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Master's thesis

The State of Journalistic Frauds in Major Newspapers

Located in Addis Ababa

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Abstract

In the age of information society, having ethical journalists in all media houses is indispensable for the people to exercise the right to know the truth. As one can easily guess, truth or information gives people power. This power in turn can transform the society into a new level of development. This power can also enable society to entertain democracy. Ethical journalists are the one who facilitates this power to be used by the people. When journalists become unable to accomplish this role, the society will label journalists and the profession as a whole 'untrustworthy and dishonesty'. In order for journalists to play their role effectively, journalists ought to fulfill six elements of the profession; that are truthfulness, accuracy, objectivity, impartiality, fairness, and public accountability. This study therefore tries to see whether Ethiopian journalists strive to preserve these standards or not. It also aims at finding or understanding the states of plagiarism, fabrication, unbalance, unbalance and omission in major newspaper companies located in Addis Ababa. Likewise, it will look at the major factors that hinder journalists from achieving all these standards in their media houses. And finally the paper will give practical solutions for the factors that deter journalists to be truthful and honest.

The study is conducted in ten major newspapers namely; *Addis Admass*, *Addis Zemen*, *Awramba Times*, *Berissa*, *Capital*, *Daily Monitor*, *Ethiochannel*, *Ethiopian Herald*, *Fortune*, and *Reporter*. The total number of Population (journalists) working in these newspaper extends one hundred twenty two. The researcher had first distributed a total of 122 questionnaires, but, the returned questionnaires are forty four in numbers. Therefore the study bases on the available of response of those 44 journalists. As a result of this, the sampling technique that this thesis employed is availability or convenience non random sampling method. The study also used snow ball non random sampling method to get supplementary data through interview from the top level editors. Moreover, to attain the research objective easily and reach at valid findings, the study tries to use the researcher's own observation. Based on the above technique that the researcher used, the study revealed plagiarism, unfairness, unbalanced reporting, and omission exists in major newspaper located in Addis Ababa. The results show that the majority of respondents have observed plagiarism, unfairness, deliberate omission and unbalanced storytelling in their newspapers. However, the number of respondents who have experienced fabrication is less than the respondents who have never experienced fabrication. In this

particular research topic the researcher able to find many factors for the journalistic frauds discussed in the literature review. Among these factors, the one which is considered as the 'major factor' for all fraud types is lack of knowledge about the profession. The second factor, which identified as the common factor for all journalistic frauds is carelessness. Based on the finding, therefore, the researcher recommends the media stakeholders to work more on the educational quality, and producing free, confident and skilled journalists.

Table of content

Acknowledgements	I
Abstract	II
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1. Background of the Study	1
2. Statement of the problem	3
3. Objective of the study	5
3.1. General objective	5
3.2 Specific objective	5
5. Scope of the Study.....	5
6. Research Questions	6
7. Limitations of the study.	6
1.8. Organization of the study.	6
CHAPTER TWO	7
2. Literature Review	7
2.1. Operational definitions.	7
2.2. The role of mass media.	7
2.3. Responsibilities of Journalists.....	8
2.4. What is truth?	10
2.5. Objectivity	11
2.6. Journalism frauds	14

2.7. List of journalistic frauds.	15
2.7.1. Plagiarism.	15
2.7.1.1. Factors to plagiarize.....	17
2.7.2. Fabrication or Blasphemy.	18
2.7.2.1 Factors that force journalists to fabricate	18
2.7.3. Unfair and Unbalanced reporting	21
2.7.3.1 Factors that affect journalists to write unfair and unbalanced reports	22
2.7.4 Omission	23
2.7.4.1 Factors that lead journalist to omit	23
CHAPTER THREE	25
3. Methodology	25
3.1. Introduction	25
3.2. Design of the study.	26
3.3. Data collection techniques.	27
3.3.1. Data sources.	27
3.3.2. Three instruments	27
A. Questionnaire	27
B. Structured interviews	28
C. Observation	29

3.4. Sampling Method	29
3.4.1. Population of the study	29
3.4.2. Sampling technique	30
3.5. Methods of analysis	32
3.6. Ethical consideration	32
CHAPTER FOUR	33
4. Findings and Data Analysis	33
4.1. Introduction	33
4.2. Background characteristics of the study population.	33
4.3. The degree of journalistic frauds in major newspapers	34
4.4. Factors that force journalists to commit journalistic frauds	39
4.4.1. Plagiarism	39
4.4.2. Fabrication	45
4.4.3. Unfairness	49
4.4.4 Unbalanced stories	52
4.4.5 Omission	55
CHAPTER FIVE	60
Conclusions and recommendations	60
References	63
Appendix:	

Chapter One

1. Background of the Study

Many journalists argue that the Media is a mirror reflecting reality, presenting a credible first draft of history. The main purpose of journalism is to report the news objectively, and a number of journalists are harassed, thrown in jail, and lose their lives as they try to preserve journalistic standards.

On the contrary, there are countless unethical journalists, who wrote something that doesn't reflect the social reality and spoil the freedom of the society to know the truth. Usually, these stories would bring individual economic or other types of benefit, but at the same time their stories harm the great social goods. Some of the journalistic unethical behavior includes: fabricating a story, plagiarizing, manipulating, misleading and being unfair. For the -media practitioner, unethical behavior can mean the loss of credibility, which is one of the most valuable possessions for the profession. Examining these behaviors and working hard to mitigate the problem can help one achieve ethical values-driven journalism.

Currently, the temptation to present plagiarized, fabricated and or manipulated news is growing. With the advent of World Wide Web, journalists are becoming more unethical in their reporting. Stephen J.A.Ward argues

By the end of the 1900s, computers linked to the internet would create a communication revolution that would challenge the social position and standards of the professional, commercial press that had developed in the previous century. (Stephen J.A.Ward, 2009).

With these new technologies, journalists are able to deliver news to the audience in few seconds. The need to present news exclusively within a short period of time puts media organizations in a state of competition. At times, this competition is not based on truth telling and performing the watchdog role, rather it is a business competition.

As cited in Richard Keeble (2001).

Newspapers are first and foremost businesses. They do not exist to report news, to act as watchdogs for public, to be a check on the doings of government, to defend the ordinary citizens against abuses of power, to unearth scandals or to do any of the other fine and noble things that are sometimes claimed for the press. They exist to make money, just as any other business does. To the extent that they discharge any of their public functions, they do so in order to succeed as businesses.

This unhealthy competition leads media houses to present sensational news, fabricated quotes, plagiarized statements, omission of facts... Phil Hall (2000), the longest serving editor of The News of The World newspaper in Britain, comments "one of the most frustrating parts of working on the news is the lack of trust the public has for journalists". For example, the British Social Attitudes Survey revealed that only 15% of readers trust newspaper journalists pursuing the truth above getting a good story. This survey of public opinion also places journalists at the bottom of 15 social groups in terms of public credibility- even below politicians (Richard Keeble, 2001).

As journalists' fraud increases, the public trust in the media decreases. Findings from a new Sacred Heart University poll shows that the public's overall perception about the credibility of the media news reports, including those by Fox, has plummeted. According to this poll 19.6 percent of those surveyed, in America, said they believe all or most news media reporting, down from 27.4 percent in 2003 (Broadcast Engineering, 2008).

Journalism in Ethiopia is a recent phenomenon as compared to the western journalism. Till recent times, the practitioners were people who did not pass through college education. Most of them came to know and practice journalism deprived of the professional knowledge. The great number of print as well as broadcast journalists who got degree or diploma in journalism and communications are insignificant in number (Birhanu, 2006). Rather than journalism profession, most reporters and editors are people who came from other departments like language studies and literature (Ibid).

Until recently, it was not understood by many people that journalists should be professionally educated. With the establishment of a school of journalism in 1996, most Ethiopian journalists

are getting the opportunity to know journalistic standards. And yet, many journalists still fail to comply with these principles (Press reference, 2010).

As a result, Ethiopian journalists are often labeled as untrustworthy by the people. It is easy to hear someone saying “*Wushetam Gazetegna*” which is to say “lying *journalists*”. Here we might pose a question. Why people label journalists *Wushetam Gazetegna*? Why people do not trust journalists? These questions lead any interested groups in the area to think about journalistic frauds.

2. Statement of the Problem

What so ever the opportunity of being benefited from these advantages, journalists seems ignorant to fulfill what the standard requires. Rather than writing their story accurately and become satisfied in what they did, reporters have caught many times when they try to cheat the innocent people by their stories.

The 21th century journalists are surrounded by many opportunities in terms of getting, sharing and practicing the professional standards. Among these opportunities some of them are; education, easy accessibility of printed books and World Wide Web connections allows journalists to constantly update their knowledge.

Unless journalists are loyal to the people and to their profession, it is easy to mislead and inform people with false information. There are many instances of journalistic fraud all over the world. A number of famous journalists have been caught after they allegedly fabricated their story. Prize winners are forced to return their gold medal...

Due to its harmful effect on society, journalism fraud is one of the topics that needs close attention. Especially in Ethiopia, whose democracy is not developing very well, needs to study and learn from the mistakes. The following true stories explain how journalistic fraud is very serious and needs to be studied very well in Ethiopia.

One reporter wrote an article about packed water. The news was about the bottle of water which contains some kind of parasite in it. After the publication of the news the water company sued the reporter. Following a long investigation, the court understands the

story was something fabricated. Then the court decided to put the reporter in to jail. The reporter also resigns from his job (Personal communication with Gebrie Yigzaw, Ethiochanal newspaper deputy editor 25, August 2010).

... In soccer game between Tanzania and Ethiopia, a famous commentator called *Emberberu* was broadcasting the game through the Ethiopian Radio international service. Another guy from the same radio station was also on duty in the national service. The radio station sends both of these commentators in the intention that these telecasters will broadcast live from Dar es Salaam for national as well as international services. But later, the guy who is being a commentator for the national service, found he did not made to Tanzania, rather he was listening what *Emberberu* was saying and disseminating as if he is broadcasting from Dar es Salaam stadium. (Personal communication with Solomon, Capital newspaper editor, on 12, 04, 2011)

One day *Negadras* newspaper wrote news about the damage that happened on the Gil gel Gebie III dam. One day later, on Ethiopian Television, I heard the news which is publicized in *Negadras* was wrong. After a few days later, the Ethiopia Electric Corporation head called a press conference and confirmed the news about the damage was true. (Personal communication with Ethio-chanal newspaper editor in chief, 6, September 2010)

The above three cases are about fabrication, plagiarism and omission. The main point here is journalists who fail to practice ethical standards, might be the cause for social, political and economic distractions. When journalists, who are supposed to be the *watch dog* of the society, lie or fabricate news, directly or indirectly the society will be affected.

Even though this research does not stand to teach journalists about ethical standards, it will show how journalists are striving to save the country from social, political and economic distractions that emanates from careless reporting.

3. Objectives of the study

3.1. General objective of the research

The general objective of the research is to investigate and understand the states of journalistic frauds in major Medias located in Addis Ababa.

3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objective of this study includes;

- To investigate the scope of those scandals in the study area.
- To identify the factors that cause journalistic frauds
- To make a determined effort identifying the problems and offering recommendations.

4. Significance of the study

The result and recommendations of this study will benefit many stakeholders, who work in the area of journalism and communications. For example, Media instructors will use it to teach their students about ethics of journalism. In addition to this, it will enhance governmental and non-governmental organizations to work hard to raise the standard of journalism in Ethiopia. Furthermore, the finding will help press regulators, journalism associations, and other organizations to adjust themselves and decide according to the findings and recommendations of the research. Finally the study will serve as a reference for those who want to study in this area.

5. Scope of the study

The study is conducted in major Newspapers located in Addis Ababa. Since it is difficult to cover all Medias with in short period of time, the researcher obliged to focus on major newspapers as a primary study area.

As a result of this, the investigation is conducted in the city's major newspapers, whose circulations are more than 5, 000 copies per a publication and their primary concern is covering political, economic and social affairs of the country. According to Ethiopian

Broadcasting authorities, newspapers who are covering the political, economic and social matters of the country are 33 in numbers, (Ethiopian Broadcasting authorities, 2011).

