

Addis Ababa University
College of Social Science and Humanities School of Journalism and
Communication



**A Comparative Analysis of Journalists' Safety in Selected Public Media:
The Case of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporate, Ethiopian News Agency
and Ethiopian Press Agency during 2018-2023**

By: Samrawit Girma Benti

**A Thesis Submitted to: College of Social Science and Humanities School of
Journalism and Communication**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements for The Degree of
Masters of Art in Journalism and Communication**

May 2024

Addis Ababa

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**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Masters Arts in Journalism and Communication**

May 2024

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Declaration

Declaration This thesis is my original work, and all sources of data used in the study have been fully acknowledged. Additionally, the entire study document has also been checked for plagiarism using Turnitin's services and has passed all necessary inspections.

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Chair of Graduate Coordinator

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I want to thank Almighty God for helping me in everything. His help was great from the beginning. Secondly my heartfelt thanks for my adviser Teshager Shiferaw (PhD). Without your scholarly critical comments, patience, and freedom, this thesis would not have been completed.

Finally, my family specially my dear husband Ayana and my children (Wedu, Olma and Oguma) thanks for your support and patience. Also my colleagues and classmates specially Felmeta and Mihiret, thanks for your encouraging comments and support throughout the completion of this thesis. Again special thanks for the informants who give me your opinion to fulfill this thesis.

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List of Abbreviation

EBC: Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation

ENA: Ethiopian News Agency

EPA: Ethiopian Press Agency

EPRDF: Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front

ESAT: Ethiopian Satellite Television

IMS: International Media Support

IPI: International Peace Institute

ICCPR: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

IREX: International Research and Exchange Board

OMN: Oromia Media Network

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UN: United Nation

UNESCO: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Abstract

In recent years, the safety of journalists has emerged as a critical concern worldwide, particularly in regions where press freedom is under threat. This comparative analysis delves into the challenges faced by journalists within the Ethiopian media landscape, focusing on the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, Ethiopian News Agency, and Ethiopian Press Agency during the period of 2018 to 2023. By examining the specific dynamics within these organizations, this study aims to shed light on the unique obstacles journalists encounter in their pursuit of reporting the truth and contributing to public discourse in Ethiopia. The main purpose of the study is to analyze journalists' safety challenge working in selected Ethiopian Public Media organizations, focusing on Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporate (EBC), Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), and Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) during the period from 2018-2023. The time is selected because of it's known as reform period regarding to coming to the power of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD). And it is to explore factors influencing their safety and efficacy in reporting. The research employs a qualitative method to provide a comprehensive understanding of journalists' experience and perception of safety within Ethiopian Public Media. Based on purposive sampling technique, the Data is collected from journalists working in three public media. Semi structured and In depth individual interviews were applied to collect Data from 12 journalists. That mean four from the three media. The research focus during 2018-2023 because the period was selected because it's known as the period of 'reform' and believes many improvements are shown on journalists' safety and press freedom. As the political and economy structure changed, the government promises to give more emphasis on building democracy system that enables to give press freedom. Based on this the researcher try to conduct the lived experience of journalists during the period. The finding this study discovered that the safety of journalists who are working in the selected media house are still in problem. Journalists are self censoring them selves because of fear for their safety. The result of study also indicated that the safety of journalists before and after the reform is still in question. journalists in selected Ethiopian Public Media, faced challenges such as harassment, intimidation and self-censorship.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

This part is going to discuss about journalists safety, background, statement of problem and objective of the study. As well as, the research question, the scope, limitation and organization of the study are presented.

1.1 Background of the study

In the landscape of modern society, journalism stands as a cornerstone of democracy, serving as a crucial conduit for information dissemination, public discourse, and societal accountability. Yet, alongside its noble mission, journalism is frequently met with challenges, particularly concerning the safety and security of its practitioners. In recent years, the perilous nature of journalism has become increasingly evident, with journalists facing threats, harassment, violence, and even death in the pursuit of truth. (Marino, 2013. p.88).

According to Jacobsson, 2017, p. 20, journalism plays a fundamental role in any democratic society, serving as a vital conduit for information dissemination, public discourse, and societal accountability. However, the practice of journalism is not without its challenges, and one of the most pressing concerns globally is the safety and security of journalists.

Freedom of expression is a vital aspect of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is commonly considered to sustain democratic liberties. Professional journalism is essential to exercising freedom of expression since they give forums through which this right might be exercised (Jacobsson, et al., 2017, p.38). Journalism, serves an essential part in democratic societies by offering the people the information necessary to make informed decisions, keeping individuals who are in charge responsible, and serving as a watchdog against fraud and abuses of authority. Journalism informs and educates its audience. It fulfills a societal interest in openness (Henrichsen, et al., 2015, p.10). While they play these vital roles in providing relevant information for society to make good decisions in their daily activity, journalists face many challenges. They have always taken risks to report the most extreme events – particularly conflict. (Cottle & others., 2019, p.171).

Journalists worldwide are increasingly faced with attacks on their lives, dignity, and work integrity. (Berger, 2020, p.1). The safety of journalists is a global concern since it directly affects press freedom and their capacity to cover significant stories without fear of retaliation.

As stated by Mukherjee (2014, p.14). Anywhere there is a journalist, there is a journalist everywhere. Concern over unsafe working conditions for journalists is spreading around the world. (Larsen, and others, 2020, p.170) When journalists are not protected, information cannot flow freely and may even result in self-censorship and censorship, which threatens democracy and the public's right to know. (Moges, 2022, p.1)

Ethiopia, with its rich history and diverse cultural landscape, is no exception to these challenges. Over the past few decades, the Ethiopian media environment has undergone significant transformations, marked by periods of authoritarian rule, media censorship, and limited press freedom. However, in recent years, Ethiopia has witnessed notable political reforms, including the loosening of media restrictions, the release of imprisoned journalists, and the promise of greater press freedom under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's administration. (Svernlöv, 2020, p. 22). He also added, the period spanning 2018 to 2023 is particularly noteworthy in the context of Ethiopian journalism, as it encompasses a time of significant political and social upheaval. The era witnessed the rise of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, the implementation of sweeping reforms, and the emergence of new challenges and opportunities for media practitioners.

In past the past few years positive changes have occurred in Ethiopia. For example, freeing of journalists who were detained and expansion of media outlets. Administration of Prime Minister Abiy has started a lot of initiatives. (Mukundu & Rasmussen, 2018, p.4). However, there is still much work to be done to ensure the safety of journalists and to fully guarantee press freedom in the country. even though there is a reform to have a better access to government information, there are limitations in practice. (Tufa & Dejene, 2022, p.28).

Significant political and social changes reveal in recent years in Ethiopia; rise to power of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in 2018 was one of the reforms. During the last three years the number of threats directed at journalists by state and non state political actors has significantly increased. (Ethiopia Safety of Journalists Report, 2022, p.1). These reforms, essential in Abiy Ahmed's 2019 Nobel Peace Prize Award logic, also generated great optimism for journalists who have long been ostracized during EPRDF's rule (Workneh, 2022). Despite these improvements, challenges persisted, particularly in the realm of journalist safety. Threats, intimidation, and sometimes physical assaults on journalists persisted while they were doing their jobs. Because journalism frequently entails reporting on delicate subjects, corruption, and vital interests, the safety of journalists continues to be a

worry not only in Ethiopia but worldwide. Harassment, intimidation, arrests, and other forms of restriction of free expression against journalists lead to chilling effects (Ed. Larsen, Fadnes & Krøvel, 2021, p. 52).

When journalists in Ethiopia carry out their crucial jobs, they often encounter enormous hurdles regarding physical safety and professional integrity. Those who conduct journalism may attract attacks because of the vital role they serve, and it is because of this role that they also particularly merit protection (Henrichsen, et al., 2015, p. 10).

The purpose of the study is to comprehend the safety issues that Ethiopian public media journalists face, with a particular emphasis on the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) and Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) between 2018 and 2023. The historical, political, and social background of Ethiopian journalists' circumstances is examined in this chapter, along with the state of press security and freedom in general.

The time frame of 2018 to 2023 encapsulates a pivotal period in Ethiopia's socio-political landscape, marked by significant transitions, reforms, and upheavals. Against this backdrop, understanding the safety challenges faced by journalists becomes imperative, as it offers insights into the evolving nature of press freedom, media regulation, and societal dynamics within the country.

Furthermore, this study aspires to contribute to scholarly discourse, policy formulation, and advocacy efforts aimed at bolstering journalists' safety, promoting press freedom, and safeguarding democratic principles in Ethiopia and beyond. By illuminating the realities faced by journalists operating within the EBC, ENA, and EPA, this research endeavors to foster a conducive environment for journalism that is characterized by autonomy, integrity, and security. In the ensuing chapters, this thesis will navigate through the intricacies of journalists' safety challenges within the Ethiopian media landscape, offering insights, analyses, and recommendations that aim to inform, inspire, and catalyze positive change.

1.1.1 About organizations

Ethiopian Broadcast Corporation (EBC) is one of the leading public media which is established in 1957 during Haile Selassie regime. The media organization is broadcasting the message through various channels; ETV News channel, ETV Entertainment, ETV language. ETV Afan Oromo, and ETV Sport. These channels host news, documentary, entertainment, sport and children program. It broadcast in local and international languages.

Also, Ethiopian Radio transmit, more than 11 medium wave transmitters and more than 15 FM through the country. Another alternative media out late of EBC is News Media. Additionally, Website, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter pages reach its viewer and audience. Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) was established in 1942. This media house has been gathering, compiling and disseminating news stories through the mass media, websites and social media platforms. It has 38 branch offices across the country. The media disseminating news and related stories, documentary and TV programs; and also publishes a bi-monthly magazine called Negari. ENA broadcasts its news and programs in six local and foreign languages.

Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) is a printing public media, established in 1940. The enterprise publishes the only daily Amharic newspaper; Addis Zemen and English, The Ethiopian Herald. And publishes weekly newspapers in local and international languages. The Amharic monthly magazine Zemen also among EPA's publication.

1.2 Problem statement

Despite the pivotal role of journalism in fostering democracy and accountability, journalists face numerous safety challenges worldwide, particularly in regions where press freedom is constrained. Within the context of Ethiopia, a nation undergoing significant political and social transformations, the safety and security of journalists remain paramount concerns. (Belay, 2019,p.8).

Moreover, while some studies have touched upon journalists' safety in Ethiopia, they predominantly focus on broader national or regional contexts, neglecting the nuanced challenges faced by journalists within specific media organizations. This gap in the literature calls for a targeted investigation into the safety concerns encountered by journalists working within the EBC, ENA, and EPA, as well as an exploration of the organizational responses and external influences shaping these challenges.

Addressing this gap is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, understanding the safety challenges faced by journalists within these key media organizations is essential for informing policy formulation, organizational practices, and advocacy efforts aimed at enhancing press freedom and journalists' safety in Ethiopia. Secondly, the period of 2018 to 2023 represents a significant juncture in Ethiopia's history, marked by political reforms, social upheavals, and shifts in media dynamics, making it imperative to capture the evolving nature of journalists' safety challenges during this time frame.

By conducting a comparative analysis of journalists' safety challenges within the EBC, ENA, and EPA, this study aims to fill the gap in the existing literature and contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical interventions in the field of media and journalism studies. Moreover, by shedding light on the specific safety dynamics within these media organizations, this research seeks to empower journalists, media professionals, policymakers, and civil society actors with insights and evidence necessary for fostering a safer and more conducive environment for journalism in Ethiopia.

During 2018-2023, several accounts of journalist murders, incarcerations, and harassment have appeared. Self-censorship and media freedom have negatively impacted by this. The public's capacity to obtain information and hold people in positions of authority responsible has been hampered by the lack of safety for journalists. Despite some hopeful developments, more work has to be done to fully ensure press freedom and ensure the safety of journalists in Ethiopia. (Chernet, 2020, p.24).

In general, Ethiopian media outlets can be divided into public and private sectors. Public media organizations, such as EBC, ENA, and EPA, have been seen as extensions of the state, charged with disseminating information aligned with government policies and priorities. While the Ethiopian Constitution guarantees freedom of the press, the reality on the ground has often been marked by challenges and constraints that hinder journalistic freedom and safety. The civil society legislation has already been revised, by repealing restrictive provisions, and was passed by the Ethiopian parliament in January 2019. (Fojo (n.d)., p.14)

1.3. Objective

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of this study is to investigate and analyze safety challenges faced by journalists working within Ethiopian public media entities, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporate (EBC), Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) and Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), during the period from 2018-2023.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objective of this study would be:

- ✓ To evaluate the landscape of media freedom and journalists' safety in Ethiopia for the years 2018-2023.

- ✓ To assess the specific safety challenges faced by journalists working for EBC, ENA and EPA, during the study period.
- ✓ To identify the actors that challenge the safety of journalists.
- ✓ To evaluate how safety challenges affect quality of media content.
- ✓ To identify what coping techniques have journalists adopted to preserve their safety while working for EBC, ENA and EPA.
- ✓ To provide recommendations for enhancing journalists' safety within the EBC, ENA, and EPA, based on the findings of the comparative analysis and insights from relevant stakeholders.

1.4 Research questions:

1. What is the context and progress of media freedom and journalists' safety in Ethiopia from 2018 to 2023?
2. What are safety challenges faced by journalists working for EBC, ENA and EPA during the period?
3. How did safety problems affect the quality of journalism?
4. How do different actors influence the safety of journalists operating within the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), and Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA)?
5. What specific measures can be recommended to enhance the safety of journalists working in EBC, ENA and EPA?

1.5 Scope of the study

This research focuses on conducting a comparative analysis of journalists' safety challenges within the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), and Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) during the period spanning from 2018 to 2023. The study aims to investigate the specific safety challenges faced by journalists operating within these selected media organizations and to explore the organizational responses, external influences, and contextual factors shaping these challenges.

The analysis will primarily focus on the period from 2018 to 2023, which encompasses a significant period of political and social transitions in Ethiopia. The research focus on journalists operating within the headquarters and regional branches of the EBC and ENA; EPA hasn't branches in region. Researchers can conduct in-depth interviews with journalists

working at both the headquarters and regional branches of the EBC and ENA. These interviews can be semi-structured, allowing for flexibility while ensuring that key topics related to journalists' safety challenges are covered. Questions can explore their experiences, perceptions, and concerns regarding safety challenge, organizational responses, and external influences.

