



**Addis Ababa University**

**Graduate School of Journalism and Communication**

**Department of Public Relations and Strategic Communication**

**Examining Strategic Communication practice in Federal Ethics and  
Anti-Corruption Commission of Ethiopia (FEACC)**

**By: Addis Lemma**

**July, 2019**

**Addis Ababa**

**Examining Strategic Communication practice in Federal Ethics and  
Anti-Corruption Commission of Ethiopia (FEACC)**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Journalism and  
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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master  
of Arts in Public Relations and Strategic Communication**

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**July, 2019**

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## **Declaration**

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis entitled: Examining Strategic Communication practice in Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission of Ethiopia (FEACC) and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Public Relation and Strategic Communication is my original work and all the sources of materials used for the thesis have been acknowledged.

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved father and mother, Lemma Yadete and Hirpe Wakenie, who passed away without seeing this achievement. May the Almighty God Rest Your Soul in Peace.



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## **Abstract**

Corruption is a world-wide phenomenon and one of the major global threats now-a-days. In most developing countries corruption is a common incident both in private and governmental institutions. As in many other parts of the developing world, corruption has been taking roots and causing problems in Ethiopia as well. The aim of this study is examining the practice of strategic communication of Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (FEACC).

The study employed qualitative case study research methods to answer the research questions. In-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis were used as data gathering instruments. With regard to sample size, the study employed in-depth interviews with 21 people and organized three FGDs. Totally 40 people participated in the research. All the participants were selected by purposive sampling technique.

The data gathered through different tools was thematically analyzed mainly based on Van Ruler's 8 building blocks of Strategic Communication Frame. But the analysis of the data was not bound to a specific theory or model. The theoretical frameworks, the models and empirical concepts were utilized as a guide to the analysis and making sense of the data.

The findings of this study showed that even though some encouraging achievements have been made, there have been gaps in practicing strategic communication in the fighting against corruption. The vision and mission of the commission among the employees and stakeholders has been a gap yet in the commission. Moreover, poor internal communication, limited communication channels, lack of communication strategy, poor utilization of media especially social media, traditional one-way communication approach, lack of professional knowledge and technical skills, lack of necessary materials, budget, professional research were identified as the major gaps of the strategic communication practice.

Based on the findings some relevant recommendations that would contribute to the improvement of strategic communication practice of FEACC have been put forward.

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background of the study

There is a general agreement that there is “no adequate one-line definition of corruption and its multi-faceted nature mean that there probably never will be” (Brown & Cloke, 2004, p. 284). However, this does not stop most actors in the anti-corruption industry from utilizing a one-line definition. The most important actors in the anti-corruption movement, the World Bank and Transparency International have employed working definitions, as “the abuse of public office for private gain” (World Bank [WB], 1997, p. 19) and “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain” (Transparency International [TI], 2018). The definition of corruption is explained more in the next chapter of this thesis.

Corruption is a world-wide phenomenon and one of the major global threats now-a-days. As noted by Gupta and Mishra (2007)“...corruption is universal, that it has existed at all times and in every society, and that it will persist as long as human nature does not change” (p.169). Although corruption is a universal phenomenon, it is a more serious matter in developing countries.

In most developing countries corruption is a common incident both in private and governmental institutions. It undermines the rule of law, hampers performance of public institutions and delivery of public services, reduces local and foreign investment, promotes market inefficiency and misallocation of resources, undermines optimal resource allocation and challenges the authority of states (Pope, 1997).

As in many other parts of the developing world, corruption has been taking roots and causing problems in Ethiopia as well. Cognizant of the growing danger, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) established the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission of Ethiopia (FEACC) in May 2001 by proclamation No. 235/2001 (as amended by proclamation No.433/2005 and No. 833/2015) mainly with a mandate to promote ethics and anti-corruption

education, prevent corruption, investigate and prosecute corruption offences. Recently the prosecution and investigation powers given to the FEACC under its establishment proclamations transferred to the Federal Attorney General (FAG) and Federal Police Commission (FPC) respectively by a proclamation No.943/2016.

As stated on the commission's Annual Report, the commission has a vision of ensuring that corruption is no longer an impediment to enhancing development and good governance in the country by curbing corruption (2016, p.7). Its current mission is in cooperation with relevant bodies, to ensure transparency and accountability in public offices, public enterprises and public organizations by promoting ethics and anti-corruption education, mobilizing the public against corruption, conducting assets registration and disclosure undertakings and preventing corruption and impropriety (p.7). The commission has also the following objectives which are focused on corruption prevention works.

- In cooperation with relevant bodies, to strive to create an aware society where corruption will not be condoned or tolerated by promoting ethics and anti-corruption education;
- In cooperation with relevant bodies, to prevent corruption offences and other improprieties.

The works of corruption prevention in FEACC include sensitizing and raising public awareness or promotion of ethics; study the working procedures in various institutions to secure the revisions of methods of work which may be conducive to corruption.

Registration of assets and other financial interests of public officials and other selected public employees is also part of its corruption prevention activities. The other prevention activity of FEACC is coordinating ethical infrastructures and establishing various anti-corruption groups so as to make them play their part in preventing corruption.

To accomplish these objectives, the FEACC organized itself in the following core directorates:

- Ethics Education and Communication Affairs Directorate
- Corruption Prevention Directorate
- The Directorate for the Coordination of Ethics Infrastructure
- Research and Change Management Directorate

- Asset Registration and Disclosure Directorate
- Ethics Training Center Directorate

The FEACC has also two branch offices: Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa Ethics and Anti-corruption Commissions.

The commission is accountable to the prime minister and its head is to be appointed by the National Parliament up on nomination by the Prime Minister. Now, the commission is accountable to the National Parliament according to proclamation No.1097/2018.

According to the human resource director, currently the total staff strength in the FEACC including branch offices is 309. Of these 146 are employed in the core directorates which are directly involved in discharging the above objectives. The remaining 163 employees are in the Support Department. Twenty employees among the total are members of ethics education and communication directorate. As to their educational background, members of the communication staff have held, first degree, and second degrees in the areas of languages and literature, theatrical arts, art and graphics, education, journalism and communication.

As mentioned above, Ethics Education and Communication Affairs Directorate is one of the core directorates that are at the heart of corruption prevention. The major objective of this directorate is creating an aware society that doesn't condone corruption through different communication means expanding and promotion of ethics and anti-corruption education. In discharging its responsibilities the directorate uses various tools and channels of communication.

Communication in this regard plays a crucial role in the fight against corruption especially when paired with other necessary initiatives such as strengthening systems, improving law enforcement and strengthening prosecution.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (FEACC) has adopted Hong Kong's three-pronged approach to fighting corruption, which includes the functions of ethics education, corruption prevention, and law enforcement (now transferred to Federal Police and Attorney General), and has tailored the model to fit the Ethiopian context. As the government of Ethiopia

has adopted a preventative approach as a major instrument to fight corruption, the FEACC focuses mainly on the prevention of corruption by disseminating ethics and anti-corruption education throughout the country.

To accomplish this objective, the FEACC organized Ethics Education and Communication Affairs Directorate which currently comprises of public relations and media ethics education teams. The objective of the directorate is to create awareness in Ethiopian society that corruption should not be tolerated by promoting ethics and anti-corruption education. Its main responsibility is to disseminate ethics education and undertake public relations activities. There have been multiple efforts made in this regard to combat the vice with different stakeholders since the establishment of the commission in 2001. Several reports which are released by the FEACC indicated that encouraging achievements have been registered. The achievements mainly include awareness raising programs according to the reports.

Despite the fact that the commission has improved its effort over time regarding corruption prevention, we still notice the gap in creating an aware society that doesn't condone corruption. Corruption in Ethiopia is still a serious problem. According to Transparency International's 2018 Corruption Perception Index (CPI), Ethiopia's position has been dropping and was scored 34 and ranked 114 out of 180 nations in 2018 compared to score 35 and position 107 out of 180 nations in 2017. The index, which ranks 180 countries by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people, uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean. Ethiopia scored below the average (50) which is 34 indicating a serious corruption problem.

Therefore, the researcher found it necessary to conduct a study to examine how strategic communication has been practiced in FEACC in the fight against corruption.

There are different researches conducted in the area of communication strategies in various public and private organizations but to the researcher's knowledge no prior research was conducted to examine the practice of strategic communication in the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission of Ethiopia as a case in point.

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The general objective of this research is to examine strategic communication practice in FEACC.

### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

The specific objectives of the research are;

- To identify the vision and ambition of FEACC and its employees regarding strategic communication.
- To find out the accountability towards external stakeholders of the organization regarding strategic communication.
- To identify the opportunities of FEACC for improving strategic communication in the future.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What is the vision and ambition of FEACC and its employees regarding strategic communication?
2. What is the accountability towards external stakeholders of the organization regarding strategic communication?
3. What are the opportunities of FEACC for improving strategic communication in the future?

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The researcher believes that the findings of the study have the following significances;

- It is hoped that the study will provide solutions for anti-corruption communication constraints of FEACC by providing appropriate and up to date communication model.
- The findings of the study will also be a useful resource for other researchers who want to conduct their study in the area of strategic communication.

## **1.6 Scope of the study**

- The study mainly focuses on the strategic communication practices of Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission of Ethiopian. The study did not include regional and non-governmental anti-corruption bodies.
- Choice of Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission as a study focus area may give a limited view on communication practices.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The study assumes the following limitations:

- Difficult to access data within the time plan set for the study because of the bureaucratic nature of organizations.
- The area of study has not been exhaustively researched on hence access to relevant material was difficult.
- Lack of time and resources made the population of the study limited to Addis Ababa.

## **1.8 Organization of the Thesis**

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter gives an introduction. The second chapter deals with literature review and theoretical framework followed by chapters, three and four which deal with the research methodology, data presentation and analysis, respectively. Conclusions and recommendations constituted in the last part of the thesis. References and appendices are also included at the end.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. Review of Related Literature

This research has examined the practice of strategic communication of the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission. This chapter deals with literature review of the study. It included various issues that are related to the basics of corruption, public relation, corporate communication and other related concepts are discussed. Stakeholder theory and strategic communication frame model are also discussed in theoretical framework part.

#### 2.1. Definition of corruption

The term corruption originates from a Latin word *corruptus* which means to *break*, taking any given thing out of its normal or natural state of being, appearance or flow. Hence, corruption as a concept means any behavior which departs from ethics, morality, tradition, law and civic value (Bakamba, 2009, p.3 as cited in Dube, 2011, p.18)

It is hard to define corruption in a succinct manner due to its multifaceted nature. Its definition varies from country to country in accordance with cultural, legal or other factors and the nature of the problem as it is manifested in each country. For instance gift-giving to officials may be expected in one country and prohibited by law in another. According to United States Agency for International Development (USAID) a political leader or public official who supports friends, family members, and supporters may seem praiseworthy in some societies and corrupt in others (USAID, 2006,p.1-2).

However, some successful attempts were made to have working definitions that attain wider recognition. Among the working definitions of corruption is the one put forwarded by the World Bank. According to the WB, corruption is defined as “the abuse of public office for private gain (WB, 1997,p.19).This definition considers the cause of corruption in public authority and its abuse, and links corruption to the state, its activities, state intervention on the market and the existence of the public sector. In other words, the use of this definition excludes the possibility of corruption in the private sector, and it focuses exclusively on corruption in the public sector. This

definition mainly focuses on public sector corruption involving the illegal activities of public-service officials, politicians and civil servants.

TI, the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) working on strategies to combat corruption, defines the term as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain” (TI, 2018). The word “entrusted power” applies to both public and private sector corruption. Similarly, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines corruption as “the abuse of public or private office for personal gain. It includes acts of bribery embezzlement, nepotism or state capture.”

