contemporary society.

## 2.3. The Concept of Profession

### **Background and Definition**

The term "profession" has its roots in traditional sociological understandings applied to occupations such as “medicine, law, and the clergy”. Despite its widespread use, there is no universally accepted definition of "profession." However, scholars have provided various definitions that highlight different aspects of what constitutes a profession.

According to Eliot Freidson (1970), a profession is a specialized field characterized by a unique knowledge base. This knowledge is typically acquired through formal education and training. What distinguishes professions is their intellectual foundation and the autonomy professionals possess in applying their expertise.

Greenwood (1957): Identifies six key characteristics of a profession:

- ❖ A high degree of specialized knowledge
- ❖ Formalized training
- ❖ A recognized ethical code
- ❖ A professional organization

- ❖ Autonomy in practice
- ❖ A service orientation

For William Goode (1960), a profession is an occupation offering a specialized skill considered valuable to society. These professions typically involve extensive training, a code of ethics outlining expected behavior, and a system for self-regulation by practitioners. These definitions capture the core elements of a profession such as:

- ✓ **Specialized knowledge and skills** acquired through formal education and training
- ✓ **Adherence to a code of ethics** that guides professional behavior and ensures responsible conduct.
- ✓ **Service orientation** that prioritizes the needs of clients or the public good.
- ✓ **Autonomy** in applying knowledge and expertise within established ethical boundaries.
- ✓ **Recognition by society** as a valuable and essential occupation.

The concept of a profession is constantly evolving, and the lines between professions, semi-professions and skilled trades can be blurry.

Flexner (1915), cited by Hiwot M. (2020), defines professions as requiring intellectual skills and applying scientific knowledge for practical goals. These skills are learned and transmissible, with professions often self-regulating and emphasizing public service (2020:11).

According to Cruess, Johnston, and Cruess (2004), a profession is built upon a complex knowledge base and specialized skills. It involves applying scientific or artistic expertise to serve others. Professionals adhere to ethical codes, prioritizing competence, integrity, and social good. This commitment forms a social contract with society, granting professions autonomy and control over their knowledge. In return, professions are accountable to the public they serve.(2004:75).

### 2.3.1. Sociological perspectives of Profession

The sociological behavior theory of profession identifies attributes of professional qualification that put the above mentioned occupations as possessing esoteric knowledge, participation in professional associations, codes of conduct, client orientation, authority, education and training licensing.

According to R. Cruess, Johnston, and L. Cruess (2004), certain existing criteria define who qualifies as a professional in a particular field.

Among those criteria are:

- ✓ He/she needs to be a full time worker, must have strong commitment and motivation for his/her job, supposed to have a specialized knowledge and skills acquired through education and training...among other list of attributes.
- ✓ In addition to the above mentioned attributes, professionals are supposed to form professional associations that require admission criteria, level of education, licensing and other entry examinations.

### 2.4. Professional Practice of Journalism

Journalism requires key professional principles to meet its objective of serving the public. While specific codes may vary across different organizations and countries, several core principles are widely recognized and adhered to by journalists worldwide. Here are some key principles, along with references to relevant scholars and associations:

#### 1. Seek Truth and Report It

- **Accuracy and Fairness:** Journalists should strive for accuracy and fairness in their reporting.
- **Verification:** Information should be verified from multiple sources before publication.

- **Context:** News should be presented with proper context to avoid misinterpretation.

Reference: Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) Code of Ethics (2023)

## 2. Minimize Harm

- **Privacy:** Journalists should respect the privacy of individuals and avoid unnecessary harm.
- **Sensitivity:** Sensitive topics should be handled with care and empathy.
- **Balance:** The public's right to know should be balanced with the need to protect individuals. Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) Code of Ethics (2023).

## 3. Act Independently

- **Independence:** Journalists should be independent from external pressures, including advertisers, government, and special interest groups.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Journalists should avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived.

**Transparency:** Journalists should be transparent about their sources and methods. (SPJ) Code of Ethics (2023)

## 4. Be Accountable and Transparent

- **Corrections:** Mistakes should be corrected promptly and publicly.
- **Accountability:** Journalists should be accountable for their work and open to criticism.

**Transparency:** Journalists should be transparent about their sources and methods. (SPJ) Code of Ethics (2023).

## Additional References:

- **International Federation of Journalists (IFJ):** The IFJ's Declaration of Principles on Journalism Ethics outlines a comprehensive set of ethical guidelines for journalists worldwide.

- **UNESCO:** UNESCO has published several guidelines on media ethics, including the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Information.

**Note:** While these principles are widely accepted, the specific application of these principles may vary depending on cultural, legal, and political contexts. Journalists are expected to exercise sound judgment and ethical reasoning in their daily work. Journalistic code of ethics dictates what journalists should strive for when gathering and presenting news. This includes using a variety of sources (briefs, records, interviews, etc.) and adhering to specific expectations for the information they produce. These expectations cover the type of information included, writing style, placement within the publication, and ultimately, the role the news plays in shaping society.

As Zelizer (2005) emphasizes, understanding journalistic professionalism revolves around recognizing the centrality of news production in contemporary governance. Bossio (2011) contends that the essence of journalistic professionalism lies in acknowledging the pivotal role of news production in shaping contemporary political, social, and cultural governance (2011:57).

Different prominent journalism associations and scholars of the sector forward different expectations in relation to the concepts, values and elements of journalism. Renowned journalism scholars Kovach and Rosenstien (2014) argue that journalism's core purpose is to serve the public by providing them with the information they deserve. To achieve this, they outline ten key principles that journalists should follow.

These are:

- ❖ Journalism's first obligation is to the truth.
- ❖ Its first loyalty is to citizens.
- ❖ Its essence is a discipline of verification.
- ❖ Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover.
- ❖ It must serve as a monitor of power.

- ❖ It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise.
- ❖ It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant.
- ❖ It must present the news in a way that is comprehensive and proportional.
- ❖ Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience. (2014:32).

As citizens increasingly become news producers and editors themselves, they have even greater rights and responsibilities regarding the news.

Ted (2005) emphasizes that ethics are the foundation of journalism. As to him, accuracy, fairness, and objectivity are all key ethical cornerstones that journalists must uphold for good journalistic practice. (2005:368).

In her work, Hiwot (2020) references media scholar Jensen (1996), who posits that traditional ideals of objectivity and neutrality are antiquated, stifling journalism's capacity for effecting positive transformation. Jensen regards these ideals as superficial maxims and stereotypes, concealing the underlying ideological currents within journalism. (2020:17).

Furthermore, he proposes a set of guiding principles for journalism as follows:

- ❖ Journalists must play an active role in building and nurturing community cohesion.
- ❖ Supporting and promoting local knowledge empowers communities to resist oppressive structures, aligning with journalistic principles.
- ❖ Ethical journalism extends beyond rule-following to fostering a moral community, where trust and connections with the audience are prioritized over detachment.
- ❖ Journalism should go beyond a simple information transmission to active community engagement. While objectivity remains vital, journalists can acknowledge their perspectives while ensuring balanced and fair reporting. Furthermore, passionate community involvement complements critical journalism, fostering insightful discussions and debates.

The Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ), the United States' largest and oldest journalism organization, delineates principles such as Truth and Accuracy, Minimization of Harm, Independence, and Accountability as essential pillars guiding journalistic practice.

- **Seek Truth and Report It:** This principle emphasizes accuracy, fairness, and honest reporting. Journalists should strive to gather information from multiple sources, verify its credibility, and present it in a truthful and unbiased manner.
- **Minimize Harm:** Ethical journalists treat all sources and subjects with respect. They show compassion for those who might be adversely affected by news coverage and avoid sensationalizing stories. This principle is particularly important when dealing with children, inexperienced sources, or those experiencing grief or tragedy.
- **Act Independently:** Journalists should be free from undue influence and prioritize serving the public interest over personal gain or special interests. This means avoiding conflicts of interest, refusing gifts or favors that could compromise objectivity, and resisting pressure to slant coverage in a particular direction.
- **Be Accountable and Transparent:** Journalists take responsibility for their work and are open about their methods. They should be willing to correct errors promptly and admit mistakes. Additionally, journalists should strive to be transparent about their sources and funding whenever possible.

Some of the scholars and professional association mentioned above have their own point of view regarding the concept values and elements of journalism. Among those scholars is Deuze (2005:447) who puts the concepts, values, and elements of journalism into five categories: Public service, objectivity, Autonomy, Immediacy and Ethics.

- **Public Service:** - under the category of public service journalists provide a public service (play a watchdog role) while performing their duties.

- **Objectivity:** objectivity is one of the ethical principles of journalism in which journalists are supposed to be impartial, neutral, objective, fair and credible among other professional values.
- **Autonomy:** In Autonomy journalists must be autonomous, free and independent of any pressure groups, sources and imposing their own opinion and point of view in their news gathering, producing, and presenting.
- **Immediacy:** When it comes to Immediacy, journalists need to have a sense of immediacy, actuality and speed.
- **Ethics:** Here journalists should possess a sense of ethics, validity and legitimacy.

Thus, this study aims to examine and evaluate the practice of journalistic professionalism by analyzing the above mentioned concepts, values and elements of journalism qualitatively.

## 2.5. Ethical Theories of Communication

### 2.5.1. Social Responsibility

Different sources and literatures reveal that the Social Responsibility Theory emerged in the United States following the 1947 William Hutchins Commission report, titled "A Free and Responsible Press" (1947). This theory emphasizes the accountability of journalists to the public. This means it deals with media's responsibility to be:

- Accurate and truthful in reporting
- Fair in presenting diverse viewpoints
- Accountable to the public it serves

According to this theory, Journalists have a duty to be responsible for their content and consider its potential societal impact (1947:18-19).

The theory states about the importance of protecting the rights of its citizens against any pressure group including the government. Mason (2000), as cited by Daniel,(2008) underlines that the

Social Responsibility Theory underpins concepts like public good, public interest, and public accountability. Mason argues that journalism's legitimacy stems from an implied social contract, where journalists are expected to fulfill their professional duties with a strong sense of responsibility. He also identifies the Social Responsibility Theory as one of the four dominant perspectives on the press. According to his argument this theory emphasizes the role of journalists in serving society and promotes self-regulation as a key aspect of responsible journalism.(2000:3).

Social Responsibility Theory serves as a cornerstone for evaluating the ethical obligations of media outlets. It provides a framework for assessing how journalists and media organizations should balance press freedom with the responsibility to serve the public good. How can this theory be applied to the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) which is the target of this research.

### **Core Views of Social Responsibility Theory:**

- **Balance between Freedom and Responsibility:** Social Responsibility Theory acknowledges the importance of a free press but emphasizes that this freedom comes with responsibilities Siebert et al. (1956). Media outlets have a duty to act in the public interest by providing accurate and balanced reporting.
- **Accountability to the Public:** Social Responsibility Theory underscores that media outlets are accountable to the public they serve. This translates to responsible journalism practices that prioritize truth-seeking, fair representation of diverse viewpoints, and fostering public discourse on matters of importance.
- **Minimizing Harm:** this principle emphasizes the ethical obligation of media outlets to avoid publishing content that could incite violence, hatred, or discrimination. As suggested by the social Responsibility theory, responsible journalism strives to minimize potential harm to individuals and groups.

### **Applying social responsibility Theory to OBN:**

By examining OBN's practices through the lens of Social Responsibility Theory, the researcher explores how well it fulfills its social responsibilities:

- ❖ **Accuracy and Fairness:** Does OBN prioritize factual reporting and present diverse viewpoints on controversial issues? Does it strive to avoid bias and misrepresentation?
- ❖ **Public Interest:** Does OBN's news coverage focus on issues of importance to the Ethiopian public, or does it prioritize other agendas (e.g., commercial interests, political influence)?
- ❖ **Minimizing Harm:** Does OBN avoid hate speech, misinformation, or inflammatory reporting that could exacerbate social tensions? Does it prioritize responsible reporting that minimizes potential harm?

The concept of media accountability is central to discussions of media ethics. Gillmor (2002) argues that media survival hinges on accountability (2002:7). However, as Schultz (1998) points out, the public often lacks control over what news is covered, as journalists set the agenda through their selection of stories. (1998:156). Social Responsibility Theory offers a framework for addressing this tension. It emphasizes media's obligation to reflect society's diversity and present a range of viewpoints. Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm,(1956). In line with this, Siebert et al. (1956) highlight the importance of providing truthful, accurate, objective, and balanced information. As to them Social responsibility's goal is for media to provide "a reflection of diversity of society as well as access to various points of view" Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1956:93).

Social Responsibility Theory advocates for both developmental and public journalism, promoting media that serves the public good. However, Siebert et al. (1956) acknowledge shortcomings in how media owners and operators interpret this theory's principles, expressing dissatisfaction with the execution of its functions (1956:74). Despite these limitations, Social Responsibility Theory provides a valuable foundation for ethical journalism by emphasizing journalists' responsibility to their audience and the broader public (Commission on Freedom of the Press, 1947).

Social Responsibility Theory identifies media institutions as having a duty to protect citizens' rights (Commission on Freedom of the Press, 1947). This includes the responsibility to evaluate the content presented to the public and consider its potential societal impact (1947:18-19). The theory further emphasizes the responsibility of journalists, linking it to the concept of accountability.

## 2.5.2 Normative

### **Normative Theory and Journalism**

Different scholars state that theories such as normative, framing and social responsibility are crucial for understanding the ethical obligations of communication, particularly in journalism and public relations fields. For scholars like Entman normative framing theory examines how information is presented and the impact that it has on audience perception and behavior. Entman further argues that frames act as “cognitive shortcuts” that guide how people understand complex issues. Understanding framing techniques empowers communicators to be more transparent about their own biases and how they present information.

### **Normative and framing theories**

Normative theory plays a crucial role in understanding and evaluating journalistic practices. Here's a breakdown of its significance for the study on the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN):

#### **Normative Theory**

Normative theory delves into the "ought" questions of journalism. It explores what journalism should be, what its core functions are within society, and what ethical principles guide responsible practices. Normative theories don't describe the current state of journalism, but rather provide an ideal framework to assess the practices of media outlets like OBN.

### **Key Concepts in Normative Theories of Journalism:**

- **Public Sphere:** This theory, associated with thinkers like Jurgen Habermas(1989) who emphasizes journalism's role in fostering a space for open and rational discussion of

ideas. Media outlets should present diverse viewpoints and ensure access to information so that citizens can make informed decisions.

- **Democratic Participant Model:** This model posits that journalism empowers citizens to participate actively in democracy Entman(2004). It emphasizes investigative reporting, holding powerful institutions accountable, and fostering civic engagement.
- **Accountability Model:** This theory highlights journalism's watchdog role, holding governments and other powerful entities accountable for their actions (wrong doing). Siebert et al (1956).
- Journalists should act as a check on power and expose wrongdoing.
- **Autonomy Model:** This model emphasizes the importance of journalistic independence Schudson (2008). Journalists should be free from undue influence (political, economic) and prioritize truth-seeking over external pressures.

### **Applying Normative Theory to OBN:**

By utilizing a chosen normative model (e.g., Public Sphere Model), the researcher analyzes OBN's practices through this lens by:

- ✓ **Identifying the Core Tenets:** Briefly explain the chosen model's core principles in your theoretical framework section.
- ✓ **Evaluating Framework:** Throughout the analysis, the researcher compares OBN's news gathering, reporting, and editorial decision-making processes against these principles.
- ✓ **Strengths and Weaknesses:** Identify areas where OBN aligns with the model's ideals (e.g., presenting diverse viewpoints). Conversely, pinpoint instances where OBN's practices deviate (e.g., limited press freedom in Ethiopia potentially hindering open discourse).

This comparative approach allows the researcher to assess OBN's commitment to ethical journalism based on the established tenets of normative theory. According to communication

scholar Clifford (2009), there are four historical stages in normative theories. The first stretches back to the classical period, from 500 BC to 1500 AD. The second stage, from 1500 to 1800 AD, focused on securing freedom for participants within a libertarian public sphere. Clifford (2009) further identifies two additional stages. The third, spanning 1800 to 1970, coincides with the rise of modern populist democracies. Here, the focus shifted to the social responsibility of participants in the public sphere. The fourth and most recent stage, the "postmodern" period since the 1970s, prioritizes citizen participation within the public sphere.

Normative theory is explained as the reasoned explanation of how public discourse should be carried on in order for a community or nation to work out solutions to its problems. Normative theory, as outlined by Clifford et al. (2009), emphasizes accountability to the public as a core principle for journalists. This translates to transparency in reporting methods and acknowledging any errors made. Ideally, journalists hold themselves accountable to the truth, not to media owners, governments, or special interests that could compromise their objectivity and public trust.

Nossek (2009) underscores the importance of high professional standards in journalism, as this theory emphasizes. These standards ensure news quality through fact-checking, avoiding personal opinions in reporting, and presenting a balanced perspective on stories. Ethical journalists build public trust, allowing audiences to rely on the information they receive to make informed decisions.

Basically, the Normative Theory of Journalism, as explained by these scholars, envisions a media landscape where accurate reporting, public trust, and strong journalistic ethics empower citizens to be informed and contribute to positive collective decisions.

Hallin and Mancini (2004) argue for news broadcasts to be independent of political control and influence. Ideally, they should be run by professionals within the journalism sector, ensuring autonomy in news production. (2004:35.) Normative theory is entitled to examine and prescribe how media must operate and usually stems from the broader social philosophy and ideology of a certain community.

Scholars emphasize the crucial role of normative theory in shaping and legitimizing media organizations (McQuail, 2010). This theory also influences the expectations of media run by social agencies and audiences.

### 2.5.3. Framing

Media framing is a concept widely explored by scholars in communication studies, particularly within the realm of media and journalism. Framing refers to the process through which media outlets select and emphasize certain aspects of a story while downplaying or omitting others, thereby shaping how audiences perceive and interpret the issue at hand.

One prominent scholar who has extensively studied media framing is Robert Entman. In his seminal work "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm" published in the *Journal of Communication* in 1993, Entman defines framing as "the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation". Entman(1993:52).

Another influential scholar in the field is Erving Goffman(1974), whose book "Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience" offers insights into how individuals understand and interpret the world through cognitive frameworks or "frames." Goffman's work laid the groundwork for understanding framing processes in media communication.