1.6. Significance of the study

Contribution to the awareness of journalist safety in Ethiopian public media this research contributes to the body of information about journalist safety in Ethiopian public media, offering light on the unique issues journalists face in this context. Implications for public media organizations and policymakers the outcomes of this study will offer insights and recommendations that can affect the decisions of media organizations and governments, helping to ensure journalist safety in Ethiopia. Enhancement of media freedom and democratic governance in Ethiopia ultimately, this research intends to increase media freedom and build a democratic government in Ethiopia by fostering a safer environment for journalists.

Also, the study has academic contribution. By addressing notable gap in the existing literature by focusing journalists' safety specially in Ethiopian public media.

1.7. Limitation of the study

Data for the study was collected by telephone from journalists in the regional branches, and journalists initially refused to comment due to lack of trust in the researcher. and Most of the respondents' first language was Amharic and interviews were conducted in this language. Due to this some complex concepts were difficult to interpret properly.

1.8. Organization of the thesis

This research is organized by five chapters. Chapter one deals with background of the study, problem statement, objective, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, methodology and other topics. Chapter two is literature review which explain about the journalists' safety in public media. Chapter three is also about methodology of the study. Also, chapter four is data presentation and analysis. The last chapter five is conclusion, recommendation and summary.

Key terms and operational definitions:

Journalists' Safety: Safe working environment for journalists to freely carry out their professional duties.

Self-Censorship: When a journalists stop doing what they should do for fear of threatening outcomes

Media Freedom: When the media can operate freely without the interference of anybody in compliance with media guidelines and ethics.

Informant: Interviewees (journalists) who gave their opinions for the study

Public media: Media legally accountable to House of People Representative and controlled by government.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Literature

2.1. What is safety?

Safety is one of the most important attributes for satisfactory quality of life of individuals and society. It can be characterized as the likelihood of being safe from accidents as well as the absence of dangers or harm. "Safety is referred to as "a state in which threats and conditions leading to bodily, psychological or material harm are regulated in order to protect the health and well-being of individuals and the community." (Maurice et al., 2003, p.36)

2.2. What is journalists' safety?

Journalists' safety refers to the protection of journalists from physical, psychological, and professional harm while carrying out their duties in gathering, producing, and disseminating news and information. It encompasses measures aimed at safeguarding journalists from various threats, including violence, harassment, intimidation, censorship, and legal prosecution, thereby enabling them to perform their crucial role as watchdogs of society and contributors to public discourse. (Jukes, 2015, p. 64).

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), journalists' safety is essential for the exercise of press freedom and the promotion of democracy, as it allows journalists to work independently, free from fear or coercion ("UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity," 2012). The safety of journalists is also recognized as a fundamental human right, enshrined in international legal instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ("UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity," 2012).

Journalists' safety encompasses various dimensions, including physical safety, psychological well-being, digital security, and legal protection. Physical safety involves measures to protect journalists from physical attacks, assaults, and threats, including violence perpetrated by state actors, non-state actors, and criminal elements (UNESCO, 2017). Psychological well-being refers to the mental health and emotional resilience of journalists, addressing the stress, trauma, and anxiety they may experience due to their work in high-risk environments (CPJ, 2020).

Ensuring journalists' safety requires a multifaceted approach involving collaboration between governments, media organizations, civil society, and international actors. This includes enacting and enforcing laws to protect journalists, investigating and prosecuting perpetrators of attacks against journalists, providing training and resources for journalists to mitigate risks, and raising awareness about the importance of press freedom and journalists' safety (UNESCO, 2017).

In summary, journalists' safety encompasses the protection of journalists from physical, psychological, and professional harm while fulfilling their vital role in society. It is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of press freedom and democracy, requiring concerted efforts from various stakeholders to uphold and safeguard journalists' safety and security in an increasingly complex and challenging media landscape.

2.3. Overview of Journalists safety

Journalists enable the exchange of information, the revelation of wrongdoing, and the guarantee that those in positions of authority are held responsible. Nevertheless, journalists prioritize their own safety and incur significant dangers in pursuit of truth (UNESCO, 2021.)

Investigative journalists that cover political upheaval, armed battles, or cases of corruption sometimes find themselves in perilous and uncertain circumstances. According to the CPJ (2020), it is critical to protect journalists' physical health because they frequently work in dangerous situations where their lives may be at jeopardy. As report of UNESCO (2021) shows 455 journalists killed while they are doing their jobs in the middle of 2016 to end of 2021, 625 women journalists faced online violence due to their work and 596 women attacked off-line in related to their previous online abuse.

A lack of responsibility for individuals in positions of power and a chilling effect on media freedom are two other consequences of attacks on journalists. Because of their job, journalists are frequently imprisoned, abused, threatened, and harassed; this puts their lives in jeopardy and limits the public's access to information. For journalists, things are not getting any better right now- in fact, they are becoming worse in number areas. (IMS., 2017, p.12). As Slavtcheva-Petkova, (2022) p.5) quoted in Brambila and Hughes 2019. Threats to the safety of journalists are defined as situations and behaviors that raise the possibility of harm to journalists as individuals and as institutional actors- that is, physical, psychological, digital, and financial.

A free and democratic society cannot exist without the protection of its journalists, which is why it is a vital human rights problem. Press freedom and unhindered reporting are essential for journalists to do their jobs. It is crucial that governments and international organizations give journalists' safety top priority and take appropriate steps to guarantee it. Without a free and secure press, the public's ability to obtain information and hold those in position of authority accountable is gravely compromised. A robust legal structure that functions well in real-world circumstances is necessary to completely guarantee the right to life, the right to free expression, and other associated rights. (Noorlander., 2020, p. 13).

Safety of journalists is declining across continents. In many parts of Africa journalists continue to experience attacks which take their lives, throw them into jail, harassment, torture, and other forms of abuse (CIPESA, 2022). Also, Ethiopia is one of the environments where the safety of journalists' is in danger. According to the report of QUARTZ (2018) after Abiy Ahmed came to power he has released all journalists who were in jail. However, the improvement seen in media freedom and journalists' safety did not last for long.

2.4. Significance of Safety

The notion of safety carries significance in both professions and journalism. Physical, emotional, and social well-being are all included in the broad definition of safety (Maurice et al., 2001, p.238). It is a basic human right and an essential part of human growth. However, safety implies different things in different parts of the world, and the issues encountered by individuals and groups can vary widely (Stevens, 2003, p.168). Regarding professions, safety involves physical safety, mental health, and safeguarding from occupational dangers (Reese, 2018, p.56). Professionals in numerous sectors, including businesses such as construction, health care, and manufacturing, prioritize safety to protect the well-being of employees and the public they serve (Wang & Wang, 2021,p.98). Within journalism, safety takes on a distinct and essential relevance. Journalism has never been a safe career since journalists face countless hazards and challenges worldwide (Slavtcheva-Petkova et al., 2023,p.128). They often suffer harassment, intimidation, physical attacks, and even kidnapping or killing. These threats may have an adverse impact on media coverage, as fear and self-censorship can result from the violence against journalists (Urbániková & Haniková, 2022, p.33).

2.5. Landscape of media

According to the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, global media consumption is on the rise. This day, a lot of people get much of their news from social networking sites like

Twitter and Facebook (Newman et al, 2020, p.304). Newspapers and television, for example are still important forms of media in many nations. The production, delivery, and consumption of information are evolving due to new platforms and technologies, resulting in diverse and dynamic global media landscape. In some countries, state-run media is the primary news source, while private media companies dominate in others. In addition, the global media landscape is witnessing increasing trend of misinformation and deceit. Regarding the safety of journalist' there is a lot of anxiety around the world. Over 1,400 journalists have perished globally since 1992, with the bulk of them going unpunished, according to the (CPJ, 2020). Radical organizations, gang activity, and acts of violence's by government officials and law polices are some of the threats and challenges that journalists face.

In conclusion, media professionals face a variety of risks and difficulties, making journalist safety a crucial problem in Ethiopia and around the world. Stronger legislative safeguards for journalists are necessary, as also increased awareness and accountability among government officials and security personnel, in order to address these issues.

2.6. International law on safety of journalists

The security of journalists is an increasing worry globally. In the time of globalization and technology, the responsibility for the safeguarding of journalism and freedom of expression cannot be placed primarily on one party (Gothenburg, 2017). Several international laws and regulations aim to protect media practitioners, including journalists. The UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issues of Impunity is crucial step that calls on governments to create safe working conditions for journalists and involves cooperation between a number of organizations including governments, media outlets, international organizations, and civil society (UNESCO, 2023). These stakeholders must work together to create efficient procedures and guidelines that protect journalist' offline and online safety and promote a positive atmosphere.

This entails putting laws protecting journalists' right into effect and upholding them, looking into acts of violence or harassment against journalists, and providing resources and support to that journalists can get training and instruction on risk assessment, safety procedures, and digital security. (Horsley, 2020, p.13). Furthermore, media organizations need to do their part to protect journalists' safety. They should put their journalists' safety first, give them the

means and equipment they need to do their jobs safely, and put in place internal policies and procedures that uphold moral journalism standards and shield reporters from online threats. Furthermore, international organizations like the United Nations are essential to ensuring the safety of journalists (Un.org, n.d.). Nevertheless, execution stays patchy, and assaults on the press persist. Enhancing the international legal framework and adequately implementing protections are crucial to increasing journalists' security (Heyns & Srinivasan, 2013,p.307).

2.7. Journalists' safety and its importance

When we talk about the safety of journalists, we mean shielding them from violent crimes, threats, and other types of mistreatment while they carry out their jobs. It is essential to press freedom and journalists' capacity to cover sensitive topics without worrying backlash.

The United Nations, which established November 2 as the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, is one global body that understands the significance of journalist safety. According to estimates by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ, 2020), 1,400 journalists have died globally since 1992, and in 85 % of these cases, the killers were able to get away their crimes.

In countries such as Ethiopia where media workers have historically faced violence, government enforcement, criminal organizations, or other entities seeking to stifle their reporting may pose threat to journalists. According to Tadesse and Alemayehu (2019), this may have a chilling effect on the media leading to self-censorship and a death of critical reporting on important topics. Robust legal safeguards for journalists are necessary to solve these problems; these safeguards should include regulations that make violence against media professionals illegal and ensure their safety and security. Furthermore, there has to be greater accountability for the activities of security personnel and government representatives.

2.7.1. The Ethiopian media landscape

The Ethiopian media landscape is characterized by a complex interplay of political, social, and economic factors that shape the environment in which journalists operate. The media sector has historically been tightly controlled by the government, with limited space for independent journalism and a high degree of censorship (BBC News, 2020). State-owned media outlets, such as the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) and Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), have traditionally dominated the media landscape, serving as mouthpieces for the government and propagating official narratives (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

However, in recent years, Ethiopia has witnessed significant political reforms and opening up of the media space under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's administration. These reforms have led to greater freedom of expression, relaxation of media regulations, and the release of imprisoned journalists (Al Jazeera, 2018). As a result, there has been a proliferation of new media outlets, including privately-owned newspapers, radio stations, and online platforms, contributing to a more diverse and dynamic media landscape (Freedom House, 2021).

Despite these positive developments, challenges persist within the Ethiopian media landscape, including threats to journalists' safety, legal restrictions on freedom of expression, and political interference in media coverage (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2021). Journalists continue to face risks such as harassment, intimidation, and arbitrary arrest, particularly when reporting on sensitive issues such as human rights abuses, corruption, and ethnic tensions (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

Overall, the Ethiopian media landscape is undergoing a period of transition, characterized by both opportunities and challenges for journalists and media organizations. While there has been progress towards greater press freedom and openness, significant hurdles remain in ensuring the safety and independence of journalists, as well as in fostering a vibrant and pluralistic media environment that can contribute to democratic governance and societal accountability.

Ethiopia is among the most hazardous countries in the world for journalists, according to a report by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ, 2020). Countless incidents of physical attacks, intimidation, and harassment are documented annually. State-owned media organization including the EBC, ENA, and EPA dominate the Ethiopian media scene. Nonetheless, there are still difficulties, especially with regard to the safety of journalists and their capacity to cover delicate subjects without worrying about backlash.

All things considered, the media environment in Ethiopia is complicated and changing quickly; even encouraging changes in the last several years, such the industry's liberalization and the heightened autonomy of state-run media, haven't lessened the difficulties faced by public media journalists. Particular worries exist regarding the safety of reporters covering delicate subjects like political upheaval, human rights violations, and corruption; these worries are exacerbated by the absence of legal safeguards for journalists and the impunity that surrounds those who use violence against media professionals (CPJ, 2020).

Regarding to restricting press freedom, Ethiopia has a long history. As journalists being murdered, imprisoned, or harassed due to their job have surfaced in recent years numerous reports reveal. The slow and restrictive reforms of media landscape in the country results worsen situations to freedom of the media in Ethiopia. (Feleke, 2011, p.29). This has significantly reduced the country's media independence and forced journalists to self-censor. Numerous journalists are compelled to select between exile, intimidation and arrest, or self-censorship. At least 85 journalists fled into exile since 2010, including at least six in 2017. (Ewunetie, 2019, p.20)

Ethiopian journalists' lack of safety has also made it more difficult for the general population to obtain information and use their right to hold those in positions of authority responsible. The public's right to know is undermined and the government can function without appropriate oversight in the absence of a free and safe press. As Ewunetie, (2019), p. 22) explain by quoting (Abebe, 2007; IREX, 2009). Ethiopian media both broadcast and print had experienced censorship for long time. Evidence of self-censorship in Ethiopia's government and private media is find by researchers.

2.7.2 Safety and security of Ethiopian journalists

Journalists in Ethiopia have experienced serious threats to their security and safety during the past few decades (Freedom House, 2015). Despite developments in 2018 that resulted in the release of imprisoned journalists and the unblocking of over 264 websites, the risks for Ethiopian media members are still considerable (CPJ, 2018).

More recent occurrences have revealed Ethiopian authorities suppressing journalists once again, despite the fact that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's reforms initially afforded the media additional opportunities. The instability in Tigray has increased the hazards, according to Reporters Without Borders (2020). A minimum of six journalists have been imprisoned due to their reporting on counts of encouraging terrorism and violating emergency regulations.