Out of these newspapers, therefore, the following newspapers were the study area. These include private newspapers (*Reporter Amharic, Ethio-channal, Fortune, Addis Admass, Capitals, Awramba Times, The Daily monitor,*) and governmental newspapers (*Addis Zemen, Berisa, Herald*). The study only focused on those Journalistic scandals or frauds such as; plagiarism, blasphemy, unfair and/or unbalanced reporting, and omission.

6. Research questions:

In order to obtain the objectives of the study, the researcher probes the following questions.

- 1) What is the degree of journalistic frauds in major newspapers produced in Addis Ababa?
- 2) What are the basic causes that force journalists to deviate from the normal standards?

7. Limitations

- a. Financial constrains to make the research
- b. Lack of time to cover wide study area
- c. Material constraints
- d. Lack of cooperation from respondents of interviews and questionnaire

8. Organization of the study

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter one deals about the background of the study, statement of the problem and some of the objectives of the research. Chapter two gives a detail theoretical framework about journalistic fraud. It also discusses about some of the issues that force journalists to commit journalistic fraud by referring many author's articles. The third chapter mainly focuses on the methodology that the investigator used to study the problem. It also briefly explains the rationale behind to choose mixed type of approach as a best way of studying journalist's behavior. Chapter four and five concentrates on the analyzing the results and giving some recommendation based on the findings respectively.

Chapter two

2. Literature review

2.1. Operational definitions/conceptual clarification

2.1.1. **Journalistic scandals or frauds:** for the purpose of this study, journalistic scandals are defined as scandals which are directly related with journalism integrity and truth telling. These include plagiarism, fabrication, unfairness and unbalanced reporting, and omission.

2.1.2. **Major newspapers:** newspapers that prints a minimum of 5,000 copies per a publication

2.2. The role of mass media

Media contribute a lot to the general public. Since it has a close relation with society, it can change people's opinions as well as their attitudes for better lifestyle of the citizen. Sometimes media's role will extend to revolutionizing the country's economic, political, and communal values. That is why the media is frequently labeled as 'powerful', 'the fourth Estate of a country', and so on.

William Tomas as cited in Karen Sanders (2003) says;

I have seen cabinets upset, ministries driven in to retirement, laws repealed, programs modified, acts passed, generals nominated, governors appointed, armies sent hither and thither, wars averted, by the agency of newspapers. (p.8)

This power gives the media a lot of strength. However, sometimes this strength can either be used constructively by educating the people or it can be used destructively by misleading the innocent people.

Most journalists would argue; the reason for journalists main presence, is to serve 'the public's right to know' by informing the truth. They would also agree that journalists role could be expressed in playing 'the watch dog role', both of these roles involves truth telling.

However, the concept of truth in journalism as explained in, (Bill Kovach, and Tom Rosenstiel, 2007) is the most confusing principle because truth might contain subjectivity, bias, stereotype, and other misleading information.

Different journalists may interpret the same news event in different ways; this is because human being is subjective by its nature. Richard hard wood as cited in steven M.Hallock (2007)says

The story of why the giants lost can be told in a hundred different ways each story being written through a different lens that fogged over by stereotypes and personal predilections.

Based on the journalist's preference, a single story can be shaped and framed as two different stories. For example, a report about heroin addicts can be shaped as a story about criminals or a story about people with a health problem. This shows how it is easy for the journalists to spread stereotypes, bias, and their own interest to the public. The ease in framing a story in different ways allows journalists to make frauds by negotiating with advertisers and PR officers.

The democracy of any country is compromised when journalism is willing to benefit private life over the good of the public. Rajan argues:

Journalistic goals, especially in the main stream media, are generally not made with a view to influencing decision making in political life; they are merely expected to maximize personal economic security. As a result, political decision making is left to the elite politicians. (Nalini Rajan, p: 9)

2.3. Responsibilities of journalists

Journalists' first responsibility is for the people. Regardless of any difficulty, journalists' loyalty is to the citizens. The idea here is to put audiences ahead of political and immediate financial interests.

Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel(2007) explains journalists' loyalty,

It is the implied covenant with the public, which tells the audience that the movie reviews are straight, that the restaurant reviews are not influenced by who buys an ad, that the coverage is not self- interested or slanted for friends.

The American organization's code of ethics has put over its principles about the journalists obligation to the citizens.

Promotion of any private interest contrary to the general welfare for whatever reasons is not compatible with honest journalism... partisanship, in editorial comment which knowingly departs from the truth, does violence to the best spirit of journalism; in the news columns it is subversive of a fundamental principle of the profession.

In order to keep the standard of the profession, many media houses prepare their own guidelines and try to mitigate ethical issues. However, the effort to minimize ethical problems in the news companies may be tough. Richard keeble (2001) wrote on how difficult for the editors to catch problems before getting the newspaper published.

Since credibility is journalism's main intention, many news agencies and mass media outlets have strict codes of conduct and enforce journalists, and use several layers of editorial layers to catch problems before stories are distributed. However in many of the cases, investigations later found that long-established journalistic checks and balances in the news rooms failed. In some cases, senior editors fail to catch fabrication and plagiarized statements inserted in to a story by a reporter. In other cases, the checks and balances were omitted in the rush to get important breaking news. Sometimes individual vested interest creates a problem of fabrication, omission or manipulation of facts.

In order to understand how the profession is implementing its responsibilities, it is useful to look at what the following paragraph depicts. It goes on to say

Journalism as a duty calls for the dissemination of salient facts in such a way that decision is left to the reader, with whom all the facts are shared. As a mission, it is more business and it calls for the management of information, with the intent of coloring audiences' perceptions of the news through emphasis, suppression, 'intentional

ignorance', omissions, and endless repetition of governments' perspectives (Francis P. Kasoma, 1994 P. 52)

2.4. What is truth?

Some say; since journalists are subjective individual, truth is too complicated for them to pursue. They even argue; as if truth doesn't exist (Elements of journalism) others say, as long as journalists follow the scientific way to get and distribute the truth it is possible to pursue the truth (Stephen, 2004).

As Rajan wrote about the principles of truth, a newspaper must aim for factuality, accuracy, verification, anticipating the likelihood of error; providing context, background, reasonable interpretation and careful analysis.

A long time ago, it was truth and accurate if someone says 'the sun revolves around the earth'. Inasmuch as this 'fact' works for that society, 'the sun revolves around the earth' is a practical or functional form of truth. In a situation like this, journalists must amplify what is said 'truth'.

Bill Kovach, and Tom Rosenstiel Argues:

“Even the laws of science are subject to revision, but we operate by them in the meantime because they are necessary and they work. This is what journalist is after a practical or functional form of truth. It is not truth in the absolute or philosophical sense. It is not the truth of chemical equation but journalism can and must pursue truth in a sense by which we can operate day to day”

In journalism telling accurate information for the people is fundamental. As Karen Sanders (2003, p: 43) puts it accuracy, getting the facts right, getting to the truth of the matter, is one of journalism's Ten Commandments.

However, this doesn't mean only mere accuracy would result good journalism. Beyond mere accuracy, it is quite necessary that journalists have to offer the real context, interpretation and meaning of the event.

Karen sanders (2003 p: 44) argues how journalists interpretation will affect the standards of journalism “interpretation is also an activity to which we bring premises, prejudices in the sense

of prejudgments. We bring a set of assumption and expectation to bear on the subject we're seeking to understand.”

Bill Kovach, and Tom Rosenstiel (2003 P: 43) on his side says

“We can only interpret what is already there. Interpretation implies the existence of something. Interpretation involves disclosure. Thus, journalism would seem to be about interpreting reality, disclosing its truth and telling stories. Stories can be factually correct but as a result of bias, stereotype and subjectivity it might be substantially untrue”

2.5. Objectivity

Apart from the notion of truth, this is the other controversial issue; not only in the profession of journalism but also in any other field of science. Many scholars and philosophers have had debated on the idea of objectivity. The social and natural science scholars have fought in the so called ‘science war’ (1980’s) just because they couldn’t reach at a clear understanding of objectivity (Stephen. J.A. Ward, p: 11)

The concept of objectivity is not a recent phenomenon. The quest of objectivity begins with the Greek invention of rational inquiry in to society and nature in the 17th c B.c. (Ibid, P: 38). The famous philosophers such as, Thales, Anaximander, Empedocles, Democritus, and Herodotus disclose ‘truth’ based on the premises of their rational thinking. In order to arrive at a valid conclusion, these philosophers try to detach themselves from the actual event being recorded.

In his explanation about a victory of Greek over Persians for example, Herodotus tried to show how detachment from personal belief is essential in reporting objective facts. “My job, through this account, is simply to record whatever I am told by each of my sources” (Herodotus as cited in Stephen)

Stephen divides objectivity in to two types. These are traditional and pragmatic objectivity. The traditional way of achieving objective reporting was very famous in the western world in the early 20th c. its main idea is something much related with what the positivists advocate. The positivist support the idea of detachment and pure objectivity in the process of finding truth (Wikipedia. 2010)

According to the traditional objectivity outlook, there are six related standards that define the ideal and help journalists decide whether a report is objective or subjective. These are factuality, fairness, non-bias, independence, non-interpretation, neutrality and detachment. The following explanation, which is extracted from ‘the invention of objectivity’ helps to understand each concept very clearly.

- A. Factuality: Reports are based on accurate, comprehensive, and verified facts.
- B. Fairness: Reports on controversial issues balance the main rival viewpoints, representing each viewpoint fairly.
- C. Non-bias: Prejudices, emotions, personal interests, or other subjective factors do not distort the content of reports.
- D. Independence: Reports are the work of journalists who are free to report without fear or favor.
- E. Non-interpretation: Reporters do not put their interpretation or opinion in to their reports.
- F. Neutrality and detachment: Reports are neutral. They do not take sides in a dispute. Reporters do not act as advocates for groups and causes.

The difference between traditional and pragmatic objectivity lies on the last two defining points, which are non-interpretation and neutrality or detachment. Pragmatic objectivity is developed by Stephen .J.A ward. According to pragmatic objectivity view point neutrality (detachment) and non-interpretation does not have any place in defining objectivity.

In the first place, this theory believes, journalism’s neutrality (detachment) from all values and perspectives is not practicable. In addition to this Stephen believes there are legitimate reasons that make journalists to practice attachment. According to his explanation, the journalist’s connection with public interest is one example of legitimate attachment.

Martin Bell (former BBC journalist) as cited in Karen Sanders (Karen p: 43) says, there are times to be passionate and times to be dis-passionate. Especially in the times of war, unless the journalism practitioners close their hearts to pity, the war report will disrespect the human dignity. In this case; the journalist, who feels pity for the warriors, is expressing his attachment.

Chapter two of the BBC's producers' guidelines says the journalist's attachment sometimes will be related with the democratic principles. "due impartiality (detachment) does not mean just getting two sides to a story nor does it requires absolute neutrality on every issue or detachment from democratic principles. (BBC producer's guidelines, 2001)

The above points are small cases that prove the importance of attachment; however for the most of the journalism practice, impartiality is an indispensable principle to arrive at objective facts. Matthew Kieran (1998 p: 23) says, "It is a common place assumption of journalism that the media have a fundamental duty to be impartial in order to achieve the goal of an objective report or analysis of current events." Journalism's codes of conduct underlines the importance of impartiality or detachment especially in the process reporting racial, religious, and gender issues. As Karen (2003 p: 42) puts over "impartiality is the way of eliminating reporting filtered by the more extreme kinds of religious, racial, or other types of prejudices.", he also says impartiality is "a practice aimed at removing the distorting effect of prejudice from whatever source, ensuring that full and fair accounts are given of events."

Hence, except journalism's attachment with public interest and democratic principles, the need for detachment is not a free will of the journalist it is nothing but mandatory principle. Journalists also need to detach themselves not only from two opposing groups in the news but also they have to be impartial from their individual vested interest. Matthew Kieran (1998 p: 34) says, "It is not just illegitimate but immoral to re-construe news events merely because a journalists prejudices, interests, or news agenda suggests things should be otherwise."

