

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

**CENSORSHIP AND ETHICS: PRACTICE
AND PROBLEMS IN ETHIOPIAN
TELEVISION**

BY

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Abstract

This study generally deals with the practice of censorship and its ethical effects in the government owned Ethiopian Television. It has been based on the hypothesis that direct censorship imposed by the government authorities or politicians and self-censorship which is the result of internalized fear of punishment among the journalists are the reasons for underreporting contending political views.

The rationale to study this issue is the threat that repressive governmental influence and control of the media could pose to the newly emerging multi-party politics in the country. The broadcast media in general and the television in particular have remained under the monopoly of government fourteen years after the promise for democracy and the democratic media that can entertain plural voices. This medium has made a bad name for itself, for its lack of depth and one-side reporting of events. It has been restricted to serving the political propaganda of the party in power to the extent of committing out right bias and bombarding opposition parties that holds viewpoints critical to or different from the government. This is what has made imperative a need to study the problem of censorship and its ethical consequences.

Three methods are employed to conduct this study. The first is survey method. Self-administered questioner is responded by the editors and reporters working in four newsrooms of ETV to elicit the forms of direct censorship, self-censorship and the major target issues. Secondly, the contents of some news stories selected from post-election 2005 ETV coverage are analyzed to show the fairness of the coverage towards the ruling and opposition political parties. Thirdly interviews are conducted with five selected and willing journalists to supplement the responses given by the questionnaire. The analysis of the data has shown direct censorship is practiced in ETV through assigning faithful

party members, providing guidelines or directives to the journalists and directly reviewing the contents of the news stories. Self-censorship is also manifested in several forms. One is dodging political issues particularly reporting opposition parties. The journalists also tone up and tone down political issues based on the interests of the ruling party. The other form of self-censorship is that journalists are externalizing their responsibility regarding the transmission of sensitive new stories. This is often practiced by consulting the faithful party members in the medium to decide on the fate of the sensitive issues like coverage of the opposition parties. It is a tactic used by editors to manage the risk of punishment.

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List of Acronyms

CPJ - Committee to Protect Journalists

CUD - Coalition for Unity and Democracy

EHRCO - Ethiopian Human Rights Council

EPRDF - Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front

ETV - Ethiopian Television

IPI - International Press Institute

KBC - Kenyan Broadcasting Corporation

NGO - Non - Governmental Organization

UEDF - United Ethiopian Democratic Forces

UNMEE - United Nation's Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Censorship refers to the acts of suppressing information in different ways ranging from the outright banning, cutting, dumping, burning and retouching of publications to offensive public relation activities that only promote a certain version of reality in the public (Phillips and Harslof, 1997: Internet). Sweeney (2003:189) also defines censorship as "the act of suppressing or deleting expression that is considered to be objectionable on moral, political, religious, military or other grounds." Similarly, for Stone (2005: Internet) Censorship refers to "the cyclical suppression, banning, expurgation, or editing by an individual, institution, group or government that enforce or influence its decision against members of the public."

In most instances censorship is negative in a sense that it refers to the acts of suppressing ideas and information that circulate within the society. It is applied to a wide range of media including radio and Television programs and news reports.

In the mass media, censorship is exercised through reviewing the contents of the news story, providing written or oral guidelines (directives) to journalists or the media houses, intimidating, detaining, harassing, punishing and rewarding the journalists to control objectionable contents through creating obedient journalists that compromise their professional integrity (Kasoma, 2002; Mwaura, 1994). This is a direct type of censorship, which is forced by a government authorities or politicians before or after information is published or broadcasted. Censorship also refers to journalists' self-restraint by publishing or broadcasting only information that is safe from punishment.

With regard to purpose of censorship Sweeney (2003:190) observes, "censorship is perceived as lessening objectionable expressions and either directly or indirectly promoting beneficial ones." Different thinkers argue that negative propaganda, media manipulation, spin, disinformation, denying access to means of communication and

any other attempts intend to suppress points of views fall within the ranges of censorship (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2005: Internet). For instance, propaganda serves as "a corollary to censorship" in the sense that the targets of the two is not filling peoples' minds with approved information, but by preventing people from being confronted with "opposing point of view" (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2005: internet).

In Ethiopia censorship has remained the problem despite the constitution and the press law prohibits censorship and any form of restrictions intended to suppress the circulation of information and ideas. However, the discrepancy is what Amanuel (2004:105) observes as "the media in general could only be said to have changed masters not the philosophy behind or the approach to the art of public information... radio and television broadcasting remained almost entirely the preserve of the federal and regional states." The different forms of censorship under the different regimes have turned the government media in the country into toothless bulldog.

Under the imperial regime in the past the media were censored by the board of censorship drawn from various government offices. Content revision and directives were being applied to ensure the media products do not contain anti-government expressions. Similar trends were continued during the military regime with emphasis on socialist ideology. Directives were directly given from the office of the ruling Workers Party of Ethiopia to control all anti-revolutionary expressions (Getachew, 2003).

Similar trends have also been continued under the Present regime despite democracy is accepted as a form of government and censorship of the media has been explicitly prohibited by the 1995 constitution as basis for freedom of the press. Radio and Television have remained entirely under the government Monopoly after fourteen years of promise for democracy. Censorship is also the result of this monopoly by the government. Traditional forms of censorship are still prevalent. The ruling political party controls information in the government media by assigning its members in the leadership and as journalists. For instance, the prime Minister directly assigns the Manager of Ethiopian Radio and Television. Since recently, many ruling party

members nicknamed UNMEE have been assigned to work as journalists. They are named after the United Nations Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The contents of the stories are screened, by the judgments of their benefit for the ruling party. Interpretations of all events are given on the basis of party line and programs to the exclusion of other views different from or critical to the government. Party and government activities have no clear line in the coverage. Circulars of directives come down from the party leaders through management. The two are one and same so that they work for one goal. The contents of sensitive political issues are closely watched and reviewed by the party members assigned to the media. All Successes are given to the ruling party. It is over emphasized at the expense of the critical issues mainly that involve the opposition parties. Other political parties are denied access or misrepresented in the government media. In case of conflicts with the government they are attacked over the Television to the exclusion of their views to defend themselves.

The existence of faithful political members has also led to serious forms of self-censorship. When politicians interfere into the news production activity the journalists are forced to exercise self-censorship and this problem is prevalent in African countries (Mwaura, 1994). This is also a deep-rooted problem in Ethiopian Television.

The consequences of the censorships in the government media in general, and in the Ethiopian Television in particular are observed in many ways. News is selected mostly based on their value to promote the activities of the ruling party not for the professional judgment of newsworthiness. Usually success stories about development, official meetings and statements of the officials are the considerable part of the news content. The top managers and leaders of each language services who are members of the ruling party have direct influence especially on sensitive political matters. This is especially the case as regards issues that involve opposition parties where criticisms against the government authorities and politicians are expected.

Mostly the views of the ruling party dominate the coverage even during elections when this national television is expected to entertain all contending views fairly. Government Authorities directly involve through phone calls, simple orders or requests. Their request usually turns into effect as the response of their party members in the media is

fast. Politicians in the government office usually call the party members assigned on the managements to prohibit certain information or to force the dissemination of information they want.

Intimidating the editors and the individual reporters is also common. The party cadres on different level intimidate the journalists through phone calls or in person to prevent journalists not to broadcast issues or to broadcast issues under the pretext of government interest.

Disappointing the politicians often ends by harsh punishment imposed on the journalists in coordination with the party members assigned to the media. Warning, dismissing and suspending from their jobs, denying training opportunities and promotion are some forms of punishment. The journalists are also deliberately labeled as members of the opposition political parties as a tactic to intimidate them when their report is critical to the authorities. In addition fining, harassing the journalists by criticisms made in the meeting, which is often known as "gimgema", are also forms of punishment

Moreover, guidelines are common forms of prior restraint in the Ethiopian Television. Journalists are usually given written or oral guidelines when there special events such as election or conflicts and uprisings. Particularly, reporters are often given directions on how to cover such types of events to the extent of giving them the questions to be forwarded to the government officials. For instance, interview with the prime minister is conducted only by ready-made questions that the managers provide. The journalist is not allowed to ask follow up questions

The direct interference of politicians has induced fear, which has led to self-censorship. The expression of this case is that editors often edit stories based on their value to promote the interest of the ruling party to the exclusion of critical stories. They also censor themselves while ordering news. Stories that involve government officials are given upper position and more time. Some stories are placed in obscure position. It is this way that one story is emphasized over the other. Changing the story to safe angle is also one area of self-censorship. Furthermore, editors prefer to contact the faithful

party member bosses to provide them guidelines in case they fear to decide the story they think is sensitive.

Reporters themselves do not plan story ideas of an investigative kind, or issues that involve the opposition political parties. The reporters usually prefer speeches of government authorities and safe angles. They also practice safety through giving priority and more time for government officials. The journalists use these practices as an excuse for lack of fairness, and objectivity in the story.

Thus, it is the problem of such practices that has made reasonable the need to study the practice of censorship and its ethical problems in Ethiopian Television.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

In Ethiopia, despite censorship and any form of restriction is prohibited by law, the Ministry of Information and other government officials and politicians still directly control what journalists in the government media broadcast to the audience. This could be a threat to the development of multi-party democracy that Ethiopia has already recognized. The practices of imposed censorship and self-censorship have been suppressing the circulation of contending political views in a way of denying the right of the people to make informed decisions.

The problem may have a far-reaching influence in Ethiopia because the government entirely controls the broadcast media, which are more appropriate for the illiterate, poor and rural dwellers with no access to the private publications. Alternative views may have no way to reach the people mainly the illiterate majority who rely on radio and TV. The journalists working in Ethiopian Television have still been under the influence of direct censorship imposed by the politicians including the self-censorship that is caused by fear of punishment. Due to this reason stories suffer from ethical problems such as lack of fairness, impartiality and objectivity.

Thus, the problem is in what ways censorship is exercised and what professional defects it has caused to the news stories that the journalists in Ethiopian Television present to the audience as well as its effect on the service that the government media provide for the society in the process of democratization. This study mainly focuses

how the coverage of political views, which is different from that of the government, is directly or indirectly affected by the censorship.

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

The focus of this study is to assess the forms of censorship exercised in Ethiopian television and its ethical problems. The hypothesis could be: -

- I. Censorship directly imposed by government authorities and self-censorship caused by internalized fear of punishment is an observable in Ethiopian Television during reporting political issues that involve contending views.
- II. The Censorship has led to the violation of professional integrity of ETV journalists when reporting political issues particularly that involves opposition political parties.

1.4 The Research Questions

This study has been guided by the following sets of research questions.

1. What are the forms of direct censorship used on ETV journalists?
2. What issues are subjected to direct censorship and with what effect?
3. Is there self-censorship and in what ways it is practiced?
4. Why do the journalists practice the self-censorship?
5. What professional problems does the censorship cause to the news story the journalists write?

1.5 Objective of the Study

The study has the following general and specific objectives

a. General objective

To investigate the major forms of direct and indirect censorship in covering political issues and their impacts on the ethical performance of journalists in Ethiopian Television

b. Specific objective

- a. To explain censorship directly imposed by government authorities or politicians.
- b. To investigate self-censorship exercised by journalists due to fear of punishments.
- c. To identify issues mostly targeted by the censorship.
- d. To analyze the impacts of censorship on the fairness of Ethiopian Television in its political coverage that involve contending views.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study may have the following contributions

1. The findings reveal the problem of censorship in affecting what the journalists in the government media provide to the audience so that the measure could be taken.
2. This study helps the prospective researchers of the field as a model and resource.
3. It has also motivational values for other researchers to carry out detail study on performance of the government media.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Censorship can be understood in its defensive and offensive models. The earlier mode refers to the traditional censorship such as cutting, banning, burning and retouching while the later implies the public relation activities in which a certain version of reality is presented to the public (Phillipps and Harslof, 1997).