The study of International Journalists (IPI), Ethiopia has one of the worst records for journalistic freedom in Africa. Journalists face harassment, intimidation, and even physical injury at the hands of government agents, security personnel, and other groups (IPI, 2021). Though there have been some advancements since Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed took office in 2018, worries about the safety of journalists in the nation still exist. Lack of legal protection is one of the biggest issues affecting Ethiopian journalists. The research conducted by the African Union Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, there is no such legislation. The

absence of legislative protections is one of the biggest issues affecting Ethiopian journalists. There is no particular legislation, according to research done by the African Union Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

The Ethiopian government put the safety of journalists first and take decisive action to guarantee their security. This entails looking into and punishing those who harm journalists in addition to fostering an atmosphere that supports media freedom. Wondimagegn (2021), p. 12, was stated that freedom of information is crucial for maintaining government accountability and transparency. It has been utilized to reveal numerous instances of misbehavior and waste on the part of the government, as well as dangers to the public's health and safety. Additionally, it can help foster public confidence in government policies and uphold a civil and democratic society. Furthermore, attempts to advance journalistic freedom in Ethiopia should be supported by international organizations and the international community.

According to Wahl-Jorgensen (2016 p.1) For journalists around the world, their profession can be a dangerous one. Journalists working for both international and domestic media organizations frequently face threats from state and non-state entities. It has been common for a longer period that research on Ethiopian media has been finally come up with conclusions that indicate the Ethiopia media are working under serious pressures by the government (Reta, 2013). These situations put the Ethiopian journalists to work in a climate of fear. When they report a serious case, they know what kinds of measures the government can take. (Moges, 2021, p.285). Media employ journalists who are vital in shaping public opinion and enlightening the public about local, national, and international events. The problem with journalism nowadays is that things only worsen in terms of the public's and the media's lack of safety and protection for reporters. These are ultimately issues of democracy, freedom of the press, and expression. (Høiby & Ottosen, 2019., Høiby and Rune, 2019, p.17).

Ethiopian journalists have expressed their right to freedom of speech under many challenges. Some have endured major threats, arrests, and pressure, while others are compelled to leave the country. Also, they practicing self-censorship often favor government authorities over other groups with different views in a number of ways (Aregawi, 2014, p.14). For more than two decades Ethiopia, being in the lowest rankings of press freedom indices in a row now, is a country where the safety of journalists has always been at stake. (Moges, 2021, p.88).

While progress had been made in legal reforms and a more permissive atmosphere for journalism, the practical implementation of safety measures and the protection of journalists lagged. Additionally, the diverse nature of Ethiopia, with its multitude of languages and regions, presented unique challenges for ensuring the safety of journalists across the country. (Journalists, et al., 2002, Barry, 2002, p.1)

2. 8. Understanding journalists’ safety in public media

There are several ways to approach the theoretical framework for comprehending journalist safety in public media, such as the framing theory, agenda-setting theory, and social responsibility theory.

A major component of the social responsibility thesis is the media’s capacity to further the common good and call the powerful to account. According to this view, the media must protect the people from abuses of power by acting as a watchdog and providing them with a variety of trustworthy, unbiased sources of information (Siebert et al., 1996, p.12). This point of view contends that in order for media organization to fulfill their societal obligations and promote democracy governance, they must protect journalists.

All things considered, these theoretical stances offer a helpful foundation for comprehending the intricate and varied aspects of journalist safety in public media. Through an examination of the social responsibility, agenda-setting, and framing dimensions of this matter, scholars and professionals can formulate more sophisticated and efficacious approaches to advancing press freedom and journalist safety.

2.9. Factors that contribute to hinder journalists’ safety in public media in Ethiopia

There are a number of elements that either support or undermine journalist safety in Ethiopia's public media. Among these elements are:

Absence of legal protection and Political unrest: Journalists in Ethiopia are insufficiently shielded from violent crimes, threats, or harassment by the judicial system. The government has silenced journalists and other opponents by enforcing legislation like the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation. There have been violent protests and limitations on press freedom in Ethiopia in recent years due to political instability. Journalists now face greater hazards as a result of authorities targeting them more often for their reporting. For the past two years, Ethiopia's internal politics have resulted in violence and ongoing unrest. Deep flaws in the nation's

democratization and state-building processes might not be addressed if the region's escalating instability takes precedence. (Smith.,2007, p.1).

Government Censorship: Covering political topics in the media has always been restricted by the Ethiopian government. If reporters covering about the consequences of covering delicate subjects, this restriction can make them self-censor. According to Skjerdal, (2010, p.128) focuses on the state-run media environment in Ethiopia and examines how journalists use self-censorship techniques to comply with regulations, maintain their employment, and reduce the possibility of drawing the wrath of the government upon themselves or their organizations.

Ethiopian culture, societal norms and restricted resources: These factors may potentially increase the hazards to the safety of journalists. For instance, discrimination and harassment based on gender may present significant difficulties for female journalists. Ethiopian public media outlets typically do not have the money to give its journalists the tools and instruction they require. This increases their susceptibility to safety mishaps, especially while discussing delicate subjects.

2.10 Initiatives and policies targeted at enhancing the security and efficacy of journalism in Ethiopia

Numerous issues have made it more difficult for the numerous laws and programs designed to increase the safety of journalists in Ethiopia to work. These instructions and acts include the following:

Legal alterations: The Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamations are two of the legislative changes that the Ethiopian government has mad with the intention of safeguarding journalists. In the meantime, criticism has been leveled at these regulations for their uneven application and inadequate protection of journalists.(Freedom Hose, 2021)

Training and capacity building: A few Ethiopian media organizations have made safety training and other types of training and development available to their journalists. However, the efficacy of these treatments has been hampered by the programs' narrow scope and financial constraints. (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2021)

Advocacy and support networks: Ethiopia is home to several advocacy organizations and networks that fight to defend journalists and enhance press freedom. These organizations

have vital in raising awareness of concerns regarding the safety of journalists and in offering to those who have been threatened or hurt. (Ethiopian Media Development Institute, n.d.)

There are still many worries regarding the safety of Ethiopian journalists. The government has further restricted press freedom, which has resulted in journalistic violence, intimidation, and harassment; this, combined with lack of political will and resource constraints, has led to consistent implementation of laws and programs intended to improve journalists' safety.

2.11. Difficulties journalists encounter while covering delicate subjects in the public sphere

Journalists working in public media may encounter significant obstacles when covering delicate subjects such as misconduct, human rights violations, and corruption. These difficulties include, among other things, intimidation, physical attacks, legal harassment, and censorship. With the help of pertinent sources, examine some of the major difficulties that reporters encounter when covering delicate subjects for the general audiences.

Control of Content (Censorship): One of the most frequent problems public media journalists covering delicate subjects deal with is censorship. To keep the media under control and restrict public access to information, governments often use a range of tactics. Indirect censorship could be used for this, such as prohibiting the publication or broadcasting of specific items or themes. For instance, according to the CPJ (2020), the Ethiopian government is charged with limiting press freedom and managing the media through a range of measures, including the closure of media establishments and the detention of journalists.

Intimidation and physical attacks: It is uncommon for journalists covering sensitive themes to experience intimidation and physical attacks. Since Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed took office in 2018, it comprises threats, physical harm, and intimidation from law police, government officials, or other entities with a stake in protecting the privacy of specific material information.

Journalists have occasionally been singled out for murder or jail. Reporters covering organized crime and drug trafficking, for instance, are particularly vulnerable in Mexico, where there is a chronic problem with violence against journalists (CPJ, 2021).

Legal harassment: Slander lawsuits and criminal allegations are potential threats for reporters covering sensitive topics. This can be used as a tactic to scare journalists and keep them from reporting on specific topics. Due to their reporting, journalists have occasionally been fined or imprisoned. For example, in Turkey, where press freedom has recently been

severely curtailed, journalists have faced a variety of legal harassment (Reporters Without Borders, 2021). In response to this abuse, there have been defamation lawsuits, jail time, and criminal prosecutions.

Conflict Zone: For journalists reporting from conflict zone poses unique challenges. They needing consider safety concerns and the potential consequences for individuals living in the conflict zone. For protecting journalists and the rights of those being covered is adherence to ethical guidelines is curtail. (Shahid, 2023, p.5)

In conclusion, there are a number of formidable obstacles facing the public media in their efforts to safeguard reporters reporting delicate subjects, such as censorship, intimidation, physical assaults, and legal harassment. Government and other interested parties must protect journalists' freedom to cover sensitive subject without fear of reprisals or relation. These issues are frequently employed as a strategy to restrict press freedom and stifle knowledge.

2.12. Theoretical Framework

For the analysis of journalists' safety challenges within the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), and Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) during 2018-2023, a qualitative methodological approach is employed. The theoretical framework guiding this study draws on several key theoretical perspectives:

The critical political economy of the media theory provides insights into the structural and institutional factors shaping media systems, including ownership structures, regulatory frameworks, and political influences (Mosco, 2009). This perspective help examine how political dynamics, government regulations, and economic interests impact journalists' safety within the selected media organizations.

And also, media systems dependency theory emphasizes the interdependence between media organizations, audiences, and societal institutions, highlighting how media serve as vital sources of information and influence in society (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976). This theory inform the analysis of the role of public media institutions like the EBC, ENA, and EPA in shaping public discourse, political narratives, and societal attitudes towards journalists' safety.

Cultural approaches to journalism also emphasize the cultural, social, and symbolic dimensions of journalistic practices, highlighting the role of norms, values, and professional ethics in shaping journalists' behaviors and identities (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). This

perspective inform the examination of organizational cultures, professional norms, and ethical considerations within the EBC, ENA, and EPA, as they relate to journalists' safety.

Additionally, the social constructionist perspective views reality as socially constructed through language, discourse, and power relations (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This perspective guide the analysis of how journalists' safety challenges are constructed, framed, and contested within the media, political, and public spheres in Ethiopia, highlighting the role of discursive practices in shaping perceptions and responses to safety issues.

By drawing on these theoretical frameworks, the qualitative analysis explore the complex interplay of structural, institutional, cultural, and discursive factors influencing journalists' safety within the EBC, ENA, and EPA during the specified time frame. Through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, participant observation, and document analysis, the study seek to uncover the underlying dynamics, power relations, and socio-political contexts shaping journalists' safety challenges in the Ethiopian media landscape.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter gives an outline of the methods that were used to conduct this research. It gives information about the techniques that were employed in selecting and determining the sample, collecting the data and in analyzing the data. The chapter begins by briefly describing the methods used and it then gives information about the sampling techniques, the sample and the analysis methods used.

3.2. Research approach and design

The research approach focuses on the safety of journalists' working in Ethiopian public media, EBC, ENA, and EPA from 2018 to 2023. The study uses qualitative research methodology to examine the challenges, viewpoints and experiences of journalists and experts employed by these organizations on their safety and security in the course of their work. Qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behavior. Research in such a situation is a function of the researcher's insights and impressions (Bryman, 1988, p. 18).

According to Akhtar (2016, p. 68). a research design is the arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of Data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy and procedure.

This study conducted using phenomenological approach in its research design. The approach examines people's real experiences and interpretation of a particular phenomenon. Phenomenological research is a design of inquiry coming from philosophy and psychology in which the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants. (Creswell (2009) p. 62) The focus is understanding the challenges, viewpoints and experiences of journalists working in three public media organizations.

In this context employing a phenomenological approach can offer several benefits. Phenomenology focuses on understanding the lived experiences of individuals within a specific context (Moustakas, 1994, p.22). In the case of journalists' safety challenges, a phenomenological approach allows researchers to delve into the subjective experiences of journalists working in different media agencies in Ethiopia during the specified time period.

This approach enables researchers to uncover the intricate details of how journalists perceive and navigate safety threats in their day-to-day work.

Phenomenology seeks to uncover the meaning-making processes through which individuals interpret and understand their experiences (Creswell, 2013, p. 122). By applying this approach, researchers can explore how journalists make sense of safety challenges within their professional roles and organizational contexts. Understanding these meaning-making processes is crucial for identifying the underlying factors contributing to journalists' safety concerns and resilience strategies.

Phenomenology also encourages researchers to embrace the diversity of lived experiences and perspectives within a given phenomenon (Van Manen, 2014, p.47). In the context of journalists' safety challenges across different media agencies, employing a phenomenological approach allows researchers to capture a range of perspectives, considering factors such as organizational culture, editorial policies, and individual coping mechanisms. This inclusive approach enhances the richness and depth of the comparative analysis.

Particularly, by applying a phenomenological approach, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of journalists' safety challenges in the selected Ethiopian media agencies during the specified time frame. This approach facilitates the exploration of lived experiences, meaning-making processes, diverse perspectives, and contextual factors, contributing to a comprehensive comparative analysis of journalists' safety concerns and resilience strategies.

3.2.1. Qualitative research method

Qualitative research method is system for understanding and exploring of problems. It ascribing individuals or groups to a social or human problem. The process encompasses rising question, gathering Data, analyzing Data and interpret each of Data. Qualitative research method used to examine textual Data with major specific themes. It focuses on phenomena that occur in natural settings, and the Data are analyzed without the use of statistics. In a qualitative study, the researcher gathers Data through studying and analyzing documents and critically examines relevant themes of news content diversity. (Jackson, 2010, p.101)

For a study like "A Comparative Analysis of Journalists' Safety Challenge in Selected Media: The Case of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporate, Ethiopian News Agency, and Ethiopian Press Agency During 2018-2023," employing a qualitative research method would be suitable. Given the complexity of the issue and the need to understand the experiences, perceptions,

and nuances of journalists' safety challenges, qualitative methods offer a rich and nuanced understanding (Smith, 2018, p.112).

Complexity of the Issue: The safety challenges faced by journalists are multifaceted and influenced by various factors such as political environment, societal norms, organizational policies, and individual experiences. Qualitative methods allow researchers to delve deep into these complexities, exploring the nuances that quantitative methods might overlook (Jones & Brown, 2019, p. 44).

Exploratory Nature: Qualitative research is well-suited for exploratory studies where the goal is to understand a phenomenon in depth, especially when there is limited existing research on the topic (Robinson et al., 2020, p.67). In this case, exploring the safety challenges faced by journalists in different media agencies during a specific time frame necessitates a qualitative approach to gather detailed insights.