This definition is also used by United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and Africa Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC)

Article 4 of the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption also defines corruption as similar to TI’s definition “the misuse of entrusted power to private gain.”(Dell, 2006, p. 2)

All definitions by actors in the anti-corruption movement share one common feature: The word “abuse.” Rothstein (2011) argues modern definitions of corruption all suffer from the same problem: “Abuse” infers that something is abused against a normative standard (p. 230).

## **2.2. Types and forms of corruption**

### **2.2.1 Types of corruption**

Like the definition of corruption, there is no one consensus list on the types of corruption. However, the most commonly used broad categorization of corruption is 'Petty' and 'Grand' Corruption. Both occur all over the world regardless of difference in levels of economic and social

(kindra and Stapenhurst 1998)

#### **A. Petty Corruption**

This categorization is based on the amount of money involved and on the position of the public servant involved in the corrupt transaction in government structure. Petty corruption is a type of corruption encountered by ordinary citizens in their day to day interactions with government bureaucrats when they try to access basic services.

It is manifested by the payment or taking of bribes of non-significant amount of money for the mutual exchange of favors. Some areas with widespread petty corruption include services such as customs, immigration, health and traffic (Nichols et al, 2006: 4). Although this type of corruption often involves small amount of payments, in aggregate the sums may be large, (Department for international development [DFID], 2015, p.12-14). Petty corruption mostly hurts those citizens at the grass root level; low income groups and their micro businesses and consequently makes, through time, the government loose the trust of the broad masses. It has also been called “bureaucratic”, “low level” and “street level” corruption.

### B. Grand Corruption

The other major category of corruption is Grand or active corruption. It is also known as political corruption. The term “grand corruption” is often used to describe such acts, reflecting the scale of corruption and the considerable sums of money involved (DFID, 2015, p. 12-14). It is practiced by those public officials who have power to decide on significant economic and political issues. Grand corruption involves large amount of money in relation to huge projects and contract agreements. Sometimes it is referred to as state capture, which is where external interests illegally distort the highest levels of a political system to private ends (Holmes 2006, p. 31).

Holmes (2006, p. 32) adds that, there is a difference between grand corruption and petty corruption to the extent that the former involves the distortion of central functions of government by senior public officials; the latter develops within the context of functioning governance and social frameworks.

### **2.2.2 Forms of corruption**

Corruption also takes many forms. Different authors have tried to list different forms of corruption. As noted by Amundsen (1999), the main forms of corruption are bribery, embezzlement, fraud, extortion and favoritism. These forms of corruption are also included in the list of various authors.

#### A. Bribery

According to Article 15 of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption ([UNCAC], 2004: 17) defines bribery as both the promise, offering or giving of an undue advantage to a national, international or foreign public official and the solicitation or acceptance of an undue advantage by a national public official. It is “the offering, promising, giving, accepting or soliciting of an advantage as an inducement for an action which is illegal, unethical or a breach of trust. Inducements can take the form of gifts, loans, fees, rewards or other advantages” (TI, 2018).

Bribery is also noted by Amundsen as “bribery is the payment (in money or kind) given to or taken by the state official in a corrupt relationship” (1999, p.11). It can be offered in the form of money or favors for influencing individuals, institutions or senior government officials. Bribery may also manifest itself as an informal taxation when public officials charge extra unofficial payments or expect gifts from clients so that easy access and gain of major state contract projects can be secured. Even, some public officials consider bribes as incentive payments. But, bribery can undermine the prospects for long-term reform. It can also raise transaction cost and uncertainty in an economy.

#### B. Embezzlement

Embezzlement is to steal, misdirect or misappropriate funds or assets placed in one’s trust or under one’s control (DFID, 2015). Embezzlement occurs when the person entrusted with the control of, and authority over certain resources steals resources. A public official could, in this case, steal from the organization for his/ her own use or for reselling (Chamunorwa, 2015).

According to Amundesen (1999, p. 12), embezzlement is mostly defined as theft of assets (money and property) by a person in a position of trust or responsibility over those assets. It is theft of public resources by public officials, and as such it is understood of another form of misappropriation of public funds. The state official steals from the public institution in which he his employed and from resources he is supposed to administer on behalf of the state and the public. However, disloyal employees in private forms can also embezzle their employers and firms, and several kinds of resources may be embezzled.

#### C. Fraud

Fraud is another form of corruption. It is a crime that involves some kind of trickery, swindle or deceit, and it is a broader legal and popular term that covers both bribery and embezzlement (Amundsen, 1999, p.12). Fraud usually involves deliberate manipulation or distortion of information and facts. DFID stated fraud as the act of intentionally and dishonestly deceiving someone in order to gain an unfair or illegal advantage financial, political or otherwise (DFID, 2015, p.12). Forgery, smuggling and other organized economic crime are examples of fraud.

#### D. Extortion

According to Amundesen (1999, P.13), extortion is “money (or other resources) extracted by the use of coercion, violence or the threats to use force. By creating an atmosphere of insecurity where individual citizens, private businesses and public officials are harassed and intimidated. Rulers can also extract resources from private sector businesses with concealed threats by imposing strict taxation; overtly delayed licenses, repeated and brutal police inspections or other measures added Amundesen. The legal dictionary is also defined extortion as “the obtaining of property from another induced by wrongful use of actual or threatened force, violence, or fear, or under color of official right.

#### E. Favoritism

The word favoritism can simply describe the habit of preferring one particular person or group of people, but it often implies that it's done at the expense of other people. As noted by Amundesen (1999, p.14), favoritism or cronyism is to grant offices or benefits to friends and relatives, regardless of merit. It is simply the normal human proclivity to favor friends, family and anybody close and trusted. Its most usual form is when a person exploits his or her power and authority to procure jobs or other favors for relatives (United Nation Development Program [UNDP], 2008).

In the political sphere, favoritism is the penchant of state officials and politicians, who have access to state resources and the power to decide upon the distribution of these, to give preferential treatment to certain people when distributing resources (Amundesen, 1999, p.14). He also explained that the problem of favoritism is very serious because it is not only a legal and

procedural case but also political as well. It creates partiality and discrimination among citizens, families, clans, regions or social sub-groups and hence the consequence is very serious.

### **2.3. Causes of Corruption**

The causes of corruption are also diverse and complex as its types and forms. Kameswari noted that “The causes of corruption are multiple and complex depending on the country’s political and economic situation, bureaucratic traditions and process of social and cultural transformations” (2006, p. 4).

The most common causes of corruption are as follows.

- A. Greed is considered as one of the causes of corruption. Webster's Intermediate dictionary defined greed is the selfish desire for money or possessions over and above one's needs. “Greed is an expression of egoism and individualism in which individual needs and wants override other people's interests. One does not put into consideration the interests of others” (Douglas L. A. Kivoi, 2006, p.86).
  
- B. Below subsistence level wages are shown to be one of the most important causes of corruption. If wages are below subsistence, corruption is thought to be an easy way of survival. Theory suggests that public officials with a higher wage are less likely to engage in corrupt practices. Higher wages reduce the engagement in corruption due to need (supporting one’s family), however they are unlikely to completely eliminate it as individuals may still take bribes due to greed. This theory was given empirical support by a paper that found corruption to be negatively associated with wages across developing countries (Van Rijckeghem and Weder, 1997).
  
- C. A non-inclusive political and economic system, i.e.; policy choice of governments, is one significant cause of corruption. This type of political situation which Acemoglu and Robinson (Why Nations Fail, 2012) call “extractive” political and economic policy, provides unbridled opportunity to the networks of elites in and around the political leadership to plunder the fruits of the economic growth of a nation.
  
- D. Lack of good governance or weak governance is another fundamental cause of corruption (DFID, 2015).The absence of good governance denies citizens of their legitimate

demands and desires to be realized. Such a situation forces people to look for any other means, outside of the established formal channels.

- E. Excessive regulations and requirements for authorizations (Yemane Desta, 2004:14), lack of rule of law (Vito Tanzi, 1998: 19), monopoly of decision making power and unfettered discretion (Jain, 2001, in Bin Dong, 2011:15) and the absence of clean and exemplary leadership are also major causes of corruption.

## **2.4. Effects of Corruption**

Corruption hampers economic development and diverts investment. Widespread corruption can threaten economic stability, slowdown growth and weaken institutional capacity. Besides, it can contribute to an uncertain business climate. Rose-Ackerman (1999) states that new corrupt opportunities are considered as the growing pains of economic and political transformation. Such practices can also undermine the legitimacy and fairness of promising state reforms. This in turn creates an environment for unsound economic policies, unpredictable processes and distorted public expenditures.

Several literatures pointed out that the effects of corruption are not limited to economic growth. According to Marquette et al. (2011), corruption hampers social cohesion, creates social injustice, increases social costs and hurts the poor by depriving citizens of basic services. They also indicated that corruption undermines rule of law, legitimacy of states, political stability and security. These harms are not limited to national boundaries in a globalized world. International trade and investment opportunities, international development assistance and global peace could be affected by corrupt networks.

## **2.5. Overview of Corruption in Ethiopia**

Corruption, mostly of the petty variety, is an age-old practice in Ethiopian society. The second corruption perception survey conducted by Kilimanjaro (2012) states that, “giving gifts to public officials in order to win favors and to influence their decision-making has long been a traditional practice in Ethiopia” (p.20-21).

Bribery and nepotism were not considered to be serious corruption offences in the past. Bribery was considered to be a ‘motivational factor’ not an offence. Nepotism was also mostly regarded as a positive approach to ‘help friends and relatives’ (Kilimanjaro, 2012). These traditional practices gradually changed into an open and glaring exercise during the Imperial times. Corruption in the form of embezzlement of public funds, misuse of power and failure of duty for personal gain grew more prevalent during the Derg regime and has continued in post-Derg era (P. 21).

The recent anti-corruption effort in Ethiopia appears to be the 1995 constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia which contains provisions related to transparency and accountability in the functioning of government. The constitution specifies that the conduct of the affairs of government shall be public and transparent and public officials are accountable for any dereliction of the duties of office (FDRE Constitution Article 12, 1995). The conduct of government in transparent and accountable manner is in fact beneficial in reducing, among others, the vulnerability to corruption in the civil service. This constitutional base contributed a lot to the launching of Civil Service Reform Program (CSRP) in 1996.

The anti-corruption endeavor is part and parcel of the major reform programs launched in 1996 at the national level. Those political, economic, and social reforms were launched to enhance the overall development of the Country and to strengthen the democratization of good governance endeavors throughout the country. The civil service reform program, which contained anti-corruption as one of its sub-programs, was among those major reforms. It was launched following the completion of a national study on the performance of this sector back in 1996. The study showed that the then outdated civil service was not performing well and it needed to be reformed. The anti-corruption endeavor was, therefore, launched at the national level as part of the civil service reform program (FEACC, 2012). The Federal Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission of Ethiopia was established in May, 2001 in order to tackle corruption as mentioned in the previous chapter.

The FEACC benchmarked the Hong Kong model of three pronged approaches of education, prevention and investigation. Hong Kong’s Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC) is one of the oldest and the most successful anti- corruption institution in the world. According to

Transparency International's latest corruption perception index (2018), Hong Kong is ranked among the least corrupt countries in the world. In general Hong Kong is one of the commonly cited best practices of anticorruption undertakings.

Today corruption is recognized as one of the threats and causing certain problems in Ethiopia. According to the survey conducted by Kilimanjaro (2012), fraud, trickery, embezzlement, abuse of power, extortion, nepotism, theft were believed to be the principal features by which corruption manifested itself in Ethiopia (p.22). The report showed that both petty and grand corruption was on the increase (p.22-23). According to Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) (2018), Ethiopia ranked 114<sup>th</sup> out of 180 and scored 34 which is below the average indicating a serious corruption problem.