According to social responsibility theory of the press, censorship suppresses the plurality of voices. This theory emphasizes the obligation of the government to refrain from exercising censorship on the media and rather it should be committed to promoting and safeguarding freedom of the press. “If the freedom of the press is to achieve reality, government must set limits on its capacity to interfere with, regulate or suppress the voices of the press or to manipulate the data on which public judgment is formed” (Hocking quoted in Siebert et al, 1956:96)

The goal of the press according to social responsibility theory is to provide truth and entertaining various viewpoints that enable the public to make informed choice. Thus, journalists are responsible to report sticking to the principles of accuracy, integrity, and fairness. Governments should not impede the professional integrity of journalists through censorship directly or indirectly. Self-regulation is the only means to monitor the activities of the journalists according to this theory.

Ethiopia accepts the principles of social responsibility since it has recognized the multi-party democracy. Thus, this study is guided by a social responsibility theory of the press as to explain the practice and problems of censorship on covering political issues in Ethiopian Television.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Literature Review

2.1 Forms censorship

Censorship generally refers to the method used by the government authorities or politicians to directly or indirectly control the contents of the media that circulates within the society. Its purpose is often to suppress information and ideas objectionable to the authorities in power. Censorship can take two forms. One is that directly exercised by the government authorities. The other is indirect or self-censorship. Still this type of censorship is mainly the result of the first form, which is caused by fear of punishment. Journalists practicing self-censorship often focus on reporting what the authorities want at the expense of other important events.

2.1.1 Direct Censorship

Direct censorship appears in two ways. Prepublication censorship or Prior restraint is a type of direct censorship that refers to preventing or forcing the dissemination of certain information to the public (Kasoma, 2002). On the other hand, direct censorship also used to refer to post-publication/broadcasting censorship. It usually implies punishing the journalists or media houses for broadcasting or not broadcasting the information that the authorities want or not.

Direct censorship takes various forms. It mainly occurs in such forms as “forcing journalists to publish information which compromises their professional integrity” (Kasoma, 2002:102). In authoritarian states such as the Soviet Union where the media were highly regulated, direct censorship was common.

The content of the media in such systems is judged in terms of its contribution to the objectives and policies set by the government. This does not include questioning these goals. The information on government affairs, meetings of the government, criticisms of government officials and their policies are carefully watched contents of the media. Journalists are forced to comply with the needs of the authorities on power.

In the Soviet Union where the broadcast media were exclusively run by the government and the communist party, direct censorship was exercised by the party through “inserting its own reliable members in all key appointments, by issuing a large number of directives and instructions, and by constant review and criticism” (Siebert, 1956:138).

In modern times, journalists working for government media even where democracy is recognized as form of government the traditional forms of censorship have remained the problem. Particularly in Africa where the broadcasting media are owned by government there are clear expressions of the situation. In this regard Bakhsh (2005: Internet) observes, “the majority of journalists in Africa are government employees and most stories are screened by government appointed editors before publication.”

Providing guidelines of various kinds are used as an effective form of direct censorship. Mwaura who studied the situation of prior restraint in African newspapers and magazines clearly put how guidelines are used:

A common form of prior restraint is the issuing of ‘guidelines’ by governments to publishers and editors. This may take the form of a written document, briefing in the ministers’ office at state house a lecture by a government official” (Mwaura, 1994:108).

For instance, in Tunisia such form of censorship is common. The report issued by the U.S department of state in January 1994 indicates “the government exerted considerable control over the editorial content of newspapers, providing extensive advance guidance on important issues and reprimanding editors when guidelines were crossed, further encouraging self-censorship” (US department of state, 1994: Internet)

In many African countries journalists are guided to the extent of handing them the questions they should ask the government authorities.

Intimidation or ordering journalists to broadcast or not to broadcast certain issues are also common forms of direct censorship. Such kinds of influences usually come from government authorities or politicians in the form of “a simple request or warning delivered by Telephone or in person” (Mwaura 1994:108). In Africa where the

Ministry of Information directly assigns politically loyal personnel to the media, ordering and warning can be effective forms of censorship. Kasoma (2002) clarifies threatening the reporters and media houses, punishing and promising rewards are the prevailing forms of pre-publication censorship in Africa. He says it is intended to create "obedient" media practitioners (Kasoma, 2002:102).

The punishments, which usually occur after the broadcasting of certain information, include losing job, denial of salary increment and promotion of rank, warning, suspending from jobs, banning not to cover certain issues and fining. This is the case in government media in Africa. Post -publication / broadcasting can also occur in such forms as banning, burning or confiscation of publications or films, which are mainly applied, to private media (Mwaura, 1994).

In general, direct censorship takes various forms such as issuing guidelines, requesting, ordering, punishing, forcing, preventing, assigning faithful party members and also directly deciding the contents of the media.

2.1.2 Forms of Self-censorship

Self-censorship is another type of censorship, which is exercised by the media practitioners themselves. It occurs when journalists are trapped between what to broadcast or not and often ends up in favoring the authorities. Usually it is the result of fear induced by the government authorities or politicians. Self-censorship occurs "when the selection of what to and what not to publish/broadcast is influenced by fear of punishment, even though there is not overt pressure by the authorities on the journalists"(Kasoma 2002:102). Indicating how self-censorship occurs, Mwaura (1994:109) also explains as follows:

When journalists feel obliged not to publish information which might otherwise be deemed suitable for publication, or publish such information, because of fear of reprisals or to please certain quarters, they are engaging in self-censorship.

Fear induced by politicians through direct censorship is the cause of self-censorship. The problem of self-censorship in Africa is deep-rooted. Mwaura (1994:109) describes it as," the most malignant disease in Africa". The causes of this problem could be the

harsh political environment, the government monopoly and control of broadcast media, the existence of appointed loyal or faithful journalists in African media. In such a way fear or the need to please the authorities in power could lead to relaxed self-censorship. Regarding the magnitude of the problem in Africa Ronning (2002:45) says, “it is not so much the political powers that restrict African journalism and makes it fall back on ‘Ministerial speech reporting’ but rather internalized assumptions of what is expected of the media”.

The long history of media control by government in Africa has established a certain trends of coverage. Unidentified Ghanaian editor quoted in Steyn (1996:4) notes, “African journalists for the most part have developed a servile mentality which sees them at best as a footnote to the narrow ambition of politicians.” It is still seen as a standard among untrained journalists. This indicates there is internalized assumption, which has kept the media, to serve as a mouthpiece of government even in countries where multi-party politics has been emerging as a form government.

Self-censorship is also common feature outside Africa. In the Middle East and Asian Countries it is prevalent. Self-censorship occurs in a variety of forms. For instance, after Hong Kong was annexed to China in 1997, self-censorship has been practiced in the following forms.

The press's tendency to dodge political controversy, the hiring of pro-china staff to assume responsible posts, the shift of editorial tone in line with Beijing's policy, the redesign of space to reduce the paper's political over tone, the firing of high risk contributors, the dissemination of writing guidelines on "sensitive" stories, and the placing of sensitive stories in obscure position (Lee quoted in Street, 2001:107).

This is not restricted to journalists working in Hong Kong papers. Inevitably, journalists that operate under government-controlled media in Africa could exercise similar forms of self-censorship. Choosing safe-side, avoiding sensitive issues or giving responsibilities to faithful bosses, suppressing the stories in favor of politicians, giving emphasis for official sources over the other significant events and unquestioning the news worthiness of events where government authorities involve could be the forms of self-censorship.

Mostly in countries where the press has no history of criticizing and questioning the activities of the government, self-censorship is common. For instance, in Saudi Arabia despite newspapers are not subjected to direct censorship, editors themselves understand that stories expressing opposition to the government and its policies are unaccepted and thus they exercise self-censorship (Reporters Without Borders, 2002: Internet).

In many African countries the long history of direct censorship has laid ground for self-censorships. According to Wilcox "censorship is the logical extension of a press totally owned and operated by the government [where] the constant threat of suppression has taught editors and journalists the fine art of self-restraint" (quoted in Bakhsh, 1997: Internet). The consequence of the situation is that, journalists employed by the government are forced to remain uncritical to government authorities in order to safeguard their jobs.

2.2 Targets of Censorship

Censorship is usually the shield of government authorities to defend their power from the critical press. Its origin is mainly "a fear among government officials and politicians of having corrupt and oppressive practices exposed publicly, and apprehension of losing their power if free public debate were to be allowed" (Ronning 2002:45). Thus, investigative journalism is the primary targets of government censorship mainly in Africa because it threatens the politicians through exposing "corruption," "Misconduct" and "Mismanagement" of the government (Mwaura 1994:107). Consequently, journalists in Africa have already stigmatized investigative journalism as a "hostile activity"(Mwaura, 1994:107).

In many African and the Middle East countries investigative and critical stories are the major reasons for throwing journalists to jail. For instance, in Saudi Arabia, criticizing government, royal families, religious people and authorities of friendly countries lead to imprisonment (Reporters without Borders, 2002: Internet).

Sudan has also similar record. In 2001 more than 30 journalists were arrested for reporting what the government authorities claim “sensitive subjects such as corruption and the politics of the Khartoum regime.” (Reporters without Borders, 2002: Internet)

Censorship is also aimed at silencing political views that are expected to challenge the government or the ruling party. This is the motive to suppress opposition parties in many African countries where as Mwaura (1994: 107) notes “government-controlled media are not allowed to cover activities and speeches of the oppositions.” The case of Zimbabwe’s ZBC is the clear expression of this situation. Carver (2000: Internet) observes “ in subsequent parliamentary elections the ZBC decided not to run political advertisements at all until election day when it broadcast advertisements for the ruling party, too late for other parties to respond.” Similarly in Tunisia and some other Asian countries have also the same recodes of denying the oppositions to express their views using the government-owned media (Reporters without Boarders, 2002: Internet).

2.3 Justifications for Censorship

In democratic societies, there can be no justification for censoring the press and taking action against the journalists. However in Africa governments justify censorship under different philosophies. Mwaura (1994:103) notes the culture of repression in Africa as follows:

In democratic societies, there can be no justification for interfering with the holding of opinion, although it is internationally accepted that with holding certain information and placing certain limits on freedom of expression can be justified in some circumstances. But in democratic societies such restrictions can be contested in court. In Africa such procedures-independent of the government-of challenging restrictions to press freedom either do not exist, or where they exist, are ineffective in stopping governments determined to suppress and persecute journalists. African governments and politicians have devised an intimidating array of instruments, legal, extra-legal and illegal, to repress journalists

Limitations on freedom of the press can be justified only in some circumstances such as to protect the welfare of the youth, the privacy of individuals, to avoid propaganda for war and expressions that injure human dignity.

However, politicians in Africa often quote the recognized limitations to justify censorship of the media. The most commonly quoted justifications for censorship in Africa is state security, national security, public order, rights of others, public interests and public morals, government propaganda and national development (Mwaura, 1994). But they are the pretexts that the politicians use to suppress critical press that could pose challenges to them. Mwaura describes the justifications as “feature prominently to justify blatant censoring and doctoring of news” (Mwaura, 1994:105).

What constitutes these elements used as justifications of censorship is subjectively interpreted. Mwaura (1994:104) also says “African governments and politicians have taken advantage of this to prevent journalists from, or to punish them for, publishing material embarrassing to government officials”

Under such justifications the authorities define what role the media should play. For instance, president Ahidjo of Cameroon assigned the media the task of informing, educating and entertaining in order to achieve the goal of nation building (Nyamnjoh, 2005: 131). Nyamnjoh further says “the slogan was to be repeated by broadcast practitioners and administrators whenever they were asked about the country’s broadcasting and information policy” (Nyamnjoh, 2005: 131). That is how critical issues are suppressed both by authorities and journalists themselves in many African countries.

The goals of such justifications are to manipulate the media entirely for the propaganda purpose of politicians in power. In this regard the function of Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation can be an example. Ronning and Kupe (2000: 157-58) observes “the news media developed into praise- singers for the party and the leader in the name of national unity.”

National development is also used to justify censorship. Again this justification is used to conceal the malpractices of politicians than genuinely promoting development. The

situation in Zimbabwe is also the clear expression of this reality in African countries where the government monopolizes and operates the broadcast media:

Broadcasting in Zimbabwe was and is used to consolidate regime power, smother opposition and legitimate the ruling party's policy agenda, by defining political reality on its own terms, behind the shield of development journalism (Ronning and Kupe, 2000: 161).