The second point which makes pragmatic objectivity differ from traditional objectivity is the pragmatic objectivity standpoint which advocate towards interpretation. The theory of pragmatic objectivity says journalism is about interpreting a given issue.

"Journalist use codes to compress data in to relatively short stories. When reporters cover complex events, such as a federal budget, they organize a blizzard of information by selecting the most important fact, picking the relevant issues, and choosing story angles. Editors construct an elaborative editorial plan that reduces the glut of material to a manageable package of stories. This selecting, categorizing, and organizing of material are essential components of a coherent interpretation that readers can understand." Stephen (2004 p: 295)

This kind of interpretative reports are common in the contemporary media environment. This is because, “journalism’s new technology, its desire to tell good stories and its romantic, self-expressive impulses could not fit with in strict, traditional objectivity” (Ibid p: 202)

However, this interpretation sometimes could be used to manipulate facts and reflect the journalist’s interest. In journalism, it is obvious and pretty easy to portray terrorist groups either as freedom fighters or criminals. (Stephen 2004 P: 295-296) And “In some contexts, journalists intentionally strip away most of the interpretation. (Ibid p: 297)

Traditional objectivity would prefer the separation of opinion, entertainment stories from the fact, but the so called “new journalism” prefers the mixture of all these in to journalistic work. As a result, according to (Louis, page: 88) the technique of writing in the “new journalism” is highly dependent on presenting factual accounts as if they were short stories or novel.

Many scholars agree the difficulty to achieve objective reporting, because of the impossibility to practice detachment and write a report without any interpretation. Some scholars and journalists even say objectivity is ‘an illusion’ and difficult to achieve it (Karen 2003 p: 43). Unlike traditional objectivity, Stephen believes there is no pure or perfect objectivity, this is because “journalists bases reports on limited data, imperfect methods, conflicting values, and changing conditions.” Stephen (2004)

2.6. Journalism frauds

As World IQ, journalistic frauds includes “practices such as plagiarism, fabrication of quotes, facts, or other report details, staging or altering the event being putatively recorded or anything else that may call the integrity and truthfulness of a pieces of journalism in to question” (world IQ n.d)

When one or more of these frauds practiced in any news outlets, it might hurt not only the reputation of the media outlet but also the profession of journalism as a whole.

In any circumstance, journalists’ credibility is vital and invaluable. Otherwise, a simple failure to achieve the standard will destroy the reputation of the entire journalism profession.

The journalism frauds may range from a simple alliteration of an event (manipulation) to serious scandals such as fabricating a story. Whether a particular media involves a simple alliteration or serious frauds the consequence is the same in terms of losing integrity.

Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel express integrity as journalists' main asset. Whenever journalists couldn't keep their standards, this asset will be in danger.

2.7. List of journalistic frauds

2.7.1 Plagiarism

Despite its presence for long period of time, plagiarism is one of the few topics, which doesn't get a chance to be discussed frequently. Standler describes it by noting that "the topic is rarely discussed in legal journals and law textbooks." Standler, R. (2000).

Any activity that tends to use other work without acknowledging the original writer is categorized under the list of plagiarism. The word plagiarism is derived from the Latin word called *plagiarius* or "kidnapper" (Alexander Lindey, 1952 p: 2) defines plagiarism as "the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person's mind, and presenting it as one's own" Diane Wyant (2008 p: 7) on his side describe plagiarism as any "intentional or unintentional activity presenting the work, words, thoughts, or ideas of others as your own."

Plagiarism is very common in the area of literary works, photography, music and politics.

"In most cases plagiarism takes place in the form of writing, whether it is in the college courses or published works in the media. Photographically, images can be altered to seem different from the original, made less controversial or they can be taken from someone completely. In music, lyrics of artists can be stolen as well as the music itself. Through politics, candidates could potentially take the ideas of their competitor and make them equivalent to their own, or simply improve up on them in order to one-up the competition." (Leah Godzina, April 11, 2006)

Now days, with the coming of worldwide connection, the temptation to plagiarize is growing. The internet, which provides reporters a lot of material or resources, can be a treat for the profession. Richard Keeble, (2001 p: 44)

Certainly with so many people be able to publish on the web, it would increase the possibility of journalists to take material without attribution. In addition to this, the inability to know who exactly wrote the material would also push journalists to copy others work without acknowledging the original author.

Willson (as cited in Jane Johnston, P: 2) believes plagiarism consists of four levels

1. Repetition: simply copying from unacknowledged source
2. Patching: copying, with joining phrases from several sources
3. Plagiphrasing: paraphrasing from several sources and joining them, placing in the reference list but without page numbers or without in text citation.
4. Convectional academic writing: where ides are synthesized to make an argument and a new academic package but are the ideas new?

Journalist credibility can be expressed by attributing someone's original work. Whenever journalists borrow literary work from others, they should "tag" the name of the original writer in their stories. This is fundamental because "media professional stock in the trade is artistic originality and creativity, the unattributed use of someone's work violets the virtue of honesty" (Louis Alvin day, page: 94)

Using digital technology, words and pictures can be easily "lifted" from various web pages. The easiness to access information from the web encourages journalists to tempt plagiarism.

Jane Jonston says the internet brings free and open culture of information, which contributes for journalistic plagiarism (Jane P: 1).

2.7.1.1. Factor to plagiarize

1. **Internet:** According to Tony Rogers, One of the main reasons that are responsible for journalist's plagiarism is the ease of online materials.

The temptation to plagiarize is greater than ever because of the internet, which places a seemingly infinite amount of information just a mouse-click away. It's simply much easier to plagiarize when the World Wide Web - and all its resources - is so easy to access. (Tony Rogers, 2011)

2. **Being unintentional or Carelessness:** Cases of plagiarism continue to occur in journalism but what the journalists who found plagiarizing materials would say is, it is unintentional. However since plagiarism is one of the main ethical issues that would harm the media's integrity, the reason of being an intentional is not the excuse.

Journalists sometimes do not pay attention for the materials that they are borrowing. They just copy and paste negligibly without acknowledging the original writer. Jack Shafer, as cited in John Seidenberg, says the source of this unintentional plagiarism is "Careless, clumsy, inexplicable, an oversight, done obliviously, a result of fatigue or distraction or rushing, but still unintentional. John Seidenberg, (2010)

3. **Deadline and work pressure:** A media that put time and work pressure up on its reporters will finally get itself at some point of trouble. Mick walker (2005, p 100) Says pressure- real or imagined- creates an unhealthy atmosphere in which facts gets plagiarized or even invented. He argues news is a perishable commodity "you rush it to the market place fast or it starts to stink." This environment creates a pressure for journalists that indeed will make them plagiarist. Ibid.
4. **Lack of clearly stated standards:** Hutton as cited in Gordon Belt (2007) said journalists "lack of familiarity with the paper's rule on attribution and pledge to take steps to address them" is additional factor for the journalists to write unattributed texts. John Seidenberg also argues that lack of clearly standard in the newsroom may contribute for the journalists' plagiarism sin. John Seidenberg (2010)

2.7.2. Fabrication (Blasphemy)

One of the most severe indictment serious problem in the 21st C. media environment is the temptation to present fabricated stories. The practice of publishing fictitious story leads to lose the credibility of the profession as a whole. The term credibility is well expressed by Louis Alvin Day (page: 10), he said “credibility is a fragile commodity, and in today’s highly competitive, materialistic and permissive environment, its presentation is sometimes tedious.”

Once the credibility of a newspaper or a journalist is eroded, it is hard to regain trust from the readers. Journalists who commit blasphemy would encounter a serious criticism, and get fired. They even would oblige to return any prize that they got from the fabricated story.

The case of Janet Cook, who had fabricated a dramatic description of an eight-year-old heroin addict, is one example. The Washington Post was obliged to return the Pulitzer prize for feature writing after the paper’s discovered the eight-year-old heroin addict boy story was fiction (Louis Alvin, page:10)

The New Republic reporter Steven Glass is another best example. After a Forbes reporter express his doubt on Steven’s famous article “Hack Heaven”, which narrates about a teenage computer hacker, investigators found that his article is invented. The notification given by the Forbes reporter initiate the investigator to examine more on the Steven’s articles and later they found that out of his 41 submitted articles for the newspaper, 27 of them are fabricated. As a result of this, Steven got fired from the New Republic newspaper. (Gordon Belt, May 24, 2007)

2.7.2.1. Factor that force journalists to fabricate

There are many factors that lead journalists to write untruthful information. These factors can be initiated by physiological, economic, political, cultural factors and even the media itself can be the source of the problem. All these factors are pressures that force the reporters to construct articles. “Where pressures are extreme the temptation to discard the commitment to truth is very strong.” Karen Sanders (2003 P: 44)

1. **Psychological factor:** Sometimes journalists fabricate news stories or feature articles just because they enjoyed to be admired, and loved by the staffs, bosses and by the readers (Ivor Shapiro, 2006). “A deep desire to get in to the paper, ‘the thrill of getting a good story’ and especially to make the front page”, is another reason for journalists to fabricate (Ibid) The other form of psychological factor as written by Ivor Shapiro is that journalists try to deceive in their writings because they want to avoid rejection.
2. **Economic factor:** Journalism is one of the profession which gets lower salary in a developing country like Ethiopia. Francis P. Kasoma (1994 P: 106), Karen Sanders (2003 P: 122) This situation aggravates the issue of fabricating news and journalists obliged to report a story, which cannot be verified, for the company, who promised to them to give a substantial amount of money. One Professional and Senior manager in Ethiopian *Reporter*, as cited in Birhanu (2006) said;

Companies (advertisers) pay rental fees for them; they buy computers for them and then ask them to publicize whatever they say... Writers are being bought to produce an article on the columns which they put totally under the control of the company or advertiser.

The National Convention of the American society of Journalists as cited in Francis P. Kasoma (1994 P: 119) has put over its journalistic standards in regard to accepting freebies; “gifts, favors, free travel, Special treatment or privileges can compromise the integrity of journalists and their employers. Nothing of value should be accepted.”

3. **Political factor and/or personal agenda:** The need to satisfy the political leaders and individual vested interest are also another reasons for the journalist to create a story. Journalists who are affiliated with political parties or to some causes will be pressured to write false propaganda. As defined in Wikipedia propaganda is a kind of information that solely presented to change people’s attitude.

Propaganda is a form of communication that is aimed at influencing the attitude of a community toward some cause or position. Propaganda often presents facts selectively (thus possibly lying by omission) to encourage a particular synthesis, or uses loaded messages to produce an

emotional rather than rational response to the information presented
(Wikipedia, 2011).

The definition shows that propaganda is a way of transmitting one's interest through lying or fabricating a reports to get public acceptance. As a result, Propaganda can also invoke fake reporting.

4. **Cultural factor:** Journalists are products of the society. They live in the society, they imitate what the society is practicing, and their day to day taught is shaped by the society's culture. As a result, Journalists may develop a culture of creating a faked report. Karen (2003) says;

Some would argue that facts and fictions are the products of interpretative communities and cultural categories. From this perspective, journalists are not only literally story tellers, in the sense that their stories are narratives, but also in the sense that their stories are fiction. They themselves construct the characters and story lines (P. 44).

5. **The media** itself can be the source for the journalistic cheating. A work pressure, which is loaded up on the reporter, will force the journalist to write an interesting fiction story. A case of Steven Glass revealed the workplace pressure is one reason for the journalists to fabricate news. Steven Glass leaks a very interesting story to his colleague and his boss. "Then he faces pressure from his editors to provide more details but he fails to find reportable fact." As a result, just to escape from the pressure, he tries to give them a fabricated detail. But "he finds himself increasingly encouraged to write 'snarky, glib, superior' copy and learns that what a journalist is looking for is 'a good story, accuracy's only half of it'" (Ivor Shapiro, 2006 P. 2)

2.7.3. Unfair and unbalanced reporting

Unfair and unbalanced reporting is common practice in the war time, and racial reporting. (Paul Harper, 2008) Unfairness and unbalanced or biased reporting can be expressed by the journalists' article in which they present the news subjects either in negative or positive way. The biggest problem in journalism is, using unfair and unbalanced reporting; journalists can spread hatred, bias, and stereotype to the world. Knowingly or unknowingly such types of report harm not only the integrity of the media houses but also the audience who are affected by the unfair reporting.

