

***PARTICIPATION IN NEWSROOM DECISION-MAKING:
A STUDY ON ROLE STRESS, THE CASE OF ERTA***

BY

WAGAYE BEKELE

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By

Wagaye Bekele

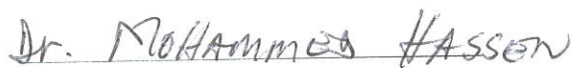
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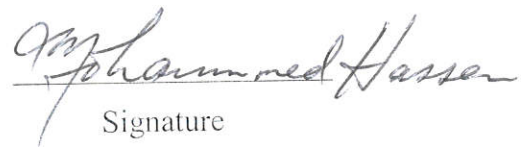
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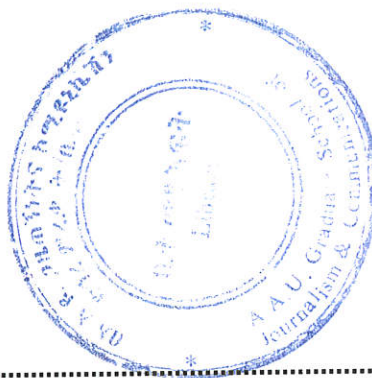


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Abstract

The attributes of role stress are examined in this study review. In particular, it focuses on the level of role stress perceived by newsroom journalists in relation to participation in newsroom decision-making. Role stress is often the result of mergers; acquisitions and restructuring that make employees unsure of their new job responsibilities the study attempts to look at what level journalists perceived role stress in the newsroom in light with ERT's changing process.

The newsroom was chosen to be a focus of the study because it is where the entire journalistic work almost carried out and the one that may be highly affected by the change process. In light with the restructuring process, the study examined the role stress effect on the newsroom journalists.

The research count on three independent variables to determine the relationship between the perceived level of role stress namely role conflict and role ambiguity in newsroom decision-making process. Based on this, the study also attempted to answer relevant questions such as at whether journalists and editors in the newsroom are certain about their authority, responsibilities and amount of autonomy they have experienced in newsroom decision-making as well as newsroom task decision.

The research that evolves a survey method, found a potential stress gap, especially in areas that were most important for working journalists in newsroom decision-making and newsroom tasks decisions. The research that employed combination methods of setting questionnaire and focus group discussion-was carried out among randomly selected 100 ERTA journalists.

Where journalistic tasks are concerned, it was found that generally respondents of the study have little say in the day-to-day newsroom tasks decision in which they are involved. However, journalists only found some autonomy in some journalistic tasks such as amount of time in writing a story and length of the story while management have the final say in most of the news tasks. The level of role conflict and role ambiguity experienced by journalists with regard to decision-making in the newsroom was thus, found at highest level.

In conclusion, the study suggested the importance of participation in influencing role conflict and role ambiguity and with greater participation in decision-making that employees were able to reduce grievances and differences. Hence, reducing role conflict and role ambiguity in return made employees able to clarify certain roles and actions. In addition, some practical intervention strategies for reducing role ambiguity and role conflict are discussed. Finally, future research recommendations that seem to flow from the two dimensions of role stress literature are outlined for the reader

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Background of the study

Ethiopian Radio and Television independently came into existence in 1936 and 1963 respectively Leykun Berhane (1997) . The two media houses have passed through several organizational structural and operational changes since to date for different reasons. Each change requirements varied according to the nature of the governments that owned the media houses at different times.

Shaping the media houses to serve their respective political interest was a common drive among all regimes that necessitated change. During the period of Emperor Haileselassie and the Dergue regime, the Ethiopian Radio and Television reduced either to glorification of the monarch or to socialist ideological gramophone, respectively. The incumbent, nevertheless, at least tried to introduce reforms without losing its control completely.

We can classify the change causes of the organization as internally and externally driven . The needs to expand transmission's reach out, improvement of production quality and service provision were attributed to internal changes drives. On the other hand, coping with technological advancement, internal politics, competition, audience's pressures count for external drives. For instance, the Somalia and Tigrigna languages radio service were introduced as a result of Ethio-Somalia war and Eritrea civil war respectively.

A replacement of obsolete technologies as Makuria (2005) stated:

“In 1936, Radio Ethiopia started its transmission with a 7-kilo watt short wave transmitter that hardly covered the scale of Addis Ababa. Immediately, the Italians took control of the station and used it as an instrument of colonial propaganda.”

In 1941, after the withdrawal of Italian troops, the Ethiopian government used the Radio for transmitting Amharic news, government statements and music (Basic Information's of Ethiopian Radio and television, 2000:4).

In 1963, Foreign and Domestic Broadcast Services started. For example: the Voice of the Gospel started broadcasting news and programs in English and French languages to West Africa and Europe audiences and in Arabic Swahili languages to Middle East, East and North Africa audiences.

After 1970, the Radio Ethiopia made a change to overcome the transmission problems of its formative years and up-graded its transmission capacity to 40 percent. This enabled the Radio Ethiopia broadcast coverage reach-out to almost all the major cities, towns and villages of the country.

Following the 1974 Revolution, the Dergue regime changed the name of Radio Ethiopia' to 'Voice of the Revolutionary Ethiopia. As Makuria (2005:10) indicated, however, the name Radio Ethiopia was restored soon after the incumbent government came to power in 1991.

Meanwhile, the idea of introducing television service was initiated in Ethiopia on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Emperor Hailieslasie, which took place in 1963 (Basic Information of Ethiopian Radio and Television, 2000:19). Leykun (1997: 1) mentioned that television transmission initially introduced in Ethiopia during Organization of the African Unity (OAU) was founded here in 1963.

A year later, being installed by Thomson Television International Limited (a British firm) on November 2, 1964, the Ethiopian Television Agency (ETV) started broadcasting its program in two languages (English and Amharic).

The British firm Thomson International Limited managed and provided technical (key) personnel for a period of three years to start the broadcasting, maintenance and training of technical staff. ETV, which had then started with 29 staff members currently have around seven-hundred technical and journalist's work force.

As Leykun (1997: 28) stated the first organizational structure of Ethiopian Television served from 1965- 1976 (referred Appendix lx) until the separate structure of Ethiopian Radio and Television were merged became one organization in 1991.

1.1 *The ERTA Newsroom*

The newsroom of the Agency is repeatedly restructured for many years in order to meet its goals. From 1965 to 1976, the Ethiopian Radio and Television newsroom functions were not separated from production activities and it was accountable to the program section (see appendixes IV and V). After the Dergue regime came to power in 1974, the news desks of Radio and Television stations started broadcasting news in Oromiffa and Tigrigna languages from Addis Ababa. Before 1974, news in Tigrigna was to be broadcasted from Asmara- the seceded Eritrea.

Then in 1991, the radio and television stations news desks reorganized while maintaining their separate entity and started broadcasting news in Tigrigna and Oromffia languages from Addis Ababa.

In 2006, a new organizational structure was designed and the radio and television stations were merged. The whole idea of the merge was to provide efficient editorial and advertorial service with effective utilization of the available human resources. The latter signifies, that journalists from both medium supposed to serve both TV and Radio as bi-media while they stand accountable to their respective mediums. (Transforming ERTA Journalists to Multi-Skill Professionalism and implementation: organizational document, 2006).

Inadequacy in providing quality news and management inability of carrying out newsroom tasks Document et al. (2006), were the main reasons that the Agency was compelled to implement the new structure in order to bring about the eventual audiences' and stakeholders' satisfaction.

To this end, ERTA replaced the existing departmentalized structure by process based structure. Concerning the human resources, new faces of journalists and managers were brought in the newsroom. In addition, the newsroom information process made to be supported by massive technological expansion program.

This technology expansion program designed to digitalize ERTA's production and transmission as well, (ERTA Restructuring Document 2009).

To communicate the change objectives and the eventual organizational and employees benefit, various training and workshops were organized and conducted. As part of human development program, bi-media and multi-skilled journalism was introduced for the first time in the history of the organization.

Stephen Lacy, Ardyth B. Sohn and Jan Le Blanc Wicks (1993: 29) describe any discussion of media organizational structure must focus on defining tasks, communication, and authority relationships, and accordingly the desired function is to be accomplished. However, ERTA's this multifaceted effort can not stopped the usual flow of audiences and stakeholders criticisms. From the stakeholders, including the government body for alleged inefficiency and ineffectiveness restructuring

The government as one of stakeholders often accuses the Agency's for alleged insufficient promotion of policies and strategies, as ERTA was expected to function as a link between the government and the people (Government Media Common Editorial policy, 2002).

The public, on their part, has never ceased to express dissatisfaction. As some audience surveys suggested, the public is not satisfied with what ERTA has broadcasted. According to some audiences and viewers comment (Compiled telephones and letters audiences' complaints, 2003), ERTA's most news and program products were either lacking their preferences or biased in their presentation.

The other key stakeholder, the opposition political parties, criticized the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency as biased in broadcasting and providing news out of context while it had to serve both the government and the opposition fairly as stated in the Proclamation (Ethiopian Radio and Television Proclamation No. 114/2003).

1.2 Statement of the problem

A number of empirical research on roles has shown that high levels of role stress particularly role conflict and role ambiguity results in unfavorable outcomes like the participation in decision-making and in task decision; leadership behavior that include leader's supportiveness and leader's emphasis for task and structure; deadline pressure and nature of task characteristics.

The personal factors that applied to the role of receivers or focal person are individual's age, years of working experience; years of formal education and salary. Other personal variables used to describe the general demographics of the respondents are including variables such as gender, job status, highest educational attainment, departmental transform and job promotion; propensity to leave the profession; race and martial status.

The interpersonal factors include communication relationship and interpersonal relationship. Hardy (1982) identifies four most frequently cited instances of role ambiguity in a workplace; these include uncertainty about one's work in evaluation, uncertainty about the scope of one's advancement, uncertainty about the scope of one's responsibility and uncertainty about others expectations of one's performance.

According to several meta-analyses conducted across various discipline studying role stress, except Paridah Ibrahim's "Predictor of Role Stress Among Malaysian Journalists" as they are found that the studies have not dealt directly to role senders but by indirectly measuring the focal person's perception of conflict and ambiguity in the role expectation of senders (Van Sell, 1981; Fisher and Gitelson, 1983). In similar way, this study also attempts measuring the perception of role stress among ERTA newsroom journalists.

According to Luthans (1992), the result of role conflict and role ambiguity is stressful for the individual and there is a substantial body of research indicating undesirable outcomes for the individual and the organization.

Whilst, Handy (1982) said role conflict occurs when the behavioral expectations for a position differ between two or more parties. Therefore, common role conflicts in organizations arise with conflicting demands on workers from superiors, subordinates and co-workers.

Role conflict therefore can be seen as resulting from certain inconsistencies or incompatibilities between what a people is expected to do and what he aspire to do. The expectation of each role may be quite clear and the expectation is compatible with the role, but the roles themselves may be in conflict.

Another crucial expectation that shape the definition of role are that of the individual himself who is the focal person, as identified in most role models and theories. If the individual's conception of his role is unclear or his conceptions of his role differ from that of the others in his role set, there will be a degree of role ambiguity. When an individual experiences role ambiguity, it does not mean that he is not functioning in the organization. In actuality, he is functioning, but the ambiguity may lead to role stress.

Hardy et al. (1982) identifies four most frequently cited instances of role ambiguity in a work place; these include uncertainty about one's work evaluation, uncertainty about the scope of one's advancement, uncertainty about the scope of one's responsibility and uncertainty about others expectations.

As it was stated in the limitation part of the paper, regrettably there were no previous local researches on the topic to be found.

On the other hand to mitigate the incessant stakeholders criticisms that discussed in the introduction, the media house (ERTA), had taken implementation of new organizational structure as the only solution. As Allan. B, (2006) said, change is constant in electronics media and therefore, managers must be able to respond quickly to change.

If ERTA's newsroom superiors fail to handle the resultant role stress, only by implementing organizational structure in the newsroom it will hardly achieved the anticipated successes. .