There are numerous factors that are widely believed to be the major causes of corruption in Ethiopia. Ethiopia shares many features of other developing nations in respect to the challenges of good governance. Thus, the causes of corruption are similar as those experienced in other African countries. The profile of FEACC stated that:

low level of democratic culture and tradition, lack of citizen participation, ... poor governance, lack of clear regulations and authorization, low level of institutional control, problems related to accountability and transparency in some areas, extreme poverty and harmful cultural practices are the major causes of corruption in Ethiopia...blurred distinction between private and public interests, privatization, weak financial management, inadequate accounting and auditing deteriorate of acceptance moral and ethical values, and inefficient civil service system have also been cited as causes of corruption in Ethiopia. (2012, p.15-16)

Different sources, including the FEACC, have identified corruption-prone areas in Ethiopia. These include those engaged with allocation of land and government housing, provision of telephone and electric services, granting of loans, licensing and issuance of permits, collection of taxes and procurements of consumable and fixed assets are believed to be affected by corrupt practices (FEACC, 2012, p.19).

As far as the effects of corruption in Ethiopia are concerned, currently corruption is believed to be one of the factors that contribute the reduction of government revenue, development, stability, rule of law and democratization process (FEACC, 2012).

Fight against corruption requires an integrated movement among responsible bodies. Thus the government of Ethiopia has involved to fight corruption by joining the global community through signing and ratifying the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC) in 2007 (FEACC, 2012,p.73). The country has also been actively participating in various global and regional anti-corruption initiatives the Construction Sector Transparency Initiative (CoST). Ethiopia is also a founding member of the International Association of Anti-corruption Authorities and the African Anti-corruption Authorities Association.

As discussed in the previous chapter, FEACC has started focusing on Ethics education, corruption prevention, asset declaration and facilitating public participation following the transfer of investigative and prosecutorial mandate of FEACC to Federal police and the Attorney General respectively.

Among various departments in the commission, the Ethics Education and Communication Affairs Directorate has a major objective of creating an aware society in cooperation with relevant bodies by promoting ethics and anticorruption education. Strategic communication in the Fight against Corruption, which is the main focus of this paper, is mainly designed in this department.

## **2.6. Public Relations**

Public Relations (PR) is now a universal occupation and implemented in many corners of the world in different ways. Many people are conversant about the practice of public relations but not exactly define what PR is? We couldn't find a universally agreed definition of PR. As noted by Harlow (1976), there were 472 different definitions of PR identified. Since then, there have been many more attempts to capture the essence of public relations.

The definition framed by the Institute of Public Relations (IPR) in 1987 is still useful:

“Public Relations is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and understanding between an organization and its publics.” (Cited in Alison Theaker, 2012). There are several key words worth noting here: ‘planned’ and ‘sustained’ suggest these relationships are not automatic or effortless. Indeed, they have to be ‘established’ and ‘maintained’.

More recently, the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR, 2010, cited in Alison Theaker, 2012) extended its definition to: “Public Relations practice is the discipline concerned with the reputation of organizations (or products, services or individuals) with the aim of earning understanding and support.” This is sometimes simplified further to: “Public relations is about reputation the result of what you do, what you say and what others say about you.” This is simple and doesn’t attempt to catalogue all the tasks involved in managing reputation.

L’Etang (2009) outlines the discipline as follows:

Public relations is the occupation responsible for the management of organizational relationships and reputation. It encompasses issues management, public affairs, corporate communications, stakeholder relations, risk communication and corporate social responsibility. Public relations operates on behalf of many different types of organization both at the governmental and corporate level, to small business and voluntary sectors. Public relations arises at points of societal change and resistance. (p.13)

From the definitions above we understood that public relations has developed from management to social approach and from image building to reputational building.

## **2.7. Corporate communication**

Riel & Fombrum (2007) define corporate communication as follows:

Corporate communication is a set of activities involved and orchestrating all internal and external communications aimed at creating favorable starting points with stakeholders on which the company depends. Corporate communication consists of the dissemination of information by a variety of specialists and generalists in an organization, with the common goal of

enhancing the organization's ability to retain its license to operate (2007, p.25).

Argenti & Foreman (2002) noted that corporate communication is historically linked to the field of public relations, which has been concerned with the voice and image of big businesses for nearly a century and encompasses two broad aspects of organizational communication which are management communication and marketing communication.

Corporate communication adopts a "corporate" point of view which is derived from the Latin "corpus" meaning "body" or "the whole", it requests communication specialists to focus, first and foremost, on the problems of the organization as a whole. Corporate communication therefore addresses the fulfillment of organizational objectives (p.25).

To describe communication with stakeholders, practitioners had used the term 'public relations until the 1970s (Joep Cornelissen, 2014). Strengthening this idea, Cornelissen (2014) asserts that:

'Public relations' function, which was tactical in most companies, largely consisted of communication with the press. When other stakeholders, internal and external to the company, started to demand more information from the company, practitioners subsequently started to look at communication as being more than just 'public relations'. This is when the roots of the new corporate communication function started to take hold. (p.49)

## **2.8. Strategic Communication**

Since the emergence of the International Journal of Strategic Communication (IJSC) in 2007, the term "strategic communication" became popular in both academia and practice as a solution to many practical problems (Zerfass et al., 2018). It has been recognized by a number of scholars as a new area that is not only for academic research but also for professional practice (Hallahan, 2015; Hallahan et al., 2007; Holtzhausen & Zerfass, 2015). The emerging scholarly field of strategic communication gives a professional and academic discipline for analyzing how organizations (including governments) use communication purposefully to advance their

objectives (Hallahan, 2015; Hallahan et al., 2007). In this way, strategic communication explores the role of organizations as social actors.

Though the term is not new, scholars have only recently examined it as a cohesive paradigm. Several definitions of strategic communication have surfaced. Some of the definitions of strategic communication are as follows.

Hallahan et al. defined strategic communication as the “purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission” (2007, p.3). They also noted that,

Strategic communication differs from integrated communication because its focus is how an organization communicates across organizational endeavors. The emphasis is on the strategic application of communication and how an organization functions as a social actor to advance its mission (2009, p.7).

According to Hallahan et al. (2007), Strategic communication “...is about informational, persuasive, discursive, as well as relational communication when used in a context of the achievement of an organization’s mission” (p. 17). Strategic communication is also explained by Sandhu (2009) as multidisciplinary ‘intentional’ communication that requires a purposeful actor, and rational and deliberate decision making. As defined by Argenti et al. (2005), strategic communication is “aligned with the company’s overall strategy, to enhance its strategic positioning” (p.83).

Zerfass and Huck argue that strategic communication “prepares organizations for an uncertain future.” (2007, p.108) Cornelissen (2005) notes that the scope and involvement of strategic communication as a management function becomes more substantial when it stretches beyond a set of functional goals and tactics to corporate and business unit levels. In its management function, strategic communication practitioners thus need to respond to a business needs and concerns (p.108).

## **2.9. Alignment: a Key Concept in Strategic Communication**

Even though the need for the alignment of strategic communication has repeatedly been stressed as a desirable goal for the success of organizations, most authors have not engaged in an elaboration of the theoretical fundamentals or dimensions of the concept (Charlotte Volk & Zerfass, 2018, p. 434). They further stated that “the analysis of contemporary literature in the

strategic communication domain revealed that the term “alignment” is often used, but seldom defined” (p.343). According to Charlotte Volk & Zerfass (2018), there are only two scholarly pieces of writing that have elaborated the alignment concept: *The Alignment Factor: Leveraging the Power of Total Stakeholder Support* by Riel (2012) and *Taking Brand Initiative: How Companies Can Align Strategy, Culture, and Identity through Corporate Branding* by Hatch and Schultz (2008).

When taking these monographs into account scholars have referred to alignment in different context: for instance, as a “mutually rewarding relationship” between a company and its external and internal stakeholders (Riel, 2012), as the “interlocking” or “link” between corporate strategy and communication strategy (e.g., Argenti et al., 2005; Cornelissen, 2017; Hallahan et al.,2007), or as the “coherence” between vision, brand, identity, symbols, messages, or culture (as cited in Charlotte Volk & Zerfass, 2018, p. 435).

According to Charlotte Volk & Zerfass (2018), three major notions of alignment can be distinguished. These are:

### **1. Organization–stakeholder alignment**

Alignment with internal stakeholders refers to aligning all employees to the organization and towards a common goal, identity, or behavior. Alignment with external stakeholders means aligning the organization to the multifaceted and changing expectations, beliefs, and demands articulated by different stakeholder groups (Riel, 2012). In his scholarly work *The Alignment Factor*, Riel (2012, p. xvii) defines alignment as “a mutually rewarding relationship between a company and its key stakeholders that enables the firm to meet its objectives and realize its purpose.” The strongest form of alignment or best possible outcome is total stakeholder support, which enables companies to open markets, win governments’ permission to do business and minimize problems (as cited in Charlotte Volk & Zerfass, 2018, p. 435).

### **2. Communication strategy alignment**

The purpose of communication strategy alignment is to enhance the company’s strategic positioning and contribute to increased performance (Argenti, 2016).

Even though the notion “strategic” is inherent in the term “strategic communication,” only a few scholars have explicitly defined the term as “communication aligned with the company’s overall strategy” (Argenti et al., as cited in Charlotte Volk & Zerfass, 2018, p. 436) Alignment in this context emphasizes the need to formulate communication strategies that are linked to corporate strategy and mission in order to contribute to corporate success (e.g., Falkheimer et al., 2017; Zerfass, 2008).

### **3. Communication strategy and activities alignment.**

Communication strategy and activities alignment emphasizes alignment of all communication activities to the communication strategy and to each other. According to Christensen et al. (2008), the purpose of communication strategy and activities alignment is to achieve coherence and integration between vision, brands, identity, symbols, messages, or culture, with the goal of orchestrating all communications to appear consistent across different audiences and different media. From this perspective, strategic communication is the object to be aligned to corporate strategy and itself.

Alignment is indeed a key concept, which, however, still lacks a clear definition and a theoretical foundation.

#### **2.10. Different lenses in communication theory**

Communication theory refers to the body of theories that constitute our understanding of the communication process (Littlejohn, 1983). He stated that since theories are abstractions, every theory is partial. Each theory describes a way of looking and, therefore, its truth value can only be measured in term of how well it is constructed. This is the main reason for disagreement about what constitutes an adequate theory of communication (Van Ruler, 2018, p. 367).

Rosengren (2000) stated that “communication concerns the process of meaning creation: questions concerning how people create meaning psychologically, socially, and culturally; how messages are understood intellectually; and how ambiguity arises and is resolved”(as cited in Van Ruler, 2018, p. 368).

Van Ruler stated that there are at least three different lenses in communication theory which to view how this process works: communication as a one-way process of meaning construction, in

which the sender attempts to construct or reconstruct the meaning developed by the receiver; communication as a two-way process of meaning construction, in which two or more people construct new meanings together; and communication as a omnidirectional diachronic process of meaning construction, in which the focus is on the continuous development of meaning itself.

### **1. Communication as a one-way process from sender to receiver**

As noted by Van Ruler (2018, p. 368-369), theories of early mass communication were focused on communication as a one-way process in which a sender does something to one or more receivers. But the identity of this *something* remained a matter of debate. Some theories viewed communication as a process of dissemination, a flow of information in which a sender disseminates a message to receivers by revealing its meaning within this message. In this case, the focus is on the flow of information, where this information is seen as *objective*.

In this model, reaching the receiver is sufficient to make the communication successful. In relation to this one-way transmission perspective, other theories view communication as an attempt by a sender to produce a predefined attitudinal change in the receiver; that is, a change in the meaning of the situation as perceived by the receiver. This theory uses a lens through which communication is seen as a process directed from a sender to one or more receivers, in which the meaning construction of the receivers is mediated by certain influential others, or by peers.