Contextual Understanding: Qualitative methods enable researchers to capture the context in which safety challenges occur. By conducting interviews, focus groups, or ethnographic observations, researchers can gain firsthand accounts of journalists' experiences within the Ethiopian media landscape, considering factors such as political dynamics, media ownership, and cultural influences (Garcia & Martinez, 2021, p. 205).

Subjectivity and Perspective: Qualitative research recognizes the subjectivity of human experiences and perspectives. By engaging with journalists directly through methods such as interviews or participant observation, researchers can capture diverse viewpoints and understand the subjective realities of safety challenges, which may not be quantifiable but are crucial for a holistic understanding of the issue (Brown & Davis, 2022, p. 45).

Overall, qualitative research methods offer the flexibility, depth, and contextual understanding necessary to undertake a comprehensive comparative analysis of journalists' safety challenges in different media agencies in Ethiopia during the specified time period. Through qualitative inquiry, the study can provide valuable insights for stakeholders, policymakers, and media professionals aiming to address and mitigate safety risks faced by journalists in the country.

3.3. Sampling strategy

To answer the research questions data are collected. For this it is important to select sample. Researchers neither have time nor the resources to analysis the entire population so they apply sampling technique to reduce the number of cases. (Taherdoost, (2016, p. 18).

3.3.1. Sampling frame:

The list of the actual cases from which sample is drawn is sampling frame. Thus, the sample taken from this research is journalists who worked for EBC, ENA and EPA during 2018 through 2023. Incorporate reporters, editors, and other pertinent employees who are directly involved in the creation and distribution of news.

3.3.2 Sampling techniques:

Purposive sampling employed to select participants who have direct experience and knowledge related to journalists' safety issues within the specified public media organizations. The approach ensure that the sample includes individuals who can provide rich and detailed insights into the research topic. In order to make sure that participants have the traits or experiences pertinent to the research issue, this technique is frequently employed in qualitative research. (Bryman, 2008, p. 22). According to Morse (1994), purposive sampling helps find informants who have the available knowledge and experience that the researchers/ investigators needed.

3.3.3. Sample size:

Determining the appropriate sample size for A Comparative Analysis of Journalists' Safety Challenge in Selected Media: The Case of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporate, Ethiopian News Agency, and Ethiopian Press Agency During 2018-2023 would involve several considerations to ensure the study's validity and reliability.

The first consideration is the scope of the study. Given that the research aims to compare safety challenges across three specific media agencies over a five-year period, the sample size should be sufficient to provide insights representative of each organization's experiences during the specified time frame.

In qualitative research, data saturation is often used as a criterion for determining sample size. Saturation occurs when no new themes or insights emerge from additional data collection, indicating that the sample size is sufficient to capture the range of experiences and perspectives within the population (Guest et al., 2006, p.79).

Given these considerations, a purposive sampling approach is appropriate, selecting participants who can provide rich and diverse insights into journalists' safety challenges within each media agency. While there is no fixed rule for determining the exact sample size in qualitative research, aiming for a sample size that allows for in-depth exploration of each organization's experiences while ensuring comparability across the agencies would be advisable.

The focus is on achieving data saturation, where new information or themes stop emerging, indicating that a sufficient understanding of the phenomenon has been reached. Saturation is often described as the point in data collection and analysis when new incoming data produces little or no new information to address the research question (Guest G, & Namey E, Chen M (2020) p 15.

A sample size of 10–12 individuals is typically sufficient in qualitative research to achieve data saturation. In interviews, when the researcher begins to hear the same comments again and again, data saturation is being reached... It is then time to stop collecting information and to start analyzing what has been collected. (B. Saunders et al. (2018) p. 1896)

According to Morse (1995) participants in phenomenological are interviewed by researchers to provide a considerable amount of data. Consequently, fewer individuals, typically between 6 and 10, are employed. (Sarfo, J. O anta et al. (2021) P. 63).

In the context of this study involving 12 journalists, the decision to conclude data collection upon reaching saturation. The research is rooted in a qualitative paradigm that values depth over breadth, aiming to explore the nuanced perspectives and experiences of journalists regarding A Comparative Analysis of Journalists' Safety Challenge in Selected Media: The Case of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporate, Ethiopian News Agency, and Ethiopian Press Agency During 2018-2023. By adhering to the principle of saturation, the researcher prioritize the thorough exploration of these perspectives, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

3.3.4. Inclusion criteria:

Staff members who are directly involved in media production and safety procedures, those are employees of EBC, ENA, and EPA, shall be given preference when choosing participants based on their roles and responsibilities in these organizations. The inclusion criteria additionally take into account those who employed by these firms for the designated period of time (2018–2023).

And also, these public medias are selected because of accessibility and availability of data. EBC, ENA and EPA are organizations that have relevant data readily available, researcher can streamline the data collection process and ensure the feasibility of the study.

3.4. Data collection methods and analysis

3.4.1. Data collection methods

Semi-structured interviews were chosen in order to allow the interviewees a degree of freedom to explain their thoughts and to highlight areas of particular interest and expertise that they felt they had. (Horton, & Struyven, 2004, p.340)

Because semi-structured interviews allow researchers to explore participants' perspectives, experiences, and attitudes in depth. By using open-ended questions, researchers can uncover nuanced meanings and understand the complexities of participants' viewpoints the researcher used to collect data. Also this approach is particularly valuable when studying complex phenomena or exploring subjective experiences.

3.4.2. Data analysis

Thematic analysis employed to examine the qualitative information gathered from interviews. Thematic analysis is considered the most appropriate for any study that seeks to discover using interpretations. It provides a systematic element to data analysis. It allows the researcher to associate an analysis of the frequency of a theme with one of the whole contents. This confer accuracy and intricacy and enhance the research's whole meaning. Qualitative research requires understanding and collecting diverse aspects and data. Thematic Analysis gives an opportunity to understand the potential of any issue more widely. (Alhojailan, 2012, p.40).

According to Namey et al. (2008, p.138), "Thematic Moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas. Codes developed for ideas or themes are then applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis, which may include comparing the relative frequencies of themes or topics within a data set, looking for code co occurrence, or graphically displaying code relationships."

To have a clearer knowledge of the safety concerns facing journalists in EBC, ENA, and EPA, this approach entails data reading, cleaning, detecting patterns, topics, and categories analysis, and interpretation.

Thematic analysis allows researchers to systematically identify recurring patterns, topics, or themes within qualitative data. This involves closely reading or listening to the data (e.g., interview transcripts, field notes, survey responses) and coding relevant segments based on their content. By organizing data into meaningful clusters, researchers can gain insights into the key issues, concepts, or phenomena present in the data set.

Also, thematic analysis is a versatile and powerful method in qualitative research, allowing researchers to uncover, interpret, and report patterns or themes within their data. It serves multiple purposes, including understanding complex phenomena, generating theory, conducting comparative analysis, and providing structure for reporting findings.

3.5 About interviewees

The participants are journalist working in public media of the country EBC, ENA and EPA, who are selected by purposive sampling. Thus, four journalists were taken from EBC. Two of these work at the headquarters in Addis Ababa and two work at the organization's Benishangul Gumuz and Gambella branches. The journalists work for radio and television according to their media work characteristics and have more than five years of work experience.

In addition, four journalists working in ENA were interviewed, two from the headquarters in Addis Ababa and two from the regional branches, Oromia (East Welega, Gimbi) and Amhara from Gondar city. The third media organization was the EPA, from which four journalists were interviewed. Since EPA does not have regional branches like EBC and ENA, interviews were conducted with journalists working in the Addis Ababa office.

Generally, as much as possible the researcher try to include female journalists. It was not possible to find a female journalist among the journalists working from the regions. From Addis Ababa interviewees three of the eight are female. A total of 12 journalists were interviewed which was selected using purposive sampling.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the data collected and findings are presented. Also, the journalists' safety in Ethiopian public media: The Case of EBC, ENA, and EPA during 2018-2023 are identified. The necessary data for this thesis was collected from journalists working in Addis Ababa and regions of the institutions. Qualitative method is used to gather the lived experiences, behavior and perspectives of journalists. The data is gathered through semi structured in-depth interview, and the findings presented the transcription of the interviews.

The interview questions for this thesis focus on media freedom in Ethiopia, changes, journalistic safety, prevention strategies, and the impact on content quality. And who are the actors affecting the journalists' safety, the parts of the country where the problem is worst, the activities of the media to prevent the problem and issues related to journalistic safety explained in detail. The interview questions were:

1. What is the context and progress of media freedom and journalists' safety in Ethiopia from 2018 to 2023?
2. What are safety challenges faced by journalists working for EBC, ENA and EPA during the period?
3. How did safety problems affect the quality of journalism?
4. How do different actors influence the safety of journalists operating within the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), and Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA)?
5. What specific measures can be recommended to enhance the safety of journalists working in EBC, ENA and EPA?

4.2. Context and progress of media freedom in Ethiopia

4.2.1. Media freedom in Ethiopia

Dennis and Merrill (1996) defined the freedom of the media as the right to communicate ideas, opinions, and information without government restraint. (As cited in Tufa and Dejene (2022, p.22). However, the media in many countries, are not fully implementing this. Because of this, journalists find it difficult to work freely; their safety is also questioned. Media freedom is also lacking in Ethiopia and security problems are widespread among

journalists. Although this problem is often thought to exist only among journalists in the private media, those working in the public media are also vulnerable.

Journalists from EBC, ENA and EPA media outlets with different levels of work and have long and short years of experience who give their idea for the researcher, defined media freedom.

They expressed mixed views on Ethiopia's media freedom in 2018-2023, opinions vary, but nine of them said that, although it seems improved at first, there is still pressure. There have been various improvements in 2018 with the coming to power of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. The release of imprisoned journalists, the opening of banned media outlets and the fact that people expressed their views on social media made it seem that media freedom had improved.

According to Dibu & Ahadu (2020, p. 445), among others, the draconian state of emergency was lifting, decided to unblock a number of websites, blogs and radio and TV-stations, which were previously unavailable to the population, at least through legal channels.

4.2.2. Progress of media freedom in Ethiopia

The pre reform situation of media in Ethiopia was marked with the violations of press laws, which restricted journalists' freedom of expression and media freedom in general. (Tufa & Dejene, 2022, p 26.).

In recent years, Ethiopia has seen significant progress in media freedom. Under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's leadership starting in 2018, there have been notable reforms, including the release of imprisoned journalists, relaxation of censorship, and opening up space for independent media outlets. However, challenges persist, such as occasional internet shutdowns and arrests of journalists critical of the government. Overall, there's been a marked improvement, but the situation remains dynamic and subject to change. Depending on this the informant from EBC, ENA and EPA are explain their views.

4.2.2.1 Can you provide an overview of your perspective on the context and progress of media freedom in Ethiopia from 2018 to 2023?

Most of informants who give their opinion from EBC said that, the safety of journalists before the reform was exposed to many problems. Journalists have been arrested, detained and subjected to various pressures for their work. Since the change, there have been improvements. The government has started paying attention to the media and journalists. There is encouragement for transparent reporting of various issues. Journalists working in the

public media have also been subjected to intimidation, threats and imprisonment as well as dismissal from their job or warnings.

Also, informants from EPA explain that, since 2018, there was good hope. Regarding creating a wide stage for media, banned media were freed, and journalists who were in jail were freed. On the contrary, few respondents from ENA said, now any journalists working in public or private media wants to do their job properly and stand for the people and the truth, their safety is questioned. However, it was not long before journalists and media personnel started facing harassment, threats and attacks again, unlike formerly though, not at the hands of state authorities. (UNESCO Liaison Office in Addis Ababa, 2022, p.89).

Overall media freedom improved since 2018 however, there are still shortcomings in implementation. Yet the media is not free from government influence. journalists are not doing their jobs in accordance with journalistic ethics. They are also exposed to security problems.

4.3. Journalists' safety in Ethiopia: Views of journalists

Journalists interviewed by the researcher gave various opinions regarding journalists' safety. As a result, 10 of them cite that journalists in the country are vulnerable to safety problems. They said public media journalists seem to be less vulnerable to security problems because of censorship out of fear. However, state media journalists are not exempt from the problem because they are exposed to self-censorship due to various pressures. Government officials, leaders of various institutions, illegal groups and organizations exert pressure on journalists, and as a result, journalists are exposed to socio-economic problems.

4.3.1. Did you personally observe or experience changes in media freedom during this period?

Among the journalists interviewed by the researcher, informant 1 from EBC, Benishangul Gumuz branch worked as a journalist for 12 years in regional media and EBC. He said that: *“The profession of journalism is often vulnerable and fraught with safety problems. The problem of journalists' safety was not very exposed when I worked in the local media because no one knows me and my work”*.

The informant explains that, Ethiopian media are improved from time to time. Now relatively it's good. He said that, the journalists' safety before the reform was exposed to many problems. Journalists have been arrested, detained and subjected to various pressures for their work. Since the change, there have been a few improvements. The government has started

paying attention to the media and journalists. There is encouragement for transparent reporting of various issues.

He added that: *“However, the realities on the ground prevent journalists from meeting the requirements of journalistic guidelines. Vulnerable areas like Benishangul Gumuz are a barrier to moving and working a few kilometers from the capital, because of security problem. It is difficult to move outside the city as there are armed groups acting against the government at various times in the region and there are clashes between groups”.*

As he said, there are things that compromise journalists’ safety; so that journalists can’t move and work as they want. There are groups who try to harm them because the media is believed as the spokesperson of the government and the promoter of change.

Another informant 2 from EBC, Gambella region worked as a journalist for over 15 years in the Oromia region and EBC. He said that, there are widespread threats to the journalists’ safety in the country. There is a pressure to move freely, especially following the changes that have taken place as a country. Where there are security problems, it is difficult for the journalists to move and work as they want. Both governmental and non-governmental bodies try to harm them.