A report is said to be fair if it tries to disseminate both side information as well as the full context of the event. For instance, a news story which emphasizes three American casualties in a 100 dead people accident is unfair for the report only gives higher concern to the Americans. A report is unbalanced if it does not represent the view point of two opposing groups.

A, David Gordon and John Michael Kittross, P: 86) defines fairness as

The act of keeping an open mind, of suspending individual judgment until enough information is available so that judgments or decisions can validly be made. It is impartiality but not ignorance. The media are not merely a conduit; they have the responsibility to assess the validity or truth of the information they disseminate. Of particular importance is the need to provide sufficient valid and reliable information that will allow readers, listeners and viewers to reach their own conclusions.

Journalism is about verifying the information that is coming from somewhere and publishing the truth. It is un-acceptable to broadcast news without any prior questioning about the believability of the source; otherwise it might end with unfair news.

Stephen (2004 P: 299) explains the standard of verification. "Verification calls on reporters to cross-check claims of potential whistleblowers against original rules on the numbers and quality of anonymous sources."

In order to reach at fair and truthful information "one strategy is 'triangulation'. This is where claims or accounts provided from one source can be contrasted with those provided by another." Karen (2003 P: 109)

When journalists write about two opposing groups, the profession requires the practitioners to show disinterest for both contrary groups and treat them equally. They should transmit what exactly the interviewees said in the interview.

2.7.3.1. Factors that affect journalists to write unfair and unbalanced reports

1. The first reason as explained in Paul Harper (2008) is when journalists faced with sensitive issues like war, or election, the possibility of their story to be slanted to one side will increase. The 1917 American senator, Hiram Johnson, as cited in Karen Sanders (2003 P: 45) says, “The first causality of war is truth.” War times is one moment that force journalists to publicize unbalanced, unfair, biased and faked report.
2. The other reason is journalists who are suppressed by the government would present the story through the government perspective. They would not have a freedom to present the opposite side of what the government is advocating.
3. The third factor that leads the journalist to write unfair and unbalanced news is the personal bias, stereotype that the journalist possesses.
4. The Media agenda is another reason that shape the news in to one side and make the story totally unfair and unbalanced.
5. Financial problem would sometimes be the factor for this ethical problem. A reporter who has got freebies from a particular organization would finally end up with writing ‘too much praise’ for the company.
6. Journalists attachment to a particular group, or company will pledge journalists to present the fact one sided or unfairly.

2.7.4. Omission

Omission of fact is the other unethical behavior that puts the integrity of the newspaper at risk. Sometimes journalists omit facts to preserve the good name of the company, individual, government and government officials.

Omission can also be practiced in the pursuit of good reasons. According to Karen Sanders journalists will omit truth in order to avoid harm, to protect the national and public security, to respect human dignity, to protect individual privacy, to avoid spreading racism, sexism and so on (Karen Sanders, 2003 PP: 72-73, 80)

However, the topic of omission is worth if we connect it with the journalists morality towards disclosing the untouched, and the fearful subjects. If journalists omit fact because it might cause one public official to lose his credibility and his job, this omission is unethical.

According to (Kramer L, 1990 P: 16-22) omission will occur when facts opposing a particular desired view are ignored to exclude from a story so as to provide a slant view. Baker also has a similar view about omission. As Baker, omission refers to the ignoring of facts “that tend to disprove liberal or left-wing claims, or that support conservative beliefs. This means in essence, the omission of certain information in maintaining the neutrality of a news story due to a deliberate act or negligence.” (Baker, B 2005 retrieved at <http://www.fairpress.org/identify.htm>)

2.7.4.1 Factor that lead journalists to omit

There many factors for the reporters to omit facts. Among these factors the following are more common in the profession.

1. **Censorship:** this is one of the main reasons that journalists practice omission. Especially in the environment where suppression exists, journalists will self-censor themselves and omit important detail of facts. (Francis P. Kasoma, 1994 P: 109 express this situation as “the most malignant journalistic disease in Africa.”

Another explanation to this point is that the government will directly involve in the task of the journalist and obliged him to omit sensitive facts. Sometimes editors or publishers would get a phone call from the Minister or state house and urged them to stop publishing that fact. (Ibid, P: 109)

- 2. Individual vested interest:** Journalists who wants to disseminate a particular point will omit any information that holds a different view of their belief. (Kramer L, 1990 P: 16-22).

Chapter Three

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

As explained briefly in the objective, the goal of this thesis is something related with investigating and understanding the state of journalistic frauds in major Newspapers located in Addis Ababa. These newspapers are selected based on their circulation rate. The newspapers which are selected to be studied in this research have a circulation of more than 5,000 copies per a publication. Accordingly the following newspapers become the study's main focus.

Owner	Newspaper	Circulation / publication	Source	No. of low levels editors & reporters	Language
Government	1 Addis-Zemen	15,000	Population media center, Dec. 2006 p:30	40	Amharic
	2 The Ethiopian Herald	9,000-11,000	Ibid	15	English
	3 Berisa	13,500	Ibid	2	Oromiffha
Private	1 Reporter	19,500	Ethiopian Broadcasting authorities, (2011)	17	Amharic
	3 Addis Admas	21,833	Ibid	11	Amharic
	4 Ethio-chnal	5,766	Ibid	7	Amharic
	5 Awramba Times	5,666	Ibid	8	Amharic
	6 The daily monitor	5,174	Ibid	8	English
	7 Capital	6,666	Ibid	4	English
	8 Fortune	8,000	Ibid	10	English
	Total				122

Table 3.1 the circulation rate of each newspaper and number of journalists who are working in those major newspapers.

This chapter discusses the various methods and methodologies that are used to study the journalistic frauds in the above listed newspapers. And also it endeavors to look at the different data collection techniques, sampling procedures, and methodological approach that will be applied in the study.

3.2. Design of the study

In order to study the research problem, the researcher had to see the case not only in the reporters' perspective but also editors' perspective. Hence, in addition to observational method, the researcher has applied two types of data collection methods, which are questionnaire and interview. While the questionnaire has distributed to the reporters, the interview has been conducted with the editors of the newspapers. This is because the results that are found through the sole questionnaire should be triangulated with the interviews that are undertaken with the editors. By doing this, the researcher has able to fill the gap, as well as, prove what the research subjects have been saying in the questionnaire part.

The majority section of the research analysis is inclined to describe the journalists' culture regarding to keep the journalistic standards. The journalist's behavior has also explained in relation to the theoretical paradigm that is presented in review of literature. As the study becomes much related with the understanding of the journalist's behavior, the larger part of the study is dominated by qualitative approach. As explained by Immy Holloway (1997 P: 1) qualitative research approach

“Is a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live. Researchers use qualitative approaches to explore the behavior, perspectives and experiences of the people they study.”

In addition to qualitative approach, the study has also used quantitative method of analyzing a problem. Quantitative method is a means of presenting a research using numbers and statistical methods. For example, in order to find out the degree of journalistic frauds in those major newspapers, the researcher has applied Likert scale, by which the investigator has able to get quantifiable data from the research subjects. King, Keohane, and Verba (2003 P: 2), as cited in Robert Murray Thomas, say “Quantitative

research uses numbers and statistical methods. It also tends to be based on numerical measurements of specific aspects of phenomena; it abstracts from particular instances to seek general description.”

To sum up, the main approach of this study is a mixed type of approach. Mixed type of approach is a method which uses qualitative as well as quantitative method as a main way of presenting a study.

Mixed method approach is a way of collecting both quantitative and qualitative data sequentially. The researcher bases the inquiry on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data best provides an understanding of a research problem. The study begins with a broad survey in order to generalize results to a population and then focuses, in a second phase on detailed qualitative, open ended interviews to collect detailed views from participants. (Ibid, p: 21)

3.3 Data gathering technique

3.3.1 Data source:

In this study, the researcher used primary and secondary data types as a main source of information. The secondary data types are gathered from books, periodicals, internet resources, newspapers and other printed materials. And these data's are used mostly in review of literature as a way of presenting the theoretical paradigm. The primary data types in other words are collected by the means of questionnaire, interview and observation.

3.3.2 Three instruments:

A. Questionnaire:

A questionnaire was prepared to get firsthand information about journalistic deception in the study area. In order to know what the journalists think about the journalistic frauds as defined in the operational definition, the researcher had distributed a total of 122 questionnaires to the newspaper journalists and evaluates their responses based on the theoretical paradigm that is discussed in chapter two.

Before the actual survey was conducted, a pre-test was held on 6 randomly selected newspaper journalists. After the pre-test was taken place, some corrections were made to the previously prepared questionnaire. And then the final questionnaire implemented for 122 journalists. This questionnaire had two parts. The first part of the questionnaire intended to answer the background information of all informants. And the second is mainly aimed at answering the objectives of the thesis.

As the scope of the study shows, the research deals with newspapers that operate three different languages namely Amharic, English and Oromiffha. As a result of this, the researcher crafted this questionnaire in English and offer respondents a full of right to give their answer in whatever languages they prefer. In order to make the data collection process precise enough, some of the jargons that are used in the questionnaire are translated in to Amharic language. This is especially useful to make it simple for the respondents.

The two most important advantages of using questionnaire as a research tool are firstly it allows respondents to fill it up the questionnaire privately and secondly it makes the data collection process free from the interviewer bias and the visual clues to influence the respondents in a particular way, (Jahoda, M., M. Deutsch, and S. Cook, 1962).

B. Structured interview:

The other technique that the researcher has applied in the study is structured interview. The investigator has conducted structured interview with various editors and found it helpful especially in understanding the different editor's views and comparing their answers with 44 responses in the questionnaire part. Structured interview is an important tool in this research because it provides a wealth of rich information to the study. Lambert M Surhone, Miriam T Timpledon, Susan F Marseken (2010) defines a structured interview (also known as a standardized interview or a researcher administered survey) as

A quantitative research method commonly employed in survey research. The aim of this approach is to ensure that each interview is presented with exactly the same question in the same order. This insures that answer can be reliably aggregated and that comparisons

can be made with confidence between sample subgroups or between different survey periods.

Eight structured in-depth individual interviews were conducted in the study. The interviewer has worked out a set of questions in advance, and makes a use of these questions for all respondents. The interviewees were a combination of top level editors from newspapers in the study area with at list a 6 years' of experience as an editor. As there are many editors in a typical newspaper, these editors were selected from different editor position such as managing editors, news editors, political editors, column editors, etc...

C. Observation:

The third technique that has been taken as a researching technique is observation method. The investigator used this technique to find out the truth of whether news medias have their own editorial guideline or not. At the time of data collection, the researcher checked all the collected data and investigates some of the questions which need special attention such as checking whether the media house have their own editorial guide line or not, observing whether editors and journalists use these guidelines while writing their article. This is because, when media companies operate without having guidelines, journalists will find themselves doing something wrong. According to Hutton journalists' lack of familiarity with the paper's rule is one factor for the journalists to deviate from the basic standards. (Hutton, as cited in Gordon Belt 2007)

3.4 Sampling method

3.4.1 Population of the study

The population of this study includes all journalists who are working in the following newspapers namely *Capital*, *Fortune*, *Daily Monitor*, *Addis Admass*, *Awramba Times*, *Ethio-chanal*, *Reporter*, *Addis Zemen*, *Berissa* and *Ethiopian Herald*. A pilot study that is undertaken by the researcher shows that the total population of the research is insignificant in number (refer Table 3.1).

3.4.2 Sampling technique:

An appropriate research technique is important to any research as it will guide the process for collecting the desired data. In a situation where lack of time and money is prevalent, sample is the best way to study a given research problem.