It is possible to conclude that issues ranging from national security to national development have served to influence journalists directly or to provoke self-censorship. It is aimed at controlling critical media reports that could pose challenges to the authorities in power. For instance, in Togo the role of the press was defined as mobilizing the people behind the president and the party while in the former Zaire the journalists were expected to educate and rally the mass behind the authorities (Wilcox 1975). Thus, the contents of the media is controlled directly or indirectly based on such missions' assigned by government authorities. That is also aimed to create obedient journalists that refrain from being critical to the politicians.

2.4. The Ethical Problems of Censorship

Ethics are guides to professional etiquette. They serve to guide the journalists in their daily activities. Journalism ethics deal with the right and wrong, good and bad, better and worse actions that the media workers take (Gordon and Kittross, 1999)

The fundamental principle of journalism ethics is reporting the truth fairly. In this regard Retief (2002) writes journalists should strive to achieve maximum truth and minimum harm. Day (1991) as cited in Retief (2002:67-68) identifies three concepts that underline the notion of truth in reporting:

- ❖ Reporting must be *accurate*. The facts should be verified and based on solid evidence. If there is any doubt, it should be revealed to the audience.
- ❖ Reporting should promote understanding. A story should contain as much relevant information as is available and essential to afford the average reader at least an understanding of the facts and the context of the facts. All sorts of

ethical issues arise when journalists intentionally withhold some facts relevant to the public interest.

- ❖ Reporting should be fair and balanced. Avoid reporter bias, accord recognition to those views that enhance the understanding of an issue, and present them fairly and in context. Clarify the content and avoid any comment.

Thus, Retief stresses the importance of accuracy, facts, fairness and balance as a foundation of truth telling in journalism. The absence of such basic ethical elements may be regarded as deception. Providing information that mislead the public is not considered by any parameters to be truth telling. Deception and manipulation erode credibility in journalism. The moral base of truth telling in journalism is the public's right to be properly informed (Mupfurutsa, 2005: Internet). This is the goal of media in democratic society.

Censorship makes difficult for journalists to bring truth to surface and achieve accuracy, fairness, balance and factualness that underline the notion of truth in reporting. For instance in Africa the culture of secrecy within the government institutions, the prevalence of detention, torture and even killing of the journalists have made truth reporting a difficult task (Mupfurutsa, 2005: Internet). Mupfurutsa also says:

Such a culture has led to self-censorship by journalists who have to weigh options of preserving the integrity of the profession against their very lives. This has had adverse effects on objective reporting and the public has suffered because the information they get is not the "full story".

Censorship prohibits the media to entertain contending views mainly that are different from that of the party in power. Consequently, journalists and media institutions are forced to serve only the purposes of the ruling party at the expenses of important views of the opposition parties and other classes of the society.

Election coverage in many African countries is the clear indication where broadcast media controlled and run by the government is known for biased reporting. For instance this was the case in Kenya, during Daniel Arap Moi regime. The Kenyan Broadcast Corporation (KBC) used to give broad coverage to the government activities

while opposition parties are rejected or received very little coverage (IPI, 2002: Internet). During Moi Kenyan journalists were the victims of strong censorship under the sedition law due to which prosecution was widely spread (Mwaura, 1994:107).

Thus, censorship forces the journalists to compromise their professional integrity to provide all contending views to the public. This prevents the public from getting access to opposing point of views. Thus, the journalists cannot fill the mind of the people with approved information.

In Zimbabwe also similar ethical problems of censorship are observed. The media, which are funded by public money, are reluctant to run views other than those of the government or ruling ZANU-PF. Again this is the clear case during elections where issues of fairness and balanced coverage are overlooked. A spokesman for the monitoring project in Zimbabwe Nhlanhla Ngwenya quoted in Ngara (2005: Internet) as saying “the news is still biased in favor of the ruling party...they publicize party campaign activities and yet they claim they are not obliged to cover the activities of the opposition”.

Censorship conceals facts and makes difficult to include all sides in the story. Either positive or negative accounts of events are reported. One is emphasized over the other based on the interests or simply for fearing the censors mainly the government authorities in Africa. Demszky (1998:75) implies the ethical problems of censorship when putting the effects as “censorship makes counter arguments silent ... makes people stupid and fanatic; under censorship difference is portrayed as enmity; opponents are demonized.” Thus, under such circumstance the media become powerless to entertain diverse views adhering to the professional integrity; to be free from bias reporting and to provide honest information and to give relevant interpretation of events within the real context (Gordon & Kittross, 1991).

Regarding the ethical problems of self-censorship Ronning (2002:45) also notes “the practice of self-censorship may function as an excuse for not checking stories properly or for taking on the often cumbersome and not very exciting work of following up leads.” The failure of the journalists to check the stories has clear implication for important ethical issues such as accuracy of facts. For instance, in Kenya, events

covered by the presidential press service during the regime of Jomo Kenyatta were not edited at KBC (IPI, 2002: Internet).

Broadly seen, unethical media performance impedes democracy by denying the public the right to know which is supposed to be the cornerstone to make informed decisions. In democratic society this right is the moral bases for freedom of the press.

The need of the press in democracy is to make governments accountable and transparent to the people. Thus, press is ethically obliged to investigate and reveal corruption and mismanagements. However, censorship throws the journalists under the heels of politicians and snatches their power and appetites to scrutinize the deeds of the authorities. Kasoma (2002:102) also notes censorship “destroys the morale of young journalists who, for fear of being punished, give up the idea of investigative journalism and settle for the easier and less dangerous ‘speech reporting of ministers’ and other government officials.”

In fact regulation could be necessary for the journalists. But they should not be regulated by censorship. There must be self-regulations. International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) identifies three types of self-regulations by which the activities of the media should be regulated. These include “ethics committees within the journalists’ organization; a voluntary press council set up by the media professionals (and) statutory press council” (Sofia, 2001 Internet).

The press councils monitor the performances of journalists by the professional code of conducts that govern the journalists. The aim of code of conduct according to Mupfurutsa (2005: Internet) is “to ensure the integrity of the news and general respect for the rest of society in the journalist’s Pursuit and reporting of news.” This code opposes censorship and safeguard independence of journalists to enable them ethically accountable.

In general censorship undermines the professional integrity of journalists. It makes difficult the media’s ethical goal of fairly serving the entire society. Thus, bringing proactive changes within the people could be a difficult task for the media under censorship.

2.5 Media under the Ethiopian Regimes

Prior to 1991 under the unitary political systems of imperial and military regimes in Ethiopia, the media were mainly controlled and operated by the government. The goal behind the establishment of the government media was not to deliver the public services. In the era of Emperor Haile Selassie, the role of the media was restricted to promoting the power of the emperor and covering his personal activities as well as wishing long life for the Emperor and the imperial family (Amanuel, 2004). For instance, the Ethiopian Television was first begun on Nov 2, 1964 to celebrate the coronation anniversary of Emperor Haile Selassie (Amanuel, 2004).

Censorship was official during the imperial regime. A special office for censoring media was established under the ministry of pen in 1942, but was later housed within the ministry of Information and Tourism (Getachew, 2003). The Board of censorship, whose members were drawn from different government offices including the police, reviews all media with the aim of ensuring their non anti-government content (Getachew, 2003).

After the fall of the Imperial regime in 1974 similar trends were continued. The military regime that stayed in power from 1974 -1991 controlled the media and flow of information. Amanuel (2004: 100) notes "Centralized command, control and censorship contributed negatively to the development of the mass media." Like in the imperial era, censorship was official and it was practiced with emphasis on the socialist ideology. Getachew (2003: 568) states "directives to the media were given from the office of the workers party of Ethiopia [and] publications deemed to be anti-revolutionary were closed". During the time, publications such as Gole, Berhan and Seregela were banned and also printed materials from foreign countries were highly censored particularly for imperialist ideologies (Getachew, 2003).

The year 1991 was the turning point in the history of Ethiopian media. Freedom of expression and of the press was officially recognized by the constitution for the first

time. The 1995 constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia guaranteed the right of thought, opinion and expression. In confirming this right article 29(1) of the constitution states:

Every one has the right to freedom of expression without interference. This right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any media of his choice.

Freedom of the press that stipulated under article 29(3) of the constitution mainly covers two important elements one of which is the prohibition of censorship. It is overtly stated under article 29 (3a) that "any form of censorship" is prohibited. This is a significant policy initiative that was not seen under the previous regimes. The press law issued in 1992 by the transitional charter also overtly prohibits censorship exercised against the mass media in Ethiopia. It is stated under article 3(2) of Proclamation 34/1992 that, "Censorship of the press and any restriction of similar nature are hereby prohibited."

The purpose of guaranteeing freedom of the press and prohibiting censorship is justified in the laws by the media's contribution to the process of democratization in the country. Article 29(4) of the Ethiopian constitution provides thus "in the interest of the free flow of information, ideas and opinions which are essential to the functioning of a democratic order, the press shall, as an institution, enjoy legal protection to ensure its operational independence and its capacity to entertain diverse opinions." This is clear that censorship is not only prohibited, but also the press enjoys protection, which would enable it to entertain diverse opinions. Thus, the law imposes obligation on the government to co-operate with the press to ensure its independence.

However, discrepancies between the policy initiatives on the paper and their practical implementation have become pitfalls. Although, many private publications were flourished in Ethiopia following the constitutional provision for freedom of the press

they have been still working under precarious conditions. The press law could not protect journalists. Rather its vague expressions are used against them for harassment. Pausewang and Tronvoll (2002: 233) note the problem as:

The lines of the press freedom are not clearly drawn in practice. A modern press law is in place, which includes clauses allowing the imprisonment of journalists for loosely defined and arbitrarily applicable crimes of inciting violence or ethnic conflict or spreading violence or ethnic conflict or spreading false accusations against the government.

Different phrases are vaguely used in the press law. They allow censoring articles and imposing criminal sanctions against the journalists. This can be used against the critical press any time when the government authorities or politicians are not happy with the content of the press. For instance, article 10 (2) of the 1992 press law requires the journalists to ensure the contents of the press product are free from any criminal offences against "the safety of the state or of the administration established in accordance with the charter or the national defense force." First of all the word 'safety' is too vague that gives the politicians the opportunity to interpret subjectively and use it to censor the press. Secondly, protecting the safety of the said institutions is not compatible with article 29 (6) of the constitution that states acceptable legal limitations that could be imposed only to protect the welfare of the youth, the honor and reputation of individuals as well as to avoid propaganda for war and expressions intended to injure human dignity.

However, the paradox is the press law has posed a threat to the journalists than promoting their independence. Pausewang and Tronvoll (2002:233) critically noted that independent journalists in Ethiopia are forced to live under constant threat of arrest as a result of which critical journalism and democratic press that keeps the politicians accountable is undermined.

Over the past years the squabbles between the politicians and the private press was serious in the country. Detention harassments and financial punishments have been reported to be a form of "Systematic attempt used to stifle freedom of the press" (Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO), 2003: 124). According to the council journalists, editors and publishers of the independent press are harassed and detained

by the government security forces. The following summary table of some basic facts on the magnitude and intensity of harassment of journalists is given by the Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO 12003):

Journalists under the detention without charge	2
Journalists sentenced from 6 to 24 months in prison	7
Journalists fined from birr 500 to 20,00	13
Journalists released on bail	21
Journalists whose cases on appeal at supreme court	5
Journalists on suspended jail sentence of 12 to 18 months	6
Journalists acquitted by court	9
Journalists still on litigation	10
The Total fine amounts to birr	120,500

Table 1

The consequence of the harassment is not simple. This is the case because for the journalists that are engaged in the new business and with the experience of harsh political environment in the past, the actions by the authorities could easily force them to exercise self-restraint. In addition, they could not resist the impact of financial punishment since most of them are operating under poor financial capacity. In August 1994 a lone fifty-four monthly and twenty-three weekly magazines and newspapers were forced to stop their publications (EHRCO, 2003).

Despite the harassments, some private publications have remained in the market. The private publications are providing alternative and critical information in local languages mainly in Amharic. But they are survived under the suppressions that confined them to the capital. Pausewang and Tronvoll (2002: 233) observed as follows:

Addis Ababa ... has a number of independent private newspapers, which within certain limits do criticize the government. But they are only distributed in the capital, hardly reaching the major towns where they selectively suppressed by the authorities.