Apart the physical chang ERTA should understand that human side might contribute to the unfulfilled expectation of its stake holders. Therefore, ERTA management must be sure of employee's situation i.e. whether they are working with reduced role stress towards the change goal. To this regards, the managers should be able to understand the internal and external environment that could put journalists in the newsroom under a stressful situation.

ERTA newsroom where the entire journalistic work is almost carried out could be the one that may be affected by the change process either positively or negatively. For instance, role conflict and role ambiguity often occurred as a result of restructuring where employees become unsure of their new job responsibilities. Not only that, the autonomy journalists have in newsroom decision-making could be a determining factor to the level of journalists role stress perception.

With this regards, the study will highlights factors such as participation in decision-making and participation in task decision that could affect role conflict and role ambiguity.

According to the role theorist, (Katz and Kahn, 1978) members of an organization may experience an increase in role ambiguity when there are uncertainties about one's task responsibilities, unclear organizational goals and conflicting personal values and professional needs.

Likewise, exploring whether ERTA newsrooms journalists are being experiencing an increase role conflict and role ambiguity because of a pressing deadline pressure, decreasing autonomy, a low level participation in decision on matter that affect them; pressing demand from leaders; and incompatible directive and policies were the research undertaking.

The study based on its finding, the study then, would suggest to its subject-ERTA-that with greater participation, it can reduce employees' grievances and differences hence, enhance their performance towards the newsroom goals. It will also tries to show how a greater autonomy in participation enables employees to clarify certain role, action and reduced role ambiguity consequently.

Furthermore, in order for the media organization to cope with the existing role stress, if at all it exists and experienced by journalists in the newsrooms, the study will suggests the importance of applying some initiative and freedom of decision among journalists. It is anticipated that this research will come up with findings of factors that lead newsroom journalists to role stress and will have an implication for a manner in which the role stress are to be managed both by individual and the organization.

Consequently, the resultant findings are thought to be helpful for ERTA to minimize the existing potential negative impacts the role stress has on journalists' newsroom life. To fill this gap, the research was looked at the role stress dimension of the problem.

Thus, taking into consideration the non-existent of relevant local studies in relation to the identified gap in past newsroom research and role studies, the paper attempts to identify the nature of relationship between journalists perception of role stress (particularly role conflict and role ambiguity) with selected organizational, interpersonal and personal variables. Based on an empirical research, the study attempts to looks at the significant predictor of journalists' perception of role stress in ERTA newsroom.

1.3 Assumptions

The study assumed that a higher-level of role stress existed in ERTA newsroom because journalist's participation in newsroom decision-making was minimal.

The role-taking assumption in the ERTA newsroom may account for organizational, personal and interpersonal factors that directly have influence on employee's decision to accept roles that are conferred upon them by their employers (role senders) and the manner in which role stress factors impacts is incorporated into the assumption underpinning in Organizational Role Theory.

1.4 Objective of the study

The broad objective of the research is to explore and determine the relationship between the perceive level of role stress among ERT journalists in newsroom decision-making that could enhanced by the change process and based on the findings of the study eventually provides recommendation.

1.4.1 Specific objectives:

- To examine the effect of ERTA's internal news decision mechanism critically to the role behavior of newsroom journalists.
- To examine the role conflict and ambiguity ERTA journalists and editors experienced with the role they are expected to perform.
- To assess the resultant level of role conflict exhibited by journalists and editors in relation to the question of autonomy in news decision-making.
- To explore the resultant role stress influences on journalists effort and effective performance in achieve the newsroom change goals.

1.5 Research Questions

In light of the research opportunity identified above, the narrow focus of this research is to determine the relationship between the perceive level of role stress namely role conflict and role ambiguity experienced by journalists with regard to participation in newsroom decision-making.

Based on this broader question, the study also attempts to answer the following relevant questions.

- Are journalists and editors in the newsroom certain about their authority and their responsibilities? If they are not why?
- Are ERTA journalists and editors having autonomy to participate in news decision-making process and newsroom task decision?
- What are the perceived level of role stress namely role conflict and role ambiguity that are experienced by journalists because of a limited participation in newsroom decision-making?
- Does ERTA newsroom decision-making process creates un healthy newsrooms environment?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Role conflict and role ambiguity are often the result of mergers, acquisitions and restructuring Dimmick. J. (1974), that makes employees unsure of their new job responsibilities. Thus, ERTA needs to investigate the ability of its managers to contend the level of role stress journalists perceive in the newsroom.

In any organization, both employees and employers encounter challenges or problems at work that require them to choose alternative course of action in order to make objective and reasoned decisions that normally achieved through adequate information.

Moreover, as discussed at length in the introduction part of the study, ERTA tried overtime varies restructuring to mitigate the incessant stakeholders criticisms. This longstanding criticism of the stockholders was focused on their dissatisfaction in news product that could emanate from those journalists who have working in stressful situation. If this is the case, ERTA should address the human side of the problem. Restructuring that does not consider the human factors is doomed to fail. Thus, ERTA must make sure that this important component was given an equal attention and understanding in the organizational change process.

If managers understand the complexities of internal and external environments that could put journalists under stressful situations, they would be able to make effective decisions that could alleviate the problem.

Manageress's conceptual knowledge and problem-solving skills are equally important to the desired change. At this change time what ERTA needs is managers who can adopt to change and lead journalists to the attainment of the newsrooms goals. ERTA, than ever before seeking such qualities from its newsroom managers. In addition, it is a high time for researcher with an interest of studying role stress in media employees.

This changing situation coupled with its resultant stressor also provided an opportunity for a researcher to examine newsroom operations and journalist's behaviors in relation to role stress.

Employee's relation and participation in decision-making process are essential in the effort ERTA has engaged in bringing audiences' and viewers' satisfaction. Thus, the researcher made the newsroom journalists and editors the subject of the study on investigating their perceived level of role conflict and role ambiguity in the newsroom participative decision-making.

Any assessment of the process of news decision would be shortsighted if it failed to take into account the various factors such as division of power and labors in the news organization; organizational rules and editorial policies; news format and presentation.

With this understanding, the researcher believes it is important critically to analyze the ERTA's newsroom internal mechanism in relation to positive and negative effects on role behavior of the journalists. Thus, the study made to look at journalist's participation in newsroom decision-making and newsroom tasks its focus.

News decision-making in the newsroom comes in various forms, which include news evaluation and selection by the news staff, the expenditure of time and resources for newsgathering, and allocation of space for the presentation of the news.

Ethiopia Radio and Television which is under a changing environment can not stand exceptional to these facts. Therefore, ERTA newsroom could be affected by the organizational change that required a fundamental structural and operational transformation.

According to Luthans (1992), the result of role conflict and role ambiguity is stressful for the individual. There are also a substantial numbers of researches indicating undesirable outcomes for the individual and the organization (Handy 1982).

Thus, the research in its finding will offer ERTA's managements to mediate the identified negative effects of role stress and to scale-up the positives.

In order to lead journalists to the completion of the newsroom goals, ERTA needs a strong newsroom leadership bestowed with essential management qualities. Otherwise, such deficiency could be an impendent to the change successes. Thus, the study reviewed whether superior's behaviors were contributing toward newsroom poor management and as a consequence to induces stress among journalists.

The issue of role ambiguity and role conflict are significant and warrant continued study as Fisher and Gitelson (1983) note that the consequences of role stress have a potentially important cost implication for organization. They further note that whereas the cost of turnover and substandard performance are obvious, the cost and attitudinal difficulties are less direct and just beginning to be understood. Ultimately, management and employees will benefit from this greater understanding in designing intervention strategy that may help to alleviate problems, if necessary,

This organizational dissatisfaction with supervision, increased tension, and turnout intentions. However, the study has not the intention of exploring the importance of role stress in relation to its outcomes such as journalist's low involvement and satisfaction. Thus, the researcher hopes that this study will have the following general advantages:

- Make ERTA management learn and take the necessary corrective measures against causes of role stresses among newsroom journalists that are identified by the study.
- The organization can use the finding as an input to rectify its undergoing newsroom change process and as potential remedy that could reduced role conflict and role ambiguity in the organization.

- It will give direction to those who are interested in establishing other dimensions of role stress.
- So also can be used as initial point for scholars who are interested in this area.
- It is anticipated that this research will have an implication on the manner in which the role stress are to be managed both by individual and the organization in order to minimize the potential negative impacts on ERTA's journalists newsroom life.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The non-existence of single local researches on the matter at hand could be a limitation to the study. The absence of local study either at national and organizational levels may casts a shadow on the study's lack of local color. For this reasons the researcher had feared lest the study influenced by outside experiences.

However, to minimize the possible cultural influence, the researcher takes some caution such as resorting in reviewing few available workshops proceedings.

On may argue that journalists' experiences are universal, however, cultural difference can cause a disparity among journalists level of role stress perception.

The research in the area of role stress and cultural diversity are a broad research topic that stands by itself. The role incumbents become more diverse, the question becomes diverse too. For instance, role conflict and role ambiguity appear to be related to lower job satisfaction, job involvement and performance but with what type of cultural people is a relevant question here to be answered.

However, the study have not the intention of exploring the importance of role stress in relation to its outcomes such as journalists low involvement and satisfaction, and more importantly the studies have hardly revealed what are the related variables that predict role stress.

The Proclamation of the National Salary Increment that benefits the public employees that occurred amidst the research could affect the study.

The subject of study so happened to be one of the beneficiaries from the increment may affect the research in some way. Although it has been a common knowledge that employees have been dissatisfied on their salary, the research may be affected by the increment negatively.

CHAPTER TWO: RELEVANT LITERARY REVIEW

2.1 Decision-making

Organizations exist in order to pursue goals through the most efficient and available means. In any organization, both employees and employers encounter challenges or problems at work. Such challenges require them to choose alternative course of action in order to make objective and reasoned decisions, normally that can be achieved through adequate information (Conrad, 1990).

Ethiopia Radio and Television, which has currently undergone a massive structural change, cannot stand exceptional to this fact. The ultimate aim of the structural change in ERTA that assumed audience's ultimate satisfaction in turn entails effective decision both at organization and newsroom level. Fulfilling journalists need is equally important to its newsroom successes.

With out maintaining positive employee's relationship and their participation in decision-making, a media organization can hardly satisfy its audiences test and preference. In order to provide quality news products that could satisfy audiences, a conceptual knowledge and analytical skills of the decision makers also needed. Thus, to ERTA's anticipated newsroom success such qualities have of a paramount importance.

Newsroom staff may have limited capacity of obtaining and processing information. Nonetheless, journalists and editors in newsroom need adequate information and analytical skill to reach at valid decision.

For these reasons, people in ERTA newsroom may rarely have enough information and processing skill to reach at sound decisions that go to the satisfaction, taste and preference of its audiences. If the journalists are working under their training ability, they could feel uncertainty about their job.

However, to the completion of these newsroom goals, a fair conceptual knowledge of decision-making and problem solving skill are essential to ERTA managers and journalists.

Nevertheless, different perspectives of the justification of PDM are not an inherent goal of this literature review but it should be taken into account that different perception of PDM can affect the structure and its deployment at organizational level. Thus, reviewing some literatures and researches with regard to definition, rationale, and perspectives of participation in decision-making in relation to role stress, will give a fair theoretical framework on the topic.

2.1.1 Definition and rational

Participation in decision-making (PDM) is a central topic in organizational studies:

“It is difficult to specify the attribute of the organization with out, asking who makes what kind of decision, and what procedure are used to make them.” (Dachler and Wilpert, 1978).

The field is quite broad and the perspective quite different. Locke and Shweiger (1979), in their literature review on the topic, found that there is little consensus on its exact meaning.

PDM has been defined an active ego involvement, a specific managerial style , a legally mandated mechanism for employees to influence organizational decision, group involvement or group decision making ,equalization of influence or power sharing and

empowerment. On top of these, finally some writers see PDM as includes delegation while others do not.

The Locke and Schweiger's (1979), definition of PDM (to which we referred) is joint decision-making. This definition is enough generally to include all levels of members and enough to exclude delegation, which is not sharing in common with others, but rather an explicitly division of labor that is determined hierarchically.