In this study, the researcher has applied two sampling technique. While the first sample is practical for the informants of the questionnaire, the second sampling type is functional for the interview participants.

1. Sampling method for the respondents of questionnaire: As explained in chapter one, the respondents of questionnaire are journalists who are working in major newspapers. The number of these working journalists is small. As we can see in table 3.1, the total number of reporters reaches 122. At first the researcher have thought, it would be great if all journalists give their answer in the questionnaire and to increase its' validity, the researcher distributed a questionnaires equivalent to the number of journalists but the actual data collection showed that most of the informants are unable to fill the questionnaire due to various reasons. As a result the researcher has forced to use the responded questionnaires as a representative for the whole population. Allen Rubin explains this type of sampling method as availability non probability sampling method. Availability non-random sampling is a type of sampling that uses the available data as a sample. "Relying on available subjects-sometimes called availability sampling, accidental sampling, or convenience sampling- is a sampling method that selects elements simply because of their ready availability and convenience", (Allen R. Earl R. 2010 P. 146).

Daniel F. (2010) Chambliss an author of 'Making sense of the social world; methods of investigation' says;

An available sample is often appropriate at key points in social research- for example, when a field researcher is exploring a new setting and trying to get some sense of prevailing attitudes or when a survey researcher conducts a preliminary test of a new set of questions. Intensive qualitative research efforts also often rely on availability samples. (P. 124)

2. Sampling method for the interviewee: The participants of the interview includes top level editors such as editor-in- chief, deputy editor, Managing editor... Editors are selected to participate in the interview because they are much smaller in number than reporters. So that, it was very easy to undertake the interview effectively. In addition to this, as editors would believed to have better experience than reporters; it was appropriate to give enough chance for the editors to tell the exact culture of the news people through interview. And finally this interview was useful to cross check what the respondents of the questionnaire have said in the survey.

In order to get relevant data from the participants, snow ball non-probability sampling method has been used. Snow ball or chain sampling as explained by Mugo Fridah (n.d);

Identifies, cases of interest from people who know people who know what cases are information rich, which is good examples for study, good interview subjects. What you do is to get hold of one and he/she will tell you where the others are or can be found. When you find those others they will tell you where you can get more others and the chain continues. (Mugo Fridah W. (n.d))

For snow ball sampling, you identify one member of the population and speak to him or her, then ask that person to identify others and so on. The sample, thus, ‘snowballs’ in size. This technique is useful for hard –to –reach or hard – to identify, (Daniel F. 2010, P. 124).

In non-probability sampling method, the sample size is determined by the redundancy of information that is collected from respondents, (Yvonne S. Lincoln, 1985) says;

In purposeful sampling the size of the sample is determined by informational considerations. In the purpose is to maximize information, then sampling is determined when no new information is forthcoming from newly sampled units; thus *redundancy* is the primary criterion. (P. 202)

As a result a total of eight interviewees have been used in this research. The interviewer intentionally selected these participants from different newspaper editor position, and working experience. By doing this the researcher has able to get important viewpoints to analyze the topic in relation to the responses of the questionnaire.

3.5 Methods of Analysis

After conducting the survey, the four page questionnaires were returned to the principal researcher. Then the raw data was edited, coded, entered in to the computer and analyzed using various statistical methods. Frequency distribution, maximum and minimum score values were calculated in this software.

The analysis part is presented in the form of descriptive, tabular and graphical format. The researcher compiled all information gathered from informants and compared the answer with the theoretical paradigm.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

Throughout all the research stages, the researcher has kept most of the ethical issues. Some of the ethical issues that were implemented in this research were giving official letters for the concerned body, asking permission from the stakeholders, informing all the participants about the objective and keeping their confidentiality. In order to preserve their privacy, the researcher tries to keep the anonymity of the participants.

Chapter Four

4. Findings and Data analysis

4.1. Introduction

The main point of this chapter is to give a more in-depth analysis on the status of journalistic frauds in Ethiopian major newspapers, which are located in Addis Ababa. In this particular chapter, the researcher has tried to review the responses given by major newspaper journalists in the questionnaire, as well as in the individual interviews. The data obtained through both formats are analyzed and triangulated simultaneously, so that we might get closer to know the precise thinking of journalists in relation to journalism principles and ethics.

To begin, the finding first describes the major socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the studied groups. Following this, the research will show what major newspaper journalists have said in the questionnaire and interview sections of the study. In sum, this chapter will disclose the status of journalistic frauds in ten newspapers mentioned in the preceding chapters. Additionally, the research below will attempt to review the major factors that forced journalists to engage in journalistic frauds. Finally, it should be always be held in mind that this research is based on the information gathered from reporters and editors who are currently working in those newspapers, not those who have worked in the past.

4.2 Background characteristics of the study population

From ten major newspaper companies, the researcher was able to gather forty-four questionnaire responses and conduct eight interviews. While the interviews were held with top level editors, the questionnaires were distributed to several select reporters and some low-level editors.

The demographic and socio-economic characteristics of those questioned are summarized and presented in table 4.1. Based on confidentiality agreements made between interviewees and the researcher, the interview respondent's names are changed.

Attribution	Educational level					Marital status			Monthly salary				
	Grade 8	Grade 12	BA	MA	No (ZERO) response	single	married	separated	<1000	1000-1500	1501-2500	2501-3000	>3001
No of respondents	1	3	23	9	8	34	7	1	3	8	20	5	6

Table 4.1: Questionnaire participants and their background information

As depicted in the above table, the questionnaire participants are a combination of people from different educational backgrounds, marital statuses and incomes. According to the data, the minimum educational level is 8th grade, while the maximum is graduate level. It should also be noted that 23 people of those surveyed held BA degrees. Also of importance is the fact that many of the journalists' salaries range from 1501-2500 Ethiopian birr.

The next two demographic features focus on age distribution and years of experience. While the youngest respondent in this study is 23, the oldest is 51. The number of years that these journalists have served in their profession ranges from 3 months to 24 years, as is seen in Table 4.2.

Gender			Year of experience				Age ranges			Extra jobs	
M	F	Total	<1 year	1-5 year	6-10year	>10	23-30	31-40	>41	yes	No
39	5	44									
No of respondents			5	25	5	6	22	9	4	6	38

Table 4.2 Frequency distribution of journalist's age and their experience in professional world. NOTE: The age distribution is arranged based on convenience and does not have any connection with internationally accepted age standards.

4.3. The degree of journalistic frauds in major Newspapers

As one might assume, it would be quite difficult to obtain accurate information if journalists were asked to share their own unethical behaviors. For this reason, the researcher crafted the questionnaire in such a way that all identities were protected.

Overall, the reporters and editors were asked if they had ever observed journalistic frauds in their newspapers. The results gleaned from the respondents' answers are presented in the following table

No	Attributes	never	Few times	sometimes	Many times	Many many times	No response	Total
		Qt.	Qt.	Qt.	Qt.	Qt.	Qt.	
1	Plagiarism	20	16	6	0	1	1	44
2	Fabrication	23	9	6	0	3	3	44
3	Unfairness	10	9	11	8	4	2	44
4	Deliberate omission	17	5	9	10	2	1	44
5	unbalance	4	9	11	14	6	0	44

Table 4.3: percentage distribution of various frauds in terms of their existence in major newspapers located in Addis Ababa. Note: Qt. represents number of responded journalists

The results show that the majority of respondents have observed plagiarism, unfairness, deliberate omission and unbalanced storytelling in their newspapers. For instance, in plagiarism, the total number of people who say that they have experienced plagiarism cases in their newspapers totals 23. The result clearly shows that 20 respondents have said they have never observed or experienced plagiarism in their newspapers, while the remainder one individual left the question blank. Out of 44 surveyed journalists, 16 of respondents observed plagiarism a few times, 6 of them witnessed it sometimes, and one of the journalist have seen plagiarism many many times.

When it comes to the topic of fabrication, the results are quite different. While 23 journalists said that they had never seen fabrication cases in their newspapers, 18 respondents admitted the opposite; 3 of them did not respond to this particular question.

Unfairness is another fraud that these journalists were able to address. The question was related to whether or not they had ever seen unfairness in their newspapers. Their answers reveal that 32 informants observed unfair cases within their newspapers. 10 of the participants responded

saying that they did not know whether unfair reporting existed in their newspapers or not; the remaining two people failed to answer.

The third type of fraud that participants were asked to tell about is related to deliberate omissions. Accordingly, 26 informants confirmed that there were times that deliberate omission being practiced in their newspapers. On the other hand, 17 of 44 journalists never observed these deliberate omission cases. The rest one journalist did not respond.

The final question that all of these respondents were asked to answer, concerned unbalanced stories. According to their responses, the majority of the people (40) said that they have observed unbalanced stories in their newspapers. Only 4 of them identified with the answer “never experienced unbalanced reporting”.

Another significant issue evident in the table above has to do with the frequency of the frauds that repeatedly occurred in those newspapers. The regularity of these occurrences are seen in the following five phrases: never, a few times, sometimes, many times and many many times. Based on this information, the questionnaire informants gave the answer for how often they had been observing plagiarism, fabrication unfairness, deliberate omission and unbalanced reports.

The next question that was asked in the questionnaire concerns what journalists would think about the magnitude of each journalistic fraud in their newspaper. Their responses are summarized in the following table.

No	Types of fraud	Zero or very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Total
		Qt.	Qt.	Qt.	Qt.	Qt.	Qt.
1	Plagiarism	7	24	13	0	0	44
2	Fabrication	12	17	10	3	2	44
3	Unfairness	5	11	17	8	3	44
4	Deliberate omission	5	11	19	7	2	44
5	unbalance	1	5	11	20	7	44

Table 4.4: the degree or level of journalistic fraud in major newspaper located in Addis Ababa

As we can see in table 4.4, the highest number of journalists (24) says that the extent of plagiarism in the surveyed newspapers is low. Regarding the next two frauds, fabrication and plagiarism, the majority of respondents believed that these journalistic frauds were in a lower status. The third fraud, unfairness, according to the informants' thinking, held the medium position. Accordingly, 17 respondents admit, the level of existence for unfair reporting in their newspaper is neither low nor high. When it comes to deliberate omission, as the table demonstrates, it is akin to unfairness. 19 out of the 44 people answered that the degree of this particular fraud was neither low nor high. Finally, questionnaire respondents were given a chance to rate the amount of unbalanced stories in their newspapers. The results show that 20 respondents thought the degree of unbalanced stories in the ten newspapers was/is high. As we can see in this particular row, the second largest rating (11 people) indicates that the degree of unbalanced stories lies on the medium, not on the low nor high position.