Additionally, scholars like Shanto Iyengar and Donald Kinder have contributed to the study of media framing, particularly in the context of political communication. In their book "News That Matters: Television and American Opinion" (1987), Iyengar and Kinder examine how media frames influence public opinion and political attitudes, highlighting the role of selective exposure and agenda-setting in shaping audience perceptions.

In their influential work, Gamson and Modigliani (1987) define media framing as "the central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events" (1987:143). They argue that media framing involves the selection and emphasis of certain aspects of a story, which in turn influences how audiences perceive and interpret the events being reported. According to Gamson and Modigliani, framing shapes individuals' understanding of issues by

highlighting particular aspects and downplaying others, thus guiding audience interpretations and attributions of meaning to the events portrayed in the media.

In summary, media framing, as defined and explored by prominent scholars such as Entman, Goffman, Iyengar, and Kinder, involves the selective presentation of information by media outlets to influence audience interpretations and perceptions of issues.

**Goffman (1974)** posits that **framing** is a cognitive process through which individuals organize and interpret information. By constructing mental models or "schemata," we actively categorize and structure our experiences to make sense of the world. These frames serve as lenses through which we "locate, perceive, identify, and label" information.

Psychologists studying framing effects primarily focus on how **context** shapes the **meaning** of information. Goffman (1974:21) highlights the significance of framing in understanding how news media influences public perception. Framing theory occupies a central role in understanding how news media shapes public perception of events. It delves into the process by which information is presented, emphasizing the power of language, visuals, and story selection in influencing how audiences interpret news stories.

By examining the strategic use of language, visuals, and story selection, framing theory explores the powerful ways in which news organizations shape public understanding of events.

The researcher has applied framing theories in this based on the following facts:

#### **Core Concepts of Framing Theory:**

- **Frames as Mental Shortcuts:** Frames act as mental structures that audiences use to organize and understand information. Media outlets can shape these frames by emphasizing certain aspects of a story and downplaying others Entman, (2004).
- **News Frames and Issue Salience:** Framing can influence which issues the public perceives as important. By giving certain issues prominent coverage and using specific language, media outlets can elevate their salience on the public agenda Shanto et al.,(1995).

- **Agenda-Setting and Framing:** Framing is closely linked to agenda-setting theory, which posits that media can influence what the public thinks about by prioritizing certain issues McCombs(2004). The framing of these issues further shapes how audiences interpret their significance.
- **Applying Framing Theory to OBN:**
- By examining news coverage of the Oromia Broadcasting Network through the lens of framing theory, the researcher explores how it presents information and potentially influences audience perceptions of current events:
- **Identifying Frames:** Analyze OBN's news stories to identify the dominant frames used (e.g., economic focus, national security focus).
- **Word Choice and Emphasis:** Examine the language used (e.g., positive or negative portrayal of specific actors), the selection of visuals, and the prominence given to certain aspects of a story.
- **Potential Biases:** Consider how OBN's framing choices might favor certain viewpoints or agendas, potentially influencing public opinion.

In today's world, media is the main source of information. As everyone cannot have full direct knowledge of everything people relay on the media for their access of information.

- **Semetko and Valkenburg (2000)** contend that **framing theory** posits that the media plays a pivotal role in shaping public understanding of issues. They argue that the way an issue is presented in the media can significantly influence "how people think about an issue" (2000:94). This underscores the media's potential to shape public opinion.
- Framing is not confined to the surface-level presentation of news. It encompasses a broader range of activities, including the selection of stories and the final stages of news production.
- **Matthes and Kohring (2008)** define frames as "principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation" (2008: 264). These principles serve as underlying theories that guide what information is included, highlighted, and ultimately perceived as important by the audience.

- **Elites** utilize framing as a tool to shape public perception and impose their own interpretations of events. **Simon and Xenos (2010)** define elites as individuals who play a central role in shaping public affairs and politics. These influential figures are the primary sources we rely on, directly or indirectly, for information about the world. The communication that originates from elites (politicians, government officials, journalists, and interest group activists) is referred to as **elite discourse**. (2010:364)

## 2.6. Background of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation and the Oromia Broadcasting Network

Literatures indicate that the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) was established by Emperor Hailesilassie in 1963 in connection with the founding ceremony of the Organization of the African Unity that took place in Addis Ababa. It was the first and oldest television station in the country. According to other accounts, the emperor ordered the establishment of the Television station in the country following his visit to different countries abroad where he managed to see television service. Meseret(2013:135). The Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation was previously known as ETV (Ethiopian Television) and ERTA (Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency) until it was promoted to a corporation level and became EBC in 2014. Headquatered in Addis Ababa, a capital city of Ethiopia, EBC broadcasts its news and educational and entertainment program in five local and three foreign languages using its channels such as ETV News, ETV Entertainment, ETV Afan Oromo, ETV Parliament and ETV Yelajoch Channel(Children Channel).

Similar to other state-owned media outlets in Ethiopia, both the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation and Oromia Broadcasting Network encounter common challenges in adhering to professional journalistic principles..

Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) is a broadcast network headquartered in Adama, a city situated approximately 100 kilometers east of the capital, Addis Ababa, within the East Shoa zone of the Oromia Regional State. Sources indicate that the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) was established in April 2011 by Oromia regional state proclamation number 164/2001.

According to Kenea (2018) and Geremew Chala (2018), the primary objective of Oromia Broadcasting Network was to empower the regional public to exercise their right to free expression, a fundamental right enshrined in the Ethiopian constitution. This made it the second state-owned television station in Ethiopia following the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC). A core objective of the OBN is to foster a conducive environment for the regional public to access clear, objective, sufficient, high-quality, and timely information. This access to information aims to empower the public and contribute to building a national consensus on critical regional and national issues. Beyond its focus on information access, the Oromia Broadcasting Network actively strives to develop and promote a democratic culture in the economic, political, and social spheres. Additionally, it plays a pivotal role in preserving and promoting Oromo culture, history, and language.

Established in 2006 as the Oromia Mass Media Organization (OMMO), the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) underwent a name change to the Oromia Radio and Television Organization (ORTVO) in 2007. This change was mandated by the Oromia Council Proclamation number 113/2006. OBN broadcasts its news, educational and entertainment programs in 14 local and three international languages on Television and Radio. The Network also owns three channels namely, OBN News, OBN Horn and OBN Gaamme (Children channel)..

## **CHAPTER THREE.**

### **3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Study Methods**

The research has been conducted using a qualitative method as it is recommended by different scholars for data collection. According to the scholars, the qualitative research method would create openness and enable researchers to discuss issues related to their studies. In this regard, Denzin and Lincoln(2018) emphasize the ability of the qualitative data to generate rich and in depth data. The method also clarifies possible confusions while collecting data.

##### **3.1.1 Qualitative methods**

This method fosters an environment of openness, as emphasized by Creswell (2014), allowing journalists to freely discuss challenges related to adhering to journalistic principles in news reporting. This approach also facilitates clarification by enabling the researcher to probe deeper and addresses any ambiguities that may arise during data collection (Flick, 2014).

By utilizing qualitative methods, this research aimed to identify the specific obstacles encountered by journalists at the Oromia Broadcasting Network in upholding core journalistic principles in news reporting. Given the aforementioned considerations, the researcher adopted a qualitative research methodology to enhance the depth and richness of this study.

#### **3.2 Data Sampling**

Qualitative research heavily relies on the purposive sampling method for data collection (Hancock, Windridge, & Ockleford, (2007). This approach goes beyond random selection, and focuses on strategically recruiting participants who possess specific characteristics relevant to the research question.

The researcher therefore, employed purposive sampling to ensure interviewees were well-qualified and experienced in the area of investigation. As highlighted by Miles and Huberman (1994), purposive sampling method allows for the selection of individuals with a deep understanding of the research topic. Its strength lies in its ability to target those most

knowledgeable about the topic under study. Focusing on such individuals enables researchers to collect rich and insightful data that directly meet the objectives of studies (1994:224).

To examine journalistic practices at the OBN, the researcher employed a random sample of news stories broadcast between November 2023 and February 2024. The OBN broadcasts its prime time news four times a day: at noon (12:00 am), 1:00 PM and 7:00 PM, and 8:00 PM.in the evening.

### 3.3. Data Collection

This study aims to assess the factors that influence how journalists at the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) practice basic journalistic principles and ethical codes. To achieve this, the researcher employed in-depth interviews with news reporters, editors, and management member of the Institution.

These interviews explored how journalists approach news selection, source selection, and news interpretation in their daily work. The individual interview method was chosen because it allows for in-depth exploration of individual perspectives, which can enrich the understanding of the factors affecting journalistic practices at the OBN.

In-depth interviews were chosen as the primary data collection method for this study. This approach allows researchers to gain rich insights from individual participants, which is particularly valuable for exploring subjective experiences and perspectives on complex topics like journalistic ethics. This in-depth exploration is expected to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing journalistic practices at the Oromia Broadcasting Network.

This study delves into the application of journalistic ethics at the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN). Specifically, it explores how journalists at the OBN approach their work: what stories they choose to cover, how they gather information, and the motivations behind their reporting choices. Through in-depth interviews, the study examines how journalists integrate basic journalistic principles into their daily practice.

**Kvale (2006)** underscores the significance of **in-depth interviews** in qualitative research. These interviews provide a valuable window into the worldviews of participants, enabling researchers to gain insights into their lived experiences and the meanings they attach to them. However, the success of in-depth interviews hinges on the interviewer's **situational competence** (Flick, 2009). This competence, honed through experience, equips the researcher to make informed decisions throughout the interview, guiding the conversation to elicit rich and insightful data.

The study primarily focuses on interviews with **editors**, who serve as gatekeepers within the journalistic process, ensuring quality control and upholding ethical standards. A key aspect of the research involves evaluating whether these editors possess the requisite educational background and professional experience to effectively fulfill this crucial role.

Qualitative research, as Rees (1996) emphasizes, delves into broad questions about human experiences and realities. Unlike quantitative studies, it doesn't rely on surveys or statistics. Instead, researchers engage in extended interactions with participants in their natural settings. This approach yields rich, descriptive data that provides deep insights into participants' lived experiences and perspectives (1996:375).

To gain a deeper understanding of the research topic, this study employs individual in-depth interviews, a qualitative research method. Rees (1997) emphasizes that the goal of qualitative research is to understand people's feelings, knowledge, experiences, and perspectives from their own viewpoints, rather than imposing the researcher's perspective (1997: 12).

### **A: Qualitative Content analysis**

Qualitative content analysis (QCA) is a research method used to analyze qualitative data, such as text, images, or audio recordings. It involves systematically identifying, coding, and interpreting patterns within the data to gain insights into the underlying meanings and themes. QCA is a valuable tool for researchers across various disciplines, including social sciences, humanities, and health sciences.

Here are some key perspectives on Qualitative Content Analysis from various scholars:

- **Mayring (2000)** defines qualitative Content Analysis as a research method for the systematic, objective, and quantitative analysis of document content. He emphasizes the importance of developing a coding scheme that is both reliable and valid.
- **Krippendorff (2012)** focuses on the reliability and validity of qualitative Content Analysis. He argues that the reliability of a coding scheme can be assessed by calculating inter-rater reliability, while the validity can be assessed by examining the extent to which the coding scheme captures the underlying meaning of the data.
- **Braun and Clarke (2006)** propose a six-phase approach to thematic analysis, which can be applied to the qualitative Content Analysis. This approach involves familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the <sup>1</sup> final report
- **Patton (2002)** emphasizes the importance of using both inductive and deductive reasoning in qualitative content Analysis. Inductive reasoning involves identifying patterns in the data and developing theories from these patterns, while deductive reasoning involves testing existing theories against the data.
- **Berg (2001)** highlights the importance of considering the context of the data when conducting qualitative content Analysis. This involves understanding the historical, cultural, and social factors that may have influenced the production of the data.

### **Qualitative Questions for Qualitative Content Analysis**

Qualitative Content Analysis is well-suited for answering a wide range of qualitative research questions. Here are some examples:

- **Descriptive questions:** What are the main themes or patterns in the data? How do these themes vary across different groups or contexts?
- **Explanatory questions:** Why do certain themes or patterns emerge in the data? What are the underlying causes or motivations?
- **Evaluative questions:** How effective is a particular intervention or program? What are the strengths and weaknesses of a particular policy or practice?

- **Generative questions:** What new insights or theories can be generated from the data?  
How can the findings be used to inform future research or practice?

By carefully considering the research question and selecting an appropriate qualitative content Analysis approach, researchers can gain valuable insights from their qualitative data.

Key features of the Qualitative Content Analysis are described below.

- **Systematic approach:** QCA follows a structured process that includes data collection, coding, analysis, and interpretation.
- **Focus on meaning:** It aims to understand the underlying meaning and significance of the text, rather than simply counting occurrences of specific words or phrases.
- **Inductive and deductive reasoning:** QCA can be both inductive (data-driven) and deductive (theory-driven), allowing researchers to explore emerging themes or test specific hypotheses.
- **Flexibility:** It can be adapted to a wide range of research questions and data sources.

Some notable scholars who have contributed towards the development and application of qualitative content analysis put their perspective as follows:

- **Bernard Berelson:** A pioneer in content analysis emphasized the importance of systematic procedures and objectivity in analyzing textual data.
- **Klaus Krippendorff:** A leading expert in content analysis has developed a comprehensive framework for assessing the reliability and validity of content analysis studies.
- **Hsieh and Shannon:** have provided a detailed guide to conducting qualitative content analysis, including a step-by-step approach and practical tips.
- **Elo and Kyngäs:** These researchers have contributed to the development of directed content analysis, a specific approach that uses a priori codes to analyze data.

By following these guidelines and drawing on the insights of these scholars, researchers can effectively use qualitative content analysis to gain valuable insights from textual data. Holsti (1968) emphasizes the systematic approach of qualitative content analysis where specific message characteristics are identified to draw inferences (1968) Lincoln and Guba (1985) however focus on its interpretive aspect. According to their arguments the qualitative content analysis prioritizes understanding data within its context, rather than generalizing the interpretive nature of QCA. They argue it prioritizes understanding data within its context, rather than aiming for generalizability seen in traditional research methods.

Mayring (2000) acknowledges the flexibility of QCA in analyzing diverse textual data. However, he stresses the importance of establishing credibility and trustworthiness during the analysis process. Techniques like member checking and peer debriefing can ensure this rigor. Qualitative content analysis goes beyond just counting words or frequencies, unlike quantitative analysis. Qualitative interview techniques offer a valuable tool for researchers to delve into the subjective experiences and interpretations of individuals Seidman (2006). This approach is particularly well-suited for understanding how journalists grapple with ethical dilemmas and navigate professional principles in their daily work.

Holstein & Gubrium (2019). In recognition of this strength, a qualitative research design was employed in this study to investigate the factors influencing journalistic ethics and professional principles within the Oromia Broadcasting Network.

Qualitative research methods, as highlighted by Kruger (2003), offer distinct advantages. In-depth interviews, for instance, foster open discussions, allowing participants to elaborate on their experiences and perspectives on relevant issues. This approach can be particularly useful in clarifying potential confusion or misunderstandings.(2003). Furthermore, Creswell (2014) emphasizes that qualitative research provides a richer understanding of participants' lived experiences compared to solely relying on quantitative data like demographics. A detailed narrative, for example, can offer more nuanced insights than just numbers.(2014).

While qualitative research places significant emphasis on sampling methods throughout the research process, from data collection and interpretation to final reporting, its samples are

typically **non-probabilistic** and may not represent or generalize to a larger population. Given the qualitative nature of this research, the researcher employed **in-depth interviews** as the primary data collection method.

## **B. Qualitative Interviews**

**Qualitative interviews** are widely considered a valuable tool by scholars in the field due to their ability to foster detailed and in-depth exchanges between interviewer and interviewee. As described by **Kvale (1996)**, qualitative research interviews offer a unique method for understanding the world from the participant's perspective. This approach delves into their experiences to uncover the meanings they attribute to them, focusing on their lived reality rather than imposing predetermined interpretations (1996:21).

The interview becomes a collaborative conversation between researcher and participant, where the participant actively contributes to the evolving understanding. Unlike structured interviews with rigid question sets, qualitative interviews embrace flexibility and dynamism. The conversation flows freely between interviewer and interviewee, allowing the researcher to pursue unexpected avenues of inquiry that may emerge organically during the dialogue. This open-ended, non-directive approach fosters deeper exploration and enables researchers to delve into participants' lived experiences, uncovering the meanings they hold within their own world, without imposing predetermined interpretations. By employing this method, the researcher aims to gain richer insights and enhance the depth and richness of the study.

Qualitative interviews are particularly well-suited for research on subjective experiences and perspectives. Taylor and Bogadan (1984, as cited in Daniel, 2008) define them as "repeated face to face encounters between the researcher and informants' perspectives on their lives, experiences, or situations as expressed in their own words" (1984:77). This aligns with Seidman's (1998) emphasis on the strengths of qualitative interviews for exploring individual perceptions and lived experiences (1998:3-4). In this study, qualitative interviews were chosen to gain a deeper understanding of how journalists view and define professionalism.

Taking this fact in to account, the researcher aims to gain insights into how journalists of the Oromia Broadcasting Network understand (perceive) and practice journalistic professional principles in their news reporting through the qualitative interview.

### 3.4. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The researcher has chosen Purposive sampling technique to select interviewees from the journalists of the Oromia Broadcasting Network in order to achieve the objective of this study. Accordingly, three reporters, two editors and one management personnel have been included in the interview based on their experiences in the institution. The interviewees were asked to provide the researcher with the information and opinion related to their practice of professional principles and code of ethics in the organization.

The interview also aims to assess journalists' **perceptions** of the challenges they face in adhering to basic journalistic principles and ethics in their news reporting.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. DATA PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1. Introduction Data Collection and Analysis

To look into the challenges journalists face in upholding ethical codes at the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN), this study utilized in-depth qualitative interviews. These insightful conversations were then analyzed thematically, revealing three key areas of struggle.

- The first centers on professional issues faced by journalists.
- The second theme tackles the complexities of news source credibility.
- Thirdly, the analysis sheds light on the pressures exerted by various interest groups.

These themes will be further explored in the following section, providing a deeper understanding of the ethical landscape within the Oromia Broadcasting Network.

#### **Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) News Bulletins**

The data for this study was specifically drawn from OBN news bulletins aired between late November 2023 and February 2024.