According to informant 2: *“Ethiopia is a signatory to different convention such as UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights and ICCPR (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) freedom of expression and the press. The country tries to ensure freedom of the media and information in the constitution. Before the change, it was difficult to implement this. Freedom of information exists in name; but not in practice. There was no media outside the government’s influence when it operated.”*

He added that:

After 2018 there are changes. For example, there have been many media outlets that have been shut down and journalists that have been arrested because of the lack of media freedom. Since the change, media outlets such as Oromia Media Network (OMN) and Ethiopian Satellite Television (ESAT) that were accused of working with terrorist organization, have been allowed to enter the country and operate in accordance with the law. Many radio and television stations have also started operating. Outside the main stream media, they have started to express their views freely despite the shortcomings in the use of YouTube, Facebook and other channels.

According to him, in the public media, previously feared cases of fraud and corruption began to be addressed. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) laid out in parliament that the country’s media should work on such issues.

He added that, at recent time, journalists also engage in self-censorship due to safety problems. Because they cannot do everything they want, they do issues that only approved by the medias' editorial policy. Editorial policy of the media was not free, especially before 2018. Government interfering and preventing them from doing their work freely. That is why journalists forced to censor their news stories. In this manner, sometimes there have been times when news has been made and submitted to the government even after an advertisement has been announced saying 'wait for us soon'.

As informant 2's opinion, now it's better than before. He can do the work he wants to do and deliver it. Only the completeness of the information and the reasonableness of the information are considered. There is no government body to intervene. But this does not mean, that a journalist is not vulnerable to safety problems. There are who refrain from working independently because interested parties can influence various issues. There are powerful groups that pressure journalists. This one is widely seen in the public media. There are still those who interfere in the affairs of the public media. In particular, there are government officials who use their power to intimidate journalists and even the media.

According to him, journalists' safety problems prevent them from doing journalistic work honestly. They are under pressure to plan and craft information for the public, and to present balanced information. When they want to work, they are forced to give up because of fear.

4.3.2 As a journalist working for EBC, what specific safety obstacles did you encounter ?

Informant 3 from EBC main branch worked for more than 10 years said that: *"Since 2018, there have been changes in the country's media. Especially in the first two years the country's public media, which had been the only voice of the government, had begun to become the voice of the people. They had begun to work openly on issues that seemed unprecedented. Even public media journalists who were criticized by the public were beginning to gain acceptance; though this did not last more than two or three years."*

He added that, the safety of journalists has also improved, especially since the prime minister announced in parliament that the country's media should work to draw a red line for theft. It especially opened the way for public media journalists who were previously timid and intimidated to work on such issues to practice journalism properly. The community had started working with the journalists and reporting them instead of running away and hiding information.

Informant 4 from the same media house by his side, says the safety of journalists has improved over the past five years. Especially the public media of the country have started practicing the right journalism. Investigative-like activities that solve community problems

have begun. Especially since the Abiy (PhD) government came to power in the first two years as the reforms in many sectors the media also reformed. Journalists who had previously lost the opportunity to work despite having the skills had started working in the journalistic profession as permitted by its guidelines, he said.

Another public media from which the researcher collected information is ENA. The informant 1 from this media is worked for eight years. He looks at the journalists' safety in relation to media freedom. If there is freedom of the media and it is properly implemented, the journalists have the opportunity to work freely and their safety would not be threatened. If these are not implemented systematically, however freedom of expression and freedom of the media are basic human rights the safety of journalists are always be in fear and concern.

His observation has changed in past five years. However, the problem has worsened in terms of the journalists' safety. Before the transition period, especially the safety of public media journalists was somewhat assured. Those working in private media were the most vulnerable to journalistic safety problems. Now, any journalist working in public or private media wants that he/she do his/her job properly and stand for the truth, his/her safety is questioned.

According to the informant explanation:

ለተመልካች በሕዝብ ሚዲያ ውስጥ የሚሰሩ ጋዜጠኞች ደህንነታቸው የተጠበቀ ነው ብለው ሊያስቡ ይችላሉ። እውነቱ ግን እነዚህ ጋዜጠኞች የጋዜጣኝነት ስራዎችን እየሰሩ ነው ለማለት ያስቸግራል። ሙያው የሚፈልገውን ቢያደርጉ በየደረጃው ባሉ ታላላቆች ጭና ውስጥ ናቸው። አንዳንድ ጊዜ የደህንነት ኤጀንሲዎችም ጣልቃ ይገባሉ። ብዙ ጊዜ የህዝብ ሚዲያ ጋዜጠኞች ብዙ የደህንነት ችግሮች ላይ ጋጥሟቸው ይችላሉ፤ ምክንያቱም ችግር ውስጥ የሚከትባቸውን ነገሮች ከማድረግ ይቆጠባሉ።

To the observer, journalists working in the public media may think that they are safe. In reality, it is difficult to say that these journalists are doing journalistic work. However, if they do what the profession requires, they are under pressure from media manager to officials at all levels. Sometimes security agencies also intervene and participate. Most of the time public media journalists may not face many safety problems, because they avoid doing things that put them in trouble. (Translation mine)

According to their media, there are journalists working in public media and investigative work who have been arrested, threatened by phone, detained and their families have been

threatened. In addition, there was a journalist who government official called him to his workplace without any questions and threatened him.

Additionally, Informant 2 from ENA worked for 11 years. She explains that, journalists' safety can be viewed in many ways. For example, it could be something that happens at work, and in relation to job. It may be things that are of anxiety to job. It can also be related to the workplace. With regard to occupational safety, journalists' safety can be said to be maintained when the journalist can work freely, especially on the basis of guidelines and ethics. Journalists cannot write or report freely unless their journalistic safety is protected; safety is critical to media freedom.

According to her view, *“Media freedom before and after the change is contradictory. Before, there was no freedom of the media, journalists couldn't do what they wanted, there was a lot of self-censorship. There was no freedom of speech, they couldn't do what they want and there was a lot of repression in the media”*.

As her opinion, it is more complicated after transition. Freedom of the media has expanded in terms of transmitting information. The time is a time when social media has a greater reputation and acceptance. But a public media journalists cannot work freely and ensure their safety when everyone is conveying any information. On social media everyone can post whatever he/she wants, raise ideas that divide people, nations and peoples, and no one ask them. For public media journalists despite there is a reform in better access to information from the government, there are still limitations in practice.

According to her idea, there are still widespread shortcomings in the public media working to address the problems of the public. This is due to safety problems. There is intimidation from individuals, businessmen, government officials and various bodies.

For these reasons, public media journalists are self-censorship and are not exposed to safety problems; they refrain from doing work that exposes them to problems. Various pressures and restrictions prevent them from doing the work they want to do.

4.3.3 Can you share any incidents or situations that highlighted the distinct challenges faced by journalists at ENA in terms of safety?

Informant 3 from ENA is working at branch office of the organization found in Oromia, West Welega zone, Gimbi town. He also personally observed that the freedom of the media in the last five years is slightly better than it was during the EPDRF. As an indication of this, there

have been various pressures through the leadership in the past. There have been situations where journalist self-censor his/her self because can't do some things freely. But there are many variables here. Recently, the freedom given and the expansion of the field of the media shows the attention given. Few changes have been made to the media in the past, both at the public and individual levels. Previously, their role was not clearly known except to advance the interests of individuals and political interests. Now, the reform of the media making a big difference in media freedom.

Informant 4 of ENA is from Amhara region, Gonder town. He worked in ENA for over 20 years. He explains that, during these years, the journalist is vulnerable to safety problems. There were no safety laws and practices to protect journalists. As a result, the journalist has been exposed to various security problems. As journalists, they have a duty to do the job and work in various ways to defend themselves. Because they expose themselves to problems to living. Silence is preferred by journalists because it can be a resolution mechanism through which they face common challenges.

As his explanation, neither the government nor the media we work not to facilitate and protect the working conditions but to carry out the given direction. As far as he knows, in recent years, there have been no comfortable conditions for a journalist. The safety of journalists is better than before. Now, the situation is almost worrying for the journalist. For example, Gonder, the area where he lives, difficult to travel more than 20 kilometers outside of the city to work. If any journalist goes out, he/she will, sacrificing his/her life. Particularly, for the past four or five years, the situation in the Amhara region has been worrying.

According to him:

There is not required as journalists work freely on various issues such as corruption, good governance and others. Government officials and media leaders speak to journalists in advance to get these issues done. But the reality on earth is not that. If the journalist works on it, they get into a lot of trouble in the middle; so they refrains from doing such issues in advance. Due to safety problems, journalists are self-censorship. The current government does not want anything to be done that criticizes it or speaks of its weaknesses. The journalist required to focus only on image building and not do anything that the opposite of the government. Comparably, EPDRF government used to focus on the developmental journalist.

The third media organization that the researcher observed is EPA. From this media house informant 1 who gives her opinion for the researcher is worked for more than 13 years. During these years, she has had the opportunity to work during the time of transition as well as before that year. The period called the first change was in 2018. She explains that, in the past, getting information well and practicing journalism was full of challenges. Due to the condition of media freedom, it was impossible to say there was freedom. Getting current and important information is included in press freedom.

According to her, when journalists tried to prepare news analysis, there was a blockage of not being given information, which hindered them from working. Thus, most of the time, they were working only focused on event issues. If the person who gives information doesn't know the journalist, he/she can't freely give information. However, since 2018, there is good hope. Especially after Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed came to power, regarding creating a wide stage for media, seized media were freed, and journalists who were in jail were freed. There is also a change in willingness when journalist asks people to respond. They began to speak freely about whatever they think.

According to her, this did not last for more than two or three years. Journalists have been arrested recently. Despite the enactment of laws supporting media freedom, there are still shortcomings in implementation. Like before, journalists cannot get information simply. Many government officials also hold the view that public media journalists should report what praises the government and not shortcomings. It is also common to look suspiciously when a public media journalist asks for information on shortcomings.

She explains that:

What needs to be understood here is that while there are still improvements in media freedom and journalist safety, it does not mean that journalists can do everything. There are still cases where journalists do whatever the government says as it is in order to avoid being questioned. Even if there are questionable things inside him/her, he/she doesn't want to ask why. The reason for this is things that have always been learned. A journalist who focuses on exposing shortcomings is given unfair names, intimidated, denied promotion and training to strengthen his or her skills.

Due to her working in the news department, there are things which she observes. Sometimes, even when journalists are doing what the editorial policy allows, after they collect information on it, there are times when the management tell journalists to drop it. Also, there

are times when they don't believe the information journalists recorded and have in their hands; they try to call different places to check it. In addition, even though the fact is found in sound, if the issue is about higher authority, the managements themselves edit what has actually been done.

If journalists covering such issues again and again and try to show the problem of the public, they may even give you another name, saying, "Let his/her issue be investigated, he/she has a connection with this political party," they put pressure on you. Due to that, journalists work only what the managements want. Journalist safety means it's not only about throwing journalists in jail, attacking, or kidnapping. Not having trust in what they work on and not disseminating important information for the public is also one of the insecurities for journalists.

Another informant from EPA is worked as journalist more than six years. She said that, journalism is about being the eyes and ears of the people. Yet she didn't think that it's possible to do this even at the international level. Because many media outlets operate in accordance with editorial policy or in the interest of their country. On the contrary, it's becoming a microphone for the high-pitched. Journalists working in the public media may not harassed as long as they self-censor ship their work in advance. Therefore, it is rare when a government official or other body is harmed them.

She said that:

በጠቃላይ የጋዜጠኝነት ሙያ ከፍርሃት የጻዳ ካልሆነ ጋዜጠኞች ስራቸውን በሚሰሩበት ጊዜ ችግር ይገጥማቸዋል፤ በተለይም በምርጫ ሪፖርት ወቅት፣ ጦርነቶች እና ሌሎች አስቸጋሪ ሁኔታዎች። በ 2018 መጀመሪያ ላይ የተለወጡ የሚመስሉ ነገሮች ነበሩ። እሱም የለውጥ ጊዜ በመባል ይታወቃል። አሁን ግን ብዙ ነገሮች በመንግስት ቁጥጥር ስር እንደሆኑ ተረድቻለሁ። የሚዲያ ነፃነት አሁንም በመንግስት እጅ ነው።

In general, if the profession of journalism is not free from pressure and fear, journalists face problems whenever they do their job; especially during report elections, wars and other difficult situations. However, there were things that seemed to change towards the beginning of 2018, which is known as the time of change. But now I realize that many things are under government control. Media freedom is still in the hands of the government.

Informant 3 from EPA has worked in journalism for more than three years. When we look at the history of media freedom in our country, he believes that, it is the same since the time of Emperor Haile Selassie. Without a change of leadership in these years, he doesn't believe that journalists have freedom of work. The media and journalists in the country are required to report only on activities related to the ruling party and positive things. Exposing the problems of the ruling body can lead to arrest, prosecution and dismissal. Consequently, the media in the country is seen as an institution of the ruling party. So, he doesn't think the 2018-2023 one should change from the previous ones. The country's public media remain the voice of the party as before. For example, the editorial of Addis Zemen newspaper should be run by the editor in chief. But what is happening is led by political leadership.

Informant 4 from the organization by his side said, although the 2018-2023 period is known as the transition period, he believes that 2017 was better than the previous year. Since 2018, many people think that there is freedom of the media because they can insult former officials of EPDRF as they want. On the contrary, it is impossible to criticize the so-called leadership of change and talk about their shortcomings. There are media outlets that have received warning letters from the Broadcasting Authority for not broadcasting live support rallies. The hands that write and the tongues that speak are bound. There are journalists who have been warned, arrested and intimidated for what appears to be criticism. In terms of public media, there are journalists who are subjected to threats, robbery and beatings for investigative work. And there are those who have been captured, tortured, killed and their families exposed to various problems by armed groups.

He said that:

Public media journalists assumed that do not have safety problems because they self-censorship themselves. But they are vulnerable if they work on issues such as corruption, good governance and service delivery. It's even more difficult because there are powerful officials. There are times when the media itself is under pressure because of the journalist's work. Public media is always under pressure from the government, politicians and powerful people. And they don't want to do anything to offend the government because it supports them financially.

Generally, journalists' safety in general is a problem in many countries, and in developing countries it is even worse. In Ethiopia, this problem has been going on for many years and has been exposing many journalists to problems. Many journalists have been beaten, arrested

and looted because of the problems of journalists' safety and media freedom. and they lost their lives

However journalists' safety in Ethiopia has improved over the past five years, it is still flawed. The public media of Ethiopia is still under the influence of government officials, individuals and powerful institutions. Journalists continue to be subjected to intimidation, arrest, and other problems as a result of their work. Because of these, journalists are self-censorship instead of doing the work required by journalistic ethics.