In a country like Ethiopia, where a majority of the people lives in rural areas, denying access to alternative and critical views other than that of the government has a far-reaching consequence for the democratic process. Nurturing public opinion and making the politicians accountable is not possible without the free press. The people might not be expected to be informed about election issues and able to distinguish between the programs of the political parties. They are the captives of government controlled radio and Television that serve as propaganda instrument of the government authorities.

Even after more than a decade long existence of the private papers, the actions of authorities is aggravated to the extent of banning the publications. The clear expression was that almost all private press was banned in connection with the anti-government protest occurred in Addis Ababa at the beginning of November 2005. Committee to protect Journalists (CPJ) witnessed via internet, thus "police prevented the government -owned printing press from printing private papers, most of which failed to appear on newsstands this week" (CPJ, 2005: Internet).

The Government accused the independent media as mouthpieces for the opposition, Coalition for unity and Democracy (CUD) that is alleged to destabilize the country. However, Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) accused the Ethiopian authorities for increasing the censorship of media coverage of the anti government protest in which more than 40 people were killed by security forces. CPJ's executive director Ann Cooper quoted as saying "the government's heavy-handed attempt to intimidate the independent press and suppress news of the protests and deaths in Addis Ababa is unacceptable" (CPJ, 2005: Internet). News of the protest covered only by the government radio and Television and it was dominated by news that incriminates the opposition parties and the independent press.

Apart from banning, journalists are jailed, forced to go into hiding, threatened, and incriminated by the government media. The security forces detained the family members of the hiding journalists including their mothers and wives (CPJ, 2005: Internet).

The actions of the government are not limited to the local media. The voice of America (VOA) and the Germany's Deutsche Welle are also accused and their local correspondents are punished. Kruger (2005: Internet) notes.

The local correspondents of the voice of America and Deutsche Welle, whose broadcasts in the Amharic language are hugely popular, have had their accreditation withdrawn, and several editors have been arrested. One has been sent to jail for refusing to name a source.

In connection with their coverage of the election 2005, three local correspondents of VOA Amharic, Oromo and Tigregna language service correspondents are revoked their work permits on June 7, 2005 for what the Ethiopian government authorities claimed filing "unbalanced reports" (CPJ, 2005: Internet).

The two foreign media are also accused in connection with the anti-government protest occurred in Addis Ababa in Nov. 2005. The ministry of Information accused them of being mouthpieces of the opposition, Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) which is blamed by the government for perpetrating instability in the country (CPJ, 2005: Internet). Committee to Protect Journalists has also reported what it calls "worrying attacks" on two VOA correspondents during October 2005 when the securities also listened to one of the journalist's taped materials and then threatened to kill him if he continues to work for VOA (CPJ, 2005: Internet).

The journalists in the government-controlled media are simply the reporters of authorities' speech. The media are occupied by uncritical stories under the name of national development and similar pretexts. Journalists are allowed only to cover success stories about the programs and policies of the government. Meetings, workshops, conferences, popular participation in the development activities and the statements of authorities make a considerable part of the content.

Views other than that of the government are to some extent heard only during elections. But journalists are not risk free even at that particular moment. Kruger (2005: Internet) assessed the 2005 election coverage by the government media and noted that journalists are told off for reporting views critical to the government. He has also quoted the editor from Ethiopian Television as saying "the head of the

organization never allows balanced reports. Positive stories about strong opposition parties are destined to (end in) waste baskets" (Kruger, 2005: Internet).

It is possible to infer that, rival views that are critical to that of the government are heavily suppressed by the bosses directly assigned by the ministry of information, also the propaganda office of the government.

The present status of freedom of the press and news censorship in Ethiopia can be summarized in what Getachew puts as follows: "In the post-military era, the government controls the media and independent journalists are harassed despite the pronouncement of freedom of the press." (2003: 568)

2.6 The Ethiopian Television News Decision Structure

The ultimate body that selects and decides news in Ethiopian Television is the editorial committee that comprised of editors, heads of news departments, and coordinators of the four language services and deputy manager of the organization. Generally the committee has about twenty members also drawn from other departments such as Engineering, Studio supervisors. Meeting is held twice a day in the morning and afternoon to make decisions.

When the editorial committee does not meet, heads of the news departments and the editor have the authority to decide. The editor and the head of the departments decide decisions on news order, the number of news to be carried, sound bites, and news length. Shift leader of the news center together with the editor also decides news that comes from different sources after the editorial meeting.

In ETV editor and head of the news department are different. The editor is the one who is in charge of the day's news. There are many of them working in shift. The editor may have the title of editor or may not have. The reporter can also be assigned as editor of the news if the department is confident in his capacity. The head of the news department is the one assigned to control journalists and other staff activities. He/she could be editor-in-chief or anyone assigned in his ability or for being party member.

The news decision considers three Criteria:

- ❖ Broadcast and press laws and directive of the country.
- ❖ Editorial policy of the Ethiopian Television
- ❖ Professional news judgment such as timeliness, newness and unusualness, magnitude, public interest, proximity and prominence (News Manual of ETV and Radio, 2003:11-12)

News about controversial issues is decided by vote of the editorial committee and if consensus is not reached the coordinator of the editorial meeting presents the issue for vote (News Manual of ETV and Radio, 2003). But still the Deputy Manager who is in charge of the Television branch under the General Manager who manages Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency to gather should give the final decision. The two media have branch deputy managers.

Editor -in – chief leads the news department. He is responsible to orient reporters, report to the editorial conference, delegate mini-editorial conference and give decisions on the daily news production process when necessary.

The editor of the news is different from the chief editor. The editor is the decision maker in the daily news production. He edits the reporters' script, decides time and order of the stories, executes transmission with the director and finally reports to the leader of the desk. News cannot be aired without his approval. He is accountable to the head of the news desk and the deputy manager of the organization.

The reporters write news story they gather from field assignment or rewrite news from other local news sources such as the Ethiopian News Agency and Walta Information Center. The reporters are also expected to edit the picture and sounds of the story.

The Ethiopian Television and Radio news manual indicates, the assistant editor and assistant producer closely assist the editor, but practically, one editor and the reporters do news. Generally, most activities in the news desks of ETV are done by the editors and the reporters. The news production process mainly ends between the two. The reporters write and the editor who is in charge of the day's activity edits and decides for the final transmission. Thus, whatever types of pressures come the two are the major targets.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Methodology

This study is based on primary data. The primary data derives from the journalists' response gathered using self-administered questionnaire. The contents of 37 news stories have also been analyzed to address some of the study issues to the extent necessary and possible.

3.1 Subjects/Population

The population of the study includes the media practitioners, selected news stories and interviews with some selected journalists.

3.1.1 The Media Practitioners

The primary data for this study is collected from the journalists working in the Ethiopian Television. This includes mainly editors, senior reporters and reporters working in the Amharic, Oromo, Tigre and English language service in ETV. There are more than 100 journalists in this national station.

The researcher's reasons of selection

1. The researcher has no option to include other television stations since the Ethiopian Television is the single channel in the country. The fact that the Ethiopian Television is monopolized and operated by the government. This could make relevant for the subject of censorship that the researcher intends to study. Because the government authorities may use the privilege of ownership to suppress information and ideas critical to them.
2. Most media practitioners in Ethiopian Television hold the position of editors; senior reporter and reporter. This indicates most of the works are executed by these journalists. Therefore, they could be the most vulnerable people to pressures such as censorship.

3.1.2 The News Stories

The news stories that are already aired by the Ethiopian Television will also be the subject of the study. This includes the news stories produced and aired by the four language services.

3.2 Samples

3.2.1 Samples of the media Practitioners

From the large number of editors, senior reporters and reporters working in the departments of programs, current Affairs, Entertainment, and news, the researcher has selected only those working in the news departments of the four language services. There are about 40 journalists in the four news departments. The researcher will use all of them. The editors in ETV are in charge of editing the scripts written by the reporters, deciding the news story that arrives after the editorial meeting, deciding the order of the story. In general the editor is responsible for the day's news transmission.

In ETV the duty of reporters and senior reporters is gathering information and writing news story. Practically there is no clear division of job between the two. Generally, there is no clear professional division in ETV. Even the reporters can be promoted to the level of editor without having the proper title. The editors can also be assigned to field reports. Due to this unique case to ETV the researcher has considered both reporters and senior reporters as reporters. Thus, the study depends on the editors and reporters category.

The News department is relatively more sensitive than other departments that are in charge of regular weekly programs. Journalists in the news department daily deal with sensitive political issues that require immediate decisions. As a result interferences of the politicians could be more serious there. Therefore, the researcher believes news departments are more suitable to study the issues of censorship.

All the news departments are included to be able to analyze how much different forms of censorship is wide spread among all language services that have a large number of their own audience.

3.2.2 Samples of the News Stories

News stories used in this study are those aired after the May 15, 2005 election. Thus news stories aired from May 8, to October 30, 2005, the opening date of the new parliament is selected. The news will be selected from each department on equal ratio. From each, ten news stories in which the ruling political party and the opposition parties accuse each other will be selected. Totally, 40 news stories will be chosen from the four departments.

3.3 Sampling Technique

3.3.1 Technique to Sample the Journalists

Purposive sampling technique is employed to select the sample population. The researcher has used this technique to identify recently employed journalists from the formers. Many journalists have left ETV recently and fresh journalists that have no media background have been massively employed and also simply assigned for political requirements. Thus the researcher found these less exposed journalists unhelpful for the information he needs. As a result he purposely limited his sample to the journalists who have worked at least for one year.

3.3.2 Technique used to Sample the News Stories

The news stories used in the study are also decided by purposive sampling method. After May 7 election media coverage was dominated by the allegation of ruling party and opposition political parties against each other. The themes of the allegation made by the opposition parties are mainly election fraud and manipulation of results, as a result of which they refuse to participate in some re-elections and decide to boycott the new parliament. The ruling party on the other hand accuses them for attempting to illegitimate the democratic election, for attempting to reverse the constitutional system and for inciting violence and others. Thus, the researcher purposefully selected such stories to analyze some ethical issues particularly fairness of the coverage in accommodating the points of views of the political parties.

3.4 Instrument

The primary data will be collected using the self-administered questionnaire. It is the researcher's belief that this tool gives more freedom and time for the respondents to answer the questions. It can also allow them feel safe to answer issues of censorship that also covertly exercised by the government authorities and politicians. Like an interview method, questionnaire does not involve some form of identifications that the journalists may regard as a risk. Thus, self-administered questionnaire at least minimize their fear of being identified. As a result they are encouraged to give honest and genuine information.

The questionnaire has two parts. The first part is about the personal profile of the journalists that include information such as job title, educational background and work experience. The second part systematically exploits major information about direct and self-censorship. Many of the questions are common for all categories. In Ethiopian Television a reporter or an editor is not restricted to a particular work. The editors can be assigned to field reports and reporters can also be assigned to do the work of editors. There is no clearly defined division of activity according to the particular title. As a result the researcher is forced to ask the same question with few questions for the journalists who have the title of editors. In the case of Ethiopian television both reporters and senior reporters do the same thing so that the researcher forced to take both as a reporter.

In order to obtain the information of direct censorship the journalists are asked the ways politicians force them to broadcast or not to broadcast certain information. For instance they asked where politicians directly call the journalists, present in person, provide guidelines, review the contents, and punish journalists assign party members to edit them and the like. The types of Issues mostly vulnerable to such cases are also asked.

Issues of self-censorship are exploited by asking how editors treat news about the ruling party and opposition parties in the order of the daily news. That is what news is placed in the upper or obscure position. And also the fairness of time they allot for

government authorities and other political parties with opposing views, the kind of issues they often reject and why, for what issues they consult appointed bosses for the decision.

Similarly, the respondents will be asked whether they plan to give coverage for opposition parties and other political matters assumed to oppose the interest of government authorities. They will also be asked whom they frequently quote and prioritize the sources such as the ruling and opposition parties while writing news. In addition, information such as which side they usually give more time and which view they mostly tone down and consider risk will be included to analyze the forms of self-censorship.