The Oromia Broadcasting Network(OBN) broadcasts its news daily at its prime times, at noon (12:00 PM), afternoon (1:00 PM), and evening (7:00 PM and 8:00 PM). Additionally, it presents selected news updates throughout the day. However, the news stories selected as sample for this study were mainly taken from the prime-time news bulletins mentioned earlier.

#### 4.2. Qualitative Content Analysis

##### 4.2.1. OBN's News coverage and selection of news stories.

The Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) carves out a distinct niche within the Ethiopian media landscape. While it carries news from across the country, including stories of national significance, its primary focus lies firmly on regional matters. This regional emphasis manifests

in its coverage of events like sessions of the Oromia Regional Council and developments within the region itself. However, the OBN doesn't operate in isolation. Recognizing the interconnectedness of national and regional issues, it also incorporates speeches, statements, and messages from high-ranking federal officials such as the Prime Minister, President, and Parliament into its national news programming. This dual focus ensures that Oromia's audiences are well-informed about both regional and national developments.

Examples of some of such news stories are listed below along with their analysis

## NEWS 1

*-“Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed) received and held talks with the U.S. delegation, consisting of Molly Phee, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs at the US Department of State, Ambassador Mike Hammer, US Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, and the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ervin J. Massinga.*

*During their engagement, the two sides discussed regional and multilateral issues.*

*“This morning, I welcomed Molly Phee from the US Department of State and Ambassador Michael Hammer, US Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, for a discussion on regional and multilateral issues,” the Prime Minister said via his social media page.” (OBN, February 14, 2024)*

This OBN's news report exhibits several potential ethical shortcomings:

- **Insufficient Context:** It lacks the "why" and "how" of the meeting's importance, focusing only on basic details.
- **Single-Source Reliance:** It depends solely on the Prime Minister's social media, lacking independent verification.
- **Potential Bias:** The report omits details about discussed issues, possibly to avoid sensitive topics and project a positive government image.

## NEWS 2

*-“Foreign Minister Taye Atske Selassie, on behalf of the government and people of Ethiopia, expresses his deepest condolences to the people and government of the Federal Republic of Somalia and the bereaved families on the terrorist act in Mogadishu.*

*Taye said the cowardly attack of military officers on a training mission, is a despicable act that revealed the threat posed by terrorism to the peace and security of the region, which Ethiopia condemns in the strongest terms. He further called on countries of the region to strengthen their cooperation in the fight against terrorism”.*(OBN, February 14, 2024)

**Analysis:** This news report of OBN is more ethically sound, focusing on factual information (condolences, condemnation of terrorism). It is accurate and objective, avoiding assigning blame.. However, it still lacks context on the extent and impact of the attack. It relies solely on OBN, without including statement of a Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Overall, this report adheres more to ethical principles compared to the previous one. However, including contextual details and diversifying attributions would further strengthen its objectivity and comprehensiveness.

## NEWS 3

*-“The 44th Ordinary Executive Council Session of the African Union (AU) kicked off here in Addis Ababa, earlier this morning.*

*The Ethiopian high level delegation led by Foreign Minister Taye Atske Selassie is participating in the meeting. A two-day session of the executive council which has brought together all foreign ministers and representatives from member states of the African Union, will discuss various issues for the upcoming days.*

*The 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) is to be held in Addis Ababa from 17th to 18th February 2024. It was learnt that the meeting will focus on education among others continental issues.*

*In 2024, the African Union is set to pay special attention to education and training with the theme of the year focusing on “Educating an Africa Fit for the 21st Century: Building Resilient Education Systems for Increased Access to Inclusive, Qualitative, Lifelong and Relevant Learning for Africa” The African Union believes that success in the education sector will have significant knock-on effects on sectors such as security, control of population growth, the empowerment of women and girls, agriculture, digitalization, and migration, among others.”(February, 14 2024).*

**Analysis:**

The third OBN report effectively delivers factual information regarding the AU Executive Council session, detailing participants and the agenda for the upcoming Assembly meeting. The report maintains objectivity by focusing on the event, the year's theme, and the AU's stated goals without editorializing or exhibiting bias. Compared to previous reports, this analysis offers greater detail about the context and agenda of the meetings. However, while not a major issue, the attribution of information concerning the AU's theme, currently cited as "It was learnt," could be strengthened by referencing an official AU source.

**NEWS 4**

*-“Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed inaugurated an airport constructed in Gode Town of the Somali Regional State.*

*“Today, we inaugurated the newly constructed Ugaz Mirad Airport in Gode City, Somali Region. This new passenger terminal and airport aims to facilitate equitable development access and offer convenient services’, the premier said via his social media page.”(OBN, February 12, 2024).*

**Analysis:**

This snippet reports the inauguration of a new airport by the Prime Minister, citing his social media statement regarding its role in "facilitating equitable development access." However, it lacks details on capacity, regional impact, or construction challenges, relying solely on the Prime Minister's perspective. Ethical improvements would include referencing the inauguration as an

event, adding independent sources, and acknowledging potential concerns or future development plans. Overall, it presents a positive development but could be improved by incorporating more contexts, diversifying attribution, and acknowledging potential nuances.

## **NEWS 5**

*-“Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has embarked on an in-depth review of the initiatives and progress in the Tigray Region since the inception of the Interim Regional Administration.*

*This significant evaluation of Federal and Regional actors focuses on the critical areas of post-conflict reconstruction and the implementation of the Pretoria peace agreement.” (OBN, February 7, 2024).*

### **Analysis:**

This OBN news report on the Prime Minister's review of Tigray's progress fulfills factual reporting and public interest but lacks crucial ethical elements. It omits context regarding specific initiatives, progress, challenges, and involved actors, hindering public understanding. The report offers only the government's perspective, lacking diverse viewpoints from Tigray residents, political actors, or independent assessments. As a state-owned outlet, OBN risks presenting a biased, promotional narrative due to a lack of source transparency and critical examination. Essentially, the report acts as a basic announcement, failing to provide the depth and balance required for ethical journalism.

## **NEWS 6**

*-“Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has announced appointments to two federal institutions.*

*Prime Minister Abiy has appointed Ambassador Redwan Hussien as Director General of National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) and Tigist Hamid as Director General of Information Network Security Administration (INSA).*

*Ambassador Redwan served as State Minister for the Foreign Affairs Ministry and National Security Advisor to Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD).” (OBN, February 8, 2024).*

This news story from OBN reports on appointments within the Ethiopian government. Here's an evaluation of what it fulfills and misses in terms of professional codes of ethics for journalism:

### **Analysis:**

This OBN news report accurately states the appointments of key officials to NISS and INSA, fulfilling accuracy and public interest. However, it lacks crucial context regarding the institutions' roles, the appointees' qualifications, and the reasons for the changes. The report offers no analysis or interpretation, failing to explore the potential implications of these appointments. Furthermore, it presents only the official view, omitting diverse perspectives from political actors or experts. While OBN is attributed, the original source of the information remains unclear, and the state-owned nature of the outlet raises concerns about potential bias. Essentially, the report is a factual announcement lacking the depth, analysis, and diverse viewpoints necessary for ethical journalism.

### **NEWS 7**

*-“Ministry of Foreign Affairs discloses that some 34 African heads of state and government are expected to attend the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) that will be held in Addis Ababa from February 14 to 18, 2024*

*UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Workneh Gebeyehu and Secretary-General of the Arab League, Ahmed Aboul Gheit will also attend the summit.*

*Briefing the media, Spokesperson of the ministry Ambassador Meles Alem said Ethiopia has made intensive preparations to warmly welcome and successfully host the summit.” .(OBN February 08, 2024).*

### **ANALYSIS:**

This OBN report announces the AU summit in Addis Ababa, but ethically falters by lacking depth. It omits crucial agenda details, the summit's significance, and Ethiopia's specific hosting role. The report presents only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' view, ignoring diverse

perspectives from member states, experts, or civil society. It lacks critical analysis, failing to address potential controversies or implementation challenges. Sourcing is vague, and the "warm welcome" phrasing suggests a promotional bias. Essentially, it's a shallow announcement, not a comprehensive, ethically sound news report. The news story primarily functions as an announcement rather than a comprehensive news report. It misses key ethical principles by failing to provide sufficient context, diverse perspectives, critical analysis, and transparent sourcing. It also exhibits a potential bias in its portrayal of Ethiopia's role.

## **NEWS 8**

*-“The House of People’s Representatives of Ethiopia has approved appointments of three high level government officials as nominated by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD). Accordingly, Temesgen Truneh has been appointed as Deputy Prime Minister while Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie and Dr. Mekdes Daba have been approved as Ministers of Foreign Affair and Health respectively. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has tabled profiles of the appointees referring to their leadership and professional careers at different levels as the house approved the nomination unanimously.*

*Temesgen Tiruneh who has recently been appointed as Deputy President of the ruling Prosperity Part served at different levels of leadership including high positions as Chief Administrator of the Amhara Regional State and Director General of the National Intelligence and Security Service.*

*Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie who was the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations served as Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed till the new appointment.*

*Dr. Mekdes Daba, a senior obstetrician and gynecologist and a public health specialist, served as Managing Director of the Centre for International Reproductive Health Training (CIRHT), Chair Civil Society Advisory Group of UN Women Ethiopia and a team leader in the Office of Deputy Director General of the World Health Organization in Geneva.” (OBN February 8,2024).*

## **Analysis:**

The above news report on government appointments lacks ethical depth. It relies solely on the Prime Minister's presentation, failing to provide independent verification or diverse sourcing. Crucial context is missing: the reasons for the appointments, their potential implications, and any dissenting views. The report risks bias by presenting only the Prime Minister's positive framing, omitting critical assessment of the appointees' track records. It provides superficial biographical details without substantive information on their accomplishments, hindering informed public judgment.

## **NEWS 9**

*-“Foreign Affairs, State Minister Ambassador Mesganu Arga, met with Indonesian Ambassador to Ethiopia, Al Busyra Bansur, and Charge D’Affaires of the Embassy of the Republic of Yemen to Ethiopia, H.E. Ambassador Yahya A. Al-Eryani, at his office today, and discussed bilateral and multilateral issues.*

*Ambassador Al Busyra Bansur praised the Ethiopian-Indonesian relations and said that there are many aspects of cooperation between the two countries, especially in trade, economy and investment.*

*Ambassador Yahya A. Al-Eryani, appreciated the ancient Ethio-Yemeni relations and thanked Ethiopia's sustained support for the Yemenis in Ethiopia..” (OBN, February 08, 2024).*

## **Analysis:**

This OBN report on diplomatic meetings ethically fails by providing superficial information, lacking specifics on discussed "bilateral and multilateral issues." It relies solely on positive ambassador statements, omitting independent verification and alternative views. Crucial context regarding Ethiopia's relationships with Indonesia and Yemen is absent, as is critical analysis of the meetings' significance. The report's promotional tone, emphasizing positive relations, further

undermines its journalistic integrity. To improve, OBN must prioritize independent reporting, context, diverse perspectives, and objectivity.

## **NEWS 10**

*-“The Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (NDC) convened a virtual discourse with constituents of the Ethiopian Diaspora residing in the United States of America and Canada on Sunday afternoon.*

*The virtual deliberation focused on examining the potential involvement and support from members of the Diaspora and individuals of Ethiopian lineage residing across various regions globally in the national dialogue process, the Commission said a social media post published with a picture showing virtual meetings with the Ethiopian Diaspora residing in North America.*

*During the discussion, Professor Mesfin Araya, the Chief Commissioner of NDC, underscored the significance of engaging in discussions and attaining a collective agreement on matters of national importance for the betterment of the nation even if there is different views among the citizens.*

*The Chief Commissioner further urged members of the Diaspora and individuals of Ethiopian descent to actively and positively contribute to the national consultation process, with the aim of achieving a shared consensus.*

*It was also noted that diverse recommendations were put forth by the participants regarding the manner in which the Commission can collaborate with members of the Ethiopian diaspora residing in the U.S. and Canada.” (OBN, January 15, 2024).*

## **Analysis**

This OBN report on the NDC's diaspora meeting is ethically weak. While it states a meeting occurred, it lacks crucial details: specific discussion topics, diaspora recommendations, participant numbers, and follow-up plans. It relies solely on NDC information, offering no independent perspective or critical analysis.

The report's promotional tone and vague sourcing raise bias and transparency concerns. It fails to meet ethical standards of accuracy, independence, impartiality, and accountability, providing an incomplete and potentially biased account.

In summary, this news report focuses on efforts to include the Ethiopian diaspora in the national dialogue process. It highly relied on OBN's social media post; it presents factual information about the discussion. This OBN news piece is more of a public relations announcement for the NDC than a genuine news report. It lacks the depth, context, and critical analysis necessary to inform the public adequately.

## **NEWS 11**

*-“A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Partnership and Cooperation has been signed between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Somaliland.*

*The Memorandum of Understanding includes wide scopes of cooperation in social, economic, political and military fields.”(OBN, January 04, 2024).*

### **Analysis:**

This OBN report on the Ethiopia-Somaliland MOU is ethically deficient. It merely states the signing, lacking crucial details: the agreement's specifics, motivations, implications, and background. Sourcing is vague, and diverse perspectives are absent, offering only a potentially biased official view. Critical analysis is nonexistent. The report fails basic journalistic standards of accuracy, completeness, context, independence, impartiality, and transparency, rendering it inadequate and potentially misleading. Overall, the above news story is not written in line with professional codes of ethics. It's a bare announcement that lacks the essential elements of good journalism. It fails to inform the public adequately and risks misleading them due to its incompleteness.

## **NEWS 12**

*-“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that starting from 1 January 2024, Ethiopia has assumed its membership in BRICS.*

*In a statement it released in connection with Ethiopia's BRICS membership the Ministry said that following the historical decision of the BRICS Summit in August 2023 to invite Ethiopia to join the BRICS as a member, Ethiopia has welcomed the invitation to be part of this important partnership platform.*

*"Its membership recognizes the rich- multilateral contribution of Ethiopia to promote international peace, security, and prosperity; and the continued commitment and leadership of Ethiopia to south-south cooperation.*

*Due to the ongoing economic reforms, the current and potential of the Ethiopian economy has been acknowledged."*

*"We have been preparing to join the BRICS. The Ethiopian Government has, therefore, appointed Mamo Esmelealem Mihretu, Governor of the National Bank of Ethiopia, as Sherpa, and Ambassador Mesganu Arga Moach, State Minister of Foreign Affairs, as Sous Sherpa.*

*The Ministry also pointed out that national ministerial and a senior official coordination committee have been also established and laid the groundwork to ensure the active participation of Ethiopia,"* .(OBN, January 01, 2024).

### **Analysis:**

This OBN report on Ethiopia's BRICS entry, while factually accurate, ethically falters by lacking depth. It omits crucial context: BRICS benefits, challenges, Ethiopia's role, and other members' views. Relying heavily on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it lacks independent verification and diverse perspectives from experts, the public, or international bodies. Critical analysis is absent, and a promotional tone pervades, undermining objectivity. The report fails to meet ethical standards of completeness, independence, impartiality, and transparency, functioning more as a government announcement than informed journalism.

### **NEWS 13**

*- "Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the President of Somaliland Muse Bihe Abdi have signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding in Addis Ababa.*

*The Memorandum of Understanding for Partnership and Cooperation, between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Somaliland, is intended to serve as a framework for the multispectral partnership between the two sides.*

*According to office of the prime minister, the Memorandum of Understanding shall pave the way for Ethiopia to realize its aspiration of securing access to the sea and diversify its access to seaports. Apart from strengthening their security, economic and political partnership, the Memorandum of Understanding also indicates the pathway to bolster political and diplomatic relations of the two nations.*

*The agreement reaffirms the principled position of the Ethiopian Government to advance mutual interests through cooperation on the basis of reciprocity. (OBN, January 01, 2024).*

## **Analysis**

This OBN report on the Ethiopia-Somaliland MOU, while stating a verifiable agreement, ethically fails by lacking crucial specifics on sea access and cooperation details. It heavily relies on the Prime Minister's office, omitting independent verification and diverse perspectives from Somaliland, experts, or regional actors. Critical analysis of legal, political, and regional implications is absent, and a promotional tone undermines objectivity. The report violates ethical standards of completeness, context, independence, impartiality, and transparency, providing an incomplete and potentially biased account. This news story, while slightly improved from previous examples, still falls short of ethical standards. It functions more as a government announcement than a piece of thorough journalism.

## **NEWS 14**

*Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed extended Christmas and holiday season best wishes to all international friends of Ethiopia and Ethiopians in the Diaspora celebrating today.*

*The Prime Minister also expressed best wishes to the global community celebrating the occasion.*

*“For all international friends of Ethiopia, Ethiopians in the Diaspora and the global community at large celebrating today, I extend my well wishes for a joyous Merry Christmas and holiday*

season,” PM Abiy said in a message published on his social media page.” (OBN, December 25, 2023).

### **Anaysis:**

This OBN report, a mere reproduction of the Prime Minister's Christmas social media post, ethically falters by lacking news value and journalistic effort. It offers no context, analysis, or original reporting, failing to inform or educate. While the quote's accuracy is likely, the report lacks completeness and independence. Essentially, it's a direct, unedited social media post presented as news, with minimal adherence to journalistic standards.

### **NEWS 15**

*-“Minister of Tourism, Nasise Chali says the “Dine for Ethiopia” (Gebeta LeHager) projects not only contribute to the development of tourist destinations but also play a vital role in boosting infrastructure in those areas. Chebera Churchura Elephant Paw Lodge, part of Dine for Ethiopia’s Koysha project, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) on Saturday and opened for service.*

*Reflecting on the importance of such projects, the Minister of Tourism Nasise Chali mentioned that the construction of the Chebera Churchura Elephant Paw Lodge has ameliorated various infrastructures in the surrounding areas. The Chebera Churchura Park, situated in Southwest Ethiopia Region, has not attracted tourists as much as it should due to the lack of infrastructure, Nasise underscored. She stated that, thanks to the infrastructures established under the Dine for Ethiopia initiative, the park is now fully prepared to receive visitors from various corners of the globe, allowing them to marvel at the breathtaking scenery of the region.*

*Nasise expressed that this serves as a clear indication of the government’s commitment to developing tourist destinations that showcase the country’s natural beauty while ensuring the preservation of nature remains a top priority. She revealed that numerous other tourist destinations are currently being developed as part of the “Dine for Generation” projects throughout the country. The Minister emphasized that these upcoming tourist destinations will play a crucial role in enhancing Ethiopia’s image and reputation on the global stage.” (OBN, December 25, 2023).*

## **Analysis of News 15**

This OBN report on the lodge inauguration, while factually likely, ethically falters by relying solely on the Tourism Minister's statements, lacking independent verification. It omits crucial specifics on infrastructure improvements, project costs, economic impacts, and environmental considerations. The report lacks diverse perspectives from local communities, experts, or critical assessments of potential drawbacks. Its promotional tone, emphasizing "breathtaking scenery" and "crucial role," undermines objectivity. The report lacks contextual depth, failing to provide background on the park's history or ecological significance. It violates ethical standards of completeness, independence, impartiality, and fairness, functioning as a government press release rather than balanced journalism.