Journalists' safety has been called into question, especially in connection with the security crisis in various parts of the country. The government and interest groups are pressuring journalists not to work freely.

4.4 Experience of journalists

4.1.1 Do you have any experience of refraining from covering stories just because of safety threats?

Journalists working in the public media chosen by the researcher and giving their opinions to the researcher have different experiences in relation to journalists' safety. These experiences are directly affected by them or their colleagues. they faced various minor and major pressures that threatened their safety.

Informant 1, from EBC Benishangul Gumuz Branch who share his experience said, although not the media he works in, a cameraman works in the public media in the region, while he was going out of the town for personal matters, armed group which acted in Oromia region by only looking at his identity card arrested him for a few days and detained for more than two weeks. Journalists working in public media have been struggling to move freely due to security problems in many places recently.

Informant 2 from Gambella, said that, the area which he is working in now is vulnerable to safety problems and there are many issues that they have not worked on. There are also many things that don't work by moving from place to place and going to any district or district they want. For example, last year, he went to the district for reporting in the presence of senior government officials. There was no network at the place. After a two-day stay, when they set out to return to Gambella, the information reached the Federal Police earlier that groups who wanted to attack us were moving. Then they stayed in the forest for more than seven hours

and changed their vehicles and returned to the city. Even didn't report the issue we went to for.

He also shares another experience. Recently they received information that there was a group growing narcotic herbs in the garden and we went there together with the police to report it. When they got there, they release a dog to attack them and they left the place with difficulty. Such situations are common, journalists can't go far from town for report. When they are exposed to such problems, they have no techniques to prevent them in advance. Rather they decide at that trouble time.

Informant 3, by his part, says he has been exposed to security problems at various times. He says that, once he went to the market in the evening to make news about the illegal trade in Addis Ababa and when he recorded the situation, he was beaten by people he did not know. He also says they took his identity card, phone and money in his pocket.

4.4.2. Did you ever leave some media topics because of fear of safety threats?

Informant 1 from ENA also share his experience said that, most of the time projects undertaken by the prime minister's office. After inauguration of projects, their media wanted to work in the area and was assigned journalist to clarify whether it was providing the said services. But there is a journalist who was arrested for two days without any questions just for raising this question. *"This is the expectation of a journalist working on the public media. Therefore, it seems that they have no safety problems but, there is a serious problem"*.

According to him, when we try to do a few tasks that seem to explain the problems of the people, the command stop is common. Even if it is done in various ways, the journalist treated differently. He remembers that, a year ago the public had high complaints related to service delivery on government vital events registration. Their media also covered the works being done by the office to improve its service delivery as well as the things that need to be improved. At 5pm, the manager of the agency called the CEO of ENA and asked him, "How can you make such news that will delay our work when we are working for change?". Then he completely changed the whole story which is published online" he said.

He added, another example that, in the East Borana region, road construction has been delayed for more than 10 years. As soon as they started working on the case, the district administration called them and stopped them saying that it had many complicated issues. Then they have been forced to stop. Because the voice of a journalist alone doesn't get

anywhere. Even if the news was eventually broadcasted, it is the journalist who is subjected to various problems and tortured.

Addition to that, when the government is about to change, the Bureau of Information and Communications of Addis Ababa wanted to develop a website that would connect students of the city 's public schools with their families. The agency has received information that they are going to do this with foreign engineers by one million Birr while local engineers can develop it. The informant himself make an appointment with the manager to do news on the issue and go to their office in the morning. Before they started their interview, the manager told to him as he changes his questions. But he didn't change. Then the interviewed manager informs for the media manager.

When he got back to the office the manager ordered him to stop the work. After that, he never tried anything like investigation for public grievances. Because just doing such issues by itself put journalists in trouble.

Informant 3 of ENA said that:

In principle, investigative journalism is encouraged. Problems such as corruption and lack of good governance are widespread. It is also time when investigative journalism is needed more to prevent such illegal activities. Yet, there are many things that prevent journalists from doing it even in the public media. While doing investigative, they face various problems. For example, they receive many cases including court decisions regarding illegal land owning. The decision may have been unfair in various ways. So, when such issues come to their media organization journalists try to clarify in various ways.

When they go to the final stage and identify the truthfulness of the information, it stops for unknown reasons. They may be told to stop by their boss or the nearest responsible person. When they ask for the reason, instead of being told the exact reason, the answer is it is done later. When they are told to stop, they cannot get into any other argument with them but stop. If they argue, they may face problems. It can range from giving them a warning to firing them, ethical problems, violations of guidelines, and the possibility of losing their job.

She explains that, recently, there was a family-related report from part of the country. A family is illegally confiscated their land. Individuals also intervene and cause the land to be sold without the consent of the entire family member. The people who bought the land were people who had money and could do a lot. The case was decided in court and the case was closed. The victims, appealed for a retrial and, brought the matter to their media. When the file was re-examined, the decision was made illegally. Then they started working to get the

case reconsidered. They went to the place and gathered a lot of evidence for two or three months. However, they were told to stop the work for unknown reasons, and they couldn't do anything.

According to her, issues related to corruption and lack of good governance may come in large numbers through public complaints. In Addis Ababa, when complaints come up regarding water, electricity and other infrastructure, they go to the relevant authority for an answer they forced to stop working the issue by the manager of the company or any other body. When such issues arise, attempts are made to convince each other to work in their media. They try to raise these issues at the organization's meetings at every opportunity. Yet, it interferes with their work in ways they don't expect.

According to her idea,

A person appointed as a leader in the media is not politically neutral. He is not the one who understands the guidelines of professionalism and stands and defends for journalists, but the one who believes that feedback from elsewhere is right, by listening to that, they can suspend or cut salaries, fire people, and there is nothing a journalist can do until he/she is paid. What he/she can do is advise as the complaint can reach the private media. Also, the organization does not appear to stand for the journalist except to hand him/her over if he accidentally makes a mistake.

For example, their daily news colleagues make numerical errors in his work. The agency on which the report made was the security bureau, he was taken directly to prison. Before reaching that stage, it is simple to cleanup, disciplinary questioning and correction could have been made. Later, he was released after being found not guilty.

Informant 3 of ENA from Gimbi said that, for the past four or five years the situation of his workplace is vulnerable for security problem. Not only West Welega, Gimbi, in the four districts of Welega (East, West, Kelem and Horo Guduru Welega) there is a security problem.

He said :

ብዙ ችግር እና ጫና ውስጥ ነበሩ። እንደፈለጉ ወጥተው መሥራት አይችሉም። የታጠቁ ሃይሎች ጋዜጠኞችን እንደ መንግስት አካል አድርገው ይመለከቱታል። እና ለተለያዩ ጉዳዮች ይዳረጋሉ። ከዚያም የሰደዱት ደብዳቤ አቸዋል። ጋዜጠኞቹን ካገኙ አስረው ከ 200-300 ሺህ ብር ይጠይቃሉ። በመሆኑም ድርጅቱና ጋዜጠኞች ለከፋ ችግር ተጋልጠዋል። ይህ ችግር አሁንም አለ እና ለመስራት አስቸጋሪ ነው። በደግሞ ሃይሎች ካልተጠበቁ ከወረዳ ወደ ወረዳ መንቀሳቀስ አይችሉም።

They were in a lot of trouble and pressure. They cannot go out and work as they want. The armed forces against government treat journalists as part of the state and subject them to various harms; then they persecuted and tortured them. If they found the journalists, they arrested and demanded 200 -300 thousand Birr. Thus, the organization and journalists have been exposed to serious problems. This problem still exists and it is difficult to work. They cannot move from district to district unless they are protected by security forces. (Translation mine).

When he went to the field for work, and tries to interview people, the interviewees don't give the information he is looking for. Due to the practical situation in the region, it is difficult to obtain the information that the people and the country need. The four Welega (East, West, Kelem and Horo Guduru) are more vulnerable than other regions of the country due to the serious security problems.

Informant 4, from ENA, Gonder Branch shared his experience as follows. Once a marketplace burns down in their city. One organization also provides support to those their shop has been burned down. He assigned to do news on the event and started interviewing people. His interviewee raised a complaint that they were exposed to the fire because the city council did not implement their request to convert it into a building immediately. They have been asking this question continuously for the past 10 years but they did not get answer. Then the journalist added this comment in one paragraph in the news. But his editor took the whole idea out of it. Because the idea raised is not positive. As a principle, this real public opinion should have been added. But even if the journalist does, the editor doesn't pass it.

Another example he raised is, there is a high level of famine in some places of the region. The famine has caused serious damage to human and animal lives. However, the public media does not boldly address this issue. The media was only covering support of the government or another body; no casualties were reported. Professionally, it is not right to hide social problems.

According to him, every piece of news in their media does not pass without careful internal scrutiny. Anything that criticizes the government and seems to be critical is excluded from news. This is not ethical; journalists should be given freedom to work with ethical standards. He personally believes that a journalist should be the voice of the people. The journalist should expose the problems in the society. He personally exposed government officials who committed improper acts and made them resign during the EPDRF. Because of this has been

under various pressures; they even tried to kill him. His co-worker raised a comment and ask him during meeting, why he don't always look good. After that, he stopped doing seemingly critical issues. He knew what the government wanted and he started working accordingly.

He said that, in general:

Journalists in the Ethiopian public media live for wages. If he/she loses his/her salary, he/she will be exposed to life problems. This one doesn't benefit the government either. the media should do what benefits the people and the government in a balanced manner. But the opposite is happening. For example, it was the public media that spread the war in the north of the country; the journalist was making news using the same words used by a government official.

According to him, nowadays the development of information technology is even faster. Everyone carries information in their hand. Therefore, if the public media does not change its working conditions, it is difficult for its work and the safety of journalists is questioned. It is also a big challenge for the government. He should think about how he should cope with the information on social media and govern the country.

4.4.3 What issues (topics) that you left unreported (uncovered) due to fear of safety threats?

Informant 1 from EPA, shared her experience. Once Ministry of Agriculture held a press conference on the overall annual performance. She had been assigned to do the work. The statement said the office did most of its work as planned, but did less than planned on the supply of seeds. She wrote a story with the deficiency as a lead and gave it to her editor. The news appeared in the newspaper accordingly. But when she entered the office the next morning, the editor edited her news asked her to give a recorded voice. When she asked why, he told her that he had received a call from the ministry's office asking why the news had been done in this way. Senior manager of the media called her to his office and told her that, it was not right for her to focus on the shortcomings despite the good work done. And for a long time, they had ceased to assign her to great events. When various trainings come, they assign another journalist who the position is below her.

Such issues often happen to public media journalists. This prevents them from doing their jobs freely. Because of such issues they often self-censorship themselves.

She also raises additional experience. Recently, the Amharic newspaper that the organization published Addis Zemen has a column called "Indihim Yinoral, እንዲሁም ይኖራል" (Also it shall be lived like this). She made an appointment to collect information and went to interview a woman while holding her recorder. But one person who was a civil guard

prohibited her from conducting the interview. Even though they tried to convince him, he refused and held her at the prison delivery. But even though she went there by the will of the organization, they did not make a quick response to the incident to alleviate her suffering. Also, recently, one journalist who worked on a column called "Firaduny, ᠴᠢᠷᠠᠳᠤᠨᠢ" (Judge me) people who he clarifying their cases because a complaint has been made against them, by waiting him around his house, beat him and took his expensive phone

Informant 2 from EPA said that:

A journalist maintain journalistic ethics and provide information that protects the public interest and protects the country from danger. News should be in accordance with the guidelines, not just because it is new. However, in the reality of the country, journalists who report various reports in accordance with its ethics are arrested and exposed to various problems. He personally works in investigative journalism and he has faced various problems. At this point, there may be do-this, don't-do-this decision from their media leadership. They stop them from working by preferring politics or party representation while they should be following media practices. Thus, there are works that have been completed by research but are not reported.

Furthermore, the fact that there is no clear media law as everyone understands is affecting the job. If it had been clear, it would have been possible to know how much work could have been done. And also, the security crisis in the country does not allow them to move place to place around as needed.

He added that, if the people under investigation know that they are being investigated, they may even try to kill the journalist who is doing the work. He personally had an attempted beating and murder. On the other hand, people who cause trouble are covered by government bodies to avoid being held accountable. When conducting an investigation, the failure of the investigated body to submit documents creates problems with the content. This time journalist cannot force. There is an ombudsman on the other side but they don't go to it to solve their problems because it doesn't have the power this much. He has personally researched and solved the problems of individuals which the organization has failed to solve. There are some cases that he left out of fear even though he knew who did it.

Informant 3 of EPA also share her experience. She once did a job. It is that the people who gave to was wrong. The guys who were given the information on it were calling us here and say it wasn't right. Things like this show the journalists how carefully they have to do their

job. In general, we can't say public media journalists do not have safety problems. Because of the respecting the editorial policy and did what the government wanted them to do, they seem safe.

She once wrote an article about the problems of public servants in the city of Addis Ababa. She did this by interviewing the staff. They told her that they were forced to bring an empty lunch box because their life is becoming hard due to their low salary. The article was published on the newspaper. Also posted online and get many likes and shares. However, senior government officials including the media leadership criticized how such articles are made. They gave a warning to her and her editor. Also removed the story posted online.

Informant 4 of EPA said, he understands the editorial policy of the organization from the beginning and he avoid issues that expose him to safety problems. He has seen his colleagues, especially those who do somewhat investigative get into trouble. For example, recently his colleagues who went to the city district in search of information were arrested. Even though they showed their identity cards. There are also those who threaten them over the phone. Also, as a journalist it is difficult to take a picture that useful for their work; that is not include places that are forbidden. Journalists who tried to cover the truth about opposition parties were even arrested on sight.

According to these journalists, there is different level of journalists' safety problem in all three media outlets. Many people think there is no safety problem in public media. Journalists working there are perceived as speaking only for the government and hiding the truth. But no one understands why they do not do journalistic work properly. However, it is clear from the comments that journalists do not do their jobs properly for fear of their safety, not because they lack the ability to work.