All the different perspectives have a clear element in common. They refuse work organization according to command-and-control hierarchies, where authority and responsibility are well defined and decision and execution are separated. Proponent of this old management paradigm believed that the average untrained worker of their days did not know as much the best way to do his job.

The basic rationales of PDM according (Blank Gregersen, 1997) are two. The first assumes egalitarianism-a moral ideal individual should have the right and ability to participate in decision that affects their lives. According to Democratic Theory, self-determination is seen as a morale value that should occur in all social, economic and political organizations, including workplace.

From a socialist perspective, the higher degree of specialization and division of labor – seen as a basic feature of a capitalistic production system- has the result of-powerlessness and apathy of the producer. So people should “become economically liberated by participating actively and creatively in production process and ultimately controlling it” Dachler and Wilpert, 1978:p.6).

The second rationale, which could be labeled as pragmatic and human relation rationale, assumes that PDM is considered as a means to achieve higher productivity, efficiency and profit. This is because PDF is assumed to increase effectiveness that assumed satisfaction, motivation, commitment, group cohesion and identification (Mugjuca, 1986).

Further more by involving who actually perform the basic transformational process of the organization; it is assumed that PDM allows the acquisition of more information, together with a consequent increase in decision quality (Purser and Cabana, 1998).

Most of the literature and research on PDM deals with the correlation between PDM and organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

In ERTA case, the major success anticipates from the change process is audience satisfaction that come from effective and efficient delivery of its editorial (news and programs) and advertorial products.

2.1.2 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Advancement and Decision-making

New capacities and innovations are the other dimension that needs attention in relation to efficient and effective media decision. Morgan (1986) argued that if organization were indeed a product or reflection of information-processing capacity, then new capacity and innovation would lead to new organizational forms. Technology change has created new media industries, new way of developing information, and new ways of promoting and selling media products.

ICT has changed the way organization and work structured. The main cause of change is the ability of ICT to interconnect what was divided through its networking properties For instance, computer- mediated communication technology play the leading role in the process of change due to its diffusion. E-mail, to its characteristics of rapid transformation replay and text based communication (Gartom and Wellman, 1993), has been associated with an increase of democracy in organization.

In the media industries, the introduction of computers and micro processing has created radical change in the nature and style of the organization. The technology changes have created new media industries, new ways of developing information, and new ways of promoting and selling media products. These changes create major issues for media managers , especially those at the decision-making levels.

According to several scholars, ICT is supposed to enhance the opportunity for employees direct participation in decision-making process. However, this approach has been criticized to the little role that it assigned to social context in influencing actual participation.

In ERTA case, the information and communication technologies that were introduced as result of the change process requirement, (ERTA Technology Development Study Document 2007) indeed influences the media house to assume a new organizational form. The transformation from analog to digital technology has an immense impact on obtaining and processing news information; news production, and transmission.

Utilization of these new technologies in turn necessitated emergence of new departments in ERTA structure and new skilled professional in its working force. With these new information processing technologies, ERTA has anticipated efficiency in information processing and delivery, thereby warranting effective decision-making process.

The Technology Development and ICT departments were come into existence because of new technology introduction in ERTA organizational .The two departments require a huge capital and human resources placed at higher level of the organization hierarchy. The Online and Monitoring was the other new section to happen in the ERTA's newsroom because of ICT.

Structurally the Technology Development and the Information Technology came at the top of the power ladder that is next to the General Manager and led by Deputy General Manager while the ICT runs by director level. On-Line and Monitoring section with duties of monitoring and processing news information that eventually used by the newsroom is led by the managing editor. In addition, the section is responsible to selection and up-loading news on web site, that are thought the taste and preference of Ethiopia viewers living abroad.

These technological changes, however, may pose some challenges for media managers. These possible challenges could be resistance especially by those at the decision-making level. Unless ERTA managers, including the newsroom editors, constantly monitor and adopt themselves to new technologies the organization all-time efficiency and effectiveness cannot attained.

One has to wonder what impact technology will have on role ambiguity with the opportunities like e-mail, teleconference and information access via company internet or the internet (on-line) providing employees with information that will help to reduce or moderate their level of ambiguity or only be worse. This is an important question, since the level of information available today is cited in most stress studies as being a major contributor to role ambiguity (Swayer, 1992). Thus, basic media decisions are tied closely not only to obtaining adequate information but also require analytical skill of processing it.

2.1.3 Participation in Decision-Making (PDM) and communication

Participation and communication are correlated concepts in organizational theories. The more the communication (amount, social range, freedom of speech and supervisor's openness) the more the participation.. This view is consistent with Hirschman's Exist, Voice, Loyalty model (1970) which identify three main behavioral patterns.

Exist is the option that economic agents choose when they give up the relationship (for example when consumers change products, the firm changes suppliers, workers change firm); Voice, is expression of complaint, while loyalty is the behavioral pattern facilitated voice. Similarly Boulding (1974) states that “communication can only take place among equals”, that means communication is a process of mutual acknowledgment of each other,

2.1.4 Socio-political obligation of Media organizations and decision-making

Media organizations are considered as a service industry, whose prime objective is dissemination of news, analysis of events and molding public opinion to promote community welfare, national aspirations and economic progress (Faridah, 1984). Thus, media managers not only have to exercise their judgment and pursue managerial policies to ensure viability of their business, but also have to provide public service.

Media organizations in developing nations such as Ethiopia claimed also as having socio-political obligations, Founding Proclamation of Ethiopia Radio and Television, No.114, (2003). According to the Proclamation, one of the media purposes are, promoting government policies and regulations; development strategies and society's welfare. Thus, ERTA is expected to reflect the people's lives and their socio-political and economic environment in its media products.

The basic function of the Ethiopia Radio and Television Agency is to provide news, information, entertainment, education and other services to the public. Not only does ERTA manufacture news and information, which are tangible products, but also opt to function as a socio-political institution.

In the constitution formulated during the incumbent EPRDF regime, freedom of expression was guaranteed.

Since the existence of this constitution that came after the fall of dictatorial Dergue regime, ERTA has acquired a defacto pro-government position while cautiously act autonomous. As stated in the Press law, (1994), that "while the press must be given every opportunity to exercise its freedom to express its view, the right to free expression must be balanced against the larger interest of the nation". Freedom of expression is constitutionally guaranteed, however, media are restricted to some gray areas not to be crossed.

Some of the reasons given have to do with the internal sensitivity resulting from the country's multinational background and for the sake of national security and national building. To this regard, Government print and broadcast media are expected particularly to cooperate with government policy.

This public service obligation can also be seen from stakeholder theory perspective, which argues for the particularly appropriateness of such approach for the governance of news media. Some media theory deals with the dependence relationships between members of the community and the media outlets serving them. For instance, one of Malaysia's influential national daily news *Smith Times* follows its traditional Philosophy "the media will progress if the nation is progressive; journalism is stable if the nation is stable" (Paridah Ibrahim, 2001)

News companies outline an ethical frame work to guide news company executives. According to this theory of media system dependency, people are dependent upon the media system for various reasons, at all level of society in part because the media are "an industrialized society's primarily means of gathering, processing, and discriminating information to its individual members and to its institutions (Lodges. W. E. and Ball-Rokeach, 1993)

Based on this reasoning, supported by many philosophers including Plato and Lohm Stuart „Mill,” institutions or people have power to affect the lives of individuals, and that fact entails obligation to use that power in a way that is in the interest of the people they affect” (Elliott, 1986).

In light of this public obligation theory, Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency is heavily criticized in particular for not serving stakeholders: the public, the government and the political parties of the country. The managerial behavior, the ability of journalists and the ownership of the media have been taken as causes of the Agency’s failures to satisfy the need and preference of its stakeholders. However, the media house has tried over times various organizational and operational changes, their complaint remained unanswered to date.

2.2.1 Decision-Making in the Newsroom

There are various departments in media organizations, which are involved in various functions and decision-making. Nevertheless, one of the most important departments where crucial decisions to be made daily is a newsroom, which is considered the lifeline of media organization (Teel and Taylor1983)

According to Epstein (1973) the daily agenda of reports produced by the media organization and labeled as news is by no means a product of chance events; it is actually the result of crucial decisions made in the newsroom.

The process of selecting news is known as news decision-making process and it is a task executed in a hurry due to deadline pressure. Decision-making in newsroom comes in various forms which include news evaluation and selection by the news staff; assigning of reporters to a specific events; the allocation of space for the presentation of news and the like. These are among the numerous tasks to be undertaken by editors and journalists in their role as journalists.

The numerous tasks and decisions that need to be handled within the enormous deadline pressure in the newsroom are the major reasons that place media managers and journalists under constant stress, especially job-related stress and role stress.

Decisions are made by key decision-makers, namely, the editors, editorial managers and other chiefs in the editorial department. Although key decision making lies in the hands of top editors, from the researchers personal experience it appears that many reporters are also involved in the initial decision-making at specific stages, at news gathering and factual organization.

Thus, both editors and reporters have decision roles that give them some amount of autonomy within the realm of the journalists' profession. Studies by scholars have shown that journalists have a strong need for greater participation in news decisions (Epstein 1987; Johnston et al., 1976; Adam and Fish, 1987) and various studies on participation showed that lack of participation could be a major source of stress (French et al. 1960; French and Caplan 1972).

2.2.2 Role stress in organizations: causes of stress

Generally, stress is a term applied to the pressure people feel in life. The presence of stress at work is almost inevitable in many jobs. When pressure begin to build up stress is inevitable. When stress becomes excessive, employees develop varies system of stress that can harm their performance and health, and even threaten their ability to cope with the environment (David and Newstrom 1989).

On job stress is a real growing problem. Not only is it detrimental to industries but it is also expensive in human terms. Work related stress could be viewed from different management and organizational theories and perspectives.

Stressors can be divided into those that arise from within an individual (internal), and those that are attributable to the environment (external). Internal conflicts, non-specific fears, fears of inadequacy, and guilt feelings are examples of stressors that do not depend on the environment. Internal sources of stress can arise from an individual's perceptions of an environmental threat, even if no such danger actually exists.

Environmental stressors are external conditions beyond an individual's control. Bhagat (1983) has reported that external stressors can seriously impair work performance.

There are many aspects of organizational life that can become external stressors. These include issues of structure, management's use of authority, monotony, a lack of opportunity for advancement, excessive responsibilities, ambiguous demands, value conflicts, and unrealistic workloads. A person's non-working life (e.g., family, friends, health, and financial situations) can also contain stressors that negatively affect job performance.

Albrecht (1979) argues that nearly all stressors are emotionally induced. These are based on peoples' expectations, or ". . . the belief that something terrible is about to happen." (p. 83) Thus, emotionally induced stress arises from one's imagination. Albrecht believes that our society's number one health problem is anxiety, and that emotionally induced stress can be classified into four categories: 1) time stress, 2) anticipatory stress, 3) situational stress, and 4) encounter stress.

Time stress is always created by a real or imaginary deadline. Anticipatory stress is created when a person perceives that an upcoming event will be unpleasant. Situational stress can occur when a person is in an unpleasant situation, and worries about what will happen next. Encounter stress is created by contact with other people (both pleasant and unpleasant).

Further more, many situations in organizational life can be stressful. These include: 1) problems with the physical environment, such as poor lighting or excessive noise, 2) problems with the quality of work such as, lack of diversity, an excessive pace, or too little work, 3) role ambiguities or conflicts in responsibilities, 4) relationships with supervisors, peers, and subordinates, and 5) career development stressors, such as lack of job security, perceived obsolescence, and inadequate advancement.

Adverse working conditions, such as excessive noise, extreme temperatures, or overcrowding, can be a source of job-related stress. (McGrath, 1978). Reitz (1987) reports that workers on "swing shifts" experience more stress than other workers.

Orth-Gomer (1986) concludes that when three shifts are used to provide around-the-clock production, major disturbances in people may be unavoidable.