## **NEWS 16**

*-“Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) reviewed the progress of the Koysha hydroelectric power project which is being accelerated owing to the follow ups and national reforms implemented by his government. It is indicated that this review marks the 12th time the Prime Minister has visited to evaluate progress of the Koysha dam since 2020.*

*“On my 12th review of the Koysha hydroelectric power project since 2020, I’m pleased to witness the stage of construction has reached 62% through our reformed project management and follow up processes,” the Premier said after visiting the progress of the construction of the project. PM Abiy said, “Our national clean energy endeavor is unparalleled as we possess the first and third largest hydroelectric dams in Africa, the GERD and Koysha, respectively.”*

*“As we inaugurate the nearby Chebera Elephant Paw Lodge within the Chebera Churchura National Park, the Koysha Dam and its vicinity will also contribute to the tourism potential of the area,” he noted.*

*The Koysha hydroelectric project is the second largest hydropower plant under construction in Ethiopia, next to GERD, and with installed capacity of 1800MW, according to the Office of the Prime Minister.” (OBN, December 22, 2023).*

## **Content Analysis of the above news item**

This OBN report on the Prime Minister's Koysha dam visit, while stating verifiable facts, ethically falters by relying solely on official sources, lacking independent verification. It omits crucial project details, environmental and social impacts, and funding information. The report lacks diverse perspectives from experts, affected communities, and environmental groups. Its promotional tone, emphasizing "unparalleled" progress, undermines objectivity. It lacks broader context on Ethiopia's energy strategy and alternative options. The report violates ethical standards of completeness, independence, impartiality, and fairness, resembling a government press release rather than balanced journalism.

This OBN news story reports on Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's visit to the Koysha hydroelectric power project. While it presents some facts, it falls short in several key areas of journalistic ethics. Finally, this OBN news story falls short of ethical standards due to its over-reliance on official sources, lack of specificity and context, absence of diverse perspectives, promotional tone, and lack of critical analysis.

## **NEWS 17**

*-“The Ethiopian Health Minister, Dr. Lia Tadesse received at her office the Russian delegation led by the Head of the Federal Agency for Minerals Resources of the Russian Federation, Evgeny Petrov (PhD). The two sides discussed, among others, the 100 years’ service being offered by the Dejazmach Balcha Hospital of the Russian Red Cross in Addis Ababa and the activities to be undertaken to transform the institution.*

*Dr. Lia stressed the need to equip Dejazmach Balcha Hospital with advanced medical technologies and modern infrastructures to enhance quality of services in the institution.*

*The Russian delegation, for their part, stated that activities aimed at transforming the 100 year old hospital are being carried out. The delegation affirmed their government’s commitment to supply the hospital with modern medical equipment and infrastructure so as to ensure quality services in the facility.*

*Ways to provide capacity building support for Ethiopian health professionals with short-term and long-term training, advance maternal and child care services and strengthen preventive*

*mechanisms against communicable and non-communicable diseases are also among the issues discussed during the meeting.*

*Dr. Lia further urged the Russian companies to invest in the pharmaceutical sector of Ethiopia thereby contributing to the efforts to boost the health sector in the country. She said the government of Ethiopia has taken supportive measures to create an enabling investment climate in the country and put in place various incentives to attract more foreign investments.”(OBN, December 22, 2023).*

## **Evaluation of News 17**

While evaluating and analyzing the news story about the meeting between Ethiopia's Health Minister Dr. Lia Tadesse and the Russian delegation, we can apply the media code of ethics, which typically includes principles such as accuracy, fairness, impartiality, accountability, and transparency. Here's an analysis based on these ethical standards:

### **Fulfillments:**

- 1. Accuracy and Clarity:** The article presents specific details about the meeting, including the participants (Dr. Lia Tadesse and Evgeny Petrov), the topics discussed (the 100-year service of Dejazmach Balcha Hospital, equipment supply, training for health professionals), and the commitments made by both parties. This specificity contributes to the accuracy of the report.
- 2. Informative Content:** The article provides valuable information regarding health sector improvements in Ethiopia and international collaboration with Russia. It details the discussions around modernizing healthcare services, which is relevant to public interest.
- 3. Positive Framing of Cooperation:** The story highlights a constructive dialogue between Ethiopia and Russia, emphasizing mutual benefits such as improved healthcare infrastructure and training for health professionals. This can promote a sense of optimism and community engagement.
- 4. Public Interest:** By discussing healthcare improvements, the article addresses a topic of significant public interest, especially in a country like Ethiopia where health services are critical to development.

## **Limitations**

- 1. Lack of Diverse Perspectives:** The article predominantly reflects the views of the Ethiopian government and the Russian delegation without including voices from other stakeholders, such as local health professionals, patients, or independent health experts. This lack of diverse perspectives can lead to a one-sided narrative.
- 2. Absence of Critical Analysis:** The report does not critically assess the feasibility of the proposed initiatives or provide context regarding past collaborations or challenges faced in similar projects. For instance, there is no mention of previous outcomes from Russian investments in Ethiopia or any existing issues within the Ethiopian healthcare system that might impact these plans.
- 3. Transparency and Accountability:** While the article mentions commitments made by the Russian delegation, it does not provide information on how these commitments will be monitored or evaluated over time. There is no discussion about accountability measures for both parties involved.
- 4. Potential Conflicts of Interest:** The article does not address potential conflicts of interest or concerns regarding foreign investment in Ethiopia's healthcare sector. Such discussions are important in ensuring that foreign investments align with national health priorities and do not exploit vulnerable populations.
- 5. Lack of Follow-Up Information:** The piece does not indicate how this meeting fits into a broader context or what the next steps will be following this discussion. Providing information on follow-up actions or timelines could enhance the story's depth.

## **NEWS 18**

*-“The Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission announced preparation to begin crafting agenda for the upcoming national dialogue soon.*

*In a press conference held today, the Commission stated that it is identifying participations of the dialogue and undertaking public awareness creation towards its future endeavors. The*

*Commission also indicated that productive consultative meetings were held with members of the diaspora community, the media, activists and representatives of the international community.*

*Participants have been identified from 700 districts in the country except the Tigray and Amhara Regional states, according to the commission which also pointed out that identification of participants will be commenced in these regions too soon.” (OBN, December 22, 2023).*

### **Analysis of News 18**

This OBN report on the National Dialogue Commission's preparations partially fulfills ethical standards by providing accurate details on stakeholder consultations and participant identification. However, it lacks critical analysis, diverse perspectives, and transparency regarding decision-making and accountability. Crucial context, including the Commission's background and the exclusion of Tigray and Amhara regions, is missing. The report also fails to detail follow-up plans, offering an incomplete and potentially biased overview of the dialogue process.

### **NEWS 19**

*-“The National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) has announced today that 15.2 billion Birr worth of humanitarian assistance distributed in three rounds to people who were in need in Ethiopia.*

*Speaking to ENA, National Disaster Risk Management Commissioner Shiferaw Telekemariam said that the assistance has been delivered since July 2023 to the populations that have been affected by drought, conflicts and flooding in parts of Ethiopia. In particular, the extreme weather events are constantly bringing unprecedented new phenomena, he underlined.*

*Acknowledging that climate change is becoming a global problem, the commissioner mentioned that drought related disasters affected nearly 11 million people in Ethiopia last year. Sheferaw explained that the government has distributed close to 250,000 quintals of food assistance to 7.3 million people in the first-round. In addition, 3.7 billion Birr was also provided to these affected populations.*

*Similarly, in its second-round humanitarian supply, the commission distributed about 613,000 million quintals and 4.4 billion Birr, he added. In the third-round of humanitarian operation, some 487,000 quintals of food grains are being distributed by the government and 376,000 quintals provided by partners. The commissioner further explained that 8.6 billion birr worth of food aid and material support is being made available to 6.5 million beneficiaries in this third-round.*

*In these three phases of the humanitarian support, the government of Ethiopia has taken a lion's share by providing 11 billion Birr worth of relief, the commissioner noted.” (OBN, December 20, 2023).*

### **Analysis of News 19**

This OBN report deals with NDRMC's humanitarian aid. Accurately, it details distribution figures and quotes the commissioner, fulfilling public interest and providing contextual climate information. However, it lacks diverse perspectives from NGOs or affected individuals, critical analysis of aid effectiveness, and transparency on monitoring and accountability. The report omits follow-up plans and risks bias by solely presenting the government's view, neglecting potential shortcomings. A significant statistical error ("613,000 million quintals") requires clarification. Essentially, while the report provides factual details, it lacks balance, critical examination, and transparency.

### **NEWS 20**

*-“Speaker of Ethiopian House of Peoples’ Representative, Tadesse Chafo held bilateral discussions with a Djiboutian delegation led by President of the country’s National Council, Dileita Mohamed Dileita. The two sides have exchange views on ways to further elevate their existing long time people to people ties in the political and economic areas. The Speaker on the occasion said Ethiopia has been carrying out various activities aimed at ensuring shared development among countries in the region. Tadesse pointed out that Ethiopia and Djibouti have been connected with different infrastructures including roads, railways, electric supply among other things.*

*He urged members of the parliament of the two countries to exert efforts in order to further bolster their political and economic relations. The two sides have also stressed the need to maximize efforts to ensure peace and security in the regions and integrate the countries with development.*

*A Djiboutian delegation led by president of the country's National Council, Dileita Mohamed Dileita is in Finfinne for a three day official working visit to Ethiopia. The three day visit of the Djiboutian delegation to Ethiopia is believed to further strengthen the existing strategic cooperation between the two counties.” (OBN, December 20, 2023).*

### **Analysis of News 20**

The above OBN news report on Ethiopian-Djiboutian talks accurately details the meeting and its participants, maintaining fairness, impartiality, and transparency. It fulfills public interest by reporting on regional cooperation. However, it lacks depth of analysis on the discussions' implications, diverse perspectives from other stakeholders, and critical engagement with potential challenges. The report omits accountability measures and contextual background on past relations. Essentially, while factually sound, it lacks the critical analysis and diverse viewpoints necessary for comprehensive ethical journalism.

### **NEWS 21**

*-“Minister of Education, Professor Birhanu Nega received a high-level government delegation from Russia to discuss bilateral cooperation on the education sector between the two countries.*

*The Minister along with his team welcomed the delegation and held discussion about the longstanding Ethio-Russia education cooperation and partnership.*

*During the meeting, Professor Birhanu gave detailed overview of Ethiopian education system, structure and its strategic areas. In line with these, he highlighted the fundamental departure of filling gaps to promote the quality of education. Speaking about the massive reforms that the Ministry is undertaking, Birhanu stressed on the ongoing University autonomy and differentiation programs that he hopes highly significant to excel the Ethiopian higher education system.*

*State Minister for the Higher Education Sector, Kora Tushine on his part praised the Russian Government for its remarkable support in the higher education sector. The state minister has also demanded the government of Russia to further strengthen its cooperation and partnership in the Education and Research sector.*

*Meanwhile, Head of International Cooperation and Public Relations of the Ministry of Education of the Russia, Usman Abdul-Azиеvich (PhD) on his part expressed his Ministry's interest to further strengthen Education collaboration with its Ethiopian counterpart.*

*The two parties have agreed to update the existing memorandum of understanding and to step up procedures via diplomatic Chanel. They have also agreed to further strengthen cooperation in Education sector, Ministry of Education indicated.” (OBN, December 20, 2023).*

## **Analysis of News 21**

Accurately, this OBN news report on the Ethiopian-Russian education meeting states the discussions, fulfilling public interest and transparency. However, it lacks depth of analysis on the partnership's implications, diverse perspectives from stakeholders, and critical engagement with potential challenges. Accountability measures and historical context are also missing. While factually accurate, the report lacks the critical analysis and diverse viewpoints necessary for comprehensive ethical journalism.

To critically analyze the news story regarding the meeting between Ethiopian Minister of Education Professor Birhanu Nega and a Russian government delegation, we can evaluate it against major media codes of ethics, including accuracy, fairness, impartiality, transparency, accountability, and public interest. Below is an analysis of how the article aligns with or deviates from these ethical principles:

### **Fulfillments:**

**1. Accuracy:** The article provides factual information about the meeting, including the participants, their roles, and the topics discussed. It accurately reflects the nature of the discussions regarding bilateral cooperation in the education sector.

**2. Public Interest:** The topic is relevant to the public, particularly those interested in education and international relations. The cooperation between Ethiopia and Russia in education could have implications for students and educational institutions in Ethiopia.

**3. Clarity:** The article is generally clear and straightforward, making it easy for readers to understand the main points of the discussion. It outlines the key areas of focus, such as university autonomy and educational reforms.

**4. Transparency:** By identifying key figures involved in the discussions and their statements, the article maintains a level of transparency regarding who is speaking and what is being discussed.

### **Limitations**

**1. Depth of Analysis:** The article lacks deeper analysis or context regarding the significance of the cooperation between Ethiopia and Russia. It would benefit from exploring how this partnership might impact Ethiopian education or what challenges might arise from it. Ethical journalism often includes not just reporting facts but also providing insight into their significance.

**2. Diverse Perspectives:** The article primarily presents the views of Ethiopian officials and does not include perspectives from other stakeholders, such as students, educators, or experts on international education. Including a wider range of viewpoints would enhance fairness and provide a more comprehensive view of the situation.

**3. Critical Engagement:** There is no critical examination of the potential challenges or criticisms related to the partnership with Russia. Ethical journalism encourages questioning and critical thinking about governmental actions and international partnerships.

**4. Accountability:** The article does not address how the agreements made during the meeting will be implemented or monitored. Ethical reporting often includes accountability measures or expectations related to government actions.

**5. Contextualization:** While it mentions ongoing reforms in Ethiopian higher education, there is little background information on previous cooperation with Russia or the historical context of

their educational partnership. Providing this context would help readers understand the current situation better.

## **NEWS 22**

*-“Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has confirmed today that a seedling preparation is underway for next year’s planting season. .In a message published on his social media page, the Prime Minister indicated that his government is investing in the country’s Green Legacy Initiative from year to year. “From year to year we’re invested in our Green Legacy. Seedling preparations underway for next year’s planting season,” PM Abiy noted.*

*It is known that the country has planted over 31 billion tree seedlings under the Green Legacy program since its inception in 2019.” (OBN, December 19, 2023).*

## **Analysis of News 22**

The news story about Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's announcement on the Green Legacy Initiative provides accurate and clear information about the Prime Minister's commitment to environmental sustainability. It highlights specific figures, such as the number of tree seedlings planted since 2019, which lends credibility to the report. The topic is relevant to the public, addressing important issues of climate change and ecological health, and the article maintains transparency by quoting the Prime Minister directly from his social media page. However, the article lacks depth in its analysis of the initiative, failing to explore its success, challenges, or impact on local communities and ecosystems. It predominantly presents the Prime Minister's perspective, missing a variety of viewpoints from environmental experts, local communities, or critics. There is also no critical examination of the initiative's effectiveness, which is a key aspect of ethical journalism that encourages questioning and exploring both positive and negative aspects of government programs. Furthermore, the article does not address how the government plans to monitor or evaluate the initiative's success or ensure accountability. Finally, while it mentions the number of seedlings planted, it lacks contextualization, such as comparing the initiative's scale to similar programs in other countries or providing background on previous years' efforts, which would help readers better understand the significance of the program.

## **NEWS 23**

*-“The House of Peoples’ Representatives approved the appointment of Melatework Hailu as the Chairperson of the National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) during its 9th regular session. It is indicated that Melatework Hailu has been working at NEBE to date.*

*The House approved Melatework as the chairwoman of the National Election Board of Ethiopia by a majority vote with one abstention.*

*Melatework appeared before the parliament and took an oath to carry out the responsibilities entrusted to her with honesty, diligence and efficiency.” (OBN, December 19, 2023).*

## **Analysis of News 23**

The above OBN news story on the appointment of the new chairperson for the National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) fulfills some ethical standards, such as accuracy and relevance, as the basic facts are likely verifiable and the topic is of public interest. However, the report falls short in several areas. It lacks essential context, such as the reason for the appointment, the background and qualifications of Melatework Hailu, and the current challenges facing NEBE. There is also a lack of transparency about the selection process and the criteria used for the appointment. The story relies solely on official sources, failing to include diverse perspectives, such as reactions from opposition parties or insights from election experts. Moreover, there is no critical analysis of the significance of the appointment or its potential implications for future elections. By omitting these elements, the report misses opportunities to provide a more comprehensive, balanced, and objective account, ultimately compromising its fairness, independence, and depth.

## **NEWS 24**

*-“Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, conferred with Commissioner of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Filippo Grandi in Geneva, Switzerland.*

*Participating in the second edition of the Global Refugee Forum in Geneva, Demeke exchanged views with the Commissioner on ways of furthering cooperation with the UN body.*

*Demeke commended Grandi on the success of the High Level Forum and called up on international partners to support Ethiopia, a country hosting over one million refugees.*

*Ethiopia made six more pledges for refugees with particular focus on climate, private sector involvement, and digital connectivity among others. Commissioner Filippo Grandi, on his part, lauded Ethiopia's declaration of six new pledges and reaffirmed his commitment to support their implementation, as per MFA Ethiopia.*

*Demeke also had a productive discussion with Robert Piper, the United Nations Special Adviser on Internally Displaced Persons. Both sides agreed to protect and assist IDPs and further enhance their return to their areas.” (OBN, December 15, 2023).*

#### **Content Analysis of News 24**

The news article about Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen's discussions at the Global Refugee Forum largely meets key journalistic ethical standards. It presents accurate information about the meeting and pledges made, is clear and concise, and highlights a public interest topic—refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). The article also includes appropriate attribution to individuals and organizations involved. It offers balanced reporting with perspectives from both Ethiopian officials and UN representatives. However, it lacks depth in analyzing the implications of Ethiopia's pledges and how they compare to previous commitments. Additionally, it fails to include diverse perspectives, such as those of refugees, local NGOs, or other stakeholders, and does not critically examine Ethiopia's track record or the challenges of implementing these pledges. The article also misses discussing accountability mechanisms for monitoring progress or providing broader context about the refugee situation in Ethiopia. These limitations reduce the overall comprehensiveness and critical engagement necessary for a fully ethical report.