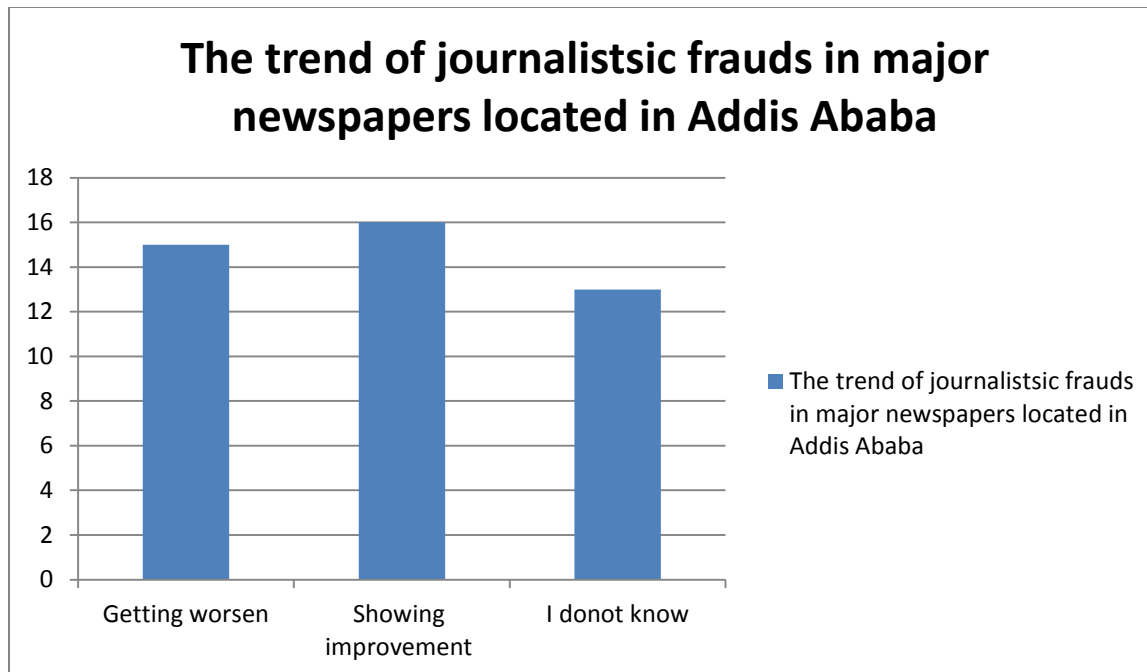
The eight top-level editors were asked to rank the highest or top two frauds that they have experienced consistently and their answers are quite similar. The rank that these editors gave is presented in the following table:

No	Attributes	Most frequently	Frequently
1	Plagiarism		2
2	Fabrication		1
3	Unfairness		2
4	Deliberate omission	3	
5	Unbalance	4	

Table 4.5 Number of editors who rank those frauds based on their regularity

As is shown in the table, unbalanced reporting and deliberate omissions are the two most frequently observed frauds by newspaper top-level editors. The results found using the interview are very similar to the founding in the questionnaire.

The next question asked to the questionnaire respondents had to do with the trends of these frauds. The aim of this question was to get an idea about these frauds and whether or not they were getting worse or showing improvement. The majority of the respondents said it is showing some improvements, however, the people who said it is getting worse, is very insignificant. While the number of journalists who said the problem is showing improvement totals 16, the fraction of respondents who agreed that these frauds were exacerbated in the major newspaper totaled 15. This figure is presented in the following chart:



4.4 Factors that force journalist to commit journalistic frauds

4.4.1 Plagiarism

After surveying 44 newspaper journalists, the researcher found 9 different factors that forced or led journalists to committing journalistic frauds. As we can see in the literature review section, many authors have pointed out there are four factors that lead journalists to copy and use others' works or efforts as their own. In this thesis, the investigator found limited knowledge or lack of skill as the first and foremost factor for journalist to commit plagiarism. From the total of 34 responses, 9 of the participants said lack of knowledge about ethics leads journalists to feel plagiarism as an undemanding problem. Birhanu's finding also shows the same thing. Most of the Ethiopian journalists who are working in the country's media are less literate in journalism Birhanu, (2006)

As one editor said;

we cannot say these will not be plagiarism in our mass media environment especially as there are journalists who do not have any idea about coherence, flow, composition, and how to write good stories (a deputy editor-in-chief from one of the government newspapers)

The second big factor, as illustrated in table 4.7, is carelessness and lack of passion for the profession. 6 informants replied laziness, negligence, lack of passion, carelessness, and lack of commitment contributed a lot for this type of fraud.

No	Factors	No of people
1	Lack of academic skill	9
2	Carelessness, lack of desire for the profession	6
3	A need to become famous or be admired by others	5
4	Lack of sources and or information due to limited connection	4
5	Deadline pressure	3
6	Work pressure	2
7	Easy access to internet	2
8	Unawareness	2
9	Being irresponsible	1
Total		34

Table 4.7 some of plagiarism factors in major newspaper located in Addis Ababa

According to one private newspaper editor, the reason behind carelessness is the great exhaustion that the nature of the profession creates. John Seidenberg describes this in the following statement: “Careless, clumsy, inexplicable, and an oversight done obliviously, as a result of fatigue” (John Seidenberg, 2010). As reporters become more careless, negligent, ignorant, and less committed to their profession, they participate in frauds like plagiarism.

The other more important factors which is revealed in this study is, the reporters’ own psychology determining their behavior to plagiarize the work of others. What 5 of the questionnaire participants have agreed up on is that reporter’s personal behaviors has a direct influence in their story and affect the way journalists report by driving them to write un attributed stories. Among these psychological factors, a need to become famous, lover by the readers, a great interest to be admired by others, a desire to get appreciation from bosses are the main driving factor for them to pirate a stories.

One deputy editor for one of Addis Ababa's private newspapers, adds a physiological reason to plagiarism: "If the story is somewhat eye catching, reporters tend to plagiarize, with the intention of getting many fans."

When the reporter's knowledge about a specific news event is limited, there is a greater tendency to plagiarize. This is the fourth factor identified in this study. According to respondents, the problem of plagiarism will be aggravated if the reporters cannot find enough sources. Four of the total informants believe lack of source or information due to limited rapport with many potential sources often leads to plagiarism.

One government newspaper editor says, "[The] lack of information affects not only reporters, but also editors. If the editor knows little about the story there will be a high degree of the plagiarized statement to get publicized."

The next factor, according to the research, is deadline pressure. In this regard, three of the research subjects revealed that a shortage of time upturns the magnitude of the practice of plagiarism in the Ethiopian newspaper environment, (Mick Walker, 2005, P. 100) argues that when deadline pressure is intense, the possibility for newspaper plagiarism increases.

According to one private newspaper deputy editor, journalists try to cope the problem of deadline pressure by plagiarizing other's work. "Sometimes in order to save time and get stories ready for tomorrow's publication. You might copy and paste an article from other media outlets. Sometimes if you think the newspaper will get a lot of free spaces, you may fill it up by copying stories from the others."

A government newspaper editor on his side describes the reason behind the concept of deadline pressure. In his experience, deadline pressure at daily newspaper companies has a positive correlation, in which the incidence of plagiarism increases as deadline pressure increases.

Our task is to produce competent story with in a short period of time. This is because; we need to get many stories available for the readers daily. Sometimes journalists take verbatim, news from press releases, and contents from PR magazines for granted. Personally, I believe, the way we practice the profession should not be like this. In every day task of the journalist, there should always be the reporter effort in the story.

When the reporter writes a story in his own word and interpretation, the story will have a kind of test but in practice what all of us are practicing is that we just copy all the press release and publicize it without acknowledging the original writer. (One editor in chief, who works in a private newspaper)

The sixth factor that gets 2 of the total respondent's agreement is work pressure or loaded work. In this particular factor, journalists were able to say exactly what work pressure means to them and they said journalists who have lots of assignment will be pressured to bring a copy of stories from books and websites.

One private newspaper editor says "for a reporter who gets a lot of assignments, it is very handy to directly copy from websites and translate it in to *Amharic* language than going through a lot of research processes and come up with original work. Generally, translated stories are comfortable for plagiarism, as to thinking no one will find the translated story in search engines." (Deputy Editor from one of the major private newspapers)

He also says, "Sometimes the editor might pressure the reports to come up with an adorable story, which is actually beyond the reporter capability. In this case the reporter will get handy to copy and paste other authors work" Ibid.

While the researcher was trying to observe some of the newspapers, he found one plagiarism case. The story was about the most accurate definition of globalization. The story was released first in an audio lecture called, "Why Isn't the Whole World Developed?" by Anton Allahar from the Sociology department at the University of Western Ontario on March 2, 2009. The story was completely duplicated and publicized without proper referencing in the *Awramba Times* on March 30, 2011 inside the title of 'Globalization and princes Diana.' (Awramba times year 4 number 165 Saturday March 30, 2011, Page 11).

Wilson, as cited in Jane Johnston, calls this kind of plagiarism a 'repetition', which simply means copying from unacknowledged source (Jane Johnston, P: 2.). Such plagiarism can lead to compromising the integrity of not only the writer but also the publication they are representing. 'Repetition' is a serious offense that can lead to firing or a punishable offense.

A long serving editor from a private English language newspaper remembers a recent case about how one reporter cheated him by copying a story from the internet.

“A few months ago, I sent a guy to report about Ethiopian premier league. Then he brought an amazing story with very good English. I just become suspicious because I knew him very well and his English was not good at all. So what I did was, I googled via the internet and found a similar story written in the same flow and composition. What makes his story different were the names of the team and players.” (Editor in chief from a private newspaper)

The next factor behind plagiarism is the temptation with easy access of information from internet. In other words, information over the web is very easy to retrieve and use. This situation, as some respondents express, encourages journalists to plagiarize. An editor, who works in government newspaper, stated:

“When we see a reporter writing a different writing style that he/she never did before, our doubt raises. You might observe a different content, style, composition, flow, and coherence from the reporter which is unfamiliar and different from what he/she used to write. When I face such kinds of cases I stop and start to inquire the reporters. I also search the content in Wikipedia and some other known web pages. Through these methods I have found many plagiarized stories” (Deputy editor in chief from one of the government newspapers).

What Richard Keeble once said in his literature is similar to this finding. “The internet, which provides reporters a lot of material or resources, can be a treat for the profession.” Richard Keeble, (2001 p: 44).

Unawareness is the next factor behind plagiarism. According to two informant’s, journalists plagiarize without knowing they are actually plagiarizing. The Convectional academic writing theory, by Wilson, discusses the idea of how difficult it is to avoid plagiarism. “Ideas are synthesized to make an argument and a new academic package but are the ideas new?” (Jane Johnston, P: 2)

The last factor of plagiarism as identified by questionnaire participants, journalists who are irresponsible in their behavior tends to plagiarize in their stories. In principle, journalists should be responsible and honest for the reader. Due to the fact that telling accurate facts are exactly one of the ten journalism’s commandments, (Karen, 2003, P: 43).

One private newspaper editor remembers a time when journalists were doing their task carelessly when he stated, “a few years ago journalists were copying a story written by famous Ethiopian writers such as *Daneil Kibret*, *Ephrem Endale*. This showed me; journalists were irresponsible especially in giving credit for the original writers” (Deputy Editor in one private newspaper)

In addition to factors that are identified by questionnaire participants, some interviewees have raised additional factors which they think is another determinant issue for the journalists to plagiarize. The factor that they pointed out during interviews is exhaustion. As one editor shares, “working in the newspaper by its nature leads into some sort of tiredness. Doing the same thing every day will let journalists to get bored or feel carelessness.” (A deputy editor for one Amharic newspaper)

Editors were asked to give their opinion on how to minimize plagiarism in their newspapers. Accordingly, the following solutions are suggested by the interviewees (1) letting journalists access information. (2) Increasing the work force as one editor claims, “most newspaper companies operate their daily task using four or five journalists.” (3) Increased work pressure since journalist are expected to write as many articles as possible. (4) Showing professionalism in journalism. As one private Amharic newspaper editor recommends, “journalists should come out of the customary practices and join professionalism. When journalists become professional, they respect others’ work, they write what they have seen and they will not fear anything to stand on the side of the people” (5) Editors should not publish anything that is directly from the internet such as a blog or Wikipedia because facts are not specifically accurate. (6) Editors should reject any story that does not give proper creditor to a source. (7) The use of an experienced editor. Many editors put forward the importance of having an experienced editor. This is because as editors become more experienced, they will detect a lot of frauds and save the newspaper from many crises. (8) The hiring of only capable or skilled journalists. Many of the interviewees advices that journalists plagiarize because they do not have a skill or capacity to produce an attractive story.

In addition to editors, reporters were asked what would be a good solution to alleviate this problem. The following suggestions are extracted from 26 responded questionnaires.

No	Solutions	No of people who suggested the following solutions
1	Capacity building	11
2	Having experienced or good editors	5
3	Having a journalist, a responsible journalist	4
4	Having guideline that promotes proper attribution	3
5	Punishment	1
6	Giving enough time to finish their stories	1
7	Hiring enough work force	1
8	Having as many contacts as possible	1
9	Total	27

Table 4.8: frequency distribution of solutions to prevent plagiarism

From the above table what we can understand is that the highest number of people (11) believes capacity building will lessen the problem of plagiarism.