The questions are the mixture of closed and open-ended format depending on the need of the researcher for detailed explanations. The questions are prepared in Amharic language to allow the respondents to clearly explain their ideas. English is difficult for most of them. The questions will be discussed with the internal advisor and the external advisor is given the translation to foreword his comment.

3.5 The Interviews

In order to add some qualitative data to the analysis the researcher also conducted interviews with five willing journalists. It is conducted with the researcher's strong promise for confidentiality. The researcher is limited to such small number of interviewees because of the issue of anonymity.

3.6 Content Analysis

Regarding the contents of some news stories the researcher intends to analyze their fairness to support the major method. The analysis is quantitative. The Themes selected for the content analysis are the points of disputes between the ruling party and the opposition parties after the May 7 elections. On the one hand, the opposition parties accused the ruling party for rigging the election results and decided to boycott parliament and finally they called stay-home strike, which was followed by violence in the capital in which more than 40 people were killed.

On the other hand, the ruling party accused the opposition parties for inciting violence and religious conflict, for attempting to reverse the constitutional system and trying to restore the past totalitarian regimes. The parties are also condemned for the alleged attempts by members of the public in meeting and by comments of the individuals. The police consecutively reported the red hand arrest of the opposition party members with weapons while trying to commit crimes. The opposition parties are labeled as “fundamentalist”, “narrow nationalists”, “violent”, “Anti- peace, development and democracy”. These labeling are over repeated by the ETV coverage from sources such as government authorities, individuals, religious leaders, ruling party members and other sectors of the society that are mobilized to condemn the alleged attempts of the opposition parties.

Therefore, in the analysis will be made in terms of party frequently quoted, parties frequently accused, whether the responses are included or excluded., whether reasons or justifications are given for not including a particular group.

View points presented in the story will also be collected in terms of whether the negative or positive or both sides of the event is presented. Similarly, the tone with which each side is presented will be seen to analyze the fairness of the stories in terms of over or under emphasis. The researcher has analyzed these issues of fairness based on the checklists of fair reporting given by Black et al in Retief(2002).

Gathering the data for the content analysis is not without problems. Since news aired in Ethiopian Television cannot be kept in archive for more than one week, it is difficult to get the picture. In addition Ethiopian Television often airs news by anchorman without picture. That has also made difficult to include the picture. Particularly, many post election news was aired using only the logo of political parties due to the station’s poor logistic capacity to film all events.

However, the scripts of the news stories aired by each department are properly filed so that they are used for the analysis. The researcher believes the scripts are enough to achieve his targets because most of the issues of fairness that is intended to be analyzed in this study can be identified from the script.

3.7 Data Analysis

The information gathered through the questionnaire and the news stories will be analyzed separately. At a later stage, the findings will be integrated to interpret their implications.

The responses acquired through the questionnaire will be analyzed to find out the major forms of direct and indirect censorship, the most targeted issues and some of the reasons for censorship. In order to analyze these points, first both the responses of the closed and open-ended questions will be translated in to English and then categorized and coded. Finally, using SPSS they will be processed and analyzed.

The contents of the news stories will also be analyzed to find ethical issues such as fairness, balance and impartiality. It is intended to show the ethical problems of the censorship. To do this, first all news stories will be translated in to English. Then, using the SPSS software the data will be analyzed according to their category and code.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Presentations and Analysis of Data

4.1 Introduction

The data used in this study is gathered from 31 editors and reporters working in news departments of Ethiopian Television by applying self-administered questionnaires. Information gathered through interviews conducted with five selected journalists and the content data of 37 News Stories is also part of the analysis.

The analysis of the data is categorized into two Major parts. In the first part some forms of imposed or direct censorship being exercised in Ethiopian Television is analyzed. Secondly, self-censorship practiced by the journalists is dealt with. This part attempts in particular to elicit how the editors and reporters prefer safety to professional practices due to fear of punishment or reprisals by the ruling political

party members assigned as journalists and on the leadership as well. Mainly, political issues in general and coverage on ruling and opposition political parties in particular are the focus of the analysis of the forms of self-censorship. Moreover, the fairness of the coverage is integrated by analyzing some news stories.

4.2 Manifestations of Direct Censorship in ETV

Based on the survey conducted the pre-broadcasting censorship in Ethiopian Television appears in such forms as assigning party control, providing written and oral guidelines to journalists, reviewing the contents of news stories as well as rewarding journalists for being obedient and punishing others who work out of the politically desired ways.

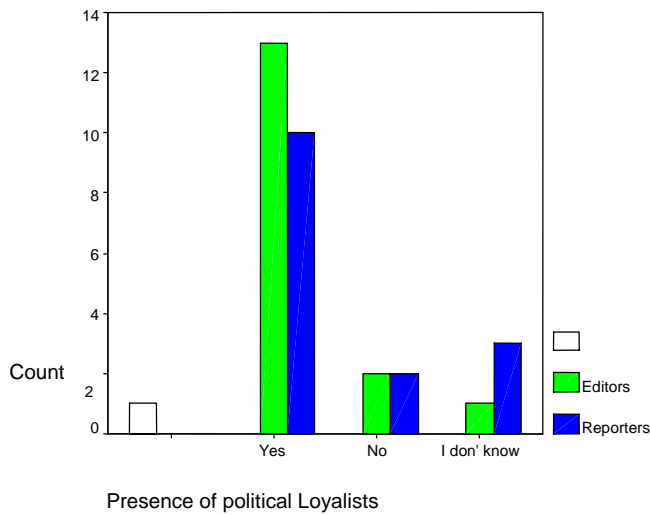
4.2.1 Assigning Party Control

Sixteen editors and fifteen reporters working in four news departments of the Ethiopian Television, Amharic, Oromo, Tigrigna and English news services were asked whether faithful members of the ruling party are working as journalists and on the leadership. Accordingly, almost more than 70 percent of the entire respondents indicated the presence of faithful members of the ruling party working as journalists and in leadership as well.

Table 2

Presence of political Loyals * respondent Crosstabulation

			respondent			Total
			Editor	reporter		
Presence of political Loyals	Yes	Count	13	10		23
		% within respondent	81.3%	66.7%		71.9%
		% of Total	40.6%	31.3%		71.9%
	No	Count	2	2		4
		% within respondent	12.5%	13.3%		12.5%
		% of Total	6.3%	6.3%		12.5%
	I don' know	Count	1	3		4
		% within respondent	6.3%	20.0%		12.5%
		% of Total	3.1%	9.4%		12.5%
		Count			1	1
		% within respondent			100.0%	3.1%
		% of Total			3.1%	3.1%
Total		Count	16	15	1	32
		% within respondent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	50.0%	46.9%	3.1%	100.0%



Out of the entire respondents, the editors who indicated the presence faithful party members are about 81 percent while the reporters are around 67 percent. The implication of the editors' domination could be that magnitude and intensity of the influence of party faithful is higher on the editors because the editors have more chance of participating in some decision making processes where the loyalists could impose heavy influence directly or indirectly. Stating the problem, one editor says the following:

Since last year many loyal cadres are assigned from various government offices without any employment notice or legal transferring formality. They were given higher position without appropriate qualification and experience. They meet weekly and pass decisions they want. They were delegated to every department. No one knows how they happen to be here.

According to the informants, the party loyalists nick named "UNMEE". They are named after the United Nation's Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), the security forces monitoring the disputed area in the boarder of the two countries. They were also named so because they were assigned to ETV in order to meet the propaganda demand of the government authorities, which the other journalists' could not meet.

The respondents involved in the study were also asked to indicate whether there are special assignment and special privilege given for being party loyalist. Many respondents indicated the existence of both cases. The faithful are benefited in such forms as rank promotion, frequent field assignment for allowance, overseas trips with government authorities and education opportunities.

Regarding the special assignment, one respondent said "whenever there are overseas trips with authorities, when the prime minister and the political parties' give statements, it is the loyal journalists who are assigned."

Generally, it can be inferred that political interference is prevalent in Ethiopian Television. This can be a form of direct censorship because it could suppress information not needed by the authorities in many ways. On the one hand, the loyalists are already obedient to censor information even in the absence of overt censorship and are also ready to implement any type of guidelines given by the politicians. Thus, the explanations and interpretations of all events and happenings could be done by the faithful only in terms of the party line and support of party policy while other views and alternatives are suppressed

On the other hand, the presence of the party loyalists could threaten other journalists and thus, exercise self restraint for fear of reprisals which is often known as "gimgema" which means "criticism". It is often made by the party loyalists. One editor

from ETV described as “mind shaking” criticism. On the other hand, the loyalists could also influence the professional decision making by direct interference into the activities of the journalists.

In the former Soviet Communist where the media were highly state controlled, overt censorship was practiced by assigning journalists’ loyal to the ruling party. Confirming this Pember (1989:334) notes, "the party faithful are permitted to work in the mass media and these workers believe in what the party is doing and will follow any guidelines that emerge." In Soviet Union censorship and propaganda were strongly coupled to censor information and ideas that affronted communist ideals (Sweeney, 2003). This censorship is conducted by the party faithful. The tendency of censorship in ETV also seems similar with the situation of censorship in the former Soviet Union with which Ethiopia has historical relation in the past during military regime. Under the military regime the media were also controlled by the Workers Party of Ethiopia and censorship was common practice. It seems the legacy has continued till present with regard to the media control for the benefit of the ruling party.

4.2.2 The Guidelines (Directives)

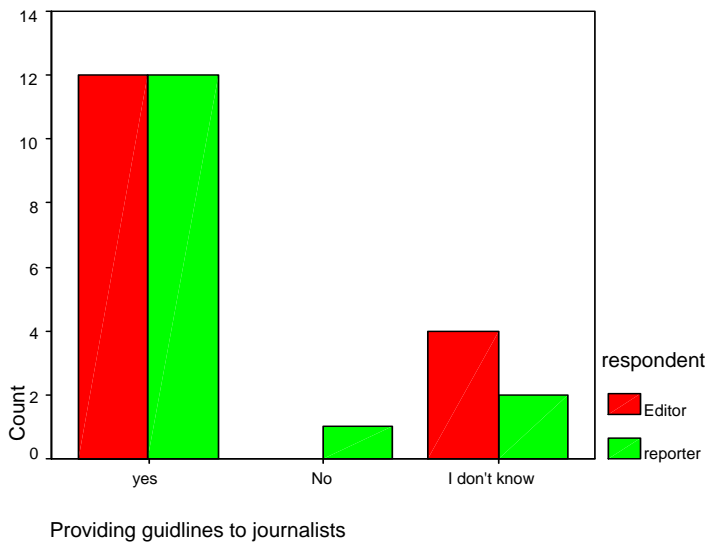
Guidelines could be given by the politicians in the forms of written documents or oral briefings which are common forms of prior restraint in Africa where governments use to influence journalists to pursue activities within the desired line (Mwaura 1994).It seems there is similar case in Ethiopian Television. Questions were posed to the respondents in a bid to find out whether the journalists in Ethiopian Television are influenced by the guidelines or directives given by the politicians. Particularly, they were asked whether the government authorities or politicians give them briefing that force them to compromise their professional integrity.

As shown by the table -3, 24 respondents or 77 percent of the entire respondents indicated guidelines are given before certain issues are reported. Only one respondent, 3 percent indicated the absence of guidelines while 6 respondents, 19.4 percent, rated indicating that they have no idea whether the guidelines are given or not. Out of them 4 respondents or 13 percents are editors. Among the editors no single respondent rated "no" to the question.

Providing guidelines to journalists * respondent Crosstabulation

			respondent		Total
			Editor	reporter	
Providing guidelines to journalists	yes	Count	12	12	24
		% within respondent	75.0%	80.0%	77.4%
		% of Total	38.7%	38.7%	77.4%
	No	Count		1	1
		% within respondent		6.7%	3.2%
		% of Total		3.2%	3.2%
	I don't know	Count	4	2	6
		% within respondent	25.0%	13.3%	19.4%
		% of Total	12.9%	6.5%	19.4%
Total	Count	16	15	31	
	% within respondent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	51.6%	48.4%	100.0%	

Table 3



It can be deduced from the responses of the majority that guidelines or directives given by the authorities are forms of direct censorship in Ethiopian Television. The intension of guidelines cloud be to keep the journalists within the lines desired by the politicians. Guidelines are given to the extent of handing the journalists ready-made questions to be forwarded to the politicians. Accordingly, 13 out of the 16 editors and over ten

reporters testify the existence of this case. The intention of this could be to impose restriction on the journalists and direct them to the desired direction, which probably is political issue.