One source of environmental stress ignored in the organizational literature is non-natural electromagnetic radiation. Becker (1990) reports that the two most prominent effects of electromagnetic radiation are stress and cancers. Modern offices are filled with electronic devices that produce high level of radiation. These include computers, video monitors, typewriters, fluorescent lights, clocks, copying machines, faxes, electric pencil sharpeners, and a host of other electronic devices.

Human sensitivity to electromagnetic fields is well documented, and the design of future office equipment will most likely take emitted radiation into consideration..

Arnold and Feldman (1986) emphasize the deleterious effects of role ambiguity, conflict, and overload and under load. Role conflict has been categorized into two types: inter-sender and intra-sender. (Kahn, et al., 1964)

Inter-sender role conflict can occur when workers perceive that two different sources are generating incompatible demands or expectations. Intra-sender role conflict can arise when workers perceive conflicting demands from the same source.

Overload is frequently created by excessive time pressures, where stress increases as a deadline approaches, and then rapidly subsides. Under load is the result of an insufficient quantity, or an inadequate variety of work. Both overload and under load can result in low self-esteem and stress related symptoms, however, under load have also been associated with passivity and general feelings of apathy. (Katz and Kahn, 1978)

Personal factors are often a source of stress. These include career related concerns, such as job security and advancement, as well as financial and family concerns. Holmes and Rahe (1967) constructed a scale of forty-three life events, and rated them according to the amount of stress they produce. The most notable feature of their instrument is that many positive life changes (i.e., marriage, Christmas, vacations, etc.) are substantial sources of stress. Generally, stress appears to be a result of any change in one's daily routine.

French, Kast, and Rosenzweig (1985) believe that any situation that requires behavioral adjustment is a source of stress. Poor interpersonal relationships are also common sources of stress in organizations. Arnold and Feldman (1986) cite three types of interpersonal relationships that can evoke a stress reaction: 1) too much prolonged contact with other people, 2) too much contact with people from other departments, and 3) an unfriendly or hostile organizational climate. However, a situation that is stressful for one person might not be stressful for another.

Older workers seem to be less strongly affected by stressful situations (Parasuraman and Alutto, 1984). Individuals with high self-esteem and a tolerance for ambiguity are less prone to stress-related illnesses. (Arnold and Feldman, 1986). There is also a considerable evidence that a person's susceptibility to stress is dependent on his type of personality.

Type-A personalities (those that seek out fast-paced, challenging situations) often react to stress with hostility and anger, while Type-B personalities seem to have an immunity to the same stressors (Albrecht, 1979; Friedman and Rosenman, 1974; Matthews, 1982; Organ, 1979).

Several studies have found that individuals who believe they have control over their own fate (internals), perceive less stress in their work than those who believe their future is determined by other factors (externals). Genmill and Heisler (1972) reported that "internals" had more job satisfaction and perceived their jobs as less stressful than "externals". They also found that managers perceived stress was unrelated to education, length of time in their career, or their level in the hierarchy.

2.2.3 Organizational Role Theory-ORT

ORT focuses on the manner in which individuals accept and enact an array of roles in task oriented and hierarchical systems (Bidder, 1986; Madsen, 2002). In an organizational context, role behaviors are the recurring patterns of actions that are considered important for effective functioning in the particular organization (Biddle, 1986).

As suggested by Khan and Katz it focuses on the role within the organization and the interaction between roles and the impact this has on achieving organizational goals (1966). As a theory of human behavior, ORT is underpinned by four basic assumptions associated with Role-taking, Role-consensus, and Role-compliance and Role conflict.

The first assumption relates to role taking. This assumption states that an individual will take or accept a role that is conferred upon him by his employer. In the organizational context it is assumed an individual will take the role required by their employer when he accept an employment position (Katz and Kahn). Katz and Kahn also suggest that employee may be required to take multiple of role, and which could be problematic if the resultant complexity in an employee being unable to enact them according to the expectation of others.

The second assumption relates to the existence of role consensus between employers and their employees.

This assumption states that for organizations to function optimally there need to be consensus regarding the expectations of enacted role and the manner in which they interact. Role consensus serves to underpin the commonly held norms and conception that give rise to consistency in behavior and adherence to the organization culture (Giddie, 1986).

In the organizational context there is assumed consensus on behalf of the organization when they enter into an employment relationship. AS Kerr (1978) argues, the assumption is that organizational role are pre-defined, agreed upon and static and consensus can be reached. However, this fails to account for the complexity of role faced by employees, such as roles changing overtime and the taking of multiple roles (Kerr, 1978).

The third assumption relates to role compliance. This assumption states that each role has a set of behavior that are well defined and consistently adhered to by employees.

In the organizational context, this compliance underpinned by the job description that set the objective of each position and dictate the behaviors expected to achieves this objectives (Jackson & Shculer, 1992). When there is non-compliance the organization can try and enforce it through the use of 'overt' or 'convert' sanctions (Katz and Kahn, 1966).

The final assumption relates to the role conflict. This assumption states that conflict will occur when role expectation embedded in one role conflict with the expectations associated with another role (Miles & Perreault, 1976). While there has been widespread academic acceptance of the role-conflict construct and the scale to measure it (Rizzo, House & Lirtzman, 1970; Schuler, Aldag & Brief, 1977), other theories focused on the personal characteristics of the individual's type (Kahn et al., 1964), some theorists focus on the organizational elements such as participation in decision-making (Fisher & Gitelson, 1983). Regarding role conflict and role ambiguity, this study takes the personal, interpersonal and organizational variables.

2.2.4 Role Stress in ERTA Newsroom Decision-Making Process

Various studies on participation also showed that lack of participation could be a major source of stress (French et al., 1960; French and Caplan 1972). The fundamental distinction between the media and other industries is the factor that gives information organizations and their managers and workers major challenges. According to Lavin and Wackman, (1988) besides the enormous deadline pressure, the media managers and journalists have to encounter it every day. There are also some challenges that need daily attention:

1. Public policy as well as societal, legal, regulatory and ethical limits that are different, more visible and often more restrictive than those facing managers in non-media industries.
2. The production of a product with content that is brand new each time (newsroom products) it reaches the audience or the advertisement markets.
3. Managing a workforce whose most important employees are often headstrong and creative, possessing their own ideals about quality – employees who often have allegiance to their profession then to their employers; and
4. Making decisions in industries where a traditional line of demarcation is rapidly disappeared.

It is the very complexity of these constraints and responsibilities within the media organizations to place managers and journalists. Such is the nature of the media organizations that a slight occurrence of an expected important event can greatly enhance tension in the newsroom. ERTA newsroom, like their counterparts, functions under stressful conditions.

Tension before deadlines is something media journalists and managers deal with everyday. Apart from deadline pressure, journalists and media practitioners uphold certain obligations, ideal and responsibilities. The strain resulting from the conflict between the organizational demands and the needs of journalists to maintain autonomy and certain ideals that could result in role stress in the newsroom.

According to Cooks and Banks (1993), the psychological syndrome of stress and job burnout are linked to job expectation and performance, productivity, job satisfaction and longevity. In the case of newsroom decision-making, the position of journalists in terms of control they can exert the stress producing aspect of their job, is more complex one.

Although journalists are professionals whose work roles should not be closely prescribed by others. They are nonetheless the target for a wide range of expectation from role senders who often exerts a considerable amount of pressure , not from within the workplace but from outside. Two major areas in understanding role stress in general and in particular in media organizations are role conflict and role ambiguity.

Like many other organizations, ERTA newsroom operates in environments that requires speed and precision. Due to these speed and precision, news decision and selection usually made in a hurry.

According to Gans (1980) the newsroom is flooded by hundred of news choices everyday and if news makers try to treat all the news as formal decision, they would not meet the daily news deadline. In such situation, instead they normally resort to their quick intuitive judgment, which some ascribe to 'feel' or 'news sense'.

In this case, journalists and editors in ERTA newsroom use rules that help them to avoid excessive uncertainty about whether they made proper choices. For instance, if they replaced one story by others, an acceptable reason for doing so is at hand. These news manuals, however, designed for efficiency and to guarantee suitable news utilization in least amount of time and effort, journalists in the newsroom hardly use it.

It is also important to take into account the increasing centralized and bureaucratic nature of the news industry to assess the process of news decisions due to factors such as division of power and labor in the newsroom; organizational rules and editorial policy; news format and presentation.

2.2.4.1 Division of power and labor

Gazino and Coulson (1988) found from a research they have done on 125 in the United States two metropolitan newspapers that journalist's participation in a news decision-making is an important factor to improving the work environment. They found, however, this goal important for editors and reporters, was not implemented frequently. They also found the lack of communication between the editors and reporters in both newspapers.

Other research conducted by Gans (1980) on CBS, Evening News, NBC, Newsweek and Times over a ten years period found that top editors, producers as well as senior editors were often make suggestion about story design. They are also the one who scrutinize, filter, review and edit stories brought back by journalists.

According to rank and power, in the ERTA, the policy makers (the General Manager and the New and Current Affairs; Educational and Entertainment Deputy General Managers) are on top of the power structure, followed by top editors and reporters and complimented by the camera crew.

The staff of Online and Monitoring also have an indirect role in news decision. Hence, Based on the decision the top management made on the content, the top editors or producers with their assistants have a power to decide in what has to go on the air, at what length, and into what order.

The lower level staff, mostly journalists, has little autonomy over news selection. Thus, the power to kill or postpone a story with inadequate information, or that requires too much rewriting and editing is in the hand of top editors.

Decisions made in ERTA newsroom are based on key decision makers, namely the news editors and editorial manager who consisted the Editorial News Conference that held its meeting on daily basis.

This body of Editorial Conference that is chaired by the deputy general manager of the newsroom (bears an equivalent professional title of executive editor-in-chief) will make the decision that is consistent with the organization's overriding interests.

Although the key decisions are on the hand of top editors, from the researcher personal experience, reporters are also involved in the initial decision-making at specific stages, such as news gathering, factual news organization, length of story writing, time needed for writing story and editing. Thus, both editors and reporters have decision roles that give them some amount of autonomy within the realms of journalistic profession.

2.2.4.2 News format and presentation

It is at the final stage in the news representation that the news organizations exert ultimate control over the product (Paridah Ibrahim, 2001).

Before the story is broadcast; it is filtered, screened and edited by the designated individual in the news organization. According to Epstein (1973), the presentation process of television news faces tighter control by organization. Most reports are filmed hours in advance and sent for editing before going on air. Editor-in-chiefs thus have the opportunity to review the story, to instruct editors and reporters how to construct and narrate it. In addition, if editing fails to conform to organizational values, the editor-in-chief can kill the story.

The same goes to ERTA newsroom. The news editors have to gradually inculcate values through editorial conferences, reediting and "spiking" stories that failed to fit the established rules. Ultimately, whatever the discretion and autonomy a journalist feel he has, his story must be approved by a higher level before it is broadcast.

Besides the daily filtering and screening by the editors, the process of news selection is also influenced by availability of space. The number of airtime is fixed in advance by media managers in the higher hierarchy, in ERTA cases by the General Manager Office.

This is done according to 'newshole' requirements and advertisement projections. Usually due to limited space, the editorial and the advertising departments have to fight for what is available. This also means that certain news by certain reporters has to be edited heavily, shortened or simply discarded.

More often, several news have to be put aside to make way for advertising that have made prior booking for advertising spaces or vice versa.

2.2.4.3. Organizational Rules, Editorial policy and other policies and their impact in Decision-making

To coordinate the efforts of hundreds of individual journalists, editors, producers and technical teams into a news product that meets certain standards and pre-set schedules, a news organization requires a set of internal rules and policies.

Although (Paridah Ibrahim 2001) the rules and policies in organization are less stringent and informally stated, it is felt that some form of operative rules are necessary at every level of a news organization.

Every media organizations have policy. Policies can be defined as the consistent orientation that is shown in newspaper editorial and news columns (Breed, 1955). Thus, journalist working in the newsroom are expected to adhere or conform to the policy.

In ERTA, organizational and editorial policies are something journalists must learn more or less informally. Some studies conducted on Malaysia local organizations suggest that these policies are not clearly spelled out (Faridah,1990: Liew,1990). Looking from the role theory perspective, these conditions in turn make journalists unsure of their roles.