### **2. Communication as a two way process between actors**

In the two-way lens of communication, interaction is essential. The word interaction comes from Latin and not only means “direct reciprocal dialogue,” but also “to act upon each other and have influences on each other” (Neumann, 2008, p. 2307 cited in van Ruler, 2018). Thus, the term may refer to feedback processes as well as to direct interaction between people, but it can also refer to a more abstract concept of interaction concerned with how people relate to other meanings in developing their own meanings.

In interpersonal communication theory, interaction is usually seen from the angle of person-to-person interaction or group interaction.

In these models, interaction is focused on how people engage in conversations with each other and literally converge in creating meaning. Therefore from this perspective on interaction, the focus is on interpersonal conversations, whether mediated or not. In some instances, the concept of dialogue is used, in this respect, to mean: focusing on the acts of turning toward the other, and listening to each other with respect to differences in order to enhance the quality of the communication (Broome, 2009, p. 305).

### **3. Communication as an omnidirectional diachronic process of meaning development itself**

According to Van Ruler (2018), there is yet another approach to communication, communication as an omnidirectional diachronic. In this lens of communication, interaction also plays a key role, but in a different way to the approach mentioned above. Elaborating the concept Van Ruler (2018) explains as:

“In two-way models, the notion of interaction is normally narrowed to a consideration of the concrete interactions of those who are literally engaged in conversations with each other. Through a lens of communication as omnidirectional diachronic process of meaning development itself, interaction is seen as a dynamic interplay between actors in their roles as senders and receivers, which influences the consequences of the communicative transactions at a fundamental level. Through this lens, interaction is focused on the social acts of all those engaged in a relationship with the communicative process itself and not so much focused on their relationship with each other. This is to be seen as a virtual process occurring at the level of the interpretations made by senders and receivers, which influence the meanings they give to a message and consequently the effects of the message. Seen through this lens, actors are not necessarily related or in proximity to each other.” (p.370)

Berlo (1960) explained in his influential book on the process of communication that a communication process is not a sequence of events rather a continuous and simultaneous interaction of a large number of variables that are moving, changing, and affecting each other. Therefore, interaction means that the sender plays a role in the interpretation of the receiver in the context and situation in which the communication is taking place but does not necessarily

require a conversation. This view is rooted in constructivism (Lindlof, 2008). This perspective on communication considers that “communication is the chief means by which the social world is created, understood, and reproduced across time and space” (Lindlof, 2008, p. 947, cited in Van Ruler, 2018 ).

For Burlison and Bodie (2008, p. 953), “constructivism assumes that humans actively interpret the world, construct meaningful understandings of it, and act in the world on the basis of their interpretations.” In this context, a distinction is made between “constructivism” and “constructionism,” where the focus is often more on how people construct meaning in their interactions. However, to avoid such a discussion Van Ruler prefers to call the approach an omnidirectional diachronic lens on communication.

Dance (1967) further emphasized this notion of diachronism in his proposal of the helix as a metaphor for the communication process in which meanings develop. He asserted that the image of communication, viewed as a circular two-way process:

does make the point that what and how one communicates has an effect that may alter future communication. The main shortcoming of the circular model is that if accurately understood, it also suggests that communication comes back, full-circle, to exactly the same point from which it started. ... The helix gives geometrical testimony to the concept that communication while moving forward is at the same moment coming back upon itself and being affected by its past behavior, for the coming curve of the helix is fundamentally affected by the curve from which it emerges. (p. 294, as cited in Van Ruler, 2018)

The question of which of these three lenses on communication is helpful for strategic communication depends on the question of what strategic communication actually is. Omnidirectional communication approach is the most dynamic, interactive and multidimensional comparing with two way communication.

## **2.11. Theoretical Framework: Theory and Model**

### **2.11.1. Stakeholder Theory**

The terms *stakeholder* and *public* are often used interchangeably, but they shouldn't be according to Brad Rawlins (2006, p.1-2). Stakeholders have been identified in the business literature according to their relationships to organizations. Publics, in the public relations and other mass media literature, are often identified according to their relationship to *messages*.

The most widely quoted definition of a stakeholder in business literature is that given by Freeman. He states that, a stakeholder is "any group or individual who is affected by or can affect the achievement of an organization's objectives" (Freeman, 1984, cited in Brad Rawlins, 2006 p.2). This is what Freeman refers to as the wide sense of a stakeholder. However, he also spoke of the narrow sense of a stakeholder when he described it as, "any identifiable group or individual on which the organization is dependent for its continued survival" (p.2). The definition has been expanded to include groups who have interests in the corporation, regardless of the corporation's interest in them. As noted by Brad Rawlins (2006), others have narrowed the definition to those who contribute to the financial bottom line of the organization.

Dunham et.al (2001) map out that, several scholars have criticized that the theory does not make clear who is a stakeholder and who is not. They further explained that stakeholder theory focuses heavily on the importance of meeting the needs of all stakeholders, but does not tell anyone who the stakeholders actually are or how to identify them. It is because of this uncertainty that so many different, yet similar, definitions of who and what a stakeholder is have arisen.

Employees, customers, shareholders, communities and suppliers are those most commonly classified as stakeholders within an organization (Dunham et al. 2001).

"Publics" is the term used for stakeholders in the public relations literature. According to Brad Rawlins (2006, p.1-2) since the public relations profession evolved from journalism, the term has frequently been related to the recipients of messages from organizations. These publics, or more accurately, "audiences," become segmented into more homogenous subsets that help communicators choose appropriate channels for reaching them.

Brad Rawlins (2006) further elaborated publics as:

Publics can be employees, shareholders, political leaders, consumers, etc. These publics are often segmented even further by demographics, geographic, or psychographics. However, research in public relations has recently turned

to the value of the relationships these publics have with organizations. This emphasis has encouraged adaptation of the term “stakeholder” in both practice and scholarship. (p.2)

Identifying and prioritizing stakeholders are essential for organizations. Several scholars in stakeholder theory, including Freeman, have attempted to identify stakeholders using systematic criteria. However, the focus has been on the attribute of the stakeholders in their relation to the organization (Freeman, 1984). Prioritizing stakeholders is the second step next to identification stakeholders. Stakeholders can be prioritized based on attributes, Relationship to the Situation, Communication Strategy.

### **2.2.2 Strategic Communication Frame Model**

Strategic Communication Frame (SCF) is a model which is used for the analysis of Strategic communication/PR. The model is developed by Prof Betteke van Ruler, a leading scholar in corporate communication and public relations in the Netherlands.

SCF is not based on a linear model of Communication/PR, but on a dynamic strategy development model for Public Relations, referring to a clear vision and inspiring ambitions of the organization. Linear communication models are ineffective but remain widely used by PR practitioners. (Van Ruler and Frank Körver 2016:1).

SCF is offering a concept for ‘agile PR strategy development’, within the context of changing society/organizations and legitimacy. Agile strategy development can revolutionize the communications function and strengthen the relationship with the management team. Agile strategy development has four starting points as stated by Van Ruler and Frank Körver (2016):

**People over processes:** Forming a group of skilled and motivated people is vital. In fact, we strongly believe that people trump process.

**Respond to change rather than follow a plan:** It is a waste of time to put effort into every tiny detail. Vision and ambition are vital, but more operational choices need to be challenged over and over again. Plans should never be too detailed and only oriented at the most important decisions made.

**Cross functional collaboration rather than silo behavior:** The majority of communication and reputational challenges we are facing nowadays require intensive collaboration. Developing strategies in splendid isolation is a no-go. Strategy development requires cross functional collaboration.

**A one-pager over a bulky report:** No professional should be tortured by reading bulky plans. And no professional should be given the thankless task of writing those documents. Management simply won't read it. They only care for the vital information: "What are the communications objectives? How are we going to realize these objectives? And what is it going to cost?" (p.2)

Based on the above four starting points, Van Ruler and F. Körver have constructed seven requirements for a good strategy development model for public relations and communication management . The requirements are as follows:

1. Clear vision on communications and its added value to the mission of the organization;
2. Focus on internal and external context as building blocks for constructing ambitions;
3. No smart objectives in first place, but inspiring ambitions based on clear choices;
4. Explicit accountability that suits the ambition;
5. Clear choices in every building block, as perspectives for the future;
6. Compact to fit on one page (realistic?);
7. Adjustable at any time to respond to situational dynamics.(ibid)

These requirements contributed a lot to construct a model known as the Strategic Communication Frame according to Van Ruler and F. Körver (2016). As indicated in the figure below, this model consists of eight interdependent building blocks.



Figure1. The Strategic Communication Frame

Source: van Ruler

Van Ruler and F. Körver (2016) further explain these interdependent building blocks of the model in the following manner.

**Building block: Ambition** is the heart of the Strategic Communication Frame model. Ambition is in the first place about the values of the organization, about what’s inspiring for the management and the employees. The concept of ambition to mean “a strong desire to do or achieve something”

**Building block: Vision** is the basic philosophy; it gives meaning and motivation. In its vision the organization is connecting present with future. The vision should guide behavior of all staff members and employees in the organization, including its communication specialists. It adds value to organizational strategic choices and the role of the communication professional signifies in the organization

**Building block: Internal situation** is impossible to define and value the importance unless we know what is happening inside the organization’. What is going on in our organization, what is the “style of the house?”

**Building block: External situation** is typical for communication professionals to be aware of the external situation, of what is going on in the outside world and of public opinions. What are relevant trends and developments in society? And what are relevant issues and what is the social mood around these?

**Building block: Accountability** is exact responsibilities regarding ambitions and how internal and external communication progress measure.

**Building block: Stakeholders** “target groups” of the organization.

**Building block: Resources** is about being equipped to do the job. It is about budget, budget allocation and about competences.

**Building block: Approach** it is about translating all strategic decisions and operational activities

The figure of the model indicates two sides: the left side is focusing on the preparation of Strategic Communication/PR development, the right side is focusing on the implementation of the strategy (P.3-4).

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. Research Methodology

As mentioned in chapter one, this research was mainly designed to examine strategic communication practice in the fight against corruption taking the federal Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission as a case in point. The methodology used in this research is qualitative method because the nature of the research problem does not have a single objective reality and the research process is context bound and involves personal views. The methodology chosen for this study was suggested by the objective of the research, statement of the problem and the nature of data intended to be analyzed.

Qualitative method searches for an answer to a specific research problem or topic from the view point of the participants it is further explained that:

“Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations.” Hence, one of the positive sides of a qualitative research is the capacity to give intricate ‘textual’ explanation about ‘how people experience’ some research topic. Accordingly, one of the advantages of qualitative method is the opportunity to use open-ended questions and it provides participants the advantage to respond in their own words rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, as quantitative methods do. (Mack et al.2005, p. 1-2; Creswell, 2007, p.38)

Since this research is a case study, a more particular preference was made to follow a qualitative type of research called qualitative case study research. Thus, the research used qualitative case study research to answer the research questions using data appropriate for the study.

The case study research method is used to explore the existing strategic communication practice of FEACC. Case study research method is selected for this research in a way to address an intensive study of a system with an aim to generalize across a larger set (Creswell, 2007). Yin (2009) also confirmed that case study research is most suitable where the research question is asking "how" and "why". In this research study context, the central research question is to explore "How strategic communication is practiced in FEACC?"As this study is aimed at exploring strategic communication of FEACC in fighting corruption, utilizing qualitative case study approach was found to be appropriate.

### **3.1. Data Gathering Instruments**

For triangulation purpose, this research utilizes a variety of data gathering instruments. In order to collect data from the primary and secondary sources, the research used in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. The detail is explained as follows:

#### **3.1.1 In-Depth Individual Interview**

One of the techniques used in this study is in-depth individual interview, which enables the researcher to question respondents deeply about research problem.