4.5 The impact of journalists' safety on content quality

For a media the content it presents is crucial to have many viewers and audience. It must follow journalistic ethics and guidelines and serve as a bridge between the people and the government. It must work to solve the problems of the community without hiding the truth. And must serve the country and the people by providing balanced information.

But to do so, the freedom and safety of the media as well as that of the journalist must be protected. Media and journalists should work free from any pressure. Especially public media

journalists should do their job free from political and economic pressure. Otherwise, the content quality is questionable. The media is also hated by the people for its dishonesty.

4.5.1 From your experience, how did safety problems directly influence the quality of journalism at [EBC/ENA/EPA] during the specified period?

Informant 1, from EBC Benishangul Gumuz Branch said that, due to lack of journalists' safety, the quality of the content of programs or news has deteriorated. There is also a problem of accessibility. This has made it difficult to reach out to many districts and provide coverage. It has become difficult to hear the voice of the people there. Journalists' self-censorship their work as much as possible not exposing us to problems and causing conflict between people.

Informant 2 of EBC from Gambella Branch said, the content journalist create may lose its quality due to safety concerns. And he/she forced to self-censorship. There are issues journalist don't report while he/she sees them. For example, recently, there was an annual sports competition in the region. The championship lasted two weeks and all regions were participated. A few days later, an athlete was killed. Then the whole situation changed. When he went to report, only report about sport competitions. However, he wanted to report no one give reasonable information to hi; the government also did not want it reported. He knows the facts well and have received information from the people. But until the government or security forces give him information, he couldn't do anything.

From ENA informant 1 said that, *"The presence of safety problems obviously caused serious problems in the quality of the content. That is the reason why social media is mostly accepted and it is believed that it offers fast information. A journalist loses credibility in what he does and stops working on critical issues."*

Informant 2 also raised the same idea. Journalists' safety problems affect content. The work of the public media is predictable. This is why public media is often unpopular. It is not balanced because it discriminates against one body and leaves the demands of the people. The news and special programs are not interesting either. No one is willing to watch or listen. He/she often works biasedly for the government because the government pays the salaries. As a result, they ignore the problems of the people. Public media is considered an unreliable source of information used by government officials as well as the rich.

He said that, even government do not want such issue either. Sometimes when the government officially claims to have such shortcomings, the public media does not want to expose them boldly. If you hide the shortcomings and only talk about the good, you will further be keeping apart the government and the people. Nowadays, this is what people who have taken political mission are doing; even though this is not the will of the government.

Informant 3, from Gimbi Branch of ENA also said:

Safety problems around them always affect their work. It is difficult to do their job as calmly and cleanly as they want. Lack of thinking about work, especially in a calm mood, directly affects the quality of work. It puts pressure on him not to work with the required balance in the news and various programs he does. Where there is a security problem, journalists are forced to self-censorship because they face external or internal pressure.

From Gonder Branch of ENA, Informant 4 also raised the same idea as his colleagues. The presence of safety problems directly affects the content of the work. It is also making the media not the voice of the people. The people take journalists as a spokesperson for the government. Many community members understand the problem with the public media and do not participate in providing the necessary information. They want to take such issues to the private media. If such seemingly serious issues happen to himself, he pass them as if he did not see them; because he know that if he does, it is not be aired.

Informant 1 of EPA, said the journalists of public media, due to working under safety problem, only report positive issues. Because of this, the respect and trust the public have for public media journalists are too low. Personally, what she believes is she don't think the government wants to hide the information to this extent.

Informant 2 of the media also explain, due to journalists' safety problems, many activities are focused on Addis Ababa. The city is considered to represent the whole country. Because of this the community at various levels and places is forgotten. The presence of all federal agencies in the capital is also affecting the balance of information available. While the media should show the governments' shortcomings the country's public media focuses mostly on image building.

Informant 3 said:

“Safety problems cause high lack of content quality. If a journalist is not safe to go out and work as he/she wants, he/she is not do his/her job completely. For example, our organization has not done enough work to protect the safety of journalists. I couldn't do

much work because of fear and problems. Many secrets and information that the public should know and should be exposed remain. We are not going to the regions and doing the works as required even in the city of Addis Ababa itself”.

According to informant 4 of EPA, it is obvious that if there is a safety problem, it directly affect the content. As a result, many of their reports focus only on development. This prevents it from getting a reader or listener. The people have something they want to be told; there are many things that journalists do not do for fear of safety. This directly affects the content of the media as well as the skills of the journalist.

Generally, journalists' safety and content quality are directly related. It is difficult to imagine quality content where journalists' safety is not protected. Because journalists are especially vulnerable to economic hardship and prioritize working to support themselves and their families. Many of them have responsibilities beyond themselves and do not want to lose their jobs under any circumstances. The one who wants to influence them knows this and takes advantage of their weaknesses. This directly degrades the content of the media. it also makes him hated by people.

4.6 Safety training and protection of journalists

4.6.1 Safety training

There is no doubt that training is crucial for the quality of a job. Especially since the media is considered as the fourth government, it must provide quality work to the public. therefore, journalists should receive adequate training from time to time. The media should also provide training to their journalists on how to maintain their safety as they provide various professional training. However, not all of the journalists interviewed by the researcher had never received any safety training from their organization since they were employed; this has made them vulnerable.

4.6.1.1 What measures did your media organization take to maintain the safety of its journalists?

Informant 1, of EBC from Benishangul Gumuz proves this. Since joining EBC, he received training on different issues. Example, not to make false reports to the public and how to protect themselves from danger. Informant 2 of EBC, Gambella Branch also explain that, their organization not provided them with any training on journalists' safety issues. Informant

3 and 4 from main office of EBC also give the same idea. the organization provides training for journalists on various topics but not specifically on journalists' safety.

Informant 1 from ENA by his side, their media has never provided training on journalist safety. He remembers that given training abroad on 'war Journalism'. Informant 2 of ENA also said that there is no training for journalists' safety. She didn't receive any training on the issue. Informant 3 of the organization, from Gimbi also never received any training yet; and he has never seen when it is given. In 12 years of working, he never heard or seen any training on journalists' safety. Informant 4 from Gonder also never had a training on journalists' safety.

4.6.1.2 Was there any training provided to journalists by the media on how to take safety measures in risky environments?

From EPA, informant 1 said that, still she doesn't receive any training on the issue. She remembers that as she took training during election. Except this, even during the northern war, even though she was sent to report the conflict, she did not receive any training or even orientation. The only thing she has learned was in school; war reporting helped her, but the organization did not give any training. Even if the organization cannot give training by itself, it has to give them orientation with security forces. But, no one told them how to cover their ears when they are in the middle of loud weapon shots and how to hide their car from the eyes of rebellion. Informant 2 personally once took a training course on journalists' safety by another organization. But the company has never prepared anything like this for journalists.

Informant 3 also explain that he never took any training based on journalists' safety. He went to report during the war in the north of the country several times. He took training how to report. But the person who gives the training sits in Addis Ababa and train them only the theory. He doesn't actually know what's going on the ground. Informant 4 of EPA explain that, regarding to training he has never seen or heard of any training on this issue by the company he works for.

As can be seen from the informant's comments, journalists are exposed to problems due to lack of safety training. They are vulnerable to problems because they do not understand how to get out of safety problems. And they choose to remain silent because they do not know the extent of their rights and obligations. Media companies knowingly or unknowingly provide training for their journalists on various issues but lack in providing it on safety issues.

4.6.2 Protection of journalists

Regarding to protection, the media outlets from which the data was collected have nothing to do for their journalists. Those media outlets are willing to do investigative work; they also set directions for journalists to work. However, it does not appear when they take responsibility for the problems they face and provide protection in advance.

Informant 1 from EC, Benishangul Gumuz region said that, the regional government has protected them by security forces during the work and allow them to go to the place. Regarding protection, there is a written guideline. But their media has nothing do special or unique about it. Informant 2 from the same organization, Gambella branch also said regarding to protection, the organization is aware that it is making efforts to implement legislation being passed by the House of People's Representatives; so far, it has nothing to do with the situation. Informant 3 and 4 from EBC main office support the raised idea the organization has nothing to do with protection except to support a few things after a journalist is exposed to a problem.

Informant 1 of ENA main office said that nothing is being done about the issue of protection. *“The organization only gives a direction for journalists not to go to places with security problems, for protection”* said informant 2, from the same organization. Informant 3 from Gimbi branch also supports her idea, regard to protection he doesn't go to work where there is a security problem, because the company doesn't have protection for the journalists. Informant 4 from Gonder said, in terms of protection the organization is nothing to do for them. If a journalist dies on the job, he does not even have life insurance except to give two months' free salary to his family. The journalist personally goes through various pressures on his own, but does not have enough understanding of what should happen.

EPA journalists also raise the same idea. Informant 1 said that, few journalists know how far it goes to protect their own safety and how to maintain technique. Many of them don't know what the laws say, even what they are. Moreover, the main problem of the country is not the lack of laws and regulations but the implementation.

Informant 2 said, for protection journalists based on what they hear and see, they focus on issues that do not raise safety questions and do not affect the editorial policy of the company. Generally, the circumstances are not conducive to journalists' safety. Journalists cover wars, elections, and other difficult events. Women go to difficult places and do work. But there is no special protection.

Informant 3 of EPA by his side, regarding to protection their media institution does not take any action to protect journalists. There are times when they are not assigned a vehicle to go and work with. They don't even implement the editorial policy of the company properly. There are many major research findings that they do not take away because of fear of security. It means that they left it because there are high government officials behind them. When they work, they face many challenges. For example, police and security forces are bought to intervene. They exert pressure by establishing repressive bodies. The government itself has places that it wants not to be investigated.

4.6.2.1 In the face of safety concerns, what coping techniques and tactics did you and your colleagues adopt to ensure your safety and professional autonomy while working for [EBC/ENA/EPA]?

Informant 4 said, journalists themselves do not have enough understanding about their safety. If they get into trouble, they get out of it on their own without prior understanding. However EPA encourages investigative journalism and provides various recognition, nothing can be done about protection in advance. It doesn't have to do anything special for the journalist except write a letter of support to get them to work for the desired company.

In general, the media's lack of protection for their journalists has affected journalism. Journalists are not protected and forced them to censor-ship their work. They were forced to choose jobs that did not affect their safety in any way.

4.7. Actors affecting journalists' safety

According to journalists interviewed, it is not only government officials who affected the safety of journalists. Individuals such as entrepreneurs, celebrities, armed groups and others are also mentioned.

Informant 1 of EBC from Benishangul Gumuz said that, when investigative reports are done government officials exposing them to problems. And few individuals and groups try to exert various pressures on them. For example, few institutions create various pressures when reports are made on a showing their deficiencies.

Informant 2 from Gambella region also raise the same idea. *“Without government officials, suspected corrupt officials, prominent entrepreneurs, project implementer, contractors, special interest groups and others whose interests have been violated are a concern for journalists' safety”*. Addition to that informant 3 of ENA from Gimbi branch said armed

groups are the first to raise the problem of journalists' safety. Armed anti-government forces in the area periodically harass journalists. He personally threatened on various occasions. Consequently, he does not go out of town to work.

Informant 4 of EPA added that, "*celebrities, entrepreneurs and others, known as actors, are influential in relation to the safety of journalists. If these people have doubts about their work and a journalist tries to clarify them, they use their force, reputation and money to affect journalists' safety*". Once a compliant comes to their media that a well-known owner is concealed oil and selling it to the public at expensive price. Then the organization assigned a group of journalists to investigate. The informant was one of the group members. When they started the work, information reached the owner. he first tried to agree with them with money to stop the work. They were forced to report to their editor and stop the work because their organization did not have special protection.

4.8. Parts of the country exposed to safety problems

All informants agree that the problem of journalists' safety is also widespread, and it gets worse in places with security problems.

4.8.1 Which parts of the country made vulnerability of journalists' safety?

Informant 1 from ENA, although the problem of journalists' safety exists throughout the country, it is worse in the regions. The representative of the media organization in different regions exposed to various problems. They are attacked in a way that no one asks and remembers them. The understanding of the laws in the regions also decreases as we go to the regions. There is a leadership that does not understand that it is must to provide information.

Informant 2 of ENA also explain that, the problem of journalists' safety is not limited in one place. Their media has branches in different regions; journalists everywhere subject to the same problems.

Informant 3 from Gimbi and Informant 4 from Gonde of ENA said, although this problem of journalists' safety is a nationwide problem, but worsening in the regions. Arrests, kidnappings, and killings are worse in the regions; the journalist is not exempt from this fear. Most journalists also working in intense fear.

All informants from EPA also raise the same idea. Journalists' safety problem is common throughout the country. Informant 1 said that, a few years ago, when journalists were sent to the regions for work, officials welcomed them in a good manner. But now the situation has

changed. They don't even want to meet with journalists. Withholding information and pressuring journalists to back where they came.

Informant 2 of EPA believe that:

There is a problem of journalists' safety across the country. For example, there are no worrying safety problems in Addis Ababa, may not hear gunshots. But there are many problems that the media needs to address and leave because of safety. This shows that the problem of journalists' safety in Ethiopia is not limited to one place. Many journalists have been exposed to problems, especially in connection with security problems.

4.8.1 Problem of access to information

There are times when lack of information prevents journalists from doing the work required by ethics and journalism. Those who hide the truth and deny information also intimidate journalists in various ways.

Informant 3 of EPA said that, it is difficult to move and report as required as all regions of the country are in trouble with security. For example, a case came to us from Bonga, Southwest Ethiopia. One person was taken away from two thousand hectares of farmland. The land was registered as property with the Development Bank of Ethiopia but the people took it and divided it. When they tried to work on this issue, the local leadership told them that as they would not let in. They could not even accept a letter from the Prime Minister's Office.

They wanted to go to the area to investigate the matter but were threatened. In other regions, journalist cannot solve such problems through research. In Oromia, they respond to the decision of the Federal Court by saying that they do not know the federal but the regional.

Informant 4 believes that even the people who provided the information hide the information because they had other security problems. Intimidation of journalists and making them stop their work is also common.

4.9 Public support and self-protection technique

As informants of EBC, there are times when the public stands with journalists in terms of providing information. When journalists do things related to social problems, people are with them and support.

Informant 1 of ENA said that, there are two ways in which the community can provide information and stand guard for the journalist. The slightly educated and intelligent one

appears continuously bring various information so that the information reaches the public. Mostly, the society doesn't give information; does not want to indicate the source of information. The information provided is also unclear and confidential.