4.4.2 Fabrication

The questioners’ participants were able to give their opinion about the possible factors of fabricating news stories. Consequently, the following lists of factors are fond.

No	Factors	Qt.
1	Carelessness	10
2	A desire to be loved by others	5
3	Political view and affiliation	3
4	Lack of sources	3
5	Work pressure	2
6	Lack of journalistic skill	2
7	Corruption	1
8	To advocate propaganda	1
9	Deadline pressure	1
10	Total	28

Table 4.9: shows some of the factors and number of people who agrees on the specific factor in descending order.

The above table clearly shows that the participants identified nine factors for fabrication. Out of these factors, the main reason for the journalists to commit blasphemy is lack of interest or carelessness holds the highest ratings. Ten people in this study admitted that the first big factor for the problem of blasphemy is carelessness or lack of interest for the profession to make their profession respectful contributes a lot for this fabrication.

The next factor, as explained by the questionnaire participants, is related to the journalists' psychological desire to get a lot of affection from the audiences as well as immediate bosses. In order to do that, they write very attractive fictional stories. Journalists fabricate stories because they enjoyed to be admired, loved by their staff, bosses, and by the readers (Ivor Shapiro, 2006). They even will have a personal agenda to convey, and promote what they intended to say. Hence, the easiest way to do that is creating stories. From the total of 28 people questioned, 5 Of them believed journalists' own interest affect the way this practitioners write. One private newspaper editor strengthens the factor that is raised by questionnaire respondents by saying;

Sometimes when journalists' wants to get their voice heard, they just add something that is unreal and totally fake. For example, a journalist who wants to create some sort of negative or positive image about Ethiopian health coverage might first compare the

Ethiopian health coverage with that of Kenya by providing a false statistical data as premises and manipulate the data as he/ she likes to be.

The third factor is related with a political view point. Three of the questioner informants in this study believed that political affiliation and the newspapers' political agenda itself can affect the journalists' honesty. One government newspaper editor explains this when stating, "Sometimes journalists try to please the government officials by writing something that advocates the governments' ideology. In order to do that they sometimes fabricate and say what they want to say". (A government newspaper deputy editor in chief) According to informants when sources become unwilling to cooperate with the reporters, or when there is few or no sources at all the reporter will be obliged to write the story on its own. This leads him to fabricate part of the story.

Work pressure is another factor for fabrication. A reporter who had many pressures from his boss may indeed end up fabricating a story. Questionnaire informants revealed Steven Glass's case has a very similar effect in Ethiopian newspaper environment. Another English private newspaper remembers one case in her newspaper.

"One day, a tipster leaks me a nice news idea. At first I liked the idea. Thus, I sent a reporter to bring me detail information. A few days later the reporter came up with detail information but with a very few sources in it. However, I kept forcing him to add at least five supportive sources. What he did at the end was terrible, he fabricated the sources"

Lack of journalistic skills is also one factor for blasphemy. A private newspaper editor agrees on this point and says "a person who doesn't know how to write, what to write will fabricate a news story." This factor can be easily worked out with simple research and hard work.

Corruption is the other big idea that these informants raised in this study. They said, as journalists' involved in bribery journalism, they tend to ignore the ethics and make blasphemy. A senior editor in one of the government newspaper says "journalists sometimes create a relationship with an organization and negotiate to write fabricated achievements of the organization." What has been discussed in the literature review shows the same thing. For instance a research study by *Bribery Journalism in Ethiopia*, one interviewee said "Advertisers pay rental fees for the journalists, they buy computers and then ask them to publicize whatever they say."

The last factor these people raised is lack of time to gather the whole picture of the actual event. As one editor explains, “we operate newspaper in a situation that time pressure prevails. As a result, some lazy reporters may bring a fabricated story just to fill the space.” He also added “that fabrication is very common in feature or entertainment section than news because feature articles requires a lot of space and indeed the reporter will fill the gap by inserting his/her personal opinion, which mostly consists a faked report”

Some of the Solutions raised in the survey to minimize blasphemy

The following solutions are gathered from eight top level editors via structured interview. (1) A good editor who can check and crosscheck the sources. (2) An educated and passionate journalists. (3) Using recorded evidences. (4) Giving attention to letters to the editors

The following table shows some the methods to lessen fabrication in newspapers. The solutions are gathered from questionnaire participants.

No	Solutions	Qt.
2	Editors should be knowledgeable and critical thinker	4
6	Educating	3
4	Letting journalist to do one assignment at a time and giving enough time to the reporters to search different books and sources	2
1	Access to information	1
3	Strict editorial policy	1
5	Encouraging a committed journalists to his/her profession	1
Total		12

Table 4.10: some of the recommended solutions to minimize blasphemy

4.4.3 Unfairness

The next topic deals with the major factors that push journalists to be unfair in their writings. We start our discussion with following table. The factors that are listed in the table are gathered from 38 responded journalists and the finding is presented as follows.

No	Factors	Qt.
3	Lack of journalistic skills,	12
2	Being biased	7
5	Political view	4
9	Lack of knowledge about the subject matters	4
4	Carelessness	3
11	Corruptions	2
1	Lack of guideline	1
6	lack of balanced information, or sources	1
7	Owners pressure	1
8	Censorship	1
10	A desired to be admired(loved)	1
12	Lack of experience in angle selection	1
Total		38

Table 4.11: frequency distribution and percentage of factors for unfair reporting in major newspapers

As depicted in the above table the major factor that leads journalists to be unfair is a lack of journalistic skills. According to the surveyed journalists in 10 newspapers, 12 journalists said a capacity problem and or lack of knowledge is the largest contributor for unfairness to occur. The research subjects also indicated that this problem also includes lack of knowledge about the subject matter and less experience on how to report the news. A private newspaper deputy editor had one experience “I sent a guy to report on the judicial process of the week. What he finally brought to me was totally unfair from the plaintiff side at that moment I concluded his position to report in the court would be impossible unless I gave him some training.” However, another editor admits unfairness is the result of low academic quality. He says “what we call ‘unfairness

and unbalanced stories', all of these have strong ties with the education quality of the country. As the quality starts to decline, the media practitioners fail to exercise the profession well."

An editor's bias to report the truth is the second most factors for unfairness. In this study showing preferential treatment can be expressed if the story is written with exaggerated facts, distorted evidences, and using too many adjectives. From 38 responses 7 of them agree journalists' bias will make the story unfair. One editor discloses:

"If the Media does not want a particular person or organization to be glorified, then the media can intentionally portray them negatively. Their positive reputation will not be displayed. I remember many cases regarding this. I remember many newspapers publicized a story of opposition parties fighting but hiding the fact that these opposition parties have done for the people so far. We publicized a famous person being accused but hiding his achievement to get a big prize.... All of these are unfair but we still practice as a good thing" (Private newspaper deputy editor)

On the contrary, to one English newspaper editor says, "There is no such thing about fairness. We all are doing business. Whoever gets the best headline and story gets the market. It is an information business. You have to ask what does the public want to read and the public has a reason to buy your newspaper. If you think you will make more money by framing the story into a special angle, do it! Because after all newspaper is a question of having the money or losing the money, the question of death or survival"

The third factor, which contributes to a journalist to write unfair stories, is their own political views or affiliation. Four people out of 38 respondents' said, their political affiliations, affect the way journalist write a story. One editor said, "Newspapers, who support party 'A' will exaggerate the story about party 'A' and give a lot of space for its' achievement. As the same time, newspapers will down party 'B' just because of its' political view" (a private newspaper editor) On the other hand another editor says, "There are special occasions that political view will affect a story." According to him, one occasion is 'election times'. "During election times, the tension to write unfair story will increase."

Paul Harper (2008) explains about the factor for unfairness, is exactly the same to this point. He says, “when journalists faced with sensitive issues like war, or election, the possibility of their story to be slanted to one side will increase.”

The fourth factor is lack of knowledge about the subject matter. Due to various reasons, news sources might be unwilling to reveal any evidence, or there would be few or no sources to balance the fact. Sometimes in a story which involves two opposing groups, there would be plenty of sources for one group and there would not be nearly enough sources for the other. In this case, unfair reporting will be mixed up in the final story. As a result, the facts will not best explain the actual event. One private newspaper editor explain, “getting a smaller size of sources for the idea that a journalists do not support is not only practicing unfairness but also effects the quality of the source that the reporter chose has a determinant factor for unfairness. Basically there is a deliberate source selection in journalism that leaves out the entirety of the facts.

Being careless to write the proper fact is an additional problem.. Accordingly, three of the surveyed journalists put carelessness as the fifth factor. Many would consider the insufficient attention to detail only adds to this. A lack of accountability in supervision is needed to solve the problem.

Two of the respondents admitted corruption as the source of unfairness in their newspaper. Similar factors for unfairness also consists of lack of editorial policy (guidelines), balanced information, or sources, censorship, lack of experience in angle selection, owners pressure, desire to be loved, or admired by bosses. Each one of these smaller factors has chosen by one respondent to be the reason for journalists’ unfairness.

There explanations for the smaller factors stated above. One government newspaper editor says “As we always work on a daily basis, the deadline pressure is higher compared to private newspapers; and therefore we might get difficulty to cover both sides of the story. When things happen like this, we may contact one person directly and the other via telephone, this creates unfairness problem in our story. During election times journalists might write unfair news. A private newspaper journalist says “on election times journalists may write a lot of positive things for one party and at the same time they might criticize the other one.” There are many factors for

unfairness that goes even beyond the scope of those stated in this paper which are fair to vast to disclose.

In another conducted survey, journalists were asked to give their comment on how to solve unfairness in their newspaper. According to the interview and questionnaire result, the following are some of the solutions to reduce unfair reporting.

No	Solutions	Qt.
1	Education, capacity building	8
2	Having a good editors	3
3	Giving freedom for journalists	2
4	Giving enough time to cover all sides of the story	1
5	Try to include all involved party's voice	1
Total		15

4.4.3 Unbalanced story

The next part of the research deals with the main factors or causes that force journalists to write unbalanced stories. Based on 38 responses from questionnaire participants, and eight interviews the following factors are identified.

No	Factors	Qt.
1	Lack of sources due to few contact, lack of information,	12
7	Political influence or political affiliation	8
11	Being biased, having personal agenda	5
2	Lack of journalistic skills	4
4	Deadline pressure	3
5	Tradition of the newspaper itself	1
6	Lack of editorial policy	1
8	Fear of punishment	1
9	Owners pressure	1
10	Laziness	1
12	Advertisers pressure	1
Total		38

Table 4.12: frequency distribution and percentage of unbalance in major newspaper located in Addis Ababa

The above table shows that the first and far most factor that leads journalists to write an unbalanced story is unavailability of sources or lack of sources because of few contacts that the reporters have. 12 people out of 38 responded questionnaires indicate that lack of sources to balance a controversial issue is the major problem. According to these respondents, having few contacts, is also part of the reason why journalists write unbalanced stories.

One private newspaper editor says “in order to balance the news, the reporters and editors should strive to find and include expertise voice as well as different involved parties in to our stories.” Another editor from the private newspaper on the other hand argues “balancing is not only about getting voices of two sides of a story but also answering all questions. You have to balance the issue that you are discussing; selecting an impotent person is unnecessary in here. If you did so, you are not balancing the story.”

The second factor is political affiliation. Eight surveyed people pointed out that political affiliation and or political views have its own influence on a journalist’s overall task. They said

journalists who have more contact with one political party tend to be more inclined and write in favor of that party. One ex-private newspaper editor says;

“Political articles have never been balanced in our newspaper. We either support one party or criticize the other. You can observe this unbalance in two ways. One the space, we give for our favorite party is more than the space we give for the other one and two the content we include for the party that we support is more positive than the opposite party”

The other factor, which makes up 13.2% of the journalists surveyed pointed out that journalists who have their own agenda might twist the story and make it unbalanced. What one private editor says in the interview is similar to this. He said, “a journalist who wants to transmit his own agenda will only stress on information that he wants to advocate.” This is an unfortunate reality.