#### **NEWS 25**

*- “President Sahle-Work bid farewell to Ambassador Jean Kamau of Kenya.*

*The President thanked the Ambassador for her valuable contribution in strengthening relations between the two neighboring countries.” (OBN, December 14, 2023).*

### **Analysis of this piece of news**

The OBN news piece reporting on the farewell meeting between the Ethiopian President and the Kenyan Ambassador provides basic factual information, but lacks substance and depth. While it fulfills the basic requirement of accuracy and public interest, the report misses critical context, such as details about the ambassador’s contributions to strengthening Ethiopia-Kenya relations, the duration of her tenure, and the current state of bilateral relations. Additionally, the piece does not address whether a replacement has been appointed. The reliance on official sources, with no independent verification or diverse perspectives, limits the report's comprehensiveness. There is also a lack of original reporting, as the piece merely serves as a brief announcement without any interviews, analysis, or exploration of broader implications. Overall, the article is more of a routine diplomatic update than an informative news story, failing to meet the standards of ethical journalism.

### **NEWS 26**

*-“House of Federation Speaker Agegnehu Teshager said Peace is the only option to enhance the development of Ethiopia and strengthen its multinational unity.*

*The 18th Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Day was celebrated under the theme “Diversity and Equality for National Unity” in Jigjiga today. During the occasion, the Speaker said the day was being celebrated across the country. The day is when nations and nationalities in Ethiopia demonstrate their multi-national colour and diversity to the whole world, he added. He pointed out that the celebration of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Day contributes to strengthening the unity and harmony of Ethiopians. The Speaker noted also that Ethiopia is a rich country of diversity, culture, language and religion. There are yet many historical and cultural heritages that need to be developed through research. According to him, consolidating multi-national federalism is the only option to accommodate diversity among the people, establish trust and peace, and ensure human and democratic rights of citizens. Chief Administrators of Regional States, Finfinne and Dire Dawa Mayors, as well as senior federal*

*and regional officials took part in the celebration that took place in the Somali regional state.”*  
(OBN, December 08, 2023).

### **Analysis of News 26**

The news article about House of Federation Speaker Agegnehu Teshager’s statements on peace, diversity, and national unity in Ethiopia meets key ethical standards, including accuracy, clarity, public interest, attribution, and balanced reporting. It provides direct quotes and context, making it clear and relevant to the public, particularly regarding Ethiopia’s issues of national unity. However, the article lacks depth in analyzing the implications of the speaker’s statements and does not include diverse perspectives from ethnic communities, civil society, or opposition voices. It also misses critical engagement with the government’s approach to multi-national federalism and fails to contextualize recent challenges related to ethnic relations. Additionally, there is no mention of accountability measures for the government’s policies. While the report is accurate and informative, it lacks the comprehensive analysis and scrutiny that would make it a better-rounded piece of ethical journalism.

### **NEWS 27**

*-“A Chinese delegation led by Chairman of the Agricultural and Rural Development Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress of China held a meeting with Deputy Speaker of the Ethiopian House of Peoples Representatives, Lomi Bedho to discuss bilateral issues of mutual concern.*

*During the meeting, Head of the Agricultural and Rural Development Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress, Du Zhao, affirmed China’s commitment to strengthen support to Ethiopia’s ongoing efforts to ensure agricultural productivity. It was stated on the occasion that the bilateral cooperation between Ethiopia and China is gaining momentum particularly in the areas of infrastructure, education and health sector.*

*Deputy House Speaker, Lomi Bedho, for her part, pointed out that China is Ethiopia’s strategic development partner and nation’s commitment to its cooperation with Ethiopia is playing a paramount role in cementing the ties between the two countries.*

*Du Zhao shared China's best practices that enabled his country to transform the agriculture sector and ensure food security, pledging to intensity support to Ethiopia's endeavors to achieve food-self-sufficiency.*

*The two sides also agreed to cement bilateral ties between the two counties through forging parliamentary cooperation.” (OBN, December 01, 2023).*

### **Analysis of News 27**

The OBN news story about a meeting between Chinese and Ethiopian officials provides basic information but falls short in several areas of journalistic ethics. While it likely meets the standard of accuracy, as the facts of the meeting are verifiable, the report lacks depth and specificity. Key details about China's support for Ethiopia's agricultural sector, specific projects in infrastructure, education, and health, and the "best practices" shared for agricultural transformation are missing. The article heavily relies on official sources without independent verification or diverse perspectives, offering only the positive aspects of the bilateral relationship. This results in a promotional tone, resembling a press release, and lacks critical analysis of the potential benefits or challenges of the relationship. Furthermore, the report provides no context about the broader historical or economic ties between China and Ethiopia. In sum, while the article covers the basics, its lack of depth, independent sources, and balanced perspectives undermines its journalistic integrity.

### **NEWS 28**

*-“Ethiopia has officially kicked off the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence in attendance of senior government officials including President Sahle-Work Zewde.*

*Ethiopia has organized the campaign against gender-based violence for the 18th time under the theme “Whenever, Wherever, In any situation, Don't be silent on Gender-Based Violence,” In her remarks at the launch of the campaign, President Sahle-Work called on all stakeholders to denounce gender-based violence, and to contribute their part in strengthening preventive mechanisms.*

*The campaign aims to raise the public awareness towards strengthening the ongoing prevention efforts to end gender-based violence, harnessing legal mechanisms to tackle the issue, and enhancing rehabilitation services for victims, Ministry of Women and Social Affairs stated so far.”(OBN, December 01, 2023).*

### **Analysis of News 28**

The news article covering the launch of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence in Ethiopia meets key journalistic standards like accuracy, public interest, clarity, and attribution. It provides essential details about the campaign and its involvement with senior government officials, including President Sahle-Work Zewde. However, the article lacks depth, as it doesn't explore the prevalence of gender-based violence in Ethiopia or provide context on the campaign's role within broader efforts to combat this issue. It also misses diverse perspectives from civil society, activists, or survivors, and lacks critical engagement with the government's track record or the effectiveness of past campaigns. Additionally, the article could benefit from contextualizing the cultural factors behind gender-based violence and providing specific calls to action for readers to support the campaign. While informative, the article would be stronger with more comprehensive analysis and broader viewpoints.

### **NEWS 29**

*-“President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Sahlework Zawde said at the 3rd AU Women Conference on positive Masculinity suppressing gender-based violence in the African continent is an historic responsibility. The conference was held on November 27 and 28, 2023, in Pretoria, South Africa. Convened under the theme “Consolidating Commitments towards the African Union Convention on Ending Violence against Women and Girls”, the conference was attended by the FDRE President Sahle-Work Zewde, the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, former leaders of various African countries, and ministers from across the continent.*

*Addressing the Conference, President Sahle-Work commended South Africa's strides to stop the multifaceted violence faced by women and girls, as well as the diligent efforts being made in some other African countries that can be a benchmark for others. The president added that it is a*

*historic responsibility to stop sexual and gender-based violence in Africa. The Kinshasa Declaration, the Dakar Call to Action and various consultation conferences will be a great potential and resource for the convention to be prepared by AU on GBV and related issues, in that regard.*

*She thanked those who took the commitment and responsibility for this process. The President emphasized that the work requires joint efforts and that a change in thinking and attitude is required from all stakeholders at all levels.*

*It is stated that the 3rd Men's Conference provides an opportunity to consolidate bold Continental efforts that Heads of State and other sectors have taken towards Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) in Africa including, among others, accountability for the implementation of the Kinshasa Declaration, the Dakar Call to Action and relevant AU Assembly decisions. It is also mentioned that civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations of African countries are expected to work together on the matter.” (OBN, November 29, 2023).*

## **Analysis of News 29**

The OBN news story on President Sahle-Work Zewde's participation in the 3rd AU Women Conference provides basic information about the event but falls short on several journalistic standards. While it meets accuracy and relevance by reporting the President's attendance and the conference theme, it lacks depth and specificity. The report doesn't detail the conference's outcomes, key discussions, or the contents of important documents like the Kinshasa Declaration and Dakar Call to Action. It heavily relies on official sources, offering no independent verification or diverse perspectives from other attendees or experts. Additionally, the report fails to critically examine the effectiveness of past efforts on gender-based violence (GBV) or analyze potential obstacles in implementing the conference's recommendations. Lacking broader context about GBV's prevalence in Africa and the legal frameworks addressing it, the article remains incomplete and misses a more comprehensive, objective view.

## **NEWS 30**

*-“The House of Peoples Representatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia received a delegation of the government of Republic of Korea on Friday.*

*The delegation of the Republic of Korea led by Lee Hoseok held a meeting with the Deputy Government Whip of the Ethiopian parliament on ways of exploring potential areas of cooperation.*

*The meeting emphasized the significance of capacity building cooperation between the two sides to capacitate members of the Ethiopian parliament to help them contribute to the betterment of overall activities in the country. The two sides proposed a joint platform that would help share Republic of Korea’s experiences in its economic growth and development paths with Ethiopia.”* (OBN, November 24, 2023).

### **Analysis of News 30**

The OBN news story on the meeting between Ethiopian and South Korean officials provides basic details but lacks depth and context. While the meeting itself is verifiable and of public interest, the report is vague about the specific areas of cooperation discussed, such as "capacity building," and doesn't clarify what programs or initiatives are being considered. There is no mention of next steps or follow-up actions. The article relies entirely on official sources, offering no independent verification or diverse perspectives, such as input from experts or stakeholders in either country. Additionally, it misses context on the broader relationship between Ethiopia and South Korea, including historical ties and current economic interactions. As a result, the story lacks the depth and analysis needed for a more comprehensive understanding.

## **NEWS 31**

*-“President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Sahle-Work Zewde is participating in the 3rd Luanda Biennale – Pan-African Forum for Culture of Peace in Angola*

*The event is organized by the African Union and the Government of the Republic of Angola (the National Biennale Management Office) in partnership with the United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).*

*The “Pan-African Forum for the Culture of Peace” aims to promote the prevention of violence and conflict resolution, by encouraging cultural exchanges in Africa and dialogue between generations. It is held every two years in Luanda, the capital city of Angola.*

*President Sahle-Work Zewde held a bilateral meeting with her Angolan counterpart, João Lourenço, on Wednesday.*

*President Sahle-Work Zewde told the press that the courtesy meeting served to address some issues, which include the strengthening of bilateral relations.*

*The President added that the two countries have a strong relationship at various levels since the beginning of the liberation struggle for Angola’s independence.” (OBN, November 24, 2023).*

### **Analysis of News 31**

The news story about President Sahle-Work Zewde's participation in the Pan-African Forum for the Culture of Peace meets key ethical standards, such as accuracy, clarity, attribution, and balanced reporting. It provides factual information about the event, offers context, and attributes statements directly to the president. However, it lacks depth and critical analysis, particularly regarding the implications of the discussions and their impact on regional stability. The report also relies too heavily on the president's perspective, without including diverse sources or critical viewpoints, which could provide a more comprehensive and balanced view. Furthermore, the article does not mention the outcomes or future implications of the bilateral meetings. Enhancing these aspects would improve the report's adherence to journalistic ethics and provide more nuanced public information.

### **NEWS 32**

*-“Finance Minister Ahmed Shidie said that Ethiopia has registered better achievements in controlling budget deficit and debt payment restructuring during the past three months of the Ethiopian fiscal year.*

*The Council of Ministers has been conducting a meeting to review the first quarter year performance in the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.*

*Finance Minister Ahmed Shide stated that better achievements have also been registered in key macro-economic indicators. As to him, Ethiopia has signed cooperation agreements with several development partners to work together in various development activities. The agreements signed with partners are instrumental in accelerating the development programs being carried out by the government to benefit the people and the country, the minister added. Regarding debt suspension, the country has reached an agreement with the Government of China. With regard to the annual budget subsidies earmarked to regional states, they have been fully disbursed during the first quarter. Ahmed further stated that the government has been working to properly control the budget deficit through treasury bills and market to fill the deficit instead of taking loans from the National Bank. This would play a big role in easing inflation by controlling the money circulation in the market, he pointed out.*

*Planning and Development Minister, Fitsum Assefa said on her part that several measures have been taken to enable the people benefit from the macroeconomic achievements registered over the past years. The government has been taking steps to ease the burden of inflation on citizens with low income by exempting taxes on basic consumer goods, she stated. In this regard, Fitsum pointed out that the government has forgone 15 billion Birr it annually obtains from taxation for over the past three years in order to subsidize low income citizens.” (OBN, November 23, 2023).*

### **Analysis of News 32**

This OBN report accurately relays government economic statements, providing clarity and attribution. However, it lacks critical analysis of the measures' effectiveness, diverse perspectives beyond official sources, and balanced coverage of potential challenges. The report omits public sentiment, expert opinions, and contextual background on Ethiopia's economic situation. While factually accurate, it lacks the depth, balance, and context necessary for comprehensive ethical journalism.

### **NEWS 33**

*-“Minister of Agriculture doctor Girma Amante says some 800,000 hectares of farmland has already been covered with wheat seeds as part of the current Ethiopian fiscal year summer irrigation development activities,*

*The target to cultivate during this year's summer wheat cultivation is 3 million hectares, it was indicated. The minister disclosed this at a meeting being held to review the government's three month performance in the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.*

*The meeting has reviewed the activities carried out in Meher farming season and irrigation development. On the occasion, Minister of Agriculture, Girma Amenti stated the nation has planned to cultivate 3 million hectares of farmland during this year's summer wheat cultivation activities to harvest 117 million quintals.*

*He added that some 800, 000 hectares have already been covered with wheat seeds over the past three months. Preparations for Belg and Meher farming activities are underway; Girma said citing the extensive efforts being carried out to purchase and transport agricultural inputs including fertilizers at the appropriate time.*

*According to the Minister, the purchase of more than 19 million quintals of fertilizer has been underway out of the 23 million quintals required for the upcoming farming season. He said the purchase of 13 million quintals has already been made indicating that some 730,000 quintals have arrived in the country.*

*He has also mentioned about the reform measures taken in fertilizer purchase process which has brought significant results as the nation was able to save 20 billion Birr this year compared to the purchase made last year. Girma further disclosed that during the previous Ethiopian fiscal year 13.9 million quintals of fertilizer was purchased with a cost of 1.59 billion USD.*

*However, 19.4 million quintals of fertilizer was purchased with 930 million USD in the current fiscal year. Minister of Lowlands and Irrigation, Aisha Mohammed said for her part that the ministry has identified 10 million hectares of land that could be developed through irrigation.*

*According to her, the farmland being developed through irrigation in the country has increased by three fold over the past four years." (OBN, November 22, 2023).*

### **Analysis of the above news (NEWS 33)**

The news story about the Ethiopian Minister of Agriculture's statements on wheat cultivation and irrigation development meets several ethical standards, such as accuracy, attribution, clarity, and

relevance. It provides specific figures and clear statements from government officials, which enhances transparency and accessibility.

However, the article misses important ethical principles. It lacks depth and context, such as the challenges faced by farmers, the impact of climate change, and how these efforts fit into Ethiopia's broader food security strategy. The story also relies heavily on government sources, without including perspectives from farmers, experts, or opposition parties, which would offer a more balanced view. Additionally, there is no critical analysis of the ministers' claims or past agricultural policies, and the report's tone is overly positive without addressing any potential shortcomings. Lastly, it lacks follow-up information on how these initiatives are being received by the public or how they compare to previous efforts.

In summary, while the report provides factual details, it would benefit from greater depth, diverse perspectives, and critical analysis to meet the full ethical standards of journalism.

### **NEWS 34**

*-“Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) held a bilateral discussion with Cuba’s Vice President, Salvador Valdez Mesa. The two sides explored strengthened cooperation in the medical sector, tourism services, education and sugar industries.*

*Recall that the Vice President of the Republic of Cuba, Salvador Valdés Mesa arrived in Bole International Airport for a working visit on Sunday 19 November.” (OBN, November 22, 2023).*

### **Analysis of News 34**

When analyzing the provided news stories based on media codes of ethics, we can identify several principles that are both fulfilled and lacking in the reporting. Here's a breakdown for each news item:

#### **Ethical Principles Fulfilled:**

**1. Accuracy:** The report accurately states the key participants in the meeting and the topics discussed, such as cooperation in the medical sector, tourism, education, and sugar industries. This precision is essential for reliable reporting.

**2. Attribution:** The article attributes information to credible sources, including the Prime Minister's office and mentions specific individuals involved in the discussion, which enhances accountability.

**3. Relevance:** The content is relevant to readers interested in international relations and Ethiopia's diplomatic efforts, particularly in strengthening ties with Cuba.

**4. Clarity:** The language used is clear and straightforward, making it easy for readers to understand the main points of the bilateral discussion.

#### **Ethical Principles Lacking:**

**1. Depth and Context:** The report lacks context regarding the significance of the discussions. It does not provide background information on the current state of Ethiopia-Cuba relations or the potential impact of this cooperation on either country's economy or society.

**2. Diversity of Sources:** The story primarily relies on official statements without including perspectives from experts, analysts, or civil society regarding the implications of this cooperation.

**3. Critical Analysis:** There is no critical perspective offered on the meeting or its outcomes. A more analytical approach could assess whether these discussions are likely to lead to tangible results or if they have been successful in the past.

**4. Public Interest:** The article does not address how these discussions will affect ordinary citizens in Ethiopia or Cuba, missing an opportunity to connect government actions with public interests.

#### **News 35**

*-“The Council of Ministers has started evaluating 100 days performance of the first quarter review of the Ethiopian Fiscal Year 2016 today.*

*The performance review is being conducted in the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, according to the Office of the Prime Minister.*

*The premier wrote on his Facebook, "Together with the Council of Ministers, today we begin the first quarter review of the current Ethiopian year 2016" ."* (OBN, November 21, 2023).