Some of these rules apply to the daily responsibilities undertaken by reporters and editors to fill up the newshole. These rules act as guideline for editors and reporters in filtering, evaluating information and making decision.

Similarly, editorial managers must imposed guidelines on those involved in the production of news so that they can meet the budgets, schedule, and other standards that they are responsible for maintaining (Epstein, 1973, p.42).

Although operative rules may not predetermine certain news stories the organization feels that they need these rules to maintain media credibility, For instance, media organizations including ERTA predetermine that any news about the leader of the country, President or Prime Minister will be covered. However, such operating rules, which are not stated clearly and spelled out on paper, have a tendency of creating uncertainty.

Apart from their cultural, economic and political background, ERTA journalists like their western counterparts, share similar obligations, responsibilities and ideals.

The existence of such strain resulting from the conflict between the organization demand and the need of journalists to maintain autonomy and to aspire greater participation in decision-making in Ethiopian journalism need to be addressed.

Studies by scholars have shown that journalists have strong needs for greater participation in news decisions (Epstein 1973; Johnston 1976; Gans 1980; Joseph1982), and various studies on participation showed the lack of participation could be a major source of stress (French and Caplan1972; Pearson 1991).

This study will show the lack of opportunities to decision process can create stress or strain in the person and adversely affect satisfaction and productivity. ERTA being the only television station in the country that is regarded by many Ethiopian audiences as the media play the most significant role in providing information for decision makers and attentive public.

Moreover, the journalists of this organization share certain preference in the interpretation of their roles in newsroom decision process.

If their preference do not represent what they actually practice in reality, one can conclude that there are some incongruencies in their role expectations. Journalists under stress may feed erroneous information in the news, possibly causing inappropriate decision and policy to be made by Ethiopian government and its people.

Furthermore, according to the regular (Newsroom Editorial Meeting Minute 2003) the definition of news itself is still rather vague and there lies a wide range of ambiguity. The absence of hard and fast rule that help ERTA journalists to make decision in the newsroom, make them invariably to depend on their good sense of judgment with keeping the interest of their organizational goal in mind.

Apart its prime objective of dissemination of news information ERTA is also involved in molding public opinion to promote public service (editorial policy 2001, p.43).

Thus, ERTA manager are not only have to exercise their judgment and peruse managerial policies to ensure viability of their business but also have to provide public services.

Every media organization has a policy. Policy can be defined as a constant orientation shown by a newspaper its editorial and news column (Breed, 1955). Thus, journalists working in the newsroom are also expected to adhere or conform to the policy. Looking from role theory perspective, this condition in turn makes journalists unsure of their role. Research on stress in the journalism and mass communication field also has shown that high level of job stress also result in low level of job satisfaction and a lack of concern about ones work and personal achievement (Johnston, 1976; Cook and Bank1993).

Editorial policy is something ERTA journalists must learn formally and informally. That is why; in ERTA, the organizational policies to be one of the training components for new journalists joining the organization. In the context of the major trends in the stress research, these studies revealed that the roles of journalism in newsroom decision-making are limited and regulated.

The studies also highlighted that journalists have a low level of job satisfaction and job involvement; and several mechanisms within the organizational structure have some influence on the roles of journalists in the newsroom decision-making process.

However, the study have not the intention of exploring the importance of role stress in relation to its outcomes such as journalists low involvement and satisfaction, and more importantly the studies have hardly revealed what are the related variables that predict role stress.

2.3.1 Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity

According to Luthans (1992) the result of role conflict and role ambiguity is stressful for the individual and there is a substantial numbers or researches indicating undesirable outcomes for the individual and the organization.

Role conflict occurs when the behavioral expectations for a position differ between two or more parties (Handy 1982). A common role conflict in organizations arises with conflicting demands on workers from superiors, subordinates and co-workers.

Khan et al. (1964) believed that in role conflict there is a simultaneous occurrence of two sets of pressures, and that an individual comply with one set of pressure will find difficulty in complying with the other. Role conflict therefore can be seen as resulting from certain inconsistencies or incompatibilities between what a people is expected to do and what he aspire to do. The expectation of each role may be quite clear and the expectation is compatible with the role, but the roles themselves may be in conflict.

Another crucial expectation that shape the definition of role are that of the individual himself who is the focal person, as identified in most role models theories. If the individual's conception of his role is unclear or his conceptions of his role differ from that of the others in his role set, there will be a degree of role ambiguity.

When an individual experiences role ambiguity, it does not mean that he is not functioning in the organization. In actuality, he is functioning, but the ambiguity may lead to role stress.

Hardy (1982) identifies four most frequently cited instances of role ambiguity in a workplace; these include uncertainty about one's work evaluation, uncertainty about the scope of one's advancement, uncertainty about the scope of one's responsibility and uncertainty about others expectations of one's performance.

In an open-system, employees of an organization are given job description that help to lessen role ambiguity. However, studies have shown that job descriptions are seldom complete role definition except at the lower end of the scale (Rizzo, 1970; Katz and Kahn 1978; Handy 1983; Liew, 1990).

Moorhead and Griffin (1992) suggest that role ambiguity occurs because a person is uncertain of his role. In this case, inadequate job description, vague instruction and unclear cues from co-workers are contributory factors that lead to role ambiguity.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS OF THE STUDY

3.1 Research Methods

The research method used in this study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. This is because qualitative method is suggested to be relatively better in survey studies, which assess attributes like attitude, behavioral and other characteristics of a defined group of population. The method also helps researcher to be more objective, to have a higher sample size and to minimize cost (material as well as time). Besides, the outcome of the qualitative research can be used for the general public at large than those of the quantitative research.

The focus group discussion was used in the research and conducted after the survey data was collected from the respondents in order to avoid possible bias. . The researcher used the focus group discussion only to compliment the findings.

3.2 Subjects

The subjects of the research were ERTA newsroom journalists residing in Addis Ababa who are mainly reporter and editor.

3.3 Samples

The study was carried out among 100 randomly selected journalists out of the 167 ERTA newsroom full-time journalist's staff residing in Addis Ababa.. Thus, the questions raised in this survey are part of the questionnaire from the survey that are conducted on newsroom decision-making and the resultant role stress namely, role conflict and role ambiguity.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

The hundred questioners were distributed to sampled journalists that are drawn from the Amharic, the Tigrigna, the Oromiffa and the Somalia local languages news desks and the English and the Arabic external news services. The number of questioners distributed to each desk according to their staff size and coverage dimension. The Amharic language, apart from the former criteria, exceptionally is the working language of the country received fifty of the questioners. The rest fifty were equally distributed among the remaining five news desks.

To collect the required sample, the researcher used purposive sampling technique. This technique was employed because it is hoped to enable the researcher to select the real people in the newsroom who are affected by stress. selecting the population using purposive sampling.

Stratified and simple random procedures, which were considered appropriate for selecting respondent for the research was used to select samples from the subject to be respondents. A survey research method was employed and self-administered. Structured questioners were used to collect data.

1.5 Data Organization and Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics, namely, frequency and percentage and a simple regression analysis were used for data analysis.

The collected data from the respondents, then were described, and analyzed in four categories. In the first category the distribution of respondent's age, years of experience, educational level and salary were determined.

On the second category, the respondents were requested to cite from the twenty-four listed items what they thought was the major factors that lead them to role stress in the order of the five-stress scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agreed. Rizzo's scale. Rizzo et al. (1970) is an instrument developed specifically to measure role conflict and role ambiguity, which was widely used in many role studies since then. Then the identified leading factor of role stress were analyzed and described in this category.

Regarding decision-making the questioner were constructed in order of five-scales in which the twenty-one different newsroom tasks were listed. The sample was then asked to respond in which newsroom tasks they had a greater autonomy in decision-making. They ranked from the listed task items they thought they had a greater autonomy in decision-making in the order of the five scales. The scales ranged from management make the decision to journalist make decision and the collected data were analyzed and the aggregate mean of the current practice was described in this category.

The last category where the correlation between the two-role dimensions role conflict and role ambiguity were measured. The measurement applied was the original role conflict scale developed by Rizzo (1970). Based on Rizzo's measurement, the correlation between the role variable of the two decision-making-participating in newsroom decision and task decision-were shown in the final category.

As to the focus group discussion, it was conducted after the survey data was collected from the respondents in order to avoid possible bias. The focus group consisted of five persons was drawn from senior journalists who used to work in the newsroom.

They know each other and to stimulate a group conversation conducting the discussion in informal was preferred. The researcher used the focus group for clarification by simply asking them for some needed direction. The recorded discussion on tape and notebook was used latter to verify some ambiguity that could results from the questioners.

3.6 Validity and Questioner Development

A number of empirical researches on roles have shown that high levels of role stress particularly role conflict and role ambiguity results in unfavorable outcomes for both the individual and the organization (Kahn et al.1964; Rizzo1970; House and Rizzo 1972). The classic study on role with regard to role conflict and role ambiguity was the study conducted by Khan et al. in 1964.

It was from this study that a model of role-sending and role behavior called The Model of Role Episode was proposed. The findings in this research use this model as the basic conceptual framework.

Three major properties which Kahn et al. (1964) have identified in the role research are the organizational factors, personal factors and interpersonal factors. Role conflict and ambiguity are found to be related to organizational factors such as size of organization, organizational rules, job task; personal factors such as person's motive and goals and interpersonal factors such as the quality of interpersonal relationship between the individual and members of his role set. Praise and criticism for instance, have different sets of meaning when they come from different categories of sources.

Although Kahn and associates were the pioneering group who place the concept of role firmly in understanding organizational behavior and effectiveness, it was Rizzo et al. (1970) who developed an instrument specifically to measure role conflict and role ambiguity, which was widely used in many role studies since then.

Newton and Keenan conducted one significant study of which used all the three groups of predictors' variables in predicting role stress in 1987.

Accordingly, the study looked at the three groups of predictor variables but with different sets of independent variables and attempts to identify the nature of relationship between journalists perception of role stress (particularly role conflict and role ambiguity) with selected organizational, interpersonal and personal variables.

Newton and Keenan used questioner that incorporate the three groups of predictors of role stress and administer it on a sample of engineers. Their results support the relevance of personal factors (Type A behavior pattern; higher order need); interpersonal factors (social support; social confiding; and interpersonal climate); and organizational factors (organizational size, economic sector, task analysis, skill requirement and training) as predictor of role stress.

Moreover, the study adopted Kahn and Watz's Episode Model as a research framework because it is the most suitable model to explain variables related to role conflict and role ambiguity. The model also fitted the purpose of the present study, which is to identify the significant predictors (among selected variables) of journalists' perception of role conflict and role ambiguity.

There are no such comprehensive studies on Ethiopian journalism. However, as various workshops presentation papers and proceedings have suggested factors that could place Ethiopian journalists in a state of dilemma, tension and ambiguity (Proceed: The Impending Problems to Practice Journalism in Ethiopia Journalism Landscape, British Council, 2003).

Just to name the few, journalists' autonomy, lack of participation in decision-making, political and government interference, interpersonal relationship and communication between media leaders and journalists were among the factors. These factors, which have some important influence on the Ethiopian journalistic profession, could be categorized into organizational, interpersonal and personal factors.

Furthermore, Katz and Kahn's role Episode Models is a classic model widely used by researcher to study role stress among workers (Schuler 1975; Fisher and Gitelson 1973). According to Dougherty and Pritchard (1987), the role conflict and ambiguity measurement captured somewhat global perception of role stress and can be used with any job.

In addition, it goes in line with Katz and Kahn's role Episode Model that postulates the level of role stress among individuals as enacted by role behaviors, could be associated with at least three major factors. Thus, this study has identified the following variables that have been categorized under organizational, personal and interpersonal factors.

The organizational factors include the participation in decision-making; participation in task decision; leadership behavior that include leader's supportiveness and leader's emphasis for task and structure; deadline pressure and nature of task characteristics.

The personal factors that applied to the role receivers or focal person are individuals' age, years of working experience; years of formal education and salary. Other personal variables are used to describe the general demographics of the respondents, including variables such as gender, job status, highest educational attainment, departmental transformation and job promotion and marital status.