Capacity problem (lack of skill) to balance a story is the next big factor. 10.6% of the surveyed journalists in this study have identified that lack of knowledge affects journalistic quality of writing. A private newspaper editor says “sometimes journalists cannot balance their story because they do not have the ‘know how’ to balance the story. They do not even know what exactly balance is”

Another editor from an English private newspaper also agrees with what the Amharic editor stated above. He said “quality of education in Ethiopia in general is getting worse. Journalism is one of the professions that goes to its lowest point in terms of quality. One can easily observe this effect in the day-to-day performance of the journalists.”

Based on the survey, the other factor next to capacity problem is deadline pressure. This idea is when journalists operate on their task in a tight schedule. As a result their ability to balance the whole story will become more. 7.9% of people, from 38 surveyed journalists, think this is the case. In supporting this idea, two government newspaper editors argue, this factor is more problematic when the newspaper publicizes its content on a daily basis. According to them, this is because news has to be ready every day and creates a time pressure on journalists. As a result, journalists fail to balance the content.

The remaining factors listed by the surveyed journalists include tradition of the media outlets, unavailability of editorial policy, fear of punishment, owners' pressure, advertisers' pressure and journalists own laziness.

Some of the solutions to reduce the problem of unbalance

The following points discussed on the solutions that journalists think they are indispensable to reduce the problem of unbalanced stories. The results are found through questioner and interview technique.

Some of the solutions raised by journalists are; (1) having or revising editorial policy, (2) educating (giving training to journalists), (3) giving enough time to the reporter to cover all sides of the story, (4) a paradigm (ideological) shift to enable government medias to report on the failure of the government, (5) having a critical thinker editor, (6) having as many reporters as possible, (7) and contacting the opposite party's' directly.

4.4.3 Omission

The final topic that this research will attempt to find out is, the factors that lead journalists to omit parts of a given story. The findings come up with 11 different reasons for omission.

No	Factors	Qt.
1	Fear of consequences	9
2	Political view	8
3	Editorial policy restriction,	3
4	Lack of detail information,	3
5	Laziness and carelessness	3
6	Corruption	1
7	Bias	1
8	Deadline pressure	1
9	Lack of awareness	1
Total		30

Table 4.13: Frequency distribution of factors that lead journalists to omit and their percentage

From the above table it is clearly written that fear is the primary reason for journalist to omit part of a story. 9 people from 30 responses indicated that fear to lose job, fear of punishment, fear of going to jail, fear of politics contribute for many deliberate omission.

A private newspaper editor says, “A media house, who mistreat and create a fear over his employees will take away journalists freedom. In principle this freedom is fundamental for the journalists to tell the truth.” This is unfortunate in our day and age. However this is a grim reality that must be confronted.

The second factor for deliberate omission in Ethiopian newspaper environment is political factors. Eight of the respondents from this survey agree politics is another major factor for journalists to omit facts. Most of these respondents say journalists, who are “loyal” for a party they support, will hide some facts they think will hurt the specific party. An editor from private newspaper told to the researcher that he has seen so many cases from some other newspapers that support this finding. According to him this is the influence of politics and he said “if you think, the gov’t will be angry by the fact you publicize, you would rather prefer to omit the fact.”

The third factor related to deliberate omission in this thesis is editorial policy restriction. Out of 30 responses, 3 of them said if the story contradicts with what the editorial policy says the story will get omitted. One editor from one of the government newspaper says:

The main objective for the presence of this newspaper is to promote the country’s positive side and best achievements. This is written in the editorial policy of the newspaper. Therefore, this media does not have a place for any other information that contradicts with this policy. You cannot publicize anything here without first; understanding the sources, second, knowing their objectives, and finally anticipating the future consequences of the story. I can tell you this with a good example. A few months ago, the BBC production team produced a documentary about *Gilgel Gibe* dam. Their angle was about the farmers that are damaged by the project. We did the same story but in different angle, by portraying the story in brighter manner. However the BBC reporters did that story by stressing only on the negative sides. You will make stories based on the objective that your newspaper stands for. Otherwise you have to be sure that you have asked and got information from the alternative officials.

The other factor next to editorial restriction is lack of detail to information. 3 out of 30 responded journalists pointed this factor as the possible reason for journalists to omit facts. One editor from one of the government newspaper agrees with this point. He says “if the information is not enough to explain the event, it is preferable that you omit the information.” This can easily be remedied with careful research and taking the time to examine the proper sources.

The next factor that is raised by questioner respondents was capacity problem. As stated by one journalists, “Journalists, who lack the knowledge and experience to write a good story, might omit several useful pieces of information. Since their capacity to understand and report every event accurately is limited, I guess my reporters will omit something in any news assignment too” There are times that reporters will not understand the issue that is being discussed and because of that they may omit important facts. Unless reporters understand the case, it would be difficult for them to interpret and make meaning out of it.

Deadline pressure is another factor playing into deliberate omission. “Journalists who are feeling pressure from the editor may end up sacrificing the finished story and submitting the unfinished one” (A private newspaper editor). The idea is journalists who cannot finish the story on time and are urged by the editor urged finish it up will be pressured to write a faked report.

Corruption was also raised as a factor for omission. Regarding the case of corruption, one private newspaper editor complains that journalist’ lower payments resulting in blasphemy. He believes Ethiopian journalists are the most unpaid people as compared to what they are doing. Some common practices of this corruption are:

Companies (advertisers) pay rental fees for them; they buy computers for them and then ask them to publicize whatever they say... Writers are being bought to produce an article on the columns which they put totally under the control of the company or advertiser. (Bribery journalism in Ethiopia).

The next factor that is discussed in this study is the journalists’ bias as a main source of deliberate omission. One editor from a government newspaper argues “if a journalist becomes mad at the source he/she will omit important facts and produce something that has a different angle.” A journalist, who does not want to disseminate a good achievement of a person or organization, will omit the story of achievements.

The remaining factors, that become disclosed in this study includes; bias, deadline pressure, and lack of awareness. According to the response given from 30 informers, one respondent for each factor pointed out the above factors also pressure journalists to omit facts.

The following factors are additional factors that were found in the interview process of some newspaper editors. The first one is advertisers' pressure. One private newspaper editor says "there is no way to publicize the negative side of your advertisers" he said "without the advertisers presence there would not be newspaper at all." One editor who has had his own newspaper a few years ago remembers a deliberate omission. He says. "One day I got an article that explains how corrupted a guy from Ethiopian sport federation is. At first I was very interested to publicize the fact but letter that guy asks our main advertiser to tell me not publicize it. Then, immediately I stop to publish the story." During interviewing the newspaper top level editors, the researcher has able to get the same cases from two newspaper editors. The story was about a man, who owns a big business center being accused by tax authority.

The next factor found while the researcher conduct interview is fulfilling personal interest. An editor who told this factor to the researcher says,

"One time a company accused us after we publicized a defamatory statement about that company. Then, we called the project manager and said 'if you try to continue with the accusation, we will publicize another story and will damage the reputations about the story' then, he just stopped and said

let's negotiate about it'... we finally skip the story"

Another reason, according to one private newspaper editor, is; if editors think the story will reduce the number of readers, they will tear the copy and throw it to the trash. This impart is due to the fact that editors have the pressure of creating stories of what sells to the public. If something is not of interest they make second guess why they should be writing a specific story in the first place.

Self-censorship was also the one that these editors labeled as a hidden factor to deliberate omission. They said if the reporter guesses, the editor will not accept part of the story, they will omit that story and bring a story that is more acceptable according to the editor's standards. Fear

and the newspaper's established culture are the primary reasons for reporters to censor themselves.

Reporters and editors were asked to provide their opinion about the possible solutions to elevate deliberate omission. Accordingly, the following points are some of the solutions raised by respondents.

No	solutions	Qt.
3	Educating, giving orientation (training) for journalists, educating journalistic ethics	5
4	Having editorial policy or using editorial policy	3
1	Having ethical editor, having an editor who is dedicated to listen the Whole recorded voice	3
6	Ensuring freedom of press even by writing against the government policies, (if the policy is not important)	2
5	Stories should be written according to public interest	2
2	Avoiding bias	1
7	Avoiding self-censorship	1
Total		17

Table 4.14: Some solutions pointed out by questionnaire respondents

Solutions rid journalism of deliberate omission

There are many creative solutions to rid the journalism world of deliberate omission. Such solutions may include (1) Having independent newspaper (independent from politics, advertisers, and publisher's interest) (2) Give access to a sufficient amount of information. (3) A confident and literate journalist and (4) freedom of press/expression.

Chapter Five

Conclusion and recommendation

Media ethics is the guide for journalist's daily operation. When its media practitioners deviate from the normal standard, the quality and indeed the power of media goes to a minimum level. Among these ethical issues, plagiarism, fabrication, unfairness, omission and reporting a story in an unbalanced manner affect the public's trust towards the practitioners.

The objective of the study was intended to see whether these frauds exist in major newspapers located in Addis Ababa or not. And if it exists, how widely spread in those newspapers. Furthermore, the aim was to explore the main factors that contributed a lot for the exacerbating of the problem.

The building block of the research frame was the interview that is given by the famous longest serving editor of the news of the world newspaper. In his interview Phill says; "one of the most frustrating parts of working on the now is lack of trust the public has for journalists."

For the profession that entirely depends only on truth this is not a simple expression; or not a simple thing that we can pass without questioning. This is nothing but a matter of survival or extinction for the profession.

Based on the fact raised by Phill the researcher wanted to check the Ethiopian journalism practice in relation to truth telling and their commitment to preserve the standard. Even though the magnitude of its existence differs, the study has found the journalistic frauds namely plagiarism, fabrication, unfairness deliberate omission and writing unbalanced stories exist in Ethiopian major newspaper environment.

Accordingly, unbalanced way of writing, unfairness and deliberate omission holds the top position in terms of its existence. As cited in Richard Keeble, the British social attitudes survey revealed only a small number of newspaper readers in British believe stories written in newspapers. The finding shows 85% of newspaper audiences lost their trust on newspaper. This is because of the many frauds that are repeatedly practiced by journalists.

Despite there must be concrete evidence on what the Ethiopian newspaper readers think about the profession, the assumption and the finding in this study leads us to speculate there will be a low level of public trust towards journalist in Ethiopia too. In spite of the fact that most respondents think the problem of this frauds are showing some improvements, the problem still exists in the big newspapers. Some of the factors discussed in this study include:

- Lack of skill as a main factor for plagiarism
- Laziness, lack of interest to the profession and or carelessness is the other big issues raised under fabrication
- The third point that we need to stress is about the main factor for unfairness that is capacity problem or lack of skills.
- The main cause for journalists to write unbalanced story is identified. According to respondents the main reason is lack of sources due to few contacts
- The last big issue that contribute a lot for omission in those newspaper goes to fear of consequences
- The common factors for all frauds as pointed out by the participants of the study include lack of knowledge or skill, carelessness, deadline pressure, work pressure lack of information

Based on the above factors, the research participants were able to give possible solutions to lessen the complications. The solutions are explained in chapter four more deeply but in here the researcher wanted to give personal recommendations for various stakeholders.

- Every media houses ought to work hard on the capacity building program. According to Birhanu's (2006) survey of 100 journalists in the Ethiopian media, 47.8 percent of the respondents were found to have an educational background in language studies and literature.
- Motivating journalists to love their occupation is another solution to raise the standard and make the profession trustful

- Journalists themselves have to work hard to have as many contacts as possible, through this way, it will be easy for them to find enough information what they are looking for
- The government and other conserved bodies have to be very cooperative to insure a freedom of press. This is a main tool for journalists to write the truth without fear
- The newspapers companies have to be committed to develop its own editorial guideline and make use of it.
- Even though editors are acting as a gatekeeper that checks the availability of frauds in the reporters copy, the existence of some frauds give some insight about the necessity of developing and using editorial policies.
- The owners of the newspaper also have to hire many professionals so that the deadline and or work pressure will be reduced

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