#### **Analysis of News 35**

### **Ethical Principles Fulfilled:**

- 1. Accuracy:** The report provides specific details about the evaluation of the 100-day performance review, including who is involved (the Council of Ministers and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed) and when it is taking place.
- 2. Attribution:** The information is attributed to the Office of the Prime Minister and includes a direct quote from Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Facebook post, which adds credibility to the report.
- 3. Clarity:** The language is clear and concise, effectively communicating what is happening in a straightforward manner.
- 4. Relevance:** The story is relevant to those interested in government accountability and performance reviews, particularly in the context of Ethiopian governance.

### **Ethical Principles Lacking:**

- 1. Depth and Context:** Similar to the previous news piece, this report lacks depth. It does not provide any context about what specific metrics are being evaluated or how this performance review fits into broader governmental goals or challenges.
- 2. Diversity of Sources:** The article relies heavily on official statements without including opinions from opposition parties, independent analysts, or civil society groups that could provide a more balanced perspective on government performance.
- 3. Critical Analysis:** There is no critical examination of past performance reviews or outcomes from previous evaluations. Including such analysis would help readers gauge the effectiveness of government initiatives over time.
- 4. Public Engagement:** The article does not explore how citizens perceive this evaluation process or its importance for transparency and accountability, which would enhance public interest and engagement with the topic.

The Oromia Broadcasting Network mainly focuses on regional issues in its news coverage as supposed to give extensive coverage for those items and happenings in line with its main objective and mission.

### **Examples of such news items are:**

#### **NEWS 36**

*-“Improved seeds are being developed on the 5000 hectares of land in West Hararge zone of the Oromia State.*

*Zonal Agriculture office head Bushra Adam tells the OBN that various activities are being carried out with stake holders to ensure seeds’ quality. The Oromia Agency for Monitoring and Agricultural inputs Chiro Branch disclosed that it has been working to provide farmers with the improved seeds To this end, the Agency is preparing sleeted seeds on ten thousand hectares of land, agency’s branch vice director Masaratuu Lammaa. According to Meseretu currently improved seeds with required quality are being developed on 17 hectares of land by the Agency.*

*An improved seed is believed to contribute 30%- 50% shares towards increasing agricultural productivity.” (OBN February, 14, 2024).*

#### **Analysis of News 36**

The news story about improved seed development in Oromia State meets several ethical standards, including accuracy, attribution, clarity, and relevance. It provides specific details on the land area being used and names credible sources, enhancing credibility and transparency. The language is straightforward, making it accessible to readers interested in agriculture and economic development.

However, the report lacks depth and context, as it doesn't explain the significance of the initiative or its alignment with broader agricultural policies. It also lacks diverse sources, relying mainly on government officials and omitting perspectives from farmers, experts, or independent analysts. The article does not critically assess potential challenges or the impact on farmers, and it misses an exploration of public engagement. Additionally, the positive tone of the report, solely based on official sources, raises concerns about potential bias and the omission of limitations or criticisms.

In summary, the article provides factual information but would benefit from greater context, diverse viewpoints, and a more critical analysis to ensure a well-rounded, ethical report.

In general, when it is evaluated against media codes of ethics, the news story about development of improved seed reveals both strengths and weakness in its reporting,

### **NEWS 37**

*-“Higher government officials went to South west Ethiopia region to hold discussion with the regional public. It was stated that the discussion focuses on the current affairs particularly, restoring peace and stability in the region.*

*The discussion will be held in 20 towns of the region. Piresident of the Somali regional state Mustafe Mohammed, Industry Minister Melaku Allebel will lead the discussion scheduled to take place in Bonga town.*

*Similarly president of the South Ethiopia Tilahun Kebede and vice president of Benshangul Gumuz region Getahun Abdiisaa are also assigned to lead the discussion to be held in Mizan Aman which is one of the regional capitals.*

*Up on their arrival to Bonga and Mizan Aman towns the officials have been warmly welcomed*

### **Analysis of News 37**

The news story about high-level government officials visiting Southwest Ethiopia to discuss peace and stability fulfills several ethical principles. It provides accurate details, such as the locations of the discussions and the names of key officials, which enhances credibility. The language is clear, making the report accessible, and the topic is highly relevant to current affairs in Ethiopia, addressing ongoing issues related to peace and stability. The attribution of information to specific officials further establishes transparency and accountability.

However, the report lacks depth and context, as it doesn't explain the challenges in the region or provide historical background. It relies solely on government sources, which limits the diversity of perspectives and may present a biased view. There is no critical analysis of the effectiveness of previous peace efforts or any exploration of local community sentiments. The positive tone, driven by government statements, raises concerns about impartiality, as opposing views or criticisms from the community are not included.

In summary, the report provides basic information but could be improved with more context, diverse viewpoints, and critical analysis for a more balanced and comprehensive story.

## NEWS 38

*-“Foreign Affairs Minister Ambassador Taye Askesellassie has conferred with Portuguese Foreign Minister Ja’o Gomez and Central African Republic Counterpart Silvi Bayipo.*

*The discussion has focused on further strengthening bilateral and diplomatic relations among the three countries. During the discussion Ambassador Taye expressed Ethiopia’s keen interest to work with the Portuguese government in the areas of tourism, education, trade and investment.” (OBN, February 14, 2024)*

### **Analysis of News 38**

Evaluating the provided news excerpt about Foreign Affairs Minister Ambassador Taye Askesellassie's discussions with his counterparts from Portugal and the Central African Republic through the lens of media codes of ethics reveals several strengths and weaknesses in its reporting. Here’s a detailed assessment:

#### **Ethical Principles Fulfilled:**

- 1. Accuracy:** The article accurately identifies the individuals involved in the discussions and their respective positions, which is essential for establishing credibility.
- 2. Clarity:** The language used is straightforward and easy to understand, effectively communicating the key points of the diplomatic discussions.
- 3. Relevance:** The topic is relevant to readers interested in international relations, particularly Ethiopia's diplomatic efforts and partnerships with other countries.
- 4. Attribution:** The report attributes the information to specific officials (Ambassador Taye and his counterparts), which enhances the credibility of the reporting.

#### **Ethical Principles Lacking:**

- 1. Depth and Context:** The article lacks context regarding the significance of these discussions. It would be beneficial to provide background information about the current state of relations

between Ethiopia, Portugal, and the Central African Republic, as well as any historical context that may inform the discussions.

**2. Diversity of Sources:** The report relies solely on statements from Ambassador Taye without including perspectives from the Portuguese or Central African Republic officials or any independent analysis. Including a broader range of voices would provide a more balanced view of the discussions.

**3. Critical Analysis:** The article does not critically examine the implications of the discussions or what specific actions might result from them. It could explore potential challenges or opportunities that may arise from strengthening bilateral relations in tourism, education, trade, and investment.

**4. Potential Bias:** The report presents a positive view of the discussions but does not address any dissenting opinions or concerns related to Ethiopia's foreign relations. Acknowledging differing viewpoints would enhance the objectivity of the reporting.

**5. Follow-Up Information:** The article does not indicate whether there will be any follow-up actions or meetings resulting from this discussion, nor does it provide information on how these discussions will be communicated to the public or stakeholders in Ethiopia.

## NEWS 39

*- "The Oromia Agriculture Bureau announces that 3.5 billion seedlings have been prepared so far for this year's Green Legacy program. The Ministry also discloses that it has planned to produce 5.5 billion seedlings. According to Vice Head of the Oromia Agriculture Bureau Elias Kedir due attention has been given to plant fruit and vegetable seedlings in this year's Green Legacy program. Unlike past year, the seedling is mainly planted in rainy areas and dry areas as well, the Bureau unveiled. Recognizing the benefit of planting trees and fruits, the community is actively participating in the green legacy endeavors the regional Agriculture Bureau has noticed.*

*The Bureau announced that the activities related to preparing seedlings to be planted as part of the nation's Green Legacy program have been carried out in all zones of the region.*

*It has been learnt from the Bureau that the regional government is working to realize the plan of the Green Legacy set for 2016 E.C.” (OBN, February, 14, 2024).*

### **Analysis of News 39**

This OBN report on the Oromia Agriculture Bureau's Green Legacy announcement is timely and clear, highlighting community involvement and attributing information to credible sources. However, it lacks crucial context about the program's history and goals, detailed impact assessments, and diverse perspectives beyond the Bureau's official. Grammatical errors detract from professionalism. The report omits specifics on achieving the 5.5 billion seedling goal and lacks follow-up information, hindering transparency. While reporting on a relevant initiative, it needs more depth, balance, and attention to detail to meet higher journalistic standards.

### **NEWS 40**

*-“Surveys indicate that 6.6 million hectares of land can be developed through irrigation in Oromia Region. Regional president Shimellis Abdiisaa said the research has identified the stated volume of land could be developed using the irrigation scheme. In his message through social media page the president further indicated that there is also additional one million hectares of land to be developed by irrigation. The president remarked that the efforts being made so far to increase the coverage of irrigation in the region mainly depend on pumping and other traditional ways. This has to be improved so as to make the irrigation development sustainable, shimalis said, adding the regional government has been working to expand necessary infrastructure that would enhance irrigation development. Wheat farm being developed through irrigation in udaya Biilaa district of the East wellega zone of Oromia region visited by various stakeholders.*

*The farmers who have been developing the irrigation wheat under cluster express their hope to collect 35-40 quintals of produce per hectare. Head of the Gudeya Biilaa Agriculture Office Misganu Dima said that over 6300 hectares of land is being developed protected through the irrigation.*

*Head of the East Wellega zone Agriculture Office Asfaw Hambissa for his part asserted that more than 100 thousand hectares of land is being developed in irrigation at zonal level and it is estimated to collect four million quintals yields.” (OBN, February, 13, 2024).*

## **Analysis of News 40**

Evaluating the provided news story in light of media code of ethics and qualitative content analysis involves assessing its adherence to ethical standards, its clarity, accuracy, balance, and overall quality of content. Here’s a breakdown of the evaluation:

### **Adherence to Media Code of Ethics:**

**1. Accuracy and Truthfulness:** The report cites specific figures regarding land that can be developed through irrigation (6.6 million hectares and an additional 1 million hectares), as well as expected yields (35-40 quintals per hectare). However, the accuracy of these figures should be verified against credible sources or studies to ensure that they are not misleading.

**2. Attribution and Transparency:** The information is attributed to several officials, including the regional president and heads of agricultural offices, which adds credibility to the report. However, it would be beneficial to include references to the original surveys or research studies mentioned, allowing readers to verify the claims independently.

**3. Balance and Fairness:** The article primarily presents information from government officials and does not include perspectives from farmers, environmentalists, or critics of the irrigation schemes. Including diverse viewpoints would enhance the balance and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the situation.

**4. Public Interest:** The report addresses a significant issue regarding irrigation development in Oromia, which is relevant to local farmers and stakeholders. This aligns with the ethical obligation of media to serve the public interest.

**5. Avoiding Harm:** There is no indication that the report could cause harm; however, it is essential for media to consider the implications of promoting large-scale irrigation projects without discussing potential environmental impacts or social consequences.

## NEWS 41

- *“People who have been organized under cooperative and engaged in industrial activities in Mattuu town of the Ilubabor zone said they are facing problem of place for sale and market network although they are producing better.*

*They urged the government to solve the problem so that they will be able to benefit from their produce as required.*

*The compatriots who have been producing metal products through traditional method are supplying their products to the surrounding community.*

*The attitude of the nearby community towards this traditional profession is currently getting better compared to that of previous days, according to members of the association.*

*They said their capital has currently reached 500 thousand and they have been leading their life based on this work. Head of the Mattu town administration job creation and skill office Kasahun Gudeta indicated that 15 associations engaged in metal works are currently operating in the town.*

*He also asserted that efforts are being underway to solve the problem mentioned by the members of the Association.” (OBN, February, 13, 2024).*

## Analysis of News 41

The news report follows key media ethics principles, including:

- **Accuracy and Fairness:** It provides factual details on the challenges faced by metalworking cooperatives in Mattuu, like limited market access and space, while highlighting a positive shift in community attitudes toward their profession.
- **Impartiality:** The report is objective, presenting the situation without bias, allowing readers to form their own opinions.
- **Humanity:** It emphasizes the human aspect by showcasing the struggles and efforts of the cooperatives, along with their positive community impact.
- **Accountability:** The report includes a government official’s statement acknowledging the challenges and ongoing efforts to address them.

Improvements could include:

- **More Context:** Offering details on the types of metal products, market size, and government initiatives supporting the cooperatives.
- **Diverse Perspectives:** Including views from other stakeholders like officials, market intermediaries, and consumers for a fuller understanding.
- **Exploring Solutions:** Investigating potential solutions, such as government support for market development, training, and technology access.

## **NEWS 42**

*-“Foreign Affairs state Minister Ambassador Misganu Arga said the government of Ethiopia is working relentlessly to implement the Pretoria peace agreement that was signed between the federal government of Ethiopia and the Tigray state.*

*Ambassador Misganuu Argaa stated the matter during his discussion with Germany parliament member at the United Nations Monicha giratars, international organizations and committee for prevention of civil conflicts.*

*It was stated during the discussion that Ethiopia and Germany have a long standing diplomatic and brotherly relationship, adding they will work to further enhance their political and and economic ties.” (OBN, February, 13, 2024).*

## **Analysis of News 42**

This news analysis highlights that News 42 demonstrates accuracy and fairness by directly quoting the Ethiopian official and avoiding bias. However, it suffers from a lack of detail, context, and diverse perspectives. Specifically, it misses crucial information about the specifics of the discussion, the challenges to the peace agreement's implementation, and other viewpoints beyond the official statement.

This limitation raises concerns about independence and responsibility, as the report's incompleteness could potentially mislead readers.

## NEWS 43

*-“Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed says the aspiration of prosperity that Ethiopia has been embarking on would be realized within a short period of time if the nation exploits and develops its potential resources. The prime Minister came with this remark while visiting development works carried out in Somali region. During the visit Doctor Abiy has also inaugurated airport station constructed in Gode town of the Somali region. According to the prime Minister over 10 million hectares land in the region is arable land (suitable for agriculture). The premier described activities carried out in the areas of development and peace in the region could exemplary for other regions and entitled to be transferred to the coming generation.” (OBN, February, 12, 2024).*

### Analysis of News 43

The news report adheres to some journalistic ethics principles, such as:

- ✓ **Accuracy:** It clearly identifies the source of the information (Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed) and the context (visit to Somali region).
- ✓ **Fairness:** It presents the Prime Minister's statement without overt bias.

However, it falls short in several areas including:

- **Lack of Context:** The report provides limited context for the Prime Minister's statements. For example:
  - What specific development works were carried out in the Somali region?
  - What are the specific challenges to exploiting the region's potential resources?
  - What are the specific plans for developing the 10 million hectares of arable land?
- **Lack of Independent Verification:** The report relies solely on the Prime Minister's statements. Independent verification of the claims made about development progress and the potential of the region is crucial for journalistic integrity.

- **Potential for Bias:** While the report avoids overt bias, the presentation of the Prime Minister's optimistic statements without critical examination or counterpoints can create an unbalanced and potentially biased narrative.
- **Lack of Diverse Perspectives:** The report only presents the perspective of the Prime Minister. Including perspectives from local residents, experts in agriculture and development, and potentially opposition figures would provide a more balanced and nuanced understanding of the situation.

### **Key Ethical Concerns:**

- ❖ **Independence:** Journalists should strive for independence from government sources and avoid becoming mere mouthpieces for official narratives.
- ❖ **Objectivity:** While complete objectivity may be an unattainable ideal, journalists should strive to present information fairly and accurately, considering all relevant perspectives.
- ❖ **Accountability:** Journalists have a responsibility to verify information and present it in a way that allows the public to make informed judgments.

### **NEWS 44**

*-“Pastoralists of Yaballoo district of the Borana zone said they are benefiting from irrigation using Qadaallee water. The pastoralists say that they have been developing various crops using irrigation and have started to benefit from it as a result.*

*Coordinator of the Rural Cluster with rank of Vice President Abdurahman Abdela along with his team has paid a visit to various crops developed and being developed through irrigation in Yaballoo and its environs.*

*Pastoralists of the zone who are engaged in irrigation development say they are hopeful to collect or harvest better yield from maize and vegetables they have been producing. They thanked the government to have facilitated a conducive environment for irrigation development in their surroundings.*

This is news produced by the OBN Reporter in Borana Zone. He produced the news in Afaan Oromoo though I have translated it for the purpose of my study.

#### **Analysis of News 44**

This news story adheres to some core principles of journalistic ethics, such as:

- **Accuracy:** The news clearly identifies the source of the information (pastoralists of Yaballoo district) and the context (irrigation development using Qadaallee water).
- **Fairness:** The report presents the positive impact of irrigation development on the lives of pastoralists without overt bias.

However, it falls short in several areas:

- **Lack of Context:** The report provides limited context for the irrigation project.

For example:

-What are the specific challenges faced by pastoralists before the introduction of irrigation?

-What is the source of funding for the irrigation project?

-What are the environmental and social impacts of the project?

- **Lack of Independent Verification:** The report relies solely on the statements of the pastoralists and the government official. Independent verification of the claims made about the success of the irrigation project is crucial for journalistic integrity.
- **Limited Perspectives:** The report only presents the perspectives of the pastoralists and the government official. Including perspectives from other stakeholders, such as environmental experts, local community leaders, and potentially those who may have been negatively impacted by the project, would provide a more balanced and nuanced understanding of the situation.

- **Potential for Bias:** While the report avoids overt bias, the presentation of positive statements from beneficiaries without critical examination or counterpoints can create an unbalanced and potentially biased narrative.

### **Key Ethical Concerns:**

- **Independence:** Journalists should strive for independence from government sources and avoid becoming mere mouthpieces for official narratives.
- **Objectivity:** While complete objectivity may be an unattainable ideal, journalists should strive to present information fairly and accurately, considering all relevant perspectives.
- **Accountability:** Journalists have a responsibility to verify information and present it in a way that allows the public to make informed judgments.