The interpersonal factors include communication relationship and interpersonal relationship. Thus the research counts on these three independent variables tries to determine the relationship between the perceived level of role stress namely role conflict and role ambiguity in decision-making.

3.6.1 Demographic Questioner

In this category respondents to the study were asked their age, work experience, qualification and salaries to determine their demographic distribution by status, age, years of experience, educational level and salary (as shown in **Table-1**).

In addition to that, this survey was structured using yes or no questions about personal factors such as the individual needs and values of the respondents.

3.6.2 Role Stress questioner

Thus, the second stage includes a questioner-survey that focused on the issue surrounding role stress in newsroom journalists. Subjects were requested to respond to each item that indicates the condition existed for them, on a five-point scales that range from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

This survey was structured using a scale ranging of 1 to 5 and the respondent were requested the extent of his/her agreements to questions which dealt with major factors they thought that may lead to role stress.

The developed questioner was consisted of twenty-five items as shown in (**Table 2**), and arranged in 11 of which dealt with role ambiguity (even numbers) and 10 with role conflict (odd numbers).

Despite collecting data in questioner-survey, the respondents were also asked to comment and respond in an open-ended and yes or no questions respectively the major factor, they thought could lead journalist to role stress.

3.6.3 Decision-making Questioner

In this category, the subjects requested to respond out of the listed newsroom tasks which they thought have a greater autonomy in decision-making. Questioner developed in a way that respondents to rank the 21 newsroom tasks items in the order of the five scales that ranged from management make decision to journalists themselves make decision.

3.6.4 Correlation between the two Role Dimension and Decision-making

The study also looked at the relationships between participation in newsroom decision-making with the two role stress variables namely role conflict and role ambiguity. Both role dimensions were measured with the original role conflict and role ambiguity scales developed by Rizzo et al. (1970). Role conflict was measured based on 7 items and role ambiguity, 8 items. Participation in decision-making or perceived influence was assessed using the four items from Vroom's (1959) measure of influence and the three items developed by Latham and Steele (1983) to measure participation in task decision.

Apart from these, the score from the 21 newsroom tasks were summated to form a summary measure of participation in newsroom task decision. **Table-4** shows the correlations between the role variables and the two decision-making constructs.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Data presentation and Analysis

.4.1 Demography distribution of the respondents

The respondent of the study came from three groups in terms of status: 57.1 percent were reporters; 15.7 percent editors, per 25.1 percent senior editors and 12.8 percent others.

Demographically there were 72.8 percent male journalists and 27.1 percent female journalists. Among the respondents 3.3 percent were married while 96.4 percent were single.

The minimum age of respondents was 22 years old and the maximum was 45 Years old.

TABLE-1

Distribution of respondents by Age, Sex, Status, Years of Experience, Educational Level and Salary (n=73)

Factors	No. of respondents	%
Age:		
Below 30	65	92.8
30-40 years old	5	7.2
Total	70	100
Mean=42.5		
Min= 21 Max= 40		
Working experience		
journalism:		
1 year and less	0	0
Up to 10 years	70	100
Total	70	100
Qualifications:		
Under diploma	5	6.1
Diploma	4	13.5
First degree	60	79.2
MA	1	1.2
Total	70	100
Salary:		
Less than a US \$150	70	71.6

The descriptive data in TABLE-1 shows that journalists in ERTA newsroom came from a younger age group where 90 percent were below 30 years old. In terms of salary the journalists in the study were low paid with an average of USA \$ 150 dollar.

The minimum length of years of formal education completed was 12 years and maximum was 16 years, while the mean was 14 years which indicate that majority of the respondents had a Bachelor degree (an equivalent of 14 to 17 years of formal education). In terms of working experience, the mean was 5 years, which indicated that the majority of the journalists had a fair amount of experience in journalist field.

4.1 Factors Leading to Role Stress

TABLE-2 Factors Leading to Role Stress as Perceived by Respondents

(n= 70)

No	Factors	Frequency	Percent
1	Enough time to complete job	44	68.80
2	Feel un certain about ones authority	53	75.50
3	Perform easy and boring tasks	45	75.00
4	Absence of clear planned goals and objectives for job	31	51.70
5	Working under incompatible policies and guidance	38	63.30
6	Knows ones responsibilities	42	70.00
7	Performing duties in ones way	29	53.70
8	Assignments received within ones training & capability	39	60.00
9	Un clear evaluation and promotion criteria	31	55.40
10	Having the right amount of work	41	69.50
11	Un clear explanation for what has to be done	37	61.70
12	Working under vague directives and order	39	61.90
13	Not knowing work accepted by superior	30	40.70
14	Nor knowing exactly what is expected	39	67.20
15	Receiving incompatible request from superior	48	77.40
16	Receiving incompatible request from two /more superiors	45	75.50
17	News source are not cooperative	10	16.70
18	Job insecurity and not at peace in job	55	78.50
19	Lacking support from leaders/Management	41	63.10
20	Political and government intervention	33	54.10
21	Changing mix of people causes miss-communication	22	30.10
22	Imbalance between work and income	31	51.50
23	In adequate motivation	44	68.80

Out of the hundred respondents, maximum 73 of them responded. Much fear of losing a job was the highest to be cited followed by receiving incompatible request from superior. As Table 2 shows 78.4 percent of the respondents cited job insecurity as the major cause of stress among journalists in the newsroom while 77.4 percent responded for receiving incompatible request. This major stress-induced factor cited by respondents corresponded with various writing on role stress (see Katz and Kahn 1978; Robbins 1986).

As it was learned from the focus person discussion, job insecurity has probably become the major cause to stress among journalist because of the restructuring that costed some employees' job. Individuals from the focus group complimented that the fear factor could left journalists to think this way.

Moreover, most journalists were also unhappy about the new position placement in the newsroom, despite, management's relentless efforts to persuade employees on its fairness from the outset, as some focus group pointed out.

Apart from not being at peace in the job, feeling uncertain about authority 75.70 percent, receiving incompatible requests from two or more superior 75.50 percent; performing easy and boring tasks 75.00 percent not knowing responsibility 70.00 percent were cited by respondents as major factors to stress. This finding suggested that the existence of a high level of role stress in the newsroom that were expressed in terms of role conflict and role ambiguity.

Respondents also cited changing mix of people causes miss communication 72.85 percent and lack of support from leaders and management 63.10 percent respectively. With this regard, the focus group unanimously agreed that after the new arrival of people, the interpersonal relation among journalists in newsroom was not as it used to be. They said instead, a hostile and suspicious atmosphere to emerge in newsroom, though, gradually to reside.

Some commented, that many journalists found difficult to cop-up with the changed newsroom setting with inundated new faces. According to the focus group, had the management took sufficient time to socialize, could have easily manage the newsroom from turned out into stressful life. .

A good number of respondents commented to an open-ended question asked regarding this issue said, "Situation in the newsroom was made them to extent of changing their previous role."

The negative response to the questions asked about the existence of a clear-planned goals and objectives and compatible policies and guidance suggested that journalists were compelled to work either under vague directives and to receive unreasonable order from superior or to do job in ones way.

This implies that journalists in ERTA newsroom were not knowing what exactly expected from them or what work is expected by superior. Absence of a clear goals and objectives the respondent cited 63.00 percent and 63.3 percent responded for working under incompatible policy and guidance's.

Unclear evaluation and promotion 54.40 percent, heavy work load 69.50 percent and lacking support from leaders and management 63.10 percent were cited as some of the major factors causing journalists to feel stress,

Surprisingly, political and government intervention and work-income-imbalance were the least to be cited that were 39.10 percent and 51 percent respectively. In particular, concerning work-income-imbalance, the finding was consistent as to what had been presupposed in the limitation part of the study. Therefore, the study was influenced by the national salary increment as presupposed from the out set. In addition, the least to be rated 16.70 percent was not getting enough cooperation from news sources

4.2.1 Summarized Respondents Comments

The respondents comments provided on the open ended-questions were summarized as follow.

Comments made regarding intervention:

“The managements who are government appointees to emphasize on politically pronounced news. Thus, the main causes of stress aroused when journalists were trying to meet the political expectation stipulated by the management.”

“More over, journalists fear to lose job, promotion and lack of career prospects for their perceived outlook”

“They were not assigned to news that of political importance because of a personal outlook and such assignment was for the selected few.”

The following were comments done by respondent with regard to work-income imbalance and superior-subordinate relationship.

“Unnecessary directives and order from superior, low pay and no incentive are among the major factors that lead journalists to stressful situation.”

The stress level among journalists can be quite high. Causes:

“Lack of leadership and coordination in the higher echelon; lack of proper performance evaluation, no formal system of promotion and division of responsibility.

Most importantly, pay that does not commensurate with the amount of intelligence and initiative required in the job.”

Among the comments made regarding the hazards of time and interpersonal relation were presented below:

“Journalists face a high level of stress brought on by the demand of their superior, the nature of job, long working hours, deadline to meet and bosses who ignore personal problem of the staff.”

However, regarding workload a good number of respondents had a contrary comment that signified the existence of a lesser workload.

“Most journalists rather spent their day ideal in the newsroom because the organization hired surplus journalists which made them redundant.”

“Some reasoned that deadline pressure was felt by those few journalists to who the editors thought that they do job rather better.”

4.3 Level of Perceived Role Stress on newsroom Tasks Decision-Making

TABLE 3 Decision-Making on Newsroom Tasks-Aggregate Mean Data (n= 73)

TABLE-3

Decision-Making on Newsroom Tasks-Aggregate Mean Data (n= 73)

Decisions	Mean
Aggregate	2.30
1. News Suggestion	2.77
2. How to Cover	3.12
3. Length of the Story	3.58
4. Editing news	2.93
5. Rewrite the news	3.53
6. Head lines suggestions	3.60
7. Time Needed to Write News	4.49
8. Killing a News Story	1.72
9. Positioning a story	3.01
10. News assignment	2.67
11. Evaluating Journalists	1.51
12. Training Journalists	1.51
13. Hiring Journalists	1.13
14. Firing journalists	1.38
15. Promotions	1.62
16. Final Editing	2.67
17. Visual Suggestions	2.41
18. Long Range News Plan	1.54
19. Salary and Fringe Benefits	1.11
20. Disciplining Journalists	3.07
21. Leave Option	3.30
Scale: 1 = Management make decision 2 = Management consults journalists, management make final decision 3 = Management and journalists discuss, and make decision together 4 = Journalists consult but journalists make Decision 5 = journalists make but no management involvement	

With regard to decision-making on different newsroom tasks, the aggregate mean for current practice in the newsroom was 2.30 as shown in table 3. Most of newsroom task decision scored less than the average mean. Out of the listed 21 newsroom, tasks that needed decision 64.74 percent were to be decided by the management or consulting journalists but management make the final decision while 33.33 percent goes to the third category where management and journalists make decision together. Where journalists make decision alone is only in 4.28 percent of newsroom tasks.

Table 3 shows that the recorded mean fall within the first category where management make decisions and the second category where management consults journalists but make final decisions. The ideal state were where journalists have greater autonomy in decision-making is at the fourth category where journalists consult management but journalists make the decision and the fifth category where journalists make the decision without the management involvement. Table 3 shows the respondents had little autonomy where news tasks are concerned. The respondent had greater autonomy only in matter such as how to cover news and the time taken to write the story, that fall in the fourth category. However, decisions to the length of news story, news assignment, news suggestions, editing and rewriting the news, postponing a story, visual suggestions, long range news plan, evaluation, training, hiring, firing, promotions, salary and fringe benefits and leave options involved some consultation by management with journalists, even though the final says are in the hands of the management.

4.3.1 Correlation between Decision-Making and the two Role Stress Dimensions

The study also looked at the relationship between participation in newsroom decision-making with the two variables namely role conflict and role ambiguity. Both role dimensions were measured with the original role conflict and role ambiguity scales developed by Rizzo et al. (1970). Role conflict and role ambiguity were measured by identifying seven items for each stress dimensions.