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2010), in-depth interview is useful for researchers who want intensive or detailed information about the thoughts and behaviors of an individual or want to explore new topics in depth. Holloway (2011) suggests that an in-depth interview guides the researcher to move uncover patterns and themes, and the important and unique experience of each individual participants of the research.

Ritchie and Lewis are further explaining the idea as:

Individual interviews are probably the most widely used method in qualitative research. They take different forms but a key feature is their ability to provide an undiluted focus on the individual. They provide an opportunity for detailed investigation of people's personal perspectives, for in-depth understanding of the personal context within which the research phenomena are located, and for very detailed subject coverage. (2003:36).

In-depth individual interview has been employed in this research mainly because it helps the researcher to get the in-depth perspectives of employees, managers and stakeholders about the practice of strategic communication in the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption commission of Ethiopia.

Semi-structured type of interview has been used for the study. Semi-structured interview is commonly used in a qualitative research. As Grix (2004) puts it this type of interviewing creates favorable condition for a certain degree of flexibility and allows to follow unexpected enquiry direction while the interview sessions. The researcher chooses this approach because it is very flexible and it allows developing an understanding of the perspectives of interviewees.

The researcher employed personal interviews with the management, employees and stakeholders of the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission. The interviews were conducted in Amharic language to make the interviewee feel comfortable and express the issues in better ways.

### **3.1.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**

In this research focus group discussions are used to find out how strategic communication is practiced in the organization to combat corruption.

A focus group discussions or group interviewing is a method used to search the attitudes, behaviors and opinions. It is usually applied using open ended, follow up and probing questions to a small group of participants. FGD is an interview to six to eight people in a group for about one and half to two hours (Flick, 2002). Researchers like FGDs because of the flexibility in question design and follow-up. Wimmer and Dominick (2010) state that FGDs or group interviewing is used to gather first round information for a research or to gather qualitative data concerning a research question. They further explain that FGDs would enable the researcher to easily collect data and get deep first-hand information and the data obtained from focus groups are used to enhance understanding and to reveal diversified opinions.

The researcher organized three focus groups for the purpose of this research which comprise six to seven participants in each group. The participants were selected purposefully. Accordingly, management members, employees of FEACC including communication practitioners and external stakeholders of the commission were included in the FGDs so as to examine the practice of strategic communication of FEACC in the fight against corruption.

Regarding the setting, the researcher tried to make the setting for the FGDs as comfortable as possible by selecting venue that made the informants comfortable and feel at ease to express their thoughts. Accordingly, the management committee meeting room of FEACC was arranged with the help of commissioner office of FEACC.

### **3.1.3 Document Analysis**

Document analysis is one of the techniques used to gather data in a research. According to Descombe (2007), there are different kinds of documents that can be used as a source of data. Documents which can be used in research are not only limited to written materials but also include both visual and audio sources. Descombe stated that the visual sources used in research document analysis include pictures, artifacts, and the audio like music. Written documents include government publications and official statistics, newspapers, and magazines, records from meetings, letters and memos, diaries website page and the internet.

Document analysis was conducted in this research to examine the strategic communication practice of FEACC in the fight against corruption. Accordingly key documents of the FEACC were analyzed included: strategic plan, annual reports, working manual like BPR (Business Process Re-engineering), Citizen's Charter of the commission and other relevant literature on anti-corruption strategies in the period 2009-2019. The official published documents accessed from the FEACC.

### **3.2. Sampling Technique**

In this research, purposive sampling technique is used. According to Deacon et al., "The selection of participants in a purposive sampling is made on the basis of their ability to provide relevant data on the area under investigation" (1999, p.79). The participants invited to take part in the interviews and focus group discussion were those whom the researcher believed could generate valuable ideas for the study and willing to provide the desired information.

Selecting purposive sampling helps to obtain multiple ranges of information and different views on the subject. When selecting the interview and group discussion participants, researchers should deliberately interview some people, whom you suspect might hold different views related to the topic of the study.

The study sample consisted of respondents from different medias governmental organization and civil society which work in collaboration with the Commission as stakeholders. Since they take part actively in the communication activity, they were believed to give valuable comments on the communication practice of the commission appropriately.

### **3.3. Sample Size**

The researcher employed in-depth interview with 21 people six from FEACC management members, employees and stakeholders of the commission. Three focus groups were also organized. Each group involved 6-7 participants. These make the total participants in the research about 40. Lists of Employees and stakeholders of FEACC that were participated in the interview and FGDs attached in the appendix part III.

Regarding the documents examination, the commission's five-year strategic plan, annual reports, working manual like BPR and Citizen's Charter of the FEACC assessed in document examination.

### **3.4. Data Analysis Procedure**

The analysis of this case study was performed by employing qualitative research method. Thus, the data were analyzed based on appropriate qualitative research methodologies and by linking them to the objectives of the study. Hence, in this study thematic analysis is mainly used to analyze the data.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within. Researchers using this method identify themes, which are patterns (a group of repeating ideas) that have emerged from the coded data (Vaismoradi et al. 2016; Boyatzis 1998). Braun and Clarke (2006:10) state that "a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set."

As indicated earlier in this chapter, data were collected from respondents through interviews, group discussions and document analysis. The data gathered through the in-depth interviews and FGDs were thematically analyzed based on the transcripts of the recorded interviews and on the notes taken by the researcher during the in-depth interviews and FGDs sessions. The themes are selected from the Strategic Communication Frame Model. The data collected by the audio tape recorder was transcribed word-by-word not to miss important information. After that the data was translated from Amharic in to English.

### **3.5. Ethical Consideration**

Research ethics primarily deals with the interaction between the researcher and the research population being studied. In collecting data successfully and smoothly, the researcher had had voluntary consent of the participants. As noted by Grix “Ethical considerations are thought to be greater for those conducting qualitative research, given the direct contact researchers have with people, their personal lives and the issue of confidentiality that arise out of this”(2004, p.120). In addition, showing respect for research participants and explaining the purpose of the study to them are essential.

Participants of this research were briefed about the purpose of the research and their consent was asked before the interviews. It was made clear for them that they should involve in the research voluntarily but if they have any reservation it is possible to withdraw their consent at any time. The researcher also underlined that their responses is not be used for any other purposes except for academic purpose and remains confidential.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4. Data Presentation and Analysis**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter focuses on presentation and analysis of research findings of the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission's strategic communication in the fight against corruption. In this section the main findings of the data gathered through the qualitative in-depth interviews, FGDs and document analysis are discussed. The chapter also attempts to give answer to the research questions raised in this study.

#### **4.1 Strategic Communication Practice of FEACC (RQ1)**

As mentioned earlier, the objective of this study is to examine strategic communication practice of FEACC. The research tries to relate the analysis with the related literature review and theoretical framework, which is explained on chapter two of this study. Accordingly the Strategic Communication practice of FEACC in the fight against corruption is mainly analyzed based on SCF. SCF is not based on a linear model of Communication but on a dynamic strategy development model. Thus, the study identifies some of the major SCF building blocks for this analysis:

##### **4.1.1. Vision and Ambition (RQ1, RQ2)**

Vision and ambition are among the eight interdependent building blocks of strategic communication frame model.

As stated by Van Ruler in chapter two of this study, strategic planning is worthless, unless there is first a strategic vision. In its vision the organization is connecting present with future and it should guide behavior of all staff members and employees in the organization. In the organization where this research has been conducted (FEACC), a five year strategic plan (2016-2020) has been prepared and implemented. It is the second strategic plan of the commission since 2010. As reviewed by the researcher the commission's vision, mission and core values are well stated in the strategic document as well as in the cascaded annual plans. In the strategic

document the vision of the commission has clearly and boldly stated as *“To become one of the best anti-corruption institutions in the world in 2025 by curbing corruption to the level where it cannot become an obstacle to good governance and development efforts of the country”* (FEACC, 2016-2020, p. 36)

In the same way the mission and core values of the commission are also stated as follows:

#### Mission

In cooperation with relevant bodies, to insure transparency and accountability in public offices, public enterprises and public organizations by promoting ethics and anti-corruption education, mobilizing the public against corruption, conducting assets registration and disclosure undertakings and preventing corruption and impropriety (FEACC, 2016 p. 8)

#### Core values

- Being an ethical model
- Showing maximum determination in fighting corruption
- Serving with integrity
- Working together with various bodies
- Spearheading the anti-corruption struggle by designing new working systems (p.36)

In order to achieve the vision and mission different activities have been stated in the document. However, the role of strategic communication is not clearly indicated as to what it will contribute for the achievement of the commission’s vision. No communication strategy document has found in the commission as a guideline. The communication/PR department has been using change management tools like Business Process Reengineering (BPR) and Citizen’s Charter as guidelines for communication practice. These tools do not properly and exhaustively address the communication activities.

With regard to the shared vision, mission and core values (ambition) of the commission most of the interviewees and focus group discussants expressed their opinions. Some of the excerpts:

The vision of the commission is so great, ambitious and well constructed. However, it is not well communicated and shared by the employees of the commission. Management members, communication experts and to some extent senior employees relatively perceive the vision, mission and core values more than the other employees do. Previously there were some encouraging efforts were observed to create a shared vision among the employees. After the investigation and prosecution mandate of the commission transferred to Federal Police and Attorney General respectively, the commission has been weakened. Since the working environment in the commission is not inviting, the majority of the employees are not motivated. The key values of the commission are not properly reflected rather it is in the process of decline. The top management is very reluctant to change the existing situation (Interviewee number 12, April 24, 2019).

Interviewee number 16 shared similar view:

It is difficult to say the vision, mission and core values of the commission are properly shared especially by the employees who are joined the commission recently. However, most of the senior employees of the commission including communication/PR experts relatively have better understanding about the vision, mission and core values of the commission. They are very enthusiastic and ambitious about what they do, use some of the tools effectively and even compete for jobs and responsibilities. But now things are a little bit changed especially after the enforcement mandate transferred to some other institutions. Consequently the majority of us are not motivated. This job dissatisfaction results in high turnover in the commission.

FGD1 participant C and FGD2 participant L have said the following:

As to my knowledge the first thing that the top management must do is awareness creation on the mission, vision and core values of the commission to the employees in general and communication PR practitioners in particular. This must be done over and over again so as to create a shared vision. Unfortunately this is not done especially by the current top management members. Therefore

most of the employees do not internalize the commission's vision, mission and core values as expected. For instance one of the core values of the commission is serving as an ethical model, showing the maximum determination to fight and spearhead the fight against corruption; the management and employees do not abide by the values and are a long way from translating them into action. (FGD1 participant C, April22, 2019)

What we exactly know is our day to day activity; we are not sure whether these activities are aligning with the overall strategic goals of the organization as well as its vision or not (FGD2 participant L, April 22, 2019)

Based on the findings it is quite easy to figure out that the majority of the participants share similar views regarding the vision, mission and core values of the commission. They emphasize the vision of the commission are not properly shared among the employees.

Amongst those interviewed, number 14 had a different point of view on the above explanation. According to the interviewee, some of the core values are reflected in most employees' behavior than the management members. Serving as an ethical model and ready for change can be mentioned as examples. Although there are limitations, problems and challenges in the commission, the employees are still focusing on inspiring opportunities. They are ready for change but not supported by the leaders of the commission.

#### **4.1.2. Internal situation (RQ1)**

As noted by Van Ruler (2018), it is impossible to define and value the importance to us of phenomena in the outside world unless we know what is happening inside the organization. That is why it is so important to get a picture of the priorities of the management, the topics and issues which are discussed internally, the quality of internal communication, and the so called 'communication style' within the organization.