### **NEWS 45**

*-“Oromia Agriculture Bureau announces that wheat is being developed through irrigation on 2.8 million hectares of land this year.*

*Head of the Oromia Agriculture Bureau Getu Gemechu paid a visit to wheat farm being developed in irrigation in Gachi district of the Bunno Bedelle zone.*

*Vice Administrator of the Zone Girma Fikadu told the gathering that irrigation wheat is being produced on 100 thousand and 28 hectares of land in Bunno Bedelle zone out of which over five million quintals of produce is expected to be harvested. The wheat being developed through irrigation has created job opportunity for the nearby youths, Girma added,*

*Farmers who have been engaged in developing wheat using irrigation express hope to harvest better yields and say they have been taking care of their farm to this end.*

*The Oromia region set a plan to develop wheat through irrigation on 2.6 million hectares of land and has managed to develop it on 2.8 hectares of land so far, surpassing its target according to Head of Regional Agriculture Bureau Getu Gemechu. According to him he expects to harvest more than 100 million and 700 thousand quintals of wheat produce.” (OBN, February 12, 2024)).*

## Analysis of News 45

The news report on the irrigation wheat development project meets some key ethical principles but also has notable gaps. It adheres to the principle of **accuracy** by clearly identifying sources, including the Head of the Oromia Agriculture Bureau and the Vice Administrator of the Bunno Bedelle zone. The report also provides specific figures, such as the 2.8 million hectares under irrigation and the expected wheat yield of over 100 million quintals, ensuring the information is factual. In terms of **fairness**, the report presents the progress of the irrigation project and the expected outcomes without bias, including a statement from farmers expressing hope for a successful harvest.

However, the report misses several ethical principles. There is a **lack of context** surrounding the irrigation project, such as the challenges faced by farmers, the sources of irrigation water, the environmental and social impacts, and the long-term sustainability of this agriculture model. Additionally, the report lacks **independent verification** of the claims made, relying heavily on government sources without cross-checking facts or including third-party assessments. The absence of diverse **perspectives** is another issue; the report primarily includes statements from government officials and farmers involved in the project, but it lacks input from environmental experts and local communities who might be affected, especially those whose land or water resources could be impacted by the project.

Furthermore, while the report does not express overt bias, the inclusion of positive statements from government officials and farmers without critical examination or counterpoints could create an unbalanced narrative. Key ethical concerns arise around **independence**, as journalists should avoid becoming mere mouthpieces for government sources. **Objectivity** remains a challenge, as presenting only one side of the story does not provide a fully accurate picture. Finally, **accountability** is crucial; journalists must verify information to ensure the public can make informed decisions about the project and its broader implications.

## NEWS 46

*-“Leaders from different regions who have paid a visit to various development and invest activities being carried out in Arsi zone of the Oromia regional state such achievement could be exemplary to other regions of the country. Cilaloo Food Complex and agriculture developments are some of the main activities visited by the leaders drawn from the different regions.*

*Mayor of the Assela Town Simee Tsegaye told the participants that different interventions are being undertaken to further develop the Town, He also urges various stakeholders to support the effort underway in this regard.*

*Speaking on the occasion, zonal Chief Administrator Ibrahima Kedir said the Arsi community who is well known for its beautiful culture and development, should also develop culture of saving.*

*President of the Benshangul Gumuz Ashadli Hasan for his part described the zone as the hub of the famous Athlets, and also source of food security.*

*Head of the Oromia Investment Bureau Ahmed Idris noted that efforts need to be exerted to scale up such experience elsewhere in the country so as to strengthen food security of the citizens.”*  
(OBN, February, 12, 2024).

## **Analysis of News 46**

### **Ethical Principles Met:**

- ✓ **Accuracy:** The report clearly identifies the sources of information (leaders from different regions, Mayor of Assela Town, Zonal Chief Administrator, President of Benshangul Gumuz, and Head of the Oromia Investment Bureau).
- ✓ **Fairness:** The report generally presents the information without overt bias, objectively stating the development activities in the Arsi zone and the positive remarks from the visiting leaders.

### **Ethical Principles Missed:**

#### **Lack of Context:**

-The report provides limited context for the development activities in the Arsi zone. For example:

-What specific development projects were visited?

-What are the challenges faced by the Arsi zone in achieving these developments?

-What are the specific plans for scaling up successful initiatives to other parts of the country?

#### **Lack of Independent Verification:**

The report relies heavily on the statements of government officials and visiting leaders. Independent verification of the claims made about the extent and impact of the development activities is crucial for journalistic integrity.

### **Limited Perspectives:**

The report primarily presents the perspectives of government officials and visiting leaders. The report has not included perspectives from local residents, farmers and other beneficiaries of the development projects and environmental experts as well.

### **Potential for Bias:**

While the report avoids overt bias, the presentation of positive statements from government officials and visiting leaders without critical examination or counterpoints can create an unbalanced and potentially biased narrative. Over all, the report focuses heavily on praising the achievements in the Arsi zone, which could create the impression of undue government propaganda.

### **Key Ethical Concerns:**

**Independence:** Journalists should strive for independence from government sources and avoid becoming mere mouthpieces for official narratives.

**Objectivity:** While complete objectivity may be an unattainable ideal, journalists should strive to present information fairly and accurately, considering all relevant perspectives.

**Accountability:** Journalists have a responsibility to verify information and present it in a way that allows the public to make informed judgments.

### **NEWS 47**

*-“President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Sahlework Zawdie urges citizens of the nation to give priority to saving their country and ensuring national interest rather than promoting the differences and hatred narratives.*

*Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the Adwa Memorial that has been built in the capital Addis Ababa, Sahlework reiterated that although Ethiopia is the owner of Adwa victory, thje victory also belongs to all the black people across the globe. There is no country in the world who has owned the victory like Adwa.*

*Taken a lesson from our fore fathers who marched to the Adwa Battle filed to the country regardless of their differences, hand handed over it to the current generation; we would also succeed in our endeavors if we work hard together, the president remarked.” (OBN, February, 11, 2024).*

## **Analysis of News 47**

### **Ethical Principles Met:**

**Accuracy:** The report clearly identifies the source of the information (President Sahlework Zawdie) and the context (inaugural ceremony of the Adwa Memorial).

**Fairness:** The report presents the President's speech without overt bias, objectively conveying her message of unity and national interest.

### **Ethical Principles Missed:**

- **Lack of Context:**

- The report provides limited context for the Adwa victory and its significance in contemporary Ethiopia.

- It could have explored the historical context of the battle, its impact on Ethiopian identity, and its relevance to current national challenges.

- **Lack of Diverse Perspectives:**

- The report relies solely on the President's speech. Including perspectives from historians, scholars, and members of the public on the significance of Adwa and its contemporary relevance would provide a more balanced and nuanced understanding of the issue.

- **Potential for Bias:**

- While the report avoids overt bias, the presentation of the President's speech without critical examination or counterpoints can create an unbalanced and potentially biased narrative.
- The emphasis on national unity and the downplaying of differences could be interpreted as an attempt to suppress dissent or discourage critical discourse.

### **Key Ethical Concerns:**

- **Independence:** Journalists should strive for independence from government sources and avoid becoming mere mouthpieces for official narratives.
- **Objectivity:** While complete objectivity may be an unattainable ideal, journalists should strive to present information fairly and accurately, considering all relevant perspectives.
- **Accountability:** Journalists have a responsibility to verify information and present it in a way that allows the public to make informed judgments.

### **NEWS 48**

*- “In the remarks he made at the Ceremony of Adwa Memorial, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said that denying the victory of Adwa means disrespecting our fathers who brought freedom to ancient Ethiopia, and it is not acceptable to belittle the sacrifices and bravery of our ancestors. Minister of Culture, Dr. Abiy Ahimed, emphasized that denying the significance of Adwa victory is equivalent to disrespecting the blood and sweat of our forefathers and it undermines the unity and pride of Ethiopia. He further stated that our ancestors sacrificed their lives and shed their blood for the independence and sovereignty of Ethiopia. Ethiopia's freedom and unity should be cherished and defended by all means.*

*The term 'bandits' should not be used to describe heroes who sacrificed for their country. The memory and legacy of Adwa should be celebrated and honored as a symbol of unity and strength for the nation.*

*Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahimad led the commemoration of the Adwa Memorial in the city of Finfinnee. The event was attended by various dignitaries including Zinash Tayyachew, President Sahilawarq Zawudee, Speaker of House of Peoples’ Representative’s Taggesse Chaffo and*

*speaker of House of Federation Agegnehu Teshager, regional presidents, Addis Ababa city mayor Adanech Abebee, ministers, and other officials. The commemoration of the Adwa Memorial serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by our ancestors for the unity and prosperity of Ethiopia. It is a call to uphold the values of freedom and justice for all citizens.*

*The event also highlighted the importance of developing infrastructure such as roads, parks, banks, cafes, and sports facilities in order to improve the quality of life for the people.” (OBN, February, 11, 2024).*

## **Analysis of News 48**

### **Ethical Principles Met:**

- ❖ **Accuracy:** The report clearly identifies the sources of information (Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Minister of Culture, and other dignitaries). It also provides specific details about the event, such as the location (Finfinnee) and attendees.
- ❖ **Fairness:** The report generally presents the information without overt bias, objectively conveying the messages delivered at the Adwa Memorial commemoration ceremony.

### **Ethical Principles Missed:**

#### **Lack of Context:**

- The report provides limited context for the current discourse surrounding the Adwa victory.
- It could have explored any recent controversies or debates related to the interpretation or commemoration of the Adwa victory.
- It could have provided more historical context about the Adwa battle itself, its significance in Ethiopian history, and its impact on the African continent.

#### **Lack of Diverse Perspectives:**

The report heavily relies on the statements of government officials. It has not included perspectives from historians, scholars, members of the public with diverse viewpoints, and

representatives of different ethnic groups of Ethiopia who would provide a more balanced and nuanced understanding of the issue.

### **Potential for Bias:**

While the report avoids overt bias, the presentation of strong statements against "denying" the Adwa victory and the emphasis on national unity could be interpreted as an attempt to suppress dissent or discourage critical discourse. The inclusion of the Prime Minister's strong condemnation of those who "deny" the Adwa victory without presenting any opposing viewpoints creates an imbalance in the reporting.

### **Lack of Independent Verification:**

The report relies heavily on the statements of government officials. Independent verification of the claims made about the significance and interpretation of the Adwa victory is crucial for journalistic integrity.

### **Key Ethical Concerns:**

**Independence:** Journalists should strive for independence from government sources and avoid becoming mere mouthpieces for official narratives.

**Objectivity:** While complete objectivity may be an unattainable ideal, journalists should strive to present information fairly and accurately, considering all relevant perspectives.

**Accountability:** Journalists have a responsibility to verify information and present it in a way that allows the public to make informed judgments.

### **NEWS 49**

*"Residents of Jimma town are urged to actively participate in community development projects." – Speaker of Cheffie Oromia(Oromia Council) Sa'adaa Abdurrahmaan.*

*Speaker of the Cheffe Oromia Sa'adaa Abdurrahmaan, called on the residents of Jimma town to actively participate in community development projects for the betterment of the society.*

*Officials from the Federal Government and regional administration held discussions with community leaders in Jimma town on various development initiatives.*

*President of the Affar Regional state Awwel Arba and a representative from the Prosperity Party Central Office Sema Tiruneh emphasized the importance of community involvement in development projects in the region.*

*Local government officials including Jimma Zone Administrator Tijjaanii Naasir and Jimma City Mayor Najib Abbaa Raayyaa also participated in the discussions on community development projects.*

*Finally the team has paid a visit to various development activities being carried out in Jimma Town and its environs.” (OBN, February, 10, 2024).*

## **Analysis of News 49**

### **Ethical Principles Met:**

- ✓ **Accuracy:** The report clearly identifies the sources of information (Speaker of Cheffe Oromia, officials from the Federal Government and regional administration, local government officials).
- ✓ **Fairness:** The report generally presents the information without overt bias, objectively conveying the message of community involvement in development projects.

### **Ethical Principles Missed:**

#### **Lack of Context:**

- The report provides limited context for the community development projects. For example:
- What specific development projects are being discussed?
- What are the challenges faced by the community in implementing these projects?
- What specific roles are expected of residents in these projects?

#### **Lack of Diverse Perspectives:**

The report primarily presents the perspectives of government officials and the Speaker of Cheffe Oromia and has not included perspectives of community leaders, residents of Jimma Town, representatives of local NGOs or civil society organizations.

#### **Potential for Bias:**

While the report avoids overt bias, the emphasis on government officials calling for community participation without presenting any potential concerns or challenges from residents could create an unbalanced and potentially biased narrative. It could be perceived as promoting government initiatives without adequately exploring the potential benefits and drawbacks for the community.

#### **Lack of Independent Verification:**

The report relies heavily on the statements of government officials. Independent verification of the claims made about the impact of community involvement in development projects is crucial for journalistic integrity.

#### **Key Ethical Concerns:**

- **Independence:** Journalists should strive for independence from government sources and avoid becoming mere mouthpieces for official narratives.
- **Objectivity:** While complete objectivity may be an unattainable ideal, journalists should strive to present information fairly and accurately, considering all relevant perspectives.
- **Accountability:** Journalists have a responsibility to verify information and present it in a way that allows the public to make informed judgments.

#### **NEWS 50**

*-“In Harari Region, discussions were held on the importance of community participation in development projects and the preservation of cultural values. It was emphasized that community involvement in development projects and the preservation of cultural values should be a priority for all 10 districts within the region.*

*The President of the Harari Region and Head of the Culture and Tourism Bureau, Roozaa Umar, stated that these discussions aim to promote unity among communities and ensure sustainable development without compromising cultural heritage or values.*

*It was noted that community involvement in development projects in the region should cover an area of 2 to 200 hectares, with a focus on preserving 30 different cultural sites.*

*The importance of community participation in development projects and the preservation of cultural values is crucial for the overall progress of the region. The Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation will continue to provide updates on this matter.*

*A campaign aimed at preserving natural resources and environmental protection has kicked off in Hararii Regional state. It was noted that the campaign is scheduled to be carried out in all the ten districts of the region.*

*Vice president of the Harari Region and regional head of Agriculture Development Bureau Roza said that the natural resource preservation work which was carried out in the past years in Harari region has not only enhanced the underground water, but also increased production and productivity. Roza further stated that more than 30.000 farmers are supposed to participate in the natural resource preservation activities to be carried out on two hundred thousand and 200 hectares of land in the region.*

*It was stated that the campaign would come to an end in one month.” (OBN, February, 10, 2024).*

## **Analysis of News 50**

- **Accuracy:** The report clearly identifies the sources of information (President of the Harari Region, Vice President of the Harari Region) and the context (discussions on community participation and environmental protection).
- **Fairness:** The report presents the information without overt bias, objectively conveying the goals and objectives of the initiatives.

However, it falls short in several areas:

- **Lack of Context:**

The report provides limited context for the development projects and environmental protection initiatives. For example:

What is the specific development projects being undertaken?

What are the challenges faced by the region in terms of environmental protection?

What are the specific plans for preserving the 30 different cultural sites?

- **Lack of Diverse Perspectives:**

The news story under investigation has primarily focused on the perspectives of government officials by excluding local environmentalists, community members, and representatives of cultural organizations' viewpoints that would substantiate the issue.

- **Potential for Bias:**

While the report avoids overt bias, the emphasis on government initiatives and the lack of critical examination or counterpoints can create an unbalanced and potentially biased narrative.

- **Lack of Independent Verification:**

Similar to the above news piece, the report relies heavily on the statements of government officials. Independent verification of the claims made about the impact of community involvement, environmental protection efforts, and the success of previous initiatives is crucial for journalistic integrity.

**Key Ethical Concerns:**

- **Independence:** Journalists should strive for independence from government sources and avoid becoming mere mouthpieces for official narratives.
- **Objectivity:** While complete objectivity may be an unattainable ideal, journalists should strive to present information fairly and accurately, considering all relevant perspectives.

- **Accountability:** Journalists have a responsibility to verify information and present it in a way that allows the public to make informed judgments.

## NEWS 50

*-“An airplane which was assembled in Ethiopia for the first time has come back home from abroad. Upon its arrival at Bole International Airport the plane which is named Tsehay has been received by government officials. The plane which was assembled in Ethiopia in 1935 has managed to return back to its original homeland after stayed abroad for long.*

*OBN reported this news citing the Ethiopian Airlines as source.” (OBN, February, 9, 2024).*

## Analysis of News 50

This news report has several shortcomings when evaluated against journalistic code of ethics:

- **Lack of Accuracy:**

The statement "An airplane which was assembled in Ethiopia for the first time has come back home from abroad" is factually inaccurate.

While Ethiopia has been involved in aircraft maintenance and repair, there's no evidence to suggest that a complete aircraft was assembled in Ethiopia in 1935.

This claim needs to be thoroughly researched and verified before publication.

- **Lack of Context:**

The report provides minimal context about the plane, its history, and its significance.

What type of aircraft is it?

Why was it sent abroad?

What is the purpose of its return to Ethiopia?

Who are the officials who received the plane?

- **Lack of Independence:**

The report relies solely on a single source (Ethiopian Airlines) without any independent verification or corroboration.

Journalists should strive to obtain information from multiple sources to ensure accuracy and avoid relying solely on official statements.

- **Potential for Misinformation:**

The inaccurate statement about the plane's assembly in Ethiopia has the potential to mislead the public and spread misinformation.

### **Key Ethical Concerns:**

- ❖ **Accuracy:** Journalists have a fundamental responsibility to ensure the accuracy of their reporting.
- ❖ **Independence:** Journalists should strive for independence from sources and avoid being influenced by official statements without independent verification.
- ❖ **Responsibility:** Journalists have a responsibility to correct inaccuracies and avoid spreading misinformation.

### **News 51**

*-The Oromia regional state announced that it has distributed more than 500, 000 bee hives to farmers who have been organized in Associations in the past six months.*

*Head of the Oromia Agriculture Bureau Getu Gemmechu has handed over these modern bee hives to the farmers in in Becho District of the Ilu abbaor Zone as part of such initiative.*

*Iluu Abbaa Boor zone chief Administer Indalkachew Teferi said that the zone has planned to distribute over one hundred thousand modern bee hives to farmers and has been working hard to this end. According to Indalkachew, so far more than 70.000 bee hives have been distributed to the farmers organized in associations in the zone.*

*Head of regional agriculture Bureau Getu Gemmechu said honey development initiative that has put in place by the government has been improving honey productivity, adding out of one*

*million and 500 thousand bee hives planned to be distributed to farmers in the region, more than 500. Thousand has already been handed over. (OBN, February, 09, 2024)*

## **Analysis of News 51**

### **Ethical Principles Met:**

- **Accuracy:** The report clearly identifies the sources of information (Head of the Oromia Agriculture Bureau, Iluu Abbaa Boor zone chief administrator).
- **Fairness:** The report presents the information without overt bias, objectively stating the progress of the beehive distribution program.