The guidelines are given by the managers directly assigned by the ministry of information or the Prime Minister. Recently the General Manager is directly assigned by the prime Minister. Thus, the directives come directly or indirectly from the politicians.

There is also a brainwashing technique. Journalists working in the government media are usually made to hold consequent brain - washing meetings by government authorities on policies and programs. They are often told to focus on success stories. One informant puts what was once told by a minister as follows: "a journalist should not produce news or programs opposing the government policy rather he should report stories that indicate the successes." This could be a form of guideline aimed at diverting the attention of the journalists from investigative kind of stories. In many African countries censorship is justified under the pretext of national development, while investigative journalism is discouraged by the politicians. Thus, only success stories are promoted at the expense of other critical matters.

Asked the type of reporting usually given attention in Ethiopian Television, 71 percent of the respondents indicated developmental while the rest 29 percent said current issue, which in the other way round is politics. Investigative reporting is rejected by all the respondents. Current issue reporting mostly covers hot political issues such as disputes between government and the opposition political parties in which accusations made by the government is dominant without the say of the accused (see tables of the content analysis).

Guidelines are usually applied to coverage of sensitive political issues that involve oppositions. One informant indicated as follows:

News stories regarding the opposition political parties are usually not aired unless the upper bosses tell us the perspective from which we see the issue. We write when they give us the angle and we reject it if they order us to do so.

Since the bosses are faithful party members assigned by the ministry of information or the Prime Minister, the guidelines are expected to target objectionable expressions and directly or indirectly promoting beneficial to the ruling party.

4.2.3 Reviewing the Content

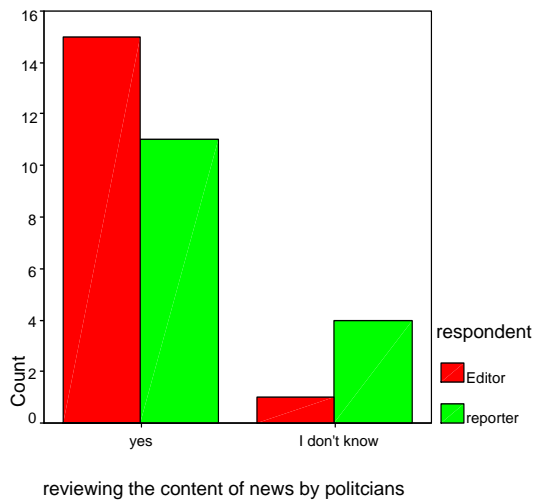
With regard to the content revision in Ethiopian Television, both the editors and the reporters were asked whether stories are reviewed by an individual who is not an editor. Accordingly, 26 respondents, 84 percents of the entire respondents indicated the news stories are revised. Within each category, about 94 percent of editors and about 73 percent of the reporters indicated the existence of content review. This shows the response is given by a significant size of editors in relation to the reporters. The reason could be that the reviewers mainly force the editors than the reporters. However, the responses of both categories testify that the contents of news stories are reviewed. The rest of the respondents, three and 13 percent of the editors and reporters respectively indicated they do not know its existence.

Table

reviewing the content of news by politicians * respondent Crosstabulation

			respondent		Total
			Editor	reporter	
reviewing the content of news by politicians	yes	Count	15	11	26
		% within respondent	93.8%	73.3%	83.9%
		% of Total	48.4%	35.5%	83.9%
	I don't know	Count	1	4	5
		% within respondent	6.3%	26.7%	16.1%
		% of Total	3.2%	12.9%	16.1%
Total	Count	16	15	31	
	% within respondent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	51.6%	48.4%	100.0%	

4



Explaining about the content review and the kinds of issues subjected to review, one editor notes as follows:

Obviously, the content of news is changed. There are times when the contents of stories produced from the statements of opposition parties are changed. For instance, if the parties criticize the government it is prohibited not to be aired in that angle or points that have no relation with that issue is added to it. Otherwise, the story will be rejected.

Thus, it can be inferred that the contents of critical political issues particularly views different from that of the government is deliberately suppressed. It seems the content revision is made on objectionable matters. Censorship obviously refers to the underreporting of objectionable information while presenting the beneficial ones

4.3 Manifestations of Self-Censorship in Ethiopian Television

The general working environment in Ethiopian Television creates a chilling effect that can prompt individual journalists to impose censorship on themselves or on others in a bid to avoid punishment or reprisals. The clear expression of this is the presence of party loyalists in the position of leaderships and as journalist. This could facilitate self-censorship because the other journalists fear criticisms. This often happen when a journalist fails to report certain issues mainly political in a way the government authorities or politicians require. This is sometimes followed by some forms of

punishments. The criticisms are made on the bases of the journalist's political outlook, which is usually interpreted from a particular way he has reported a certain issues. Some of the respondents indicated there are victims of such cases. Thus, safety seems the priority in the journalists' work.

Self –censorship is mostly exercised by avoiding political reporting in general and the opposition parties in particular. The journalists stay safe by avoiding any thing that offends the politicians. They also avoid punishments favoring the ruling party to the extent of bombarding the oppositions.

4.3.1 Dodging Political Controversy

The journalists were asked the types of issues they prefer to report from such options as political, social and cultural, and economic issues. Accordingly, politics is indicated as the least preferred issue. Out of the 31 respondents only four of them or about 13 percent have selected political issues as their preference. Only one respondent indicated all issues as his preference.

On the other hand, a large number of respondents (nearly 38 Percent) have chosen social and cultural issues and the next majority (36%) prefer economic issues. The rest (10%) indicated their preference to "no planning at all" and these takes the third position.

This can indicate self-censorship begins from the level of planning particular issues. It seems politics is less preferred because it is more sensitive area with high probability to involve the objectionable expressions. Thus, either planning non-political issues or totally ignoring planning the story seems the safest for the journalists.

The journalists are further asked whether they have ever planned and covered the views of the opposition political parties on government activities without the order of their bosses. Accordingly, 75 percent of the respondents have not ever planned and covered the views of opposition political parties. The rest majority (16 percent) indicated they do not remember and this is still with the high probability not ever planning and covering of the oppositions. The two makes 91 percent. Only two

reporters, six percent of the entire respondents indicated they have ever planned and covered the opposition views without the order of their bosses.

Planning Opposition Party Coverage * respondent Crosstabulation

			Respondent			Total
			Editor	Reporter		
Planning Opposition Party Coverage	Yes	Count		2		2
		% within respondent		13.3%		6.3%
		% of Total		6.3%		6.3%
	No	Count	14	10		24
		% within respondent	87.5%	66.7%		75.0%
		% of Total	43.8%	31.3%		75.0%
	I don't know	Count	2	3		5
		% within respondent	12.5%	20.0%		15.6%
		% of Total	6.3%	9.4%		15.6%
Total						
		Count	16	15	1	32
		% within respondent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	50.0%	46.9%	3.1%	100.0%

Table 5

Stating their reasons, some of them mention the following.

- Such coverage is not permitted. If ever permitted, it is to blame the oppositions.
- Because I know the upper bosses do not approve my plan.
- Why should I bother;
- I have not ever thought to cover opposition parties because I do not want to engage in such risky reporting. I have also not seen others reporting oppositions. I expect directives from government to cover oppositions. That is also what I know.
- Covering politics is risky.
- The opposition parties do not give fair ideas and the media house itself has no clear guideline and does not encourage us.

- I know there are many issues to plan and cover about opposition parties, but I feel it is not permitted by the editorial conference since their focus is only to execute the government demand.
- I fear I will be labeled as member or supporter of the oppositions if I report them.
- Such kind of coverage is done when assigned not by self-initiative.

It can be inferred from the responses that the reason of self-censorship practiced by the ETV journalists is fear of the punishment and also their assumptions of what is to be done in the government media. It seems the journalists also refrain before making an attempt by anticipating that the plan will not be accepted the editorial board.

4.3.2 The Safety of Tone up and Tone Down

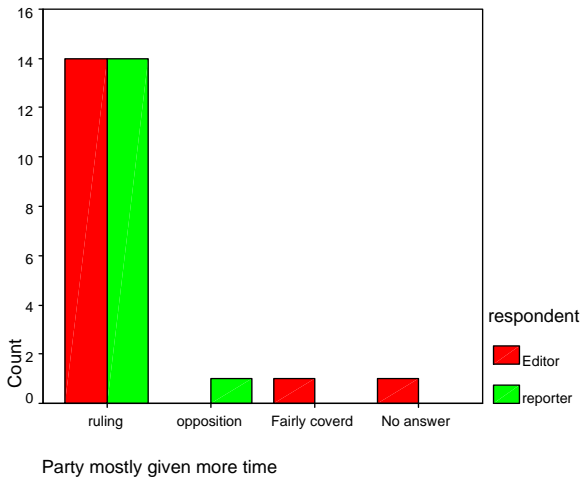
Reporting opposition political parties seems to be seen as a hostile activity by many journalists in ETV. The clear expression of this reality is how they accommodate the ruling and opposition parties' in terms of time allocation, priority in the lead or placement in the news orders.

The editors and reporters involved in the study are asked which party they give priority in terms of placement and time allocation or whether they are fair to both of them. Many of the respondents, 61 percent of the entire respondents, indicated that the ruling party enjoys priority in terms of placements in the lead and upper position in the order. About 32 percent of the respondents indicated the parties are fairly placed. From the editors category no single editor responded that opposition parties are given priority. This is could be an important indicator that stories about opposition parties are placed in obscure positions.

Party mostly given more time * respondent Crosstabulation

			respondent		Total
			Editor	reporter	
Party mostly given more time	ruling	Count	14	14	28
		% within respondent	87.5%	93.3%	90.3%
		% of Total	45.2%	45.2%	90.3%
	opposition	Count		1	1
		% within respondent		6.7%	3.2%
		% of Total		3.2%	3.2%
	Fairly covered	Count	1		1
		% within respondent	6.3%		3.2%
		% of Total	3.2%		3.2%
	No answer	Count	1		1
		% within respondent	6.3%		3.2%
		% of Total	3.2%		3.2%
Total		Count	16	15	31
		% within respondent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	51.6%	48.4%	100.0%

Table 6



Many of the respondents also indicated the ruling party is favored in time allocations. Even within a single news story in which both parties are accommodated the ruling party is given more than two-thirds time.

In terms of placing the stories that are critical to the government, editors were asked where they frequently put them (Beginning, center and end). Only 3.2 percent of the entire respondents indicated at the beginning.

Ordering stories critical to government * respondent Crosstabulation

			Responde nt	
			Editor	Total
Ordering stories critical to government	Beginning	Count	1	1
		% within respondent	6.3%	6.3%
		% of Total	6.3%	6.3%
	Center	Count	2	2
		% within respondent	12.5%	12.5%
		% of Total	12.5%	12.5%
	End	Count	1	1
% within respondent		6.3%	6.3%	
% of Total		6.3%	6.3%	
It depends	Count	5	5	
	% within respondent	31.3%	31.3%	
	% of Total	31.3%	31.3%	
Not using at all	Count	3	3	
	% within respondent	18.8%	18.8%	
	% of Total	18.8%	18.8%	
No answer	Count	4	4	
	% within respondent	25.0%	25.0%	
	% of Total	25.0%	25.0%	
Total	Count	16	16	
	% within respondent	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 7

The vast majority say the placement depends on the decision of the editorial conference or the type of event. However, still this cannot be expected to guarantee stories critical to the government the upper positions because the editorial decision could be influenced by the direct interferences of the loyalists. Thus, the probable position may be center or end. These could be obscure positions that may suppress the tone of the story. The other response given by the next majority is 'not using at all'. Therefore, it can be inferred, stories critical to the government are either placed in obscure position or totally rejected by the editors. This could have a direct impact on the points of view that reach the audience, because in Ethiopia a view that criticize or oppose the government usually comes from the opposition political parties.