A simple multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify these significant predictors in terms of strength of the journalists perceived level of role conflict and role ambiguity on newsroom decision-making. By knowing these predictors, the ERTA managers as well as journalists are able to control certain variables in order to reduce role conflict and role ambiguity.

For this purpose, 7 selected role conflict predictors variables (item 6, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 21) were identified and (item 9, 1, 5, 2, 12, 18, 19, 22) were identified for ambiguity. These variables were 'not knowing ones responsibility', 'not knowing work is accepted by leaders', 'receiving incompatible request from one or more superiors', 'not knowing what exactly expected', 'participation in newsroom tasks decision', 'a changing mix of people in the newsroom' and government and political intervention.

For role ambiguity 'job insecurity, working under incompatible policies and guidelines, feel uncertain for ones authority, lack of support from leaders, absence of clear evaluation and promotion criteria, work and income imbalance, no enough time to complete job and vague directives were found to be good predictor.

Participation in decision-making or perceived influence was assessed using the eight items that respondents score from the 21 newsroom tasks that management makes the decision. Apart from these, the score from the 21 news tasks were summated to form a summary measure of participation in news tasks decision. Table -4 shows the correlations coefficients between the role variables and the two decision-making constructs.

Table-4 Correlation coefficients between two role dimensions and decision-making

Decisions	Role	Role
	Conflict	Ambiguity
Participation in newsroom decision	0.905	0.977
Participation in task decision	0.986	0.910

The result in table 4 indicate the correlation between participation in newsroom decision making and the two role dimension was strong. This suggested that journalists perceived themselves to have experienced higher role conflict and role ambiguity when they felt that they were not given the opportunity to participate in the process of newsroom decision-making as well as making decision with regard to journalistic tasks that involved them.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Discussion, Conclusion, Recommendation and Future research

5.1 Discussion

As we have seen above, the respondents have cited several potential factors that could lead journalists to stress, namely to role conflict and role ambiguity: work and income imbalance, job insecurity, un clear evaluation and promotion criteria, lacking support from leaders and several others.

The study has identified those factors like participation in newsroom decision-making and participation in tasks decisions that could affect role conflict and role ambiguity. Generally, as reported in several newsroom studies internationally (Gans 1980; Gaziano and Coulson 1988) it is the traditional practice within the media organization that most editorial and other newsroom decisions lie in the hand of the management.

Regard to task, it was found that generally respondents of the study have little say in the day-to-day newsroom tasks in which they are involved. They are found little solace in some tasks such as amount of time spent and length of the story while management have the final say in most of the news tasks.

At present, the level of role conflict and role ambiguity experienced by journalist with regard to decision-making in the newsroom were to be found at the highest level. A simple multiple regression analysis that was conducted to identify the significant predictors also implied that journalists perceived a high level of role conflict and role ambiguity on newsroom decision-making.

Although, studies have shown that employees may benefit from some amount of stress ((Luthans 1992), the fact that role stress existed up to a moderate level among professional journalists is a problem that needs an immediate attention.

The empirical examination of factors that lead to increase in role conflict and role ambiguity among newsroom journalists found a potential stress gap in areas most important for working journalists.

Accordingly, for role conflict, not knowing ones responsibility, not knowing work that is accepted by leaders, receiving incompatible request from one or more superiors, participation in newsroom tasks decision and a changing mix of people in the newsroom were to be found the strongest indicators.

For role ambiguity, findings in the study showed that job insecurity, incompatible policies and guidelines, unclear evaluation and promotion criteria; working under vague directives; work and income imbalance; and lack of management support were the predictors. By knowing these predictors, the ERTA managers as well as journalists are able to control certain variables in order to reduce role conflict and role ambiguity.

As noted above, the findings highlighted in this paper have demonstrated that the three groups of independent variables namely the organizational, personal and interpersonal variables as illustrated in Khan and Katz's Role Episode Model were found to have at least suggestive theoretical significance. The organizational factors were better predictor of role conflict, while interpersonal and organizational factors were better predictor of role ambiguity.

Moreover, the study has identified factors such as participation in newsroom decision-making and participation in tasks decision could affect role conflict and role ambiguity. The aforementioned factors, identified in the study were in par or in agreement with Schuler's (1980) study.

Schuler's study suggested that with greater participation, employees were able to reduce grievance and differences, and hence reducing role conflict: and with greater participation; employees were able to clarify certain role, action, and thus reducing role ambiguity.

Since role stress is a complex problem especially in a complicated business as the mass media industries, ERTA should be able to increase the journalist's participation in newsroom decision-making to consequent reduction of the level journalist's perceived role conflict and role ambiguity.

In terms of the profile of the respondents, the descriptive statistics in the study showed that journalism is truly a young people's profession. The typical reporter is 22 years old, with an average of 5 years of experience in journalism field holding First Degree and getting an average salary of US \$ 150 per month, which was considered very low at national and sub-regional standards.

However, some studies suggested that as such money was not a motivating factor for journalists, however, the salary ERTA newsroom journalists have currently earned was not sufficient even to meet their basic needs. In particular, at this inflationary period get a meager salary.

The payment dissatisfaction also expressed in their response to a question of work-income-imbalance. Based on the responses, it was found that the work- income imbalance was cited by 51 percent of the respondent as one of the factor that could lead to perceive role stress.

Financial situation can contain stressors that negatively affect job performance. If the journalists income is very low, they find themselves in an unpleasant situation and uncertain about the future. This perception of unpleasant upcoming create stress that will affect performance and personal communication.

5.2 Conclusion

As this study findings suggested, journalists in ERTA newsroom perceived a higher level of role conflict and role ambiguity because most newsroom decisions were controlled by the management and journalists' less participation in newsroom decision-making process.

The implication of the changing mix of people in ERTA newsroom must also be investigated in relation to interpersonal communication in order to maintaining a healthy newsroom environment. Although this not in area of my study to examine the issue in cultural context, at present, one can only guess, based on common sense notion, that different in backgrounds can cause miscommunication and differing expectations. Therefore, capacity building for new employees and refresher training for those who are not up to speed and standard could reduce the tense relationship.

As mentioned in literary review, a changing situation in the organization could cause role stress among employees, ERTA thus, need revisiting the stress level of the newsroom journalists in relation to organizational structuring process. A good number of respondents were uncertain about their new responsibilities and roles as a result of restructuring.

Those journalists who have joined in the newsroom as a result of this organizational restructuring also caused a miscommunication in the newsroom. This suggests that how reassessment of the restructuring outcome will be vital for ERTA restoration of a healthy newsroom environment.

This may result in better understanding of casual effect of miscommunications, and how much ambiguity may be necessary to motivate what type of employees, and a greater awareness of intervention strategies that may help alleviate, if necessary this organizational problem. Ultimately, management and employees would benefit from this greater understanding.

In conclusion, this paper suggests that media organization, including ERTA to cope with the existing role stress experienced by journalists, it is important some initiative and freedom of decision be permitted among journalists particularly in matter that affect their job and themselves. It also implied that a participative environment in the newsroom, or ideally, a participative management style, could help the newsroom journalists to work with a lesser role stress.

The question now is what the way forward is, and what kind of intervention is necessary to effectively addressed the problems of existing role stress experienced by journalists? Whatever choices are made, the central concern should be to provide diagnostic solutions to the existing role stress to do away the dissatisfaction of journalists and enhance performance.

5.3 Recommendations

The ERTA change process was intended to bring about effectiveness and efficiency in editorial side of its business: efficiently and effectively satisfying audience's taste and preference. Employee's relation and participation in decision-making process are essential to this anticipated success. ERTA, therefore, needs revisiting its news decision process while taking into account the various factors identified by the study.

The key issues here that need to be addressed are participation in newsroom decision-making and tasks decision. The basic approaches that should be taken by the Agency to address the issues are to increase journalist's autonomy in participating in newsroom decision-making and reducing the existing high level of role stress perceived by ERTA journalists.

With this regard, ERTA can set a committee that examines those factors leading journalists to role stress. This is a process involving few newsroom leaders and journalists' voice and opinion.

Journalists should be incorporated in the committee because the grievance of their fellow journalists and others to be heard. This encourages a joint problem diagnosis than a top down direction or a one-man show. The joint approach is relevant because many journalists cited that they did not get sufficient support from leaders. If we accept the journalist's complaints and the thing they say about the supervisors, effective mechanism for addressing the issues must be in place. When Bob Zajtsberg, The Herald-Times, editor said about the outcome of journalists more autonomy:

"Because of a more open place, we are getting better stories in the paper. We are getting more innovation and activities than were getting when everything was running up to manager. Our circulation is up. That is unusual in 2006"

The study also found that job insecurity was cited by the respondents as the number one role stress factor in ERTA newsroom. The focus group discussion also supported that the restructuring process had contributed a job insecurity to be cited as a major leading factor to stress in ERTS's newsroom and have journalists started to contemplate leaving the organization.

As mentioned in the literary review a changing situation in the organization could causes role stress among employees, ERTA need to address the problem in order to reduce the stress felt by the journalists because of it. For a successful completion of the restructuring process, thus ERTA should envisage means that could reduce the impact of restructuring on newsroom journalists.

Concerning this facts, the option open to the Agency is, therefore, to re-examine the existing structure and envisages sound alternatives to prepare ground for smooth transition which fit with its mission, vision and objectives.

The other issue that needs immediate attention is the journalist's financial concern. The descriptive statistics in the study indicated that journalists in ERTA newsroom have been earned a very low monthly salary.

Financial situation is related to stressors that negatively affect job performance. Likewise, because of this low payment, ERTA newsroom journalists job performance could be negatively affected and feel uncertain about the upcoming events. Thus, the Agency has to work on a salary scale adjustment that is proportional to the inflation rate that journalists can bear it.

The other area ERTA needs to look at is the implication of a changing mix of people in the newsroom. A good number of respondents identified a changing mix of people caused a miss-communication in the newsroom and for some forced to change their previous role expectation. Since a changing mix of people affects newsroom interpersonal relationship as cited by most journalists, it is essential for ERTA to assess its implication, and to come up with a remedy.

With this regard, though, the miss communication was claimed by focus group has been residing gradually, the agency still needs to devise a socialization scheme that could foster trust among journalists and eventually improve the interpersonal communication. This will help ERTA in two ways: to restore a smooth newsroom interpersonal communication and to reduce the existing high level of role stress perceived by journalists.

The employer / organization's ability to minimize those factors that lead journalists to newsroom role stress enables them in mediating the negative effects and potentially harness the positive aspect it may provide. Moreover, the newsroom should cultivate a culture that determines how each individual member of the newsroom thinks that he/she is expected to behave and to perform.

John P. Kotter and James L. Heskett, at Harvard Business School define culture as "an independent set of values and ways of behaving that are common in a community." Thus, ERTA management needs to build a newsroom culture that helps in shaping attitude, value, morale, product, even vocabulary.

5.4 Future research

Role stress The impact of technology on work and role stress from the role sender and incumbents perception in national media needs to be researched further. The nature of role senders must also be included in future research in order to determine their effect on role set.

The other area of research that needs to be researched is cultural diversity. In order to fully understand the role process, we must bring the area of cultural diversity and role stress to determine if changes in the make-up of workplace have an impact on perception of role stress.

Finally, the implication of a changing mix of people in organization must be investigated further as it relates to role stress and role clarity. As mentioned before, that it can be guessed based on common sense difference in background can causes miscommunication and differing expectation.,

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APPENDIXES

Appendix-A

Questionnaire for ERTA newsroom Journalists

A Quantitative study of participation in ERTA Newsroom Decision-Making and the resultant Role Stress

Being a graduate student of Journalism and Communication Faculty at Addis Ababa University I am currently engaged in research undertaking. The objective of the study is to identify factors that could lead ERTA newsroom journalists and editors to role stress. Assessing the resultant level of role conflict and role ambiguity that are exhibited by journalists in relation to autonomy in participating in news decision-making are also the objective of the research.

This study attempts to answer the following research questions in context with the organizational and operational change environments where ERTA find itself.