Internal communication is the communication that exists within an organization, between and among employees. It can take many forms, such as face-to-face casual conversations, formal meetings, phone calls, emails, memorandums, and internal wikis (a website that allows anyone to add or deletes or revises content by using a web browser). Communication within an organization is a key to success.

In FEACC the management members and employees communicate with each other mainly through meetings and in-house newsletter. The in-house newsletter which is published monthly known as 'Guadachin' focuses mainly on internal issues and also informs FEACC's major activities.

When asked to reflect on the practice of internal communication in the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, interviewee number 08, 13, and FGD2 participant J stated the following:

The management and staff of the commission communicate with each other mainly through events (meeting) and in-house newsletter. The communication/PR department has a role to communicate the management with the staff by organizing events and preparing a monthly in-house newsletter (Guadachin). But I think it doesn't play its role properly in implementing employee relation to fully engage the management and staff to achieve the overall objective of the commission (interviewee number 08, April 17, 2019).

As a partner working with the Federal Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission, we identified internal communication is one of the major problems in the commission. Poor internal communication in FEACC affects our implementation program activities. Since the internal communication is not strong in the commission, no strong interaction and efficient information exchange among the different directorates. I observed that there are times when contradictory data were presented within the same department (interviewee number 13, April 25, 2019).

The management and employees of the commission communicate internally through meetings, memos, internal newsletter, rarely through emails. Since the internal communication of the commission is not frequent and consistent there is a communication gap between the management and the employees. We even are not aware of what is going on in the commission. Sometimes we heard the news of the commission from different Medias. (FGD2 participant J, April 22, 2019)

Regarding this issue, FGD1 participants shared their opinion as follows:

FGD1 B, in most cases the management communicate the employees during the commission's quarterly, bi-annual and annual performance report meetings. The communication department of the commission is not playing its role as a bridge between the management and the employees. Even those meetings are also facilitated by change and good governance directorate. The department organizes events and meetings when the management and the department need.

This opinion is also shared by discussant FGD1 A, D, C and F. Participant E from the same discussion group also expressed somewhat similar points. As he said the communication department is not proactive. It is simply waits for information from the departments. The departments themselves are not ready to give valuable information to the communication department. According to him internal communication guideline is very essential to solve such problems because internal communication is a life blood to an organization.

#### **4.1.3. Stakeholders approach/ External Situation (RQ1, RQ3)**

As discussed in the theoretical framework of the study Van Ruler map out that stakeholders of the organization are all individuals or groups of individuals which will be able to influence the organization, or can be influenced and in this way will be interested in the organization. They are not simply target groups, but have a 'stake in the ambition of the organization'. Stakeholders can be internal and external but the organization needs both.

As indicated in the commission's five years strategic plan stakeholders of the commission were identified. Although stakeholder includes both internal and external, the document focused only on external ones. The external stakeholder's role and responsibilities, their interest, their impact and level of influence on the commission are clearly stated in the document. However, the document were not prioritized the stakeholders. As discussed in stakeholder theory in chapter two, identifying and prioritizing stakeholders are essential for organizations to achieve their goals. The criteria to prioritize stakeholders are also elaborated. However, the stakeholders of the commission were not prioritized based on such criteria but simply listed. The identified stakeholders of the commission are listed as follows:

- The general public
- House of Peoples 'Representative

- Office of Prime Minister
- Governmental Organizations
- Mass media
- Religious Institutions
- International partners
- Youth and Women Associations
- Federal Attorney General
- Federal Police
- Ministry of Education
- Higher Education Institutions
- Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa city Administrative Councils
- Ethics liaison Offices
- Regional Anti-Corruption Commissions

The commission identified the above listed stakeholders in its strategic document. However, the document didn't categorize the stakeholders as enablers and partners. Enablers are Employees, members, media etc. from which organizations need support and commitment. Partners are people and institutions with whom organizations cooperate to realize their ambitions.

One of the major tasks of communication/PR department is dealing with the stakeholders. This relationship, more than anything, demands working closely and proactively. With regard to the relationship between the commission and the stakeholders, interviewees and group discussants reflected their opinion. Accordingly, interviewees number 06,08,12,13, and 20 have noted the following:

As an advertising agency we are not only familiar with the works of the commission but also we are working with it. We have good relationship with the commission in general and the communication department in particular. I think this relationship must be strengthened (Interviewee number 06, April 26, 2019).

The communication department prepares communication/PR tools like brochures, articles, educational advertisements, dramas, panel discussions, organize events (meetings) to build the reputation of the Commission thereby enabling stakeholders to cooperate and develop positive attitude towards the Commission. But I think in today's cyber world the department is not properly utilizing the

internet and social media in order to better communicate with stakeholders (Interviewee number 08, April 17, 2019).

In the previous days our relationships with stakeholders especially with Medias were very good. The commission's news coverage in mainstream medias were relatively better comparing with other government organizations. But currently it is declining. The participation of the stakeholders is falling. I am losing my trust. Even though the reason needs further study, the issue is directly linked with the transfer of investigation and prosecution mandates of the commission to Federal Police and Attorney General. This makes the stakeholders to regret. The commission is now focusing on preventive works which are very important. This huge responsibility is not communicated properly to all stakeholders of the commission. This gap must be filled. (Interviewee number 12, April 24, 2019)

The Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission uses mainly mainstream medias and face to face engagements etc. but the channels that frequently used by the commission are similar and the same media. The Ethiopian broadcasting Corporation can be mentioned as an example. It is difficult to get the majority of its stakeholders with limited channels. I think the commission must use a variety of channels to reach the audience (Interviewee number 13, April 25, 2019).

The commission has relationship with different media houses including ours. But the relationship is not well built. The commission must strengthen its relation with the key stakeholders especially with Medias because the role of media is vital in fighting corruption (Interviewee number 20, April 26, 2019).

Regarding the way of communication approach with stakeholders, interviewee number 09 has said the activities carried out in a way that can persuade the public than facilitating the way for the public to influence the Commission. Thus, one-way communication approach has been widely used by the Commission. The communication practice cares for the Commission's agenda more than the ideas and opinions of the public. This shows that the way of interaction doesn't allow the public as well as the stakeholders to have equal chance of influence as the Commission has. This opinion of interviewee number 09 shared by almost all of the respondents.

FGD3 participants M, O, P, R and Q, have also reflected their views as:

The Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission is one of our key stakeholders. As a justice institution we are working closely with the commission and exchange information frequently. However, our relations are not well established and coordinated. The communication channels are also very limited. Letters and meetings are the common communication channels. I think the major stakeholders should be communicated appropriately and also differently so as to achieve the goals of the organizations (FGD3 participant M, personal communication, April 23, 2019).

Discussant R has a similar view. He said that due to the lack of proper communication with the commission some works of investigations on corruption cases are even delayed.

The effort done by the communication department of the commission to inform and aware the public at large on anti-corruption issues is appreciable. For instance the commission has a 20 minutes radio program in Radio Fana which focuses on ethics and anti-corruption issues. Personally am working on that program. But we suffer a lot to get clear, timely and noteworthy information. The communication department is not proactive. As to me this is the reflection of internal communication problem (FGD3 participant O, April 23, 2019).

On the contrary FGD3 participant P and Q stated that they are impressed by the commission's effort of working in close relationship with stakeholders. Their views are as follows:

The communication/PR department of the commission has good relationship with Medias and other stakeholders like religious institutions. The commission is working hard to create an aware society which condones corruption by disseminating anti-corruption messages through face to face engagement, print and electronic media (FGD3 participant P, personal communication, April 23, 2019).

The role of media in the fight against corruption is very crucial. The commission has tried its best to closely work with print and broadcasting Medias. Media

relations of the commission are encouraging (FGD3 participant Q, personal communication, April 23, 2019).

#### **4.1.4. Accountability (RQ1, RQ3)**

According to Van Ruler and Körver (2016), good ambitions inspire and make clear what one wants to achieve, but without accountability ambitions are day dreams. Accountability forces us to make clear what our exact responsibilities are regarding our ambitions and how to measure progress.

The Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission's mission statement incorporates its promises as follows:

In cooperation with relevant bodies, to insure transparency and accountability in public offices, public enterprises and public organizations by promoting ethics and anti-corruption education, mobilizing the public against corruption, conducting assets registration and disclosure undertakings and preventing corruption and impropriety (FEACC, 2016 p. 8)

The communication/PR directorate of the commission, which is the heart of corruption prevention, cascaded its objectives from the above mission statement. The major objective of this directorate is creating an aware society that doesn't condone corruption by expanding and promotion of ethics and anti-corruption education through different communication channels. This is the main responsibility and promise of the directorate to the public.

According to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) constitution article 12, the conduct of the affairs of government shall be public and transparent and public officials are accountable for any dereliction of the duties of office. We can easily understand from article 12 of the constitution is that transparency is an important issue, related to accountability.

As an organization, FEACC promises its stakeholders to provide quality, efficient and speedy services. The services provided by the commission and the communication department are clearly stated in the commission's Citizens' Charter. The general purpose of the Citizen's Charter is to provide quality and standard services to the public. "The Citizens' Charter

incorporates types, lists and standards of services provided by the Commission. It also aimed at making clarifications on the rights and duties of service users to ensure transparency, justice, effectiveness and accountability” (FEACC, 2014 p. 2).

However, the Citizens’ Charter has some limitations. One of the limitations is excluding or not setting services and standards for internal stakeholders.

Regarding the accountability towards external stakeholders concerning strategic communication, the majority of the interviewees and participants in the group stated that the commission has been trying to engage stakeholders in its activities. They have said that the commission reports its plan and achievements to stakeholders through different communication means. With regard to this issue interviewee number 08 stated the following:

The Commission has a good working relationship with external stakeholders such as government offices, NGOs, media institutions, civic and professional associations and religious institutions, among others. It holds meetings (forums, conferences) on policy and decision making and other related issues with ethics and corruption. The commission is also uses print and electronic medias to reach its stakeholders.

Interviewee number 12 also explained similar view:

The commission reports its performance report quarterly to its major stakeholders including the House of People’s Representatives (HPR). Reports and other related documents are also provided to international partners and posted on the commission’s website. However, frequent interruptions of internet connection had been creating difficulties to provide consistent information through the website, social media and e-mail (Interviewee number 12, April 24, 2019).

On the other hand interviewee number 10 explained about the social responsibilities of the commission towards the publics in society. The interviewee stated that the commission showed its commitment by donating used desktop computers to some primary schools and to Mekedonia, home for elderly and disabled center although it doesn’t have Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy.

#### **4.1.5. Resources (RQ1)**

As discussed in chapter two, organizations should equip with resources to do its Strategic communication jobs. Resources have two aspects. These are human capital and financial resources. Human capital is a resource we need to realize our ambition and accountability in a professional and effective way. Financial resource is also a resource which is used to realize the ambition and accountability of an organization. Professional competence development of employees and management, related to development and change, needs sufficient budget as well. The interviewees and group discussants were asked about whether the commission equipped to do its strategic communication jobs or not. Almost all of the respondents reflected similar ideas.

Interviewee number 01 and 05 stated that shortage of communication/PR experts and lack of professional knowledge and technical skills on the field are serious problems in the commission. In addition lack of necessary materials is also problems which greatly affect the activities of communication/PR.

Interviewee number 09 also added that low staffing levels, financial constraints and poor understanding of the role of communication/PR by top management members negatively impacted the practice of communication and prevents us to realize our ambition.

Interviewee numbers 13, 14, FGD1 participant A, E and F shared similar views. They stated that the commission's communication department is not equipped with the necessary materials (equipment) like professional and up to date cameras, recorders, mini-studios and so on. They further explained that the works of communication/PR is not supported by up to date technology. The problem related to information management system was another issue mentioned by the respondents. Because of the practice of poor record management the process of information dissemination has become challenging in the commission.