Fear of punishment and internalized assumptions of what is expected from the government media is the major reasons stated by respondents. Full reasons are put as follows:

- The government needs it
- Because the media belongs to the government
- It is tradition in ETV
- It is told the ruling party should be given broad coverage
- The ruling party has responsibility as a government and party.
- Undermining oppositions is needed
- I expect the bosses do not accept if I prioritize opposition parties.

4.3.3 Externalizing Responsibility

The journalists in Ethiopian Television are working in the tense environment because of the serious political interferences into their activities. It seems they have lost confidence to make various journalistic decisions. There is the tendency to do only what is decided. Consequently, editors often report to the faithful party member bosses whenever they come across issues they believe is sensitive to the government than deciding themselves based on its newsworthiness. In other words, the editors seek political decision to broadcast it or not. Coverage of the opposition political parties is often one of the stories that the editors fear to broadcast by their own decisions. This could be because the parties are usually critical to the government activities.

The sixteen editors involved in the study were asked whether there are issues they fear to decide on. The vast majority testified the existence of such issues. Asked what actions they take next, the majority of editors (62 percent) indicated that they would consult their bosses. No one editor indicated he decides professionally himself. Four editors have given no answers while two respondents say they consult upper bosses or reject the story.

Editors decision on Sensetive issues * respondent Crosstabulation

			responde nt	
			Editor	Total
Editors decision on Sensetive issues	consulting Boss	Count	10	10
		% within respondent	62.5%	62.5%
		% of Total	62.5%	62.5%
	No answer	Count	4	4
		% within respondent	25.0%	25.0%
		% of Total	25.0%	25.0%
	consulting Boss or rejecting	Count	2	2
		% within respondent	12.5%	12.5%
		% of Total	12.5%	12.5%
Total	Count	16	16	
	% within respondent	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 8

The Ethiopian Television Agency is administered by one General Manager together with the Ethiopian Radio. There is the deputy manager in charge of the Television branch that manages the Amharic, Afan Oromo, Tigregna and English language departments. Each department has also its own Coordinator. Under the departments there are News Desk, Weekly program Desk, Current Affaires Desk and Entertainment Programs Desk that have also their own leaders under the coordinators.

The Manager and the deputy manager are assigned by the Ministry of Information or by the prime Minister. The coordinators of the departments could also be assigned. Some times the regional governments where the target audiences of the language services are found also assign the coordinators of the departments. These Bosses are often faithful party members and assigned by the political requirements than the professional competence.

Editors often consult the deputy manager or the coordinators of their respective departments. The tendency of consulting the bosses seems to avoid the risk of punishment. The journalists in Hong Kong were practicing self-censorship in similar way after the country was annexed to China. This was reflected particularly in the form

of hiring pro-China journalists to assume responsible posts. The tendency of such action could be to externalize the responsibilities (Street, 2001).

However, the editors do not consult bosses if they think the issue favors the ruling party no matter how sensitive it is. One editor says the following.

If EPRDF [the ruling party] sends us any statement, we do not need to consult bosses. Whether it is not balanced or an outright insult, we do not worry at all. But when opposition parties send similar statement, we keep it until we consult bosses. We seek the guidelines. We have adjusted ourselves in such way.

What can be inferred is that obedient editors have been created through time .The need to consult the bosses appointed by the ruling party emanates from fear of politics.

4.4 Reporting the Ruling and Opposition Parties: Content Analysis

News stories selected from the post -election 2005 ETV coverage about the ruling and opposition political parties are analyzed how much they are fair to both sides. Totally 37 news stories are analyzed. Post election converge of ETV is dominated by the allegations of the opposition parties and the ruling party over the election results and series of conflicts that have taken place. Some of the major issues were the opposition Parties refused to accept the election results accusing the ruling party for rigging election. As a result they decided to boycott the parliament and also called for public strike. This was followed by conflict in the capital on June 8, 2005 in which about 40 people were killed.

Then government on his part accused the oppositions for inciting the violence as well as religious and ethnic conflicts. The government authorities interpreted the situation as an attempt to reverse the constitutional system and restoring the past totalitarian regimes. As a result the opposition parties labeled as “trouble makers”, “Fundamentalists”, “Interhamiwe”, “narrow nationalists”, and others. These are over repeated by the series of public meeting and used as slogan in the public demonstration mobilized against the parties.

The disputes have been covered by ETV. Those words are also directly used over ETV without giving attributes to the sources. This dispute is the main theme used for this

content analysis using the labeling words as markers of the accused and the accuser in the analysis of fairness of the coverage.

Fairness of the media coverage implies the proper balance and context (Retief, 2002). In this regard Retief further notes the definition of fairness as follows:

- ◆ Balance your report in such a way that no party is misrepresented either by your choice of words by the lack of the proper context(that would be unjust);
- ◆ Ensure that all parties get their say(equality);
- ◆ Give coverage to different parties in relation to their importance(moderation); (Retief,2002:86)

Black et al (1995) also provides various checklists for fairness one of which is giving an opportunity of replying to those who may be affected or harmed (Quoted in Retief, 2002). Thus, story in which two parties accuse each other, both the accuser and the accused body should be given an opportunity. If that is impossible the justification of excluding the other side should be disclosed properly. This study has tried to test the news stories aired by ETV against this definition of fairness.

Table 9

		Accusing body			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	EPRDF	12	32.4	32.4	32.4
	CUD	3	8.1	8.1	40.5
	CUD+UEDF	2	5.4	5.4	45.9
	Non political groups	20	54.1	54.1	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Political party accused

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid EPRDF	4	10.8	10.8	10.8
CUD	3	8.1	8.1	18.9
UEDF	1	2.7	2.7	21.6
Unidentified Opposition Parties	26	70.3	70.3	91.9
Other identified oppositions	1	2.7	2.7	94.6
CUD+UEDF	2	5.4	5.4	100.0
Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Table 10

Response of the accused

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Included	1	2.7	2.7	2.7
Excluded	33	89.2	89.2	91.9
Included Indirect	3	8.1	8.1	100.0
Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Table 11

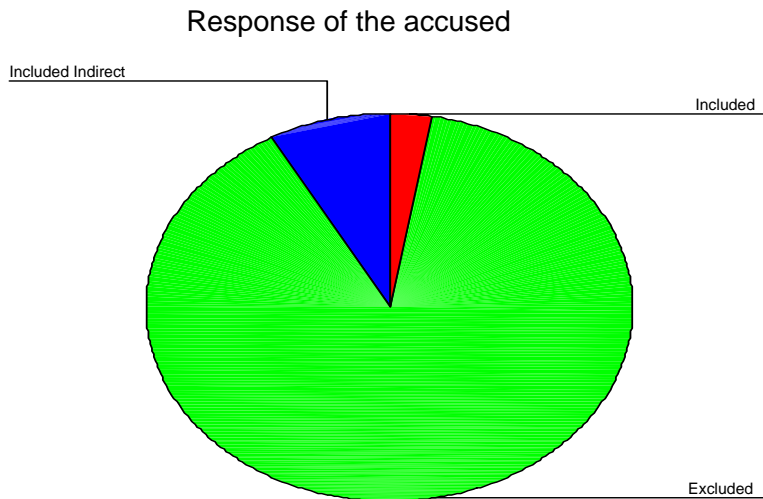
Justification for Exclusion

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	1	2.7	2.7	2.7
No	33	89.2	89.2	91.9
Resonse included	3	8.1	8.1	100.0
Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Table 12

Accordingly, it is found that 33 stories out of the entire 37 used in the study are aired without the responses of the accused party. This means 89 percent of the news stories are unfair according to the checklist fairness. Only four stories are aired with responses included directly from the accused and indirectly from some backgrounds or comments of other sources included at the end of the story. Stories are not necessarily unfair because there is no opportunity for answering allegations. But the stories aired by ETV appeal for the response of the opposition parties. It seems due to the one side coverage

the meanings of the message are distorted in ways that damage the image of the parties.



In fact, journalists may not always be successful to present the responses of the accused. But according to Black and his colleagues if the accused body is not reached nor have no comment the reason should be explained in the news (Quoted in Retief, 2002). However, out of the 37 news stories, only in one story the journalist explained that repeated efforts were made to talk to the accused.

It seems attempts are made by the journalists to include the responses of the accused whenever the ruling party is blamed. The expression of this is that the number of the stories in which the ruling party (EPRDF) is accused is proportional to the number of stories entertained the responses of the accused side. But the 33 stories that accuse the opposition parties are aired without responses from the parties or explanation of the reasons.

According to Black et al (1995) reporting all sides of the story is also a checklist of fair reporting (Quoted in Retief, 2002). This is because many events have usually more than one side. Points of view are usually different, and the journalists are expected to fairly accommodate by presenting the good and the bad, the weak and the strong, the opposing and the supporting sides.

The news stories aired by ETV seem to have such deficiency. 54 percent of accusations are made against the oppositions by non-political groups such as the police, individuals, religious organizations, NGOs and other classes of the society. The stories are produced from the statements of the Police, public meeting where oppositions are blamed for trying to reverse the constitutional system and for inciting violence and religious conflict as well as for boycotting the parliament, which is interpreted as contempt for popular vote. No story is reported in which pro-opposition parties are included. This is unbelievable and unfair in a country where the opposition political parties win more than 200 seats in the parliament and nearly all seats in the city council in the capital. It seems the voice of the oppositions and their supporters is deliberately excluded

Fairness can also be checked by the over emphasis and under emphasis given in the story in a manner the meaning is distorted (Black et al Quoted in Retief 2002). In ETV stories this can also be inferred from the number of accusations made by a particular party. The ruling party (EPRDF) accused the oppositions in 12 stories. The two oppositions, CUD and UEDF accused the ruling party five times together. Thus, it seems that emphasis is given to the ruling by giving more chance. This emphasis could seriously distort the meaning conveyed because the opposition parties have no chance at least to defend themselves.

In most of the news stories all the oppositions are accused together even though the main squabble was between the ruling party and the major oppositions CUD and UEDF. About 26 stories do not identify which opposition is blamed. Only in limited stories a particular party is cited. Such generalization may defame many opposition parties who did not take part in those contentious issues.

4.5. Analysis of Data

4.5.1 The theory and Practice of Censorship

In Ethiopia the end of censorship which was official in the past Imperial and military regimes was marked by the constitutional provision for freedom of the press. Article 29(3) of the 1995 Ethiopian constitution that provides freedom of the press explicitly

stipulates the prohibition of any form of censorship. Similarly, the press law proclamation 34/1992 states under articles 3 (2) that "censorship of the press and any restriction of a similar nature here by prohibited"

In many countries that recognize democracy as a best form of government freedom of the press is high on the agenda with the aim of allowing the media to entertain diverse opinion. This is the core principle of social responsibility theory of the media. The media must provide the people with important news and information in a context that is meaningful. They must accurately portray the diversity in the society and the aspirations of all people regardless of the kind of points of view expressed.

It seems Ethiopia has accepted the responsibility of the media to entertain diverse opinions when it prohibits censorship as the absolute basis for freedom of the press. The prohibition of censorship is explicitly justified under article 29 (4) of the constitution as the commitment to the free flow of information, ideas and opinions which are essential to the functioning of a democratic order.

However, under present condition, it does not seem that the media in Ethiopia particularly the government controlled electronic media is free from censorship. On the one hand, it is tightly controlled by the ruling party through assigning its party faithful to work as journalists and in the leadership as well. On the other hand, guidelines and direct content review are prevalent. Under any parameter the partisan journalists with a particular political outlook could not be free from censoring views different from that of their party. The journalists are obedient to work adhering only to the need of the politicians at the expense of other important views that are critical to the government. On the other hand, they may give emphasis to the ruling party, by interpreting and explaining events inline of the party interests and policies.

The loyal journalists are also ready to follow and impose the guidelines produced by their party which is also a form of direct censorship in ETV. It is given in the form of written document and oral briefing with the intention to favor the ruling party or to suppress views of the opposition political parties.

What can be inferred from the situations of the Ethiopian media environment are the discrepancies between the policy initiative on the paper and the practical implementation. The government media is still used by the ruling party in a manner that undermines a proper public political debate.