### **Ethical Principles Missed:**

- **Lack of Context:**

The report provides limited context for the beehive distribution program. For example:

What are the specific objectives of this initiative?

What are the challenges faced by beekeepers in the region?

How will the distribution of beehives improve the livelihoods of farmers?

What are the environmental and economic impacts of beekeeping in the region?

- **Lack of Diverse Perspectives:**

The report primarily presents the perspectives of government officials. It lacks including perspectives from, Beekeepers who have received beehives, Experts in beekeeping and apiculture and Environmental organizations that would balance the story.

- **Potential for Bias:**

While the report avoids overt bias, the emphasis on government initiatives and the lack of critical examination or counterpoints can create an unbalanced and potentially biased narrative.

The report could be perceived as promoting government programs without adequately exploring the potential benefits and drawbacks for beekeepers and the environment.

- **Lack of Independent Verification:**

The report relies heavily on the statements of government officials. Independent verification of the claims made about the number of beehives distributed, their impact on honey production, and the overall success of the program is crucial for journalistic integrity.

### **Key Ethical Concerns:**

**Independence:** Journalists should strive for independence from government sources and avoid becoming mere mouthpieces for official narratives.

**Objectivity:** While complete objectivity may be an unattainable ideal, journalists should strive to present information fairly and accurately, considering all relevant perspectives.

**Accountability:** Journalists have a responsibility to verify information and present it in a way that allows the public to make informed judgments.

Overall, the OBN news selection provides a window into the Ethiopian government's priorities and achievements, but lacks a more comprehensive view of the country's current affairs.

In general, the news coverage described from the Oromo Broadcasting Network (OBN) raises concerns regarding several journalistic principles:

**Accuracy and Fairness:** It's unclear how rigorously OBN vets information, especially pronouncements from government officials. There's limited mention of opposing viewpoints or critical perspectives on government actions. This raises questions about whether OBN is presenting a complete and unbiased picture.

**Neutrality vs. Independence:** While journalists should strive to be objective in their news reporting, complete neutrality can be unrealistic. However, OBN's focus on government activities and achievements suggests a potential lack of independence. Ideally, they would present a wider range of viewpoints.

**Accountability and Transparency:** OBN doesn't seem to be reporting on potential problems or areas where the government might be falling short. This lack of holding authorities accountable weakens public trust in the media.

Let's see how these professional principles are practiced.

**Accuracy and Fairness:** By not including perspectives critical of the government, OBN might be presenting an inaccurate portrayal of Ethiopian current affairs. Fairness would involve including diverse voices and viewpoints.

**Neutrality vs. Independence:** OBN's focus on government pronouncements leans towards bias rather than neutrality. True journalistic independence involves presenting information without undue influence from any particular source, including the government.

**Accountability and Transparency:** A responsible media outlet holds all institutions, including the government, accountable for their actions. OBN's lack of reporting on potential issues or criticisms of the government suggests a failure to fulfill this role.

The Oromia Broadcasting Media (OBN) extends its reach beyond news affiliated with government officials. While it covers major national events like Patriots' Day and Adwa victory, it also dedicates significant airtime to various public, national, and religious holidays and celebrations. This includes festivals like Easter, Epiphany, Christmas, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, Irecha, and Fiche Chambelala although these have not been included in this research.

However, the degree or frequency of the coverage the OBN gives to these events is not the same (equal). This shows that the media under the study experiences a bias which contradicts with the journalistic code of ethics such as impartiality and fairness among others principles. OBN collects and reports news based on different sources, i.e., through deploying its reporters to gather news stories in one hand and using zonal communication offices on the other. This trend and approach leads the media house to compromise basic journalism ethics and principles.

### **Concern: Unfiltered News from Zonal Offices**

A critical issue with OBN's news coverage is its reliance on unedited stories from zonal communication offices. These stories are often broadcast without proper verification or editorial

oversight. This practice blurs the lines between journalism and public relations, raising concerns from media scholars.

### **Impact on Standards:**

OBN's lack of editorial control raises questions about its adherence to professional journalistic standards. News reporting requires fact-checking, objectivity, and a commitment to presenting a balanced perspective.

### **Proposed Improvement:**

For OBN to regain trust and uphold journalistic integrity, it needs to implement a robust editorial process. This includes fact-checking information received from zonal offices, seeking diverse viewpoints, and ensuring stories are presented objectively.

### **Unverified News and Blurred Lines at OBN**

A major concern with the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) is its practice of airing unedited news stories obtained directly from zonal communication offices. These stories bypass essential journalistic processes like verification and fact-checking. This raises a critical issue: the blurring of lines between journalism and public relations.

### **Journalism vs. Public Relation**

As scholar Temesegene (2013) emphasizes, journalism and public relations (PR) are distinct professions with different purposes. Journalism serves the public interest by providing objective and balanced reporting. In contrast, PR aims to promote a specific organization's agenda and cultivate positive relationships with its target audiences.

### **OBN's Lack of Objectivity**

By broadcasting unedited content from government offices, OBN risks blurring the lines between journalism and PR. These stories often promote the government's viewpoint without critical analysis or consideration of alternative perspectives. This approach undermines the core principles of journalism and fails to deliver the in-depth and objective reporting that the public deserves.

## **4.2 In-depth Interview**

### **4.2.1. Journalists' view of journalism**

This is a qualitative study that explores journalists' views on factors that affect their adherence to basic principles of journalistic profession in the context of the Oromia Broadcasting Network. As the research employed in- depth interviews, The researcher has conducted interview with some of the OBN journalists and one management member to know their view and perception on how they practice basic journalism principles and the challenges related to the matter while gathering stories and report them as well.

Besides, in the study some questions were forwarded to the journalists on the importance of journalism education and how they view the practice of basic journalistic professional principles and code of ethics.

Most of the interviewed journalists of the Oromia Broadcasting Network responded saying they believe that acquiring journalism education is much better than engaging in the profession without having relevant qualification and background in the field. Regarding to the question forwarded to them on whether they have ever journalism education or received relevant courses and training, some of the interviewed journalists said they have been following journalism education with a hope of upgrading and strengthening their knowledge and perception on journalism profession.

Most of the respondents agree on the importance of journalism education as they believe it would help them apply basic professional principles of journalism in a proper and desired manner so that they will be able to achieve the desired performance and results in their career as a result.

Regarding ethical issues in news reporting status of the journalists of OBN, Geremew(2018) states some of the most common ethical challenges facing them:

#### **1 Protecting sources:**

Journalists often rely on confidential sources to obtain sensitive information. However, they must also ensure that the information they receive is accurate and reliable.

## **2 Protecting victims:**

Journalists must be careful not to identify certain victims of crimes by name, particularly when the victim is a child who may have been sexually abused.

## **3 Privacy Vs News Value:**

Journalists must balance the public's right to privacy.

## **4 Conflicts of interest:**

Journalists must avoid conflicts of interest that could compromise their objectivity and credibility.

## **5 Audiences as Customer:**

In today's media landscape, journalists must also consider the financial interests of their employer and the needs of their audience.

These are just a few examples of ethical issues in news reporting.

When faced with ethical dilemmas, journalists must take responsibility for their work and explain their decisions to the public as required by Social Responsibility Theory.

They should explain ethical choices and processes to audiences, encourage a civil dialogue with the public about journalistic practices, coverage and new content and respond quickly to questions about accuracy, clarity and fairness.

The study conducted by Geremew Chala(2018) describes the following three points as some of the major challenges affecting the practice of basic ethical principles of journalism profession at the Oromia Broadcasting Network.

**According to him, these factors are:**

**Professional Issues:** This includes a shortage of journalists with proper training and a lack of journalist independence (Chala, 2018).

**Pressure Groups:** Both direct and indirect pressure from external groups can negatively impact journalists' ability to uphold ethical principles (Chala, 2018).

**Lack of Awareness:** Inadequate awareness among journalists about the importance of applying professional codes of ethics (Chala, 2018).

Chala (2018) suggests that OBN could improve the situation by implementing training programs for journalists and strengthening editorial independence. Training programs can enhance journalists' knowledge and skills regarding professional principles, potentially addressing the identified shortcomings.

He also suggests that OBN needs to strengthen its editorial independence and ensure that its journalists have the freedom to report news without any pressure (influence) from external sources. This enables journalists of the stated media house to overcome the lobby (pressures) of different external forces which affect the practice of journalistic principles.(2018).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter culminates the study by dissecting its core findings and charting a course for improvement. By dissecting the data through meticulous qualitative content analysis, the research unveils crucial insights. Equipped with these revelations, the chapter proposes a roadmap to address the identified shortcomings, paving the way for a more ethical and impactful OBN.

#### 5.1. Research Findings.

Based on the analysis of OBN's news reporting practices, this research reveals the following key findings.

The Oromia Broadcasting Network follows selective approach in its news coverage, reporting and production as well. As stated in chapter four, its news stories manly focus on certain issues; most of them are dominated by sources from government and the ruling party. This selective reporting approach pushes other important topics to the sidelines. As a result, the public might not realize how important those neglected issues are. Sonja L. Myhre et al. (2002) suggest that news media coverage significantly influences public awareness and shapes how society perceives different issues. The more frequently a topic is covered in the news, the more aware the public becomes of it and the stronger the influence the media has on how people understand it. (2002:172).

**In general this research has come up with the following findings:**

- **Selective coverage:** OBN's news stories focus on a limited range of issues, dominated by government and ruling party sources. This marginalizes other important topics. By neglecting other important topics, its selective coverage risks limiting public awareness and understanding of critical issues. As research by Sonja L. Myhre et al. (2002) suggests, news media significantly influences public perception. The frequency of coverage shapes how society understands different issues.

- **Ethical Concerns:** Journalistic ethics emphasize truthfulness, serving the public interest, and acting as a watchdog against powerful entities. However, the research suggests that many OBN news items during the study period lack a watchdog role, and rather focus on events and pronouncements from government officials.
- **Bias and Balance:** The selected news samples exhibited a one-sided approach, primarily presenting information directly from government sources, particularly during coverage of sensitive political issues. This raises concerns about balance, a key ethical principle in journalism.
- **Development Reporting:** OBN's reporting on development activities included target groups beyond officials, attempting to reflect public needs. However, there were gaps in reporting challenges faced by these projects, such as deadlines, budgets, and quality.
- **Lack of Independence:** The research indicates that OBN lacks full independence, heavily relying on news sources from regional and federal government communication bureaus. Even stories reported by its journalists seem influenced by these sources.
- **Limited Ethical Application:** While not adhering to all journalistic ethical principles, some OBN news stories reported directly by journalists addressed basic societal issues, fulfilling a core journalistic obligation. McQuail (1994) aligns with this notion, emphasizing the social responsibility model where media holds an obligation to the public.
- **Ethical Shortcomings:** Essential journalistic standards like truthfulness, accuracy, fairness, and objectivity were often absent in the analyzed stories. The unbalanced focus on one-sided narratives contradicts the principle of impartiality. This highlights OBN's unprofessional reporting practices that lack ethical implementation.
- **Additional Concerns:** The research also identified plagiarism in some OBN news stories, further exemplifying unprofessional practices. As mentioned earlier, OBN fails to acknowledge sources for stories it borrows from.

## 5.2. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study the researcher has put his conclusions as follows:

- ✓ **Focus on Success Stories:** News stories predominantly focus on government-announced success stories, neglecting a balanced presentation of challenges or critical perspectives. This contradicts journalistic ethics principles.
- ✓ **Deviation from Social Responsibility:** The study, guided by the social responsibility theory, which emphasizes media's watchdog role, finds that OBN's news production largely fails to fulfill this function.
- ✓ **News Source Dependence:** OBN primarily relies on news sources and information from federal and regional government officials, including the Prime Minister, president, ministers, and Oromia authorities. While efforts are made to include public interest issues (political, social, and economic), government pronouncements hold significant influence.
- ✓ **Limited Independence:** OBN's heavy reliance on government communication bureaus and services as primary news sources raises concerns about its independence.
- ✓ **Absence of Investigative Reporting:** The research identified a complete lack of investigative reporting within OBN's news production. Straight news reporting, a less informative format, dominates their news approach.
- ✓ **Lack of Problem-Oriented Reporting:** News stories rarely address societal problems or solutions, focusing instead on positive narratives that enhance the government and ruling party's image. This violates the principle of fairness, a core journalistic ethics.
- ✓ **Journalist Testimony:** Interviews with OBN journalists confirmed the study's findings. Journalists tell that they face pressure from management and editors, which hinder their ability to work independently and adhere to professional principles. This pressure reportedly leads to self-censorship, a detrimental practice in journalism.

- ✓ **Partial Reporting:** Based on the evidence, the study concludes that OBN's news reporting exhibits a partisan nature, favoring the government and ruling party over public interest in its news coverage.

### 5.3 Recommendations

This section leverages the study's findings and insights from journalistic scholars like Schudson (1998) and Siebert et al. (1956) to propose a roadmap for strengthening Oromia Broadcasting Network's (OBN) commitment to core journalistic principles. These recommendations aim to bridge the identified gaps and elevate OBN's adherence to ethical practices. **Schudson (1998)** emphasizes the importance of professional autonomy for journalists. His work suggests that empowering journalists with the freedom to make editorial decisions without undue influence fosters a more objective and ethical news environment. Similarly, **Siebert et al. (1956)** highlight the vital role of social responsibility in journalism. They advocate for media outlets to prioritize truth-seeking and serving the public good, even when it challenges powerful interests.

Drawing on these principles, the following recommendations are proposed:

#### **1. Respect for Freedom of Expression:**

The government and other stakeholders should respect the law and uphold freedom of expression without interfering in journalistic practices. They should encourage journalists to deliver fair and balanced news based on ethical principles. Siebert (1956).

#### **2. Upholding Public Interest and Accountability:**

OBN should prioritize serving the public interest by holding the government accountable through investigative reporting and critical analysis.

#### **3. Establishing an Independent Oversight Body:**

An independent body composed of different stakeholders should be set up to monitor OBN's adherence to basic journalistic ethics principles.

#### **4. Commitment to Journalistic Ethics:**

Acknowledging the finding of the study, government officials, editors, and journalists of the Oromia Broadcasting Network need to act collaboratively so as to implement ethical journalistic practices throughout the news production process (Schudson, 1998).

Journalists need to maintain objectivity during news gathering, production, analysis, and reporting.

They should possess the professional skills to resist pressure from various lobbying groups, including politicians, management, and editors.

### **5. Journalist Independence and Objectivity:**

OBN journalists should be free from political affiliations and refrain from reporting biased news that misinforms the public.

As stated by Kovach & Rosenstein (2003), they should maintain a neutral stance and avoid involvement in reported stories to ensure objectivity and fairness.

### **6. Developing journalistic Code of Ethics:**

OBN should establish and respect its own code of ethics to guide professional conduct and ensure adherence to core principles like fairness, accuracy, and credibility.

### **7. Resisting Pressure Groups:**

For OBN to truly uphold journalistic ethics, it must be free from undue pressure from any group, including political interests and those with ownership stakes as stated by Kruger (2004). Pressure groups should empower journalists to work ethically rather than hindering their pursuit of truth.

OBN needs to be free from the undue influence of pressure groups, including political interests and ownership structures, to facilitate proper implementation of journalistic ethics (Kruger, 2004). Pressure groups should support journalists in practicing ethical journalism instead of hindering their work.

### **8. Diversifying News Sources:**

The study urges the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) to move beyond government pronouncements. It needs to cultivate a culture of seeking diverse sources – from academics to community leaders so as to enrich its reporting and foster a more informed public.

### **9. Empowering journalists:**

To strengthen ethical journalism at OBN, the study recommends prioritizing capacity building for its journalists. This can be achieved through targeted professional education and training programs, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to deliver trustworthy and unbiased reporting.

### **10. Strengthening investigative Reporting and Boosting Watchdog role Journalism:**

One key area for improvement at OBN lies in investigative reporting and its role as a watchdog. Currently, OBN's capacity for critical scrutiny and in-depth investigations of government activities seems limited.

### **11. Prioritizing the Public:**

Scholars of Journalism ethics like Herbert Gans (1979:143) argue that a core duty of journalists is to prioritize the public interest. This aligns with Kruger's perspective (2004) that journalists should focus on issues relevant to citizens. Therefore, OBN should strive to create an environment that empowers journalists to report on stories that directly impact the lives of the people they serve, rather than solely amplifying government pronouncements and official narratives.

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## **Appendix**

### **Interview questions**

- 1 Can you briefly describe your role and experience at the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN)?
- 2 What is your educational background and how does it relate to journalism?
- 3 How long have you been working at the OBN?
- 4 Have you participated in any journalism training programs during your time at OBN?
- 5 In your experience, do journalists at OBN and state media in general operate with complete independence from government influence or editorial pressure?
- 6 How would you assess the current state of journalistic practice at OBN?
- 7 What are the biggest obstacles to practicing core journalistic principles at OBN and in state media more broadly?
- 8 What suggestions do you have for overcoming these challenges and improving journalistic practices at OBN?
- 9 Can you elaborate on how government officials might influence journalists' daily work at OBN?
- 10 What advice would you give to OBN journalists to ensure their reporting is fair and meets professional standards?
- 11 Do you believe that journalistic ethics hinge on principles like independence, fairness, and responsibility?
- 12 In your opinion, does OBN adequately prioritize these ethical principles in its news coverage?

13 Why do you think many viewers express dissatisfaction with state media outlets, including OBN?

14 Are appointments at OBN based on merit or political affiliation?

15 Do you believe journalists should be able to work without interference from government authorities?

16 What factors contribute to the practice of self-censorship among journalists in state media including Oromia Broadcasting Network?

17 What steps could OBN take to enhance the professional skills of its journalists and improve the overall quality of its news reporting?

## DEMOGRAPHY OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

	NAME	AGE	ORGANAZATION	POSITION
1.	MIRKANA TADDASE	33	OBN	EDITOR
2	SAXXO TASHOME	32	OBN	SENIOUR REPORTER
3	MUKTAR HUSEN	42	OBN	CHIEF EDITOR
4	FANTAYE MAMMUYYE	39	OBN	EDITOR IN CHIEF
5	SHIBIREE KASIRO	53	OBN	EDITOR
6	MARGA ASEFFA	40	OBN	EDITOR