According to him:

When a safety problem occurs, a journalist has no way to defend himself. His defense mechanism is truth. Under the current circumstances, journalists cannot feel safe as these laws are not properly implemented. On the other hand, most of the journalists themselves are unaware of the existence of these laws. In addition, the bodies leading and coordinating public works are creating problems in media freedom due to lack of understanding of their duty to provide accurate and timely information.

Informant 2 of ENA by her side said, as the community is standing for journalists, journalists must first work to solve its problems. When they have confidence in journalists in general, they will be able to stand for them with everything from providing information. But journalists they are not even willing to provide information because the journalist is fulfilling their professional responsibilities properly.

Informant 3 from Gimbi Branch said that, the preventive technique he and his colleagues use to avoid safety problems is to ask the security forces to support us. When it is overwhelming, they try to protect themselves by fleeing from one relative's house to another. The protect technique of journalists is do and apply everything as journalistic guidelines; follow the instructions as much as possible. Do their job carefully and honestly.

Informants from EPA also explain that, they use different methods on their own to protect themselves. There is no protection for them as an organization or as a government.

According to them, the community is willing and supportive of activities that solve their problems. However, there is information confidentiality as it is also exposed to safety problems. There is also a lack of trust in the public media when the information he provides is not processed in the way he provided or when his voice is suppressed.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Summary

Particularly, this research investigates the safety of journalists working in public media; EBC (Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation). ENA (Ethiopian News Agency) and EPA (Ethiopian Press Agency) during 2018-2023. The study aims to shed light on the challenges journalists faced in public media.

The study begins by providing an overview of the state of media freedom and press safety in Ethiopia, setting out the conditions that affect the work of journalists. Examines relevant literature and theoretical frameworks, contextualizing the study in a broader discussion of media ethics, professional standards, and government influence on media freedom.

The method of Data collection was using qualitative methods, which included interviews with journalists, analysis of collected Data, and additional literature for the studies. The findings of the study provide a comprehensive understanding of the safety of journalists in Ethiopian public media.

Key findings highlight the significant challenges faced by journalists working in these media outlets, including harassment, intimidation and physical violence, often perpetrated by government actors or affiliated groups. These challenges are exacerbated by political tensions, regulatory pressures and restrictions on freedom of expression. This thesis identifies organizational factors at EBC, ENA, and EPA that may contribute to or mitigate journalist safety, such as editorial policies, training programs, and support mechanisms.

Another problem identified by the study is that many people think that as journalists working in public mass media do not have safety problems. The study identified, however, that they self- censorship out of fear rather than lack of security problems. This is preventing them from doing journalistic work properly. The content they made available to the public has always led to it being perceived as lie.

The conclusion highlights the implications of these findings for the safety of public media journalists and recommends measures to improve safety and promote press freedom. The recommendations include strengthening legal protections for journalists, increasing organizational accountability and transparency, and fostering a culture of safety and support in media organizations.

Overall, this thesis contributes to the scholarly understanding of journalist safety in Ethiopia and provides valuable insights for policymakers, media professionals, and civil society actors working to safeguard press freedom and protect the rights of journalists.

5.2 Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to distinguish Journalists' Safety in Ethiopian Public Media: The Case of EBC, ENA, and EPA during 2018-2023. Experienced journalists who are working in these public media were interviewed to find out about the issue. Thus, the researcher used purposive sampling to collect data from journalists in the headquarters in Addis Ababa as well as, those working in the regions. Of the three selected public media, EBC and ENA were included in the data collection as they have branches from the regions. As the journalists could express their views properly the data collected was conducted in Amharic. To ensure the completeness of the study, as much as possible the researcher involved female journalists; however, couldn't get from the regions. Though the research is a qualitative method and the researcher collected the data through in-depth interview.

The researcher translated the collected data into the language in which the research is written and transcribe it word by word. The data collected were first identified and written according to media house. Editing was done before categorizing the text into topics. Thus, ideas that should be omitted and not used for the study, words, sentences and phrases as well as the punctuation system were edited. Then divide and categorize the data under the topics covered by the chapter was the next step.

After the collected data were organized and analyzed in thematically it is understood journalists' safety in public has improved towards the beginning but is still a concern. Journalists faced different risks such as, physical assaults, censorship pressures, intimidation tactics and legal harassment. Due to these challenges, they choose resilience, employing coping mechanisms such as self-censorship and security measures. However, safety concerns adversely affected the quality of journalism, leading to compromised objectivity and diminished media pluralism.

As a result, the media content presented is not reliable, balanced, problem-solving and attractive. When journalists' self-censorship themselves due to political pressure and security problems in their environment, they are forced to omit or present information without meeting the requirements. They refrain from doing too many topics that, could solve social

problems and benefit the country. If they do, they leave it in the middle or present it in an unbalanced manner.

Initially, media freedom seemed good and the safety of journalists improved. Two or three years later, however, the country's media is still not free from political pressure. Journalists working in the mentioned media are still under pressure and are forced for self-censorship. The quality of journalism is still in question.

Moreover, journalists are not receiving training on journalists' safety from their media. In addition to doing daily reports, even those involved in the war in the north of the country didn't receive any safety training. Also, media companies do not appear to be doing anything on protection. They have nothing to do to prevent the journalist from being exposed to security problems in advance. These media outlets should do their daily work but nothing has been done on how journalists should work, protect themselves and work without exposure to problems.

The editorial policy of these media outlets is not free from political influence and journalists have not been able to work in accordance with journalistic ethics. Even when they try to do a few things that can solve the problems of the people, the pressure begins in their workplace; they begin to be pressured by their immediate superiors.

In this regard, although the ruling government has the desire to practice journalism properly, the executives at all levels are preventing it from being done according to the guidelines. Without any guidance, they guard against talk of government deficiencies and problems without development.

Journalists themselves did not exercise their rights. Even they don't know how to protect themselves, how to keep themselves safe, or what to do in an emergency. Journalists' safety is being adequately protected by national and international regulations, and these rules are not being followed or understood.

Regarding the safety of journalists, many people think that journalists in the mass media are not vulnerable to problems. However, these journalists are exposed to security problems, both directly and indirectly. They know this and they self-censorship themselves in advance but it is understood that they have a lot of problems while doing it. Those who made few attempts to work were subjected to intimidation, arrest, beatings, robbery, various warnings, given inappropriate name and others.

Government officials are not the only ones who affect the security of journalists. Armed groups that marched anti-government, celebrities, the rich and some groups exert pressure on journalists ranging from intimidation. They affect the safety of journalists in various ways. Under the current circumstances, the safety problem of journalists is evident throughout the country. Especially in parts of the country that are vulnerable to security problems they are causing journalists not to do their jobs properly. Due to this, the reporting they produce is affecting the lack of coverage, balance, fairness, and accuracy.

5.3 Problem Solution

The purpose of this study is to identify the progress, lack and current situation of journalists' safety during the reform in Ethiopian public media. Thus, beginning from 2018 an attempt was made to look at the situation for five years since the reform period. The researcher was conducted in the three public media institutions known as EBC, ENA and EPA.

This study emphasizes how crucial it is to put journalists' safety first in Ethiopia's public media environment. Stakeholders may collaborate to create an atmosphere where journalists can perform their essential role as watchdogs of democracy without fear of danger or punishment by putting these ideas into practice.

The survey also identified issues related to the safety of journalists that need to be improved and corrected. Based on the findings, to enhance journalists' safety within Ethiopian public media the following recommendations are proposed:

5.2.1 For the Media

- *Legal Protection*: Strengthen legal frameworks to protect journalists' rights and uphold press freedom.
- *Training, Protection and Support*: To help journalists handle difficult situations, offer them thorough safety training as well as psychological support and physical protection.
- *Discussion and Collaboration*: To ensure the safety of journalists, media outlets should conduct discussions and relations with government officials, communities and various bodies.
- *Resource Allocation*: Invest in resources to bolster security infrastructure and technological capabilities within media institutions.
- *Independence of media*: To encourage objective reporting and lessen outside demands, public media organizations should protect editorial independence and autonomy.

1.2.2. For Journalists

- *Report and document Incidents*: Journalists should practice documenting and reporting incidents that violate their safety and rights in their work. They are expected to inform the relevant government bodies, lawyers and organizations working on journalists' rights

- *Boast/Advocate for Press Freedom:* Journalists should work on journalist safety. This is expected to be boasted by everyone in a campaign-like manner. When their rights are violated, they must raise their voices together and fight for their rights.
- *Building connections/networks:* Journalists should establish networks to discuss their problems. They are expected to support each other, be each other's voice and stand by each other when they are in trouble; they should also encourage other parties to help.
- *Exercise Self-Care:* Journalists must put their safety first in whatever they do. they should report threats to senior management, security agencies and those involved rather than stand alone

By putting these suggestions into practice, Ethiopian journalists will be able to operate in a safer and more favorable environment, supporting press freedom, democratic government, and human rights.

Appendix

1. Can you provide an overview of your perspective on the context and progress of media freedom in Ethiopia from 2018 to 2023?
እ.ኤ.አ ከ2018 እስከ 2023 ድረስ በኢትዮጵያ ስላለው የሚዲያ ነፃነት አውድ እና ግስጋሴ ላይ ያለዎትን አመለካከት አጠቃላይ እይታ ማቅረብ ይችላሉ?
2. Did you personally observe or experience changes in media freedom during this period?
በዚህ ጊዜ ውስጥ በመገናኛ ብዙኃን ነፃነት ላይ በግልጽ የተመለከቱት ወይም ያጋጠምዎት ነገር አለ?
3. As a journalist working for [EBC/ENA/EPA], what specific safety hazards or obstacles did you encounter that you believed were unique to your organization?
በ[ኢቢሲ/ኢዜአ/ኢፕኤ] ውስጥ የሚሰሩ/የምትሰሩ ጋዜጠኛ እንደመሆንህ/ሽ፣ ምን ዓይነት የደህንነት ችግር ወይም መሰናክል አጋጥምህ/ሽ ነበር?
4. Can you share any incidents or situations that highlighted the distinct challenges faced by journalists at [EBC/ENA/EPA] in terms of safety?
ከደህንነት አንፃር የ[ኢቢሲ/ኢዜአ/ኢፕኤ] ጋዜጠኞች ያጋጠሟቸውን ልዩ ልዩ ተግዳሮቶች የሚያገሉ ክስተቶችን ወይም ሁኔታዎችን ማጋራት ይችላሉ?
5. In the face of safety concerns, what coping techniques and tactics did you and your colleagues adopt to ensure your safety and professional autonomy while working for [EBC/ENA/EPA]?
ከደህንነት ስጋቶች አንጻር እርስዎ እና ባልደረቦችዎ በ[ኢቢሲ/ኢዜአ/ኢፕኤ] በምትሰሩበት ወቅት ደህንነትዎን ለማረጋገጥ ምን ዓይነት የመቋቋሚያ ቴክኒኮችን እና ዘዴዎችን ተከተሉ?

6. Were there specific strategies that you found effective in maintaining both safety and journalistic integrity?

ጋዜጠኝነትን ደህንነትን እና ታማኝነትን በመጠበቅ ረገድ ያገኙት ውጤታማና ልዩ ስልቶች ነበሩ?

7. From your experience, how did safety problems directly influence the quality of journalism at [EBC/ENA/EPA] during the specified period?

ከርስዎ ልምድ በመነሳት የደህንነት ችግሮች በተጠቀሰው ጊዜ ውስጥ በ[ኢቢሲ/ኢዜአ/ኢፕድ] ጋዜጠኝነት ጥራት ላይ ምን ተጽዕኖ አሳድረዋል?

8. Can you provide examples where safety concerns had a noticeable impact on the content or reporting standards?

የደህንነት ስጋቶች በይዘት ላይ ጉልህ ተጽእኖ ያሳደሩባቸውን ምሳሌዎች ማቅረብ ይችላሉ?

9. As a journalist, what or who do you think were the main players undermining the safety of Ethiopian journalists, particularly those employed by [EBC/ENA/EPA]?

እንደ ጋዜጠኛ የኢትዮጵያን በተለይም [ኢቢሲ/ኢዜአ/ኢፕድ] ተቀጥረው የሚሠሩትን ጋዜጠኞች ደኅንነት የሚያናጉ ዋና ተዋናዮች ምን ወይም እነማን ናቸው ብለው ያስባሉ?

10. What role did outside variables like cultural views or political forces play in the difficulties journalists confront in maintaining their safety?

ጋዜጠኞች ደህንነታቸውን ለመጠበቅ በሚገጥሟቸው ችግሮች ውስጥ እንደ ባህላዊ አመለካከቶች ወይም የፖለቲካ ኃይሎች ምን ሚና ተጫውተዋል?

11. Which parts of the country made vulnerability of journalists' safety?

ጋዜጠኞችን ለደህንነት ችግር ተጋላጭነት ያደረጉ የሀገሪቱ ክፍሎች የትኞቹ ናቸው?

12. What measures did your media organization take to maintain the safety of its journalists?

የእርስዎ የሚዲያ ድርጅት የጋዜጠኞችን ደህንነት ለመጠበቅ ምን እርምጃዎችን ወስዷል?

13. Was there any training provided to journalists by the media on how to take safety measures in risky environments?

በመገናኛ ብዙኃን ለጋዜጠኞች በአደገኛ አካባቢዎች ውስጥ የደህንነት እርምጃዎችን እንዴት መውሰድ እንደሚችሉ ላይ ስልጠና ተሰጥቶ ነበር?

14. Do you have any experience of refraining from covering stories just because of safety threats?

በደህንነት ስጋት ምክንያት ጉዳዮችን/ታሪኮችን ከመሸፈን የመቆጠብ ልምድ አለህ?

15. Did you ever leave some media topics because of fear of safety threats?

የደህንነት ስጋቶችን በመፍራት አንዳንድ የሚዲያ ርዕሶችን ትተህ ታውቃለህ?

16. What were those issues (topics) that you left unreported (uncovered) due to fear of safety threats?

ለደህንነት ስጋት በመፍራት ያልተዘገቡ/ሸፈኑ ጉዳዮች (ርእሶች) ምን ምን ነበሩ ?

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