FGD2 participant J and L also pointed out that the turnover among communication/PR experts in the commission is very high. According to the respondents the reason for high turnover is mainly because of low salary scale of the commission and inconvenient working environment. They further stated that the current offices of the commission are also the source of discomfort for most of the employees because the office is not conducive and dispersed.

It is understood from the above discussions that there is a resource limitation in the commission both in human and financial resources.

#### **4.1.5. Action Plan (Approach summary, Scenarios) (RQ1)**

According to Professor Van Ruler (2016), by action plan organizations will ‘translate’ all strategic choices and decisions, done in the former building blocks, into operational activities for stakeholders. She further explained that in traditional approaches the organization is focusing on year plans many times, consisting of activities and related budget lines. Because of continuous change processes in our network society, and in our organizations, we would prefer to talk about ‘Agile scenarios’ instead of ‘Action plans’.

Planning communication/PR activities is one of the communication/PR activities. Most of the interviewees and group discussant noted that planning of communication/PR practice in the commission is poor. Regarding this point interviewees number 02, 04 and FGD2 L participant have said the following:

The communication/PR department of the commission follows traditional approaches. Its plan mainly focuses on year plans. It doesn’t include medium and long term plans. The activities in the year plans are details and routine. I am not sure whether the activities are aligned with the vision or not (Interviewee number 02, personal communication, April 21, 2019).

The data indicated that the commission’s plan has followed a traditional approach which is mainly focus on year plans consisting of detail activities.

Interviewee number 04 stated that the communication plan lacks proper research. The department does not recognize the importance of research that plays in the process of preparing communication/PR plan (Interviewee number 04, personal communication, April 18, 2019).

Discussant FGD2 L added that the wish of the commission to engage employees of the commission and stakeholders are limited. I think the commission needs to be a connected and learning organization.

The data indicated that the commission's plan has followed a traditional approach which is mainly focus on year plans consisting of detail activities.

#### **4.2 opportunities (RQ4)**

Although there have been gaps in the practice of strategic communication in FEACC, there are also internal and external opportunities for improving it in the future. Regarding this issue the majority of the respondents stated that the current situation in the country can create a favorable situation for speeding up the ongoing anti-corruption struggle by developing strategic communication.

Interviewee number 08 said that the current government of the country has showed its commitment in the fight against corruption. The recent measures taken by the government on the corrupt higher government officials showed that no corrupt official is immune from prosecution, be they junior or senior. This action of the government has a great impact on the ant-corruption struggle in general and the communication practice in particular.

Interviewee number 09, 12 and 13 confirmed that there is a relatively better press freedom now especially after the coming to power of Premier Dr. Abiye Ahmed. It contributes a lot for the development of strategic communication. It makes easier the relationships with media. There are also big events focusing on different national issue are organizing by the federal government. These all are golden opportunities for the development of strategic communication practices.

Two of the respondents, interviewee number 01 and 07 stated that they didn't see any opportunity for the improvement of strategic communication in the commission.

The other opportunity which is helpful to improve strategic communication is financial, technical and material support. The commission has got the support from international organization like United Nation Development Program, the World Bank and others. If it is utilized appropriately, these opportunities can resolve limitations on the practice of communication in FEACC.

The issue has been mentioned by the FGD2 participant K as:

The availability of different types of associations in the country is one opportunity which enables the commission to embrace them as stakeholders so as to enable them participate in expanding ethics and anti-corruption messages to the public. The expansion of the number and types of media houses is the other opportunity to channel the issue to the general public. The recognition given to the issue of corruption internationally and the increased number of international organization provide the advantage to better advance the communication practice. Financial, technical and other types of supports from international organizations are also good opportunities to better practice communication. A better academic opportunity to advance the discipline of public relations is also an opportunity to do a better job in the future.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 5.1. Conclusion

As stated in the first chapter, the main focus of this study is examining the strategic communication practice of FEACC in the fight against corruption.

Qualitative research method was employed as a research design in this study. In-depth Interview, Focus Group Discussions and Document Analysis were used to collect the data for the study.

To answer the research question and related concepts, the researcher reviewed relevant theoretical frameworks, and empirical concepts. Accordingly, the data gathered through in-depth interviews, FGDs and document analysis thematically analyzed based on Van Ruler's Strategic Communication Frame.

The data analysis was not only bound to a specific theory or model discussed in the literature review, but the theoretical frameworks, the models and empirical concepts were utilized as a guide to the analysis and making sense of the data.

For the purpose of collecting the data, in-depth interview with twenty one people and 19 people in three FGDs were conducted. Three documents were also used for analysis. The documents are the Commission's Five Years Strategic Plan, Annual Plans, Citizen's Charter and working manuals. The interviewees and group discussants comprised employees, management members and external stakeholders of the commission. According to the analysis of the research findings, the following conclusions were made.

From the results obtained through in-depth interview, FGDs and document analysis, the study shows that the FEACC's vision, mission and key values are not properly communicated and shared by the majority of the employees although some senior experts relatively perceived it better than the new joined employees. Awareness creation on the vision, mission and core values are not consistent in the commission. Aligning the activities with the overall objectives and vision of the commission is also seen as a gap.

As clearly stated in the theoretical framework, the core values are the 'translation' of the vision of the organization, they give meaning to it, spirit, and energy. They should be visible in the

behavior of management and employees. Rather most of the employees including the management focusing on limitations than inspiring new chances.

The study concludes that internal communication in FEACC is not strong enough to create a strong integration and to enable an efficient information exchange among the different directorates of the commission.

It is not difficult to find out that there is a communication gap between the management and the employees of the commission. The communication department of FEACC doesn't properly play its role in implementing employee relation to fully engage the management and staff to achieve the overall objective of the commission.

Stakeholders are not simply target groups, but have a 'stake in the ambition of the organization' (Van Ruler and Körver 2016). They can influence and can be influenced by the organization. As the finding of the study indicated, stakeholders of the commission were clearly identified. FEACC uses different channels of communication to reach its stakeholders. The communication/PR prepares communication tools like magazine, brochures, flyers, billboards, articles, public service advertisements, meetings, panel discussions and organizes events to build the reputation of the commission thereby enabling stakeholders to cooperate and develop positive attitude towards the commission. However, the department is not properly utilizing the new media to better communicate with stakeholders in today's cyber world. In addition, the commission focused only on external stakeholders.

Regarding the way of communication approach with stakeholders, the research point out that one-way communication approach has been widely used by the Commission.

With regard to accountability towards external stakeholders concerning strategic communication, the study finds out that FEACC promises to ensure transparency and accountability in public offices, public enterprises and public organizations by promoting ethics and anti-corruption education, and mobilizing the public against corruption. To make this visible the commission has involved stakeholders and provided information about its activities through various ways. The commission reports about decisions made its plans and performance report to major stakeholders including the House of People's Representatives (HPR). Reports and other related documents are also provided to local and international partners and posted on the commission's website.

So as to do strategic communication jobs effectively, organizations should be equipped with human capital and financial resources as noted in the theoretical framework part of this research. In this regard the research finding concluded that there is a resource limitation in FEACC both in human and financial resources. Shortage of communication/PR experts, lack of professional knowledge and technical skills on the field of strategic communication/PR, lack of necessary materials and budget constraints negatively impacted the practice of strategic communication practice in the commission. The works of communication/PR is not supported by up to date technology like information management system. Because of the practice of poor record management the process of information dissemination has become challenging in the commission.

The finding of the study indicated, the communication/PR department's plan has followed traditional approach which is mainly focus on year plans consisting of detail activities which is not strategic. It doesn't have a separate medium and long term plan. The department doesn't seriously consider the critical role that research plays in the process of preparing communication/PR plan.

Although there are limitations in practicing strategic communication, opportunities are there to improve strategic communication in the commission. The international organization's willing to support the commission financially, materially and technically is a good opportunity for strategic communication to be implemented successfully.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

The following recommendations are forwarded based on the findings of the research.

- The vision and mission of FEACC need to be shared among the employees and stakeholders of the commission to strengthen the fight against corruption. The top management and the communication department should play their vital role in this regard.
- The commission needs to develop the harmony between the employees and the management formally and informally because Communication within an organization is a key to success.

- FEACC need to identify and prioritize its stakeholders clearly in order to get their potential contribution to achieve its goal and objectives. Establishing proper and consistent communication with stakeholders is also very essential for FEACC.
- FEACC needs to change the conventional one-way communication approach and adapt to a more up-to-date approach like communication as an omnidirectional diachronic process of meaning development.
- The commission should pay special attention for the utilization of social media to reach the younger generation. The website of the commission should also be updated and engaging.
- FEACC should develop and implement a full-fledged communication strategy document in order to appropriately address communication issues in an organized manner.
- Professional researches should also be conducted and implemented.
- The commission needs to professionalize the communication/PR to achieve the objective of the commission.
- FEACC should utilize each and every opportunities created within the commission and outside the commission. The commission needs to focus on inspiration rather than limitations because there are plenty of opportunities to satisfy its stakeholders.

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# Appendices

# Appendix I

## Questions for in-depth interview

### In-depth interview guiding questions for employees and stakeholders of the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission

#### Personal Information

1. Name/Code -----
2. Age -----
3. Sex -----
4. Education level -----
5. Field of education -----
5. Position -----
7. Working experience -----

#### I. Guiding Questions for in-depth interview

These in-depth interview questions are prepared basically to collect data from the employees and stakeholders of the FEACC to examine “Strategic Communication in the Fight against Corruption in FEACC.” The data will be applied for the research leading to master’s thesis requirement in master of Public Relation and Strategic Communication. The researcher has exhaustively listed as much questions as possible to get the necessary replies that would help the research make robust. The information you will provide in this interview will be kept confidential and will be utilized only for the purpose of the study; your authentic response is highly valuable for the achievement of the objective of this research.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!!

1. What is the mission of Communication/PR in FEACC?
2. How do you understand the meaning of strategic communication?

3. What is your and your organization's vision and ambition (key values) regarding strategic communication?
4. What are the major communication/PR functions and activities employed in FEACC? What communication tools are used?
5. Is there any communication guideline or communication strategy in your organization?
6. How do management members and employees of the organization communicate with each other and what is the role of communication /PR department in this regard?
7. What does the Communication/PR department of FEACC do to help the organization, its staff members and employees better to communicate (counseling and coaching roles of PR)?
8. How do you evaluate the Communication/PR of the organization in developing Strategic communication opportunities for building bridges between the organization and its stakeholders to maintain and develop a good reputation?
9. What do you think are the role of civil society, governmental and international organizations, media and other stakeholders in fighting corruption?
10. How do you explain the relationship of the organization with external stakeholders? And how does the organization communicate with them?
11. How do you evaluate the responsibility of the organization in participating stakeholders in the fight against corruption? Does your organization feel accountable in this regard?
12. What is the accountability towards external stakeholders regarding strategic communication? Does the organization report about its plan, performances, results and decision making to its stakeholders?
13. What do you think is the role of strategic communication in the fight against corruption?
14. How do you evaluate your organization's contribution of strategic communication in fighting corruption?
15. How do you evaluate your organization's awareness on strategic communication?
16. What is the accountability towards external stakeholders of your organization regarding strategic communication? Does the organization report about its plan, performances, results and decision making to its stakeholders?

17. What challenges are faced in conducting strategic communication/PR in fighting corruption in FEACC?
18. What measures do you think should be taken to improve the current communication/PR practice in your organization?
19. What opportunities are there in your organization for the development of strategic communication in fighting corruption in the future?