It seems that the journalists' are also forced to practice self-censorship due to the interferences of the politicians, which has distributed fear of punishment among the journalists.

The great concern is that political coverage particularly, opposition political parties is already stigmatized by the journalists due to the fear of reprisal. Thus, issues those are critical for the developments of democratic order are not being raised by the journalists. Democracy could be mainly about politics than the social and economical issues that is preferred by the majority of the ETV journalists.

The tendency of the journalists is either staying away from political issues or reporting in favor of the ruling party. This has resulted in distortion of information about opposition political parties to the extent of totally rejecting their views and incriminating them. This is a threat to journalism ethics in the country. By excluding a sector of society with different political view, particularly the opposition political parties that are critical to the government, democracy cannot be achieved. Under present conditions of multi-party politics in the country view points different from that of the government or the ruling party seem are suppressed for being objectionable to the authorities.

In general, the media in Ethiopia seems trapped between authoritarian and democratic media. On the one hand, modern constitution and press law is in place. On the other hand traditional forms of censorship practiced by the totalitarian states are used to suppress the media. Consequently, the media have failed to serve the society by being fair to all opinions.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Summary and conclusion

5.1 Summary

This study have been based on the hypothesis that censorship imposed by the government authorities and the self-censorship caused by internalized fear of punishments among ETV journalists are the reasons for underreporting of political issues that involve contending views. This has also been resulted with the violation of professional integrity of the journalists. In the literature part (chapter two) the types of censorship and their forms of manifestations, targets and justifications of censorship as well as its situation under the imperial, military and present Ethiopian regimes have been discussed.

In most instances censorship is negative in a sense that it refers to the act of suppressing ideas and information that circulate within the society. It is applied to a wide range of media including radio and television programs and news reports. Different practices are used to refer to censorship. These include suppressing, banning, expurgation, deleting or editing information and ideas objectionable to the censors.

In the mass media, censorship is exercised through reviewing the contents of the news story, providing guidelines or directives to the journalists, intimidating, detaining, harassing, punishing and rewarding the journalists. This is a direct type of censorship, which is forced by a group in power on the journalists that are subject to the group's authority. Government authorities or politicians exercise such forms of censorship before or after information is published or broadcasted. These are known as pre-publication /broadcasting and post-publication/ broadcasting censorship.

It is also discussed in the literature review that censorship is practiced by the journalists themselves because of fear of punishment. Journalists exercise self-censorship by choosing reporting issues that is safe from punishment. In an effort to avoid unpleasant issues journalists who censor themselves often suppress viewpoints that are critical or objectionable to the government or ruling political party to the extent of committing

out right bias. Speeches of opposition political parties and investigative journalism are the major targets of censorship

In order to study the situation of censorship in Ethiopia, the data is gathered applying self-administered questionnaires from 31 editors and reporters working in the Ethiopian Television; Amharic Afan Oromo, Tigregna and English service News Desks. In addition the contents of some news stories and responses of interviews conducted with selected journalists are analyzed

Generally the findings of the study show both direct and self-censorship are prevalent in Ethiopian Television. One form of direct censorship is ETV is assigning party control as journalists and in the management. The Ministry of Information directly assigns faithful party members to different departments. In addition providing written or oral guidelines to journalists and reviewing the contents of the news stories are the forms of direct censorship imposed by politicians on the journalists working for ETV.

Similarly, the findings of the study indicate the existence of serious forms of self-censorship among the ETV journalists. First of all there is the tendency among most of the journalists to doge political controversies in general. Politics is less preferred issue in their reporting because it is more sensitive area with high probability to involve objectionable expressions. Thus, the journalists do not plan to report political matters particularly opposition political parties. Secondly whenever they report political matters they often tone up or tone down the issues in favor of the ruling party. This is taken by the journalists as a safe kind of reporting while they suppress information critical to the government authorities. Thirdly they do not want to decide on sensitive political matters themselves. Rather they prefer to consult the faithful party members assigned there to give them directives. This form of self-censorship is often exercised by editors to externalize the responsibility. It is a part of efforts to escape the possible punishment that may be imposed later for transmitting matters that offend politicians.

The main targets of all forms of censorship are stories critical to government authorities and viewpoints different from that of the ruling party. In particular opposition political parties are denied access to the public media except some times during election. The views of the opposition parties are usually misrepresented. In case

of conflicts with the ruling party, the media bombard them to the exclusion of their response. The clear expression is the post election 2005 crisis. Opposition parties are incriminated on daily basis as a terrorists and perpetrators of instability. They are branded with all evils without any opportunity to defend themselves.

On the other hand, the ruling party receives a wall-to-wall coverage. There is no clear line between the government and the ruling party in the coverage. All credits are given to the ruling party one way or another. Coverage about development successes are favored over investigative reporting under the reason of alleviating the poverty. Opposition parties are accused as conspirators to push back this development effort.

The analysis is given based on the social responsibility theory of the press; the theory selected for the study. Finally, it is concluded that the Ethiopian Television is not in a position to entertain diverse opinion under the present situation because the journalists are working under serious political interferences that has made difficult to entertain various contending political views especially view points that are different from that of the ruling party.

5.2 Conclusion

The value and power of freedom of the press is to bring out the open differences between individuals and groups and to sharpen their ideas in a peaceful atmosphere. The fact that in such a situation differences come out in the open should neither surprise nor frighten us.

Freedom of the press has been guaranteed by the constitution in Ethiopia since 1995. Censorship of the press is also explicitly prohibited. This initiative was an expression of commitment to ensure the democratic function of the media in the process of developing democratic society in the country. However, there are discrepancies between the initiative on the paper and its practical implementation. What we observe now is a tendency of the government that stifles freedom of the media.

This conclusion may offend some people who are denied their expectation by the finding of this study. But the reality on the ground is different as indicted by the study.

The direct censorship which is coupled with the serious self-censorship has turned the journalists and the media house into the toothless bulldog.

After more than a decade long promise for the democratic media that can accommodate diversity, censorship that is imposed by the government authorities has remained the problem particularly in government monopolized and operated Ethiopian Television. The ruling party directly assigns its members to the media as journalists and in the management. In fact it is constitutional right in Ethiopia to be a member of any political party. But for journalists political party membership contradicts with the ethical principles of journalism. Journalists with partisan political outlook may not be fair to viewpoints that are different from theirs. Either they want to favor their party or they are forced to do so by the party structure. In other words it could lead to conflict of interests.

Thus the major concern is what input do the government media contribute to democratize the Ethiopian society. A prerequisite for democracy is the independence of the media to entertain diverse opinion. Only truly free and critical media can entertain diverse opinion, provide alternative views, and scrutinize the activities of the power holders to make them accountable to the people.

It is generally believed that a free media has the power to mold public opinion, which considered as the engine that keeps the wheel of democracy turning. Witnessing the power of opinion and the role of the media Boutross- Ghali (1998: 24) notes that "for the past two centuries it was *law* that provided the source of authority for democracy [but] to day law seems to be replaced by *opinion* as the source of authority, and the media serves as the arbiters of public opinion." This is the clear deficiency of government media in Ethiopia. Because the media and its journalists that live under tight imposed censorship and self- censorship could not be the arbiters of diverse opinions.

The media that is not socially responsible could not be the agents of democracy. Under present conditions, the government run Ethiopian Television seems has no commitment or power to the public service. It is restricted to serving the narrow interests of politicians in power to the exclusion of different views. The media for

which the executive body assigns its party members by any parameter could not act as a public watchdog. It cannot raise issues at the core of democratic development.

Above all, for Ethiopia censorship in the broadcast media like television could be more devastating .A majority of people are illiterate, poor and live in rural areas with no access to private newspapers that provide relatively alternative and critical issues. The print media owned by private persons make little difference. On the other hand, there are no private broadcasters to reach the illiterate majority. Thus, only one version of reality could reach the public from government monopolized broadcast media. More over, what the people receive about the opposition political parties from government media is the distorted one. This could undermine the popularity and acceptance of opposition parties, which could finally cripple the development of multi- party politics in the country.

In general, it can be concluded in Ethiopia democratic media have not been realized yet. Those who hold the monopoly of television still make great efforts to exclude viewpoints that are critical or objectionable to them. This could take Ethiopia a long way to achieve democracy that its people desire.

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Appendix-1

QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE RESPONDED BY ETV JOURNALISTS

The aim of this questionnaire is to obtain information needed to conduct MA thesis research for the fulfillment of masters' degree in journalism and communication. This program is carried out by the school of journalism and communication organized under Addis Ababa University. Since your accurate response is very valuable for the success of the study, you are kindly requested to respond honestly and genuinely. The researcher promises your response will not be used for any other purposes. Thank you in advance.

Part I

Notice: - Please answer the following questions by ticking "✓" in the box in front of your answer.

1. Your job title

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Editor | <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant editor | <input type="checkbox"/> Editor-in-chief |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reporter | <input type="checkbox"/> senior reporter | |

2. Education: _____

3. Experience

1-5 Years

6-10 Years

11 years and above

Part - II

Please answer the following questions by "Circling" one of the given choices and /or by writing on the blank spaces.

1. What criteria are often used in ETV to select news? (For editor only)

- a. The professional news value judgment
- b. The propaganda value for the government or the ruling party.
- c. Others _____

2. What types of news reporting is more encouraged in ETV?

- a. Investigative or critical reporting.
- b. Developmental reporting that deals with success issues
- c. Others _____

3. What contents of news stories are often given more attention in ETV?

- a. Contents that show successes development policies and programs
- b. Contents dealing with critical matters that investigate weaknesses or malpractices
- c. Both are fairly presented
- d. Others _____

4. Where do you often get the issues you report in ETV?

- a. From the speeches on various workshops and statements of the government authorities.
- b. From what you plan and investigate yourself?
- c. Others _____

5. Are there conditions under which certain news stories are prevented from being broadcasted?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

6. Are there conditions under which journalists in ETV are forced to broadcast news stories regardless of their professional decisions? a. Yes b. no c. I don't know

7. If your answer for question No 5 and 6 is "yes" explain the reasons why news could be prevented or the journalists could be forced to broadcast?

8. Are there situations in which the government authorities or politicians provide oral or written guidelines to the journalists before reporting? a. Yes b. no c. I don't know

9. If your answer for question No. 8 is "yes" do the guidelines forces the journalists to compromises their professional integrity? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know

10. Do the Bosses hand ready-made questions to the journalists to forward to the government authorities or politicians? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
11. If your answer for question No. 10 is "yes", do the questions limit the information that the journalists could investigate? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
12. Do the government authorities or politicians order the journalists by Telephone or in person to fulfill their demands? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
13. If you answer for question No.12 is "yes" does the order suppress the information the journalists suppose to investigate? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
14. Are there special rewards for the journalists for being 'obedient' or compliant with the need of the politicians? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
15. If your response for question No. 14 is 'yes' what are the kinds of rewards? (More than one answer is possible). a. Rank promotion b. frequent field assignment
c. Foreign trips with officials' d. Financial Rewards
e. Others _____
16. Are there special reporting to which journalists is assigned for being faithful party member? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
17. If your answer for question No. 16 is "yes", do you think the intention of the assignment is to control the information that reaches the audience? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
18. Are the contents of the news stories reviewed by the people in the management? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
19. If your answer for question No. 18 is "yes" do they change the contents of the story? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
20. Are the journalists' punished for broadcasting or not broadcasting story even though the decision is professionally right? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
21. If your answer for question No. 20 is "Yes" what are the forms of punishments? (More than one answer is possible) a. Dismissing from the job b. denying promotion
c. Warning d. Fining salary e. others. _____
22. Based on your answer for question No. 21, are the journalists punished for not meeting the demands of government authorities? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
23. Do you know or suspect your work mates or bosses as faithful party members? a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
24. If your answer for question No. 23 is "yes" what do you feel about their presence? a. Fear b. self- confidence
c. No any feeling d. Others _____

6. How does the presence of faithful party members in ETV affect you and other journalists in doing the professional duty?
7. As the journalists in ETV punished for not fulfilling the demands of Politicians? What are the punishments often imposed?
8. The journalists recently assigned to ETV have been named 'UNMEE' by the previously existing journalists. What does that mean? And why it is given?