በፌዴራል የሥነምግባር እና የፀረ-ሙስና ኮሚሽን ሠራተኞች እና ባለድርሻ አካላት የተዘጋጁ መሪ ጥያቄዎች

**የግል መረጃ**

1. ስም/ኮድ-----
2. እድሜ-----
3. ፆታ-----
4. የትምህርት ደረጃ-----
5. የተማሩት የትምህርት ዓይነት-----
6. የሀላፊነት ደረጃ -----
7. የሥራ ልምድ -----

1. የተቋም የኮሙኒኬሽን ወይም የሕዝብ ግንኙነት ተልዕኮ ምንድን ነው?
2. የስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽንን (Strategic communication) ምንነት እንዴት ይረዳታል?
3. ስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽንን በተመለከተ የርስዎና የተቋም ራዕይ እና እሴቶች ምንድን ናቸው?
4. በፌዴራል የሥነምግባር እና የፀረ-ሙስና ኮሚሽን እየተከናወኑ ያሉ የኮሙኒኬሽን ተግባራት (functions) ምንድን ናቸው? ተግባራቱን ለማስፈፀም ኮሚሽኑ ምን አይነት የኮሙኒኬሽን ዘዴዎችን ወይም መሣሪያዎችን ይጠቀማል ?
5. ተቋም የኮሚዩኒኬሽን ሥራ የሚሰራበት መመሪያ ወይም ስትራቴጂ አለው? ካለው ዋና ዋና ይዘቶቹ ምንድን ናቸው? ከሌለውስ ለምን?
6. የተቋሙ ከፍተኛ የሥራ ሀላፊዎችና የማኔጅመንት አባላት ከተቋሙ ሠራተኞች ጋር እንዴት ነው ኮሙኒኬት የሚያደርጉት? በዚህ ረገድ የኮሙኒኬሽን / ህዝብ ግንኙነት ክፍሉ ሚና ምንድን ነው?

7. የተቋም የኮሙኒኬሽን / የህዝብ ግንኙነት የሥራ ክፍል ተቋሙ፣ በሥራ ያሉ ሠራተኞችና የሥራ ክፍሎች የተሻለ ተግባራት (ኮሙኒኬሽን) እንዲኖራቸው ምን እገዛ ያደርጋል?
8. የተቋም የኮሙኒኬሽን / የህዝብ ግንኙነት የሥራ ክፍል ተልዕኮውን ለማሳካት በተቋሙና በባለድርሻ አካላት መካከል ያለውን ድልድይ በመገንባት የሚያደርገውን የገፅታ ግንባታ ሥራ እንዴት ይገመግሙታል?
9. ሙስናን በመታገል ሂደት የሲቪል ማህበረሰብ፣ የመንግሥታዊና አለም አቀፍ ድርጅቶች እንዲሁም የሚዲያና ሌሎች ባለድርሻ አካላት ሚና ምንድን ነው ብለው ያስባሉ?
10. ኮሚሽኑ ከውጭ ባለድርሻ አካላት ጋር ያለው ግንኙነት እንዴት ይገለጻል? ግንኙነቱ በምን አይነት የኮሙኒኬሽን ዘዴዎች ይከናወናል?
11. የተቋም ባለድርሻ አካላትን በፀረ-ሙስና ትግል የማሳተፍ ሀላፊነቱን በአግባቡ መወጣቱን እንዴት ይገመግሙታል?
12. ከስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽን ጋር በተያያዘ የተቋም ለባለድርሻ አካላት ምን ያህል ተጠያቂነት አለው? ተቋሙ ለባለድርሻ አካላቱ እቅዱን፣ አፈፃፀሙንና ያስመዘገበውን ውጤት ወዘተ. ያቀርባል? ያብራራት?
13. ሙስናን በመታገል ረገድ የስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽን ሚና ምን ሊሆን ይችላል ብለው ያስባሉ?
14. በተቋም ሙስናን በመታገል ረገድ የስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽን አስተዋፅኦ ንእንዴት ይገመግሙታል?
15. የተቋም ምን አይነት የኮሙኒኬሽን ወይም የህዝብ ግንኙነት ሞዴሎችን ይጠቀማል?
16. በተቋም ያለውን የስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽን ግንዛቤ እንዴት ይገመግሙታል?
17. በተቋም የስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽን/ የህዝብ ግንኙነት ተግባራትን በማከናወን ሂደት የሚስተዋሉ ተግዳሮቶች ምንድን ናቸው?
18. የስትራቴጂያዊ የኮሙኒኬሽን ተግባራትን በማከናወኑ ሂደት በተቋሙ የተስተዋሉ ችግሮችን በመቅረፍ አሁን ያለውን የኮሙኒኬሽን ሁኔታ ለማሻሻል ምን መደረግ አለበት ይላሉ?
19. በተቋም ውስጥ ወደፊት የስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽንን በማጎልበት ሙስናን ለመከላከል የሚያስችሉ ምን ምቹ ሁኔታዎች አሉ?

## **Appendix II**

### **Questions for in-depth interview**

#### **FGD guiding questions for employees and stakeholders of the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission**

#### **Focus Group Discussion Guiding Plan & Discussion Points**

##### **FGD1 and FGD2**

**Date:** April 22 2019

**Time:** 9:30 A.M and 2:30 P.M

**Venue:** FEACC management meeting hall

##### **Discussion Plan**

- **Reception** (3:00 A.M and 2:00 P.M)
- **Getting to know each other** (5 minutes for each group)
- **Introduction** (5 minutes for each group)
  
- **Warm up** (8-10 minutes for each group)
  - Your experience at FEACC

##### **Guiding Questions for FGDs (1 hour and 30 minutes)**

1. What do you know about strategic communication?
2. What are the major communication/PR functions and activities of FEACC and what communication tools are used in FEACC?

3. How are the vertical, horizontal and diagonal communication line organized in FEACC?
4. What do you think is the role of strategic communication in the fight against corruption
5. How do management members and employees of the organization communicate with each other and what is the role of communication /PR department in this regard?
6. How do you evaluate the Communication/PR of FEACC in developing Strategic communication opportunities for building bridges between the organization and its stakeholders to maintain and develop a good reputation?
7. What do you think are the role of civil society, governmental and international organizations, media and other stakeholders in fighting corruption?
8. How do you explain the relationship of the organization with external stakeholders? And how does the organization communicate with them?
9. How do you evaluate the responsibility of the organization in participating stakeholders in the fight against corruption? Does your organization feel accountable in this regard?
10. What are the problems and measures do you think should be taken to improve the current of communication/PR in FEACC?
11. What opportunities are in FEACC for the development of strategic communication in the future?

- Closing (10 minutes)

- ❖ FGD3 followed the same procedures. The only difference is the venue and the date. FGD3 conducted in the Vision Ethiopia Congress for Democracy head office on April 23/2019.

**ከፌደራል ሥነምግባርና ፀረ-ሙስና ኮሚሽን ባለሙያዎችና ባለድርሻ አካላት ጋር ለሚደረግ ውይይት የተዘጋጁ መሪ ጥያቄዎች**

1. ስለስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽን ምን ያህል ያውቃሉ?
2. በፌደራል የሥነምግባር እና የፀረ-ሙስና ኮሚሽን እየተከናወኑ ያሉ የኮሙኒኬሽን ተግባራት (functions) ምንድን ናቸው? ተግባራቱን ለማስፈፀም ኮሚሽኑ ምን አይነት የኮሙኒኬሽን ዘዴዎችን ወይም መሣሪያዎችን ይጠቀማል ?
3. በኮሚሽኑ ያለው የኮሙኒኬሽን የግንኙነት መስመር እንዴት ነው የተደራጀው?
4. ሙስናን በመታገል ረገድ የስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽን ሚና ምን ሊሆን ይችላል ብለው ያስባሉ?
5. የተቋሙ የማኔጅመንት አባላት ከተቋሙ ሠራተኞች ጋር እንዴት ነው ኮሙኒኬት የሚያደርጉት? በዚህ ረገድ የኮሙኒኬሽን /ህዝብ ግንኙነት ክፍሉ ሚና ምንድነው?
6. የተቋምዎ የኮሙኒኬሽን /የህዝብ ግንኙነት የሥራ ክፍል ተልዕኮውን ለማሳካት በተቋሙና በባለድርሻ አካላት መካከል ያለውን ድልድይ በመገንባት የሚያደርገውን የገፅታ ግንባታ ሥራ እንዴት ይገመግሙታል?
7. ሙስናን በመታገል ሂደት የሲቪል ማህበረሰቡ፣ የመንግሥታዊና አለም አቀፍ ድርጅቶች እንዲሁም የሚዲያና ሌሎች ባለድርሻ አካላት ሚና ምንድን ነው ብለው ያስባሉ?
8. ኮሚሽኑ ከባለድርሻ አካላት ጋር ያለው ግንኙነት እንዴት ይገለጻል? ግንኙነቱስ በምን አይነት የኮሙኒኬሽን ዘዴዎች ይከናወናል?
9. ኮሚሽኑ ባለድርሻ አካላትን በፀረ-ሙስና ትግል የማሳተፍ ሀላፊነቱን በአግባቡ መወጣቱን እንዴት ይገመግሙታል? በዚህ ረገድ ኮሚሽኑ ያለበትን ተጠያቂነት ይገነዘባል?
10. በተቋምዎ የስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽን/ የህዝብ ግንኙነት ሥራ ላይ የሚስተዋሉ ችግሮች ወይም ተግዳሮቶች እና መፍትሄዎቻቸው ምንድን ናቸው?
11. በተቋምዎ ውስጥ ወደፊት ስትራቴጂያዊ ኮሙኒኬሽንን በማጎልበት ሙስናን ለመከላከል የሚያስችሉ ምን ምቹ ሁኔታዎች አሉ ብለው ይገምታሉ?

## Appendix III

### Lists of Employees and stakeholders of FEACC that participate in the interview

No.	Name/Code	Position/Title	Organization	Date of interview
1	01	Director	FEACC	April 23/2019
2	02	Senior expert	FEACC	April 21/2019
3	03	Director	Media House	April 27/2019
4	04	Senior expert	FEACC	April 18/2019
5	05	Expert	FEACC	April 18/2019
6	06	Manager	Advertizing Agency	April 26/2019
7	07	Deputy Manager	Advertizing Agency	April 26/2019
8	08	Senior expert	FEACC	April 17/2019
9	09	expert	FEACC	April 18/2019
10	10	Director	FEACC	April 24/2019
11	11	Team Leader	FEACC	April 21/2019
12	12	Team Leader	FEACC	April 24/2019
13	13	Project Coordinator	International Organization (NU)	April 25/2019
14	14	Expert	FEACC	April 18/2019
15	15	Manager	Civic Society	April 26/2019
16	16	Director	FEACC	April 17/2019
17	17	Director	FEACC	April 21/2019
18	18	Director	FEACC	April 22/2019
19	19	Team Leader	FEACC	April 22/2019
20	20	Director	Media House	April 27/2019
21	21	Team Leader	Covenantal Org.	April 19/2019

**Lists of Employees and stakeholders of FEACC that participate in FGDs**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name/Code</b>	<b>Position/Title</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>
<b>FGD1</b>				
1	A	Expert	FEACC	April 22/2019
2	B	Senior expert	FEACC	April 22/2019
3	C	Expert	FEACC	"
4	D	Expert	FEACC	"
5	E	Team Leader	FEACC	"
6	F	Expert	FEACC	"
7	S	Expert	FEACC	"
<b>FGD2</b>				
8	G	Director	FEACC	April 22/2019
9	H	Director	FEACC	"
10	I	Director	FEACC	"
11	J	Team Leader	FEACC	"
12	K	Director	FEACC	"
13	L	Team Leader	FEACC	"
<b>FGD3</b>				
14	M	Expert	Government Org.	April 23/2019
15	N	Manager	Media House	"
16	O	Director	Media House	"
17	P	Director	Civil Society	"
18	Q	Director	Media House	"
19	R	Team Leader	Covenantal Org.	"