- What are the major factors that lead ERTA newsroom journalists to role stress?
- Do journalists and editors in the newsroom feel uncertain about the news tasks that go in conflict with their roles and responsibilities?
- Are ERTA journalists and editors experiencing autonomy to participate in news decision-making process?
- What are the perceived level of role stress namely role conflict and role ambiguity which has been experienced by newsroom journalists?
- Does decision-making in ERTA newsroom create a healthy personal and interpersonal relationship?

As you are a selected sample to represent the total population of ERTA newsroom journalists, I believe, the response you provide will be of great value to make the study (the first in its kind) worthwhile and of some help in improving the current situation of journalists in the newsroom.

I therefore kindly request you to provide honest and accurate information. The information you provide shall remain confidential and only be used for the purpose of the study.

Please provide the appropriate answer in the space provided or tick () in the box as appropriate.

Personal

Job status:

Reporter	☐
Editor	☐
Senior reporter	☐
Senior Editor	☐
Editor-in- Chief	☐
Other	☐

Organizational factors:

Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

Age:

Working Experience:

Journalism ☐ Other occupations ☐

Academic Qualification:

Under Diploma	☐	1 st Degree	☐
Master Degree	☐	PhDs	☐
Others	☐		

Salary:

Less than Birr 500	☐	3000-3500Birr	☐	6000-6500 Birr	☐
500-1000Birr	☐	3500-4000 Birr	☐	6500-7000 Birr	☐
1000_1500Birr	☐	4000-4500 Birr	☐		
1500-2000 Birr	☐	4500-5000 Birr	☐		
2000-2500 Birr	☐	5000-5500 Birr	☐		
2500-3000 Birr	☐	5500-6000 Birr	☐		

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about **the major factors** you think that could **lead journalists to role stress**?

Please circle on your response from the given category of list. **Indicate one number for each item in order of stress scale.** If feel you can not respond, **select don't know'** and also multiple response is possible

- 1= Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 2= Disagree (D)
- 3= Agree (A)
- 4= Strongly agree (SA)
- 5= Don't know (DK)

Factors Leading to Role Stress as Perceived by Respondents
(n= 70)

1	Enough time to complete job	
2	Feel un certain about ones authority	
3	Perform easy and boring tasks	
4	Absence of clear planned goals and objectives for job	
5	Working under incompatible policies and guidance	
6	Knows ones responsibilities	
7	Performing duties in ones way	
8	Assignments received within ones training & capability	
9	Un clear evaluation and promotion criteria	
10	Having the right amount of work	
11	Un clear explanation for what has to be done	
12	Working under vague directives and order	
13	Not knowing work accepted by superior	
14	Nor knowing exactly what is expected	
15	Receiving incompatible request from superior	
16	Receiving incompatible request from two /more superiors	
17	News source are not cooperative	
18	Job insecurity and not at peace in job	
19	Lacking support from leaders/Management	
20	Political and government intervention	
21	Changing mix of people causes miss-communication	
22	Imbalance between work and income	
23	In adequate motivation	

Provide what you think an appropriate answer in a Box by ticking ()

1) Are you joined ERTA as newsroom journalist by your choice?.

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

2) Are you happy working in newsroom?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

3) Do you get sufficient support from the newsroom leaders and the management while performing your tasks?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

c) Not every time ☐

4) If your answer is yes, in what way they support you?

a) In solving personal problem

☐

d) enhancing my profession

☐

b) In newsroom tasks

☐

e) Financial problem

☐

5) Do you find the newsroom work monotonous?

a) Yes always ☐

b) Sometimes ☐

c) No ☐

6) If the answer is yes, what made you say so?

a) The routines nature of the work

☐

b) Lack of journalists autonomy in news decision-making

☐

c) No room for innovation

☐

d) Absence of professionalism

☐

7) If you have other reasons, please state them:

8) Do a load of work imposed on you by superiors?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

9) If your answer is yes, this happened because of:

a) The nature of the work ☐

b) Understaffed ☐

c) Because the editor

thinks I do the job better ☐

10) Do you receive unnecessary directives and orders from superiors?

a) Always ☐

b) Sometimes ☐

c) Not at all ☐

11) Does ERTA has a clear evaluation criteria?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

12) If there is, how often your performance is evaluated?

a) Once in a year ☐

b) Twice in a year ☐

c) In three years time ☐

13) Do you think the evaluation system is transparent and fair?

a) Transparent and fair ☐

b) fairly transparent and faire ☐

c) Neither transparent nor fair ☐

14) Is there a formal system for promotion?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

15) If there is ,are employees get promoted for scoring a better performance ?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

16) Please, speak your mind, if there is any other ways of promotion..

17) Are you satisfied with a salary pay?

- a) Very satisfied ☐ b) Fairly ☐ c) Not satisfied ☐

18) If you answer is (c) what causes your dissatisfaction?

- a) the organization's low salary scale ☐ b) The pay does not commensurate intelligence ☐
- c) The existence of favoritism in promotion ☐

19) Are you secured in your job?

- a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐ c) Sometimes I do not feel

20) If you answered yes, for how long you want to stay?

- a) Less than a year ☐ b) Any time I get a better opportunity ☐
- c) More than a year ☐ d) As long as I am comfortable ☐

18) Have you ever think of leaving the organization?

- a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

19) If you were contemplating to leave, what would be your major reasons to do so?

20) Having too much contact with people from other departments make you comfortable?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

21) Do you find yourself in an unfriendly or hostile organizational climate?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

Organizational

In which tasks of the newsroom do you have a greater autonomy in decision-making?

Rank the newsroom tasks in the order of the five scales.

- Scale:** 1= Management Make Decisions
2= management consults journalists,
but management make final decision
3 = Management and journalists discuss,
moreover make decisions together
4= Journalists consult management, but
Journalists make the decisions
5= Journalists make decision, No management
Involvement

Decisions		Aggregate mean
1	News Suggestions	
2	How to cover the news story	
3	Determining the Length of the story	
4	In Editing News	
5	Rewriting the news	
6	Head line stories suggestions	
7	Time Needed to Write News	
8	Killing News story	
9	Order of the story	
10	News Assignment	
11	Evaluating Journalists Training Journalists	
13	Hiring Journalists	
14	Firing Journalists	
15	Promotion	
16	Final Editing	
17	Visual Suggestion	
18	Long Range News Plan	
19	Salary and Fringe Befits	
20	Disciplining Journalists	
21	Leave options	

1) Does ERTA has organizational and editorial policies?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

2) Are you expected to adhering or conform to organizational and editorial policies; and other newsroom rules while performing your daily news tasks?

a) Yes ☐

b) Sometime ☐

c) No ☐

3) Are you formally made to learn the organizational and editorial policies?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

4) Are those policies clearly spelled out to you so that you can understand?

a) Yes _____

b) Yes but vaguely _____

c) No _____

5) Are these rules (editorial and other newsroom operative rules) consistently used as a Guideline for editors and reporters in filtering, evaluating information and making decision?

a) Yes ☐

b) Applied whenever the superiors
feel like doing ☐

c) Not at all ☐

6) Do ERTA newsroom journalists have the same definition of news?

a) Yes ☐

b) Yes but Vague ☐

c) No ☐

7) Are these guidelines imposed on newsroom journalists by superiors in order to meet the schedule and other standards?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

8) Are you ever breaking a rule or policies in order to carry assignment?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

9) Are you working with two or more groups who operate quite differently?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

10) You feel certain about how much authority you have?

a) Yes ☐

- b) No ☐

11) Do you exactly know what is expected from you? (Your role in newsroom/tasks)

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

12) Is much pressure attached to you in order to meet a deadline that is stipulated by the management?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

13) How do you describe the level of pressure you felt?

a) Excessive ☐

b) Mild ☐

c) Depends on the nature of the tasks ☐

d) Depends on the importance of the events ☐

14) Do you ever ask yourself what should I do next?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

15) Are you feel certain about when things be done and in what order?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

16) Are you clear about your task and role?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

17) Do news sources are cooperative?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

18) Are there government and political intervention in newsroom tasks?

a) Yes ☐

c) No ☐

19) If you answer yes, please describe the nature of the interventions?

Interpersonal Relationship

1) Do you think you have a good relation with your bosses?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

2) Your relation with co-workers:

a) Fairly good ☐

b) Very good ☐

c) Very bad ☐

3) Do you initiate communication when ever experiencing uncertainty about your task or role?

a) Yes ☐

b)No ☐

4) What would you do when ever experiencing un certainty?

a) Initiate communication ☐

b) become stress full ☐

5) Does the changing mix of people in the newsroom cause miscommunication?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

6) Does this difference in background, have changed your previous role expectation?

a)Yes ☐

b)No ☐

7) If the coming of people with mixed background causes some other thing, please state them?

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR WILLINGNS, TIME AND EFFEORT IN THE FILLING THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

APPENDIX-B

Respondents ranking factors that lead them to role stress in newsroom with five scales measurements.

SD= Strongly Agreed

SA= Strongly Agreed

D= Disagreed

DK= Don Not know

A= Agreed

Items	Responses									
	SD		D		A		SA		DK	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	4	6.25%	12	18.75%	34	53.13%	10	15.63%	4	6.25%
2	26	37.14%	27	38.57%	5	7.14%	8	11.43%	4	5.71%
3	4	6.67%	10	16.67%	30	50.00%	15	25.00%	1	1.67%
4	13	21.67%	16	26.67%	19	31.67%	12	20.00%	0	0.00%
5	16	26.67%	22	36.67%	14	23.33%	8	13.33%	0	0.00%
6	4	6.67%	10	16.67%	24	40.00%	18	30.00%	4	6.67%
7	13	24.07%	16	29.63%	19	35.19%	4	7.41%	2	3.70%
8	23	35.38%	16	24.62%	17	26.15%	5	7.69%	4	6.15%
9	17	30.36%	14	25.00%	20	35.71%	3	5.36%	2	3.57%
10	19	32.20%	22	37.29%	13	22.03%	2	3.39%	3	5.08%
11	8	13.33%	9	15.00%	32	53.33%	5	8.33%	6	10.00%
12	9	14.29%	9	14.29%	35	55.56%	4	6.35%	6	9.52%
13	13	24.07%	17	31.48%	13	24.07%	9	16.67%	2	3.70%
14	4	6.90%	12	20.69%	26	44.83%	13	22.41%	3	5.17%
15	6	9.68%	6	9.68%	33	53.23%	15	24.19%	2	3.23%
16	5	8.20%	26	42.62%	23	37.70%	6	9.84%	1	1.64%
17	25	41.67%	20	33.33%	6	10.00%	4	6.67%	5	8.33%
18	22	36.67%	25	41.67%	6	10.00%	3	5.00%	4	6.67%
19	26	40.00%	15	23.08%	10	15.38%	10	15.38%	4	6.15%
20	7	11.48%	14	22.95%	23	37.70%	10	16.39%	7	11.48%
21	9	12.86%	13	18.57%	28	40.00%	23	32.86%	0	0.00%
22	9	15.00%	17	28.33%	18	30.00%	13	21.67%	3	5.00%
23	4	5.7	12	17.1	34	48	10	14.2	4	6%

APENDIX -C

The frequencies and the percentage of stress factors items interims of agreed and disagreed ranked in ascending order.

DISAGREED			AGREED			
F	%	Rank	Items	F	%	Rank
12	17.1%	24	15	48	77.4%	1
31	44.2%	2	16	45	75.5%	2
14	69.5%	4	3	45	75.0%	2
14	63.3%	5	6	42	70.0%	3
22	63.1%	6	21	51	69.9%	4
16	60.0%	7	1	44	68.8%	5
16	55.6%	8	23	44	68.8%	6
16	55.4%	9	14	39	67.2%	7
18	53.7%	10	12	39	61.9%	8
17	50.8%	11	11	37	61.7%	9
21	48.3%	12	20	33	54.1%	10
29	43.3%	13	4	31	51.7%	11
26	34.4%	14	22	31	51.7%	12
10	30.1%	15	17	29	47.5%	3
29	28.6%	16	7	23	42.6%	14
31	28.3%	17	9	23	41.1%	15
30	27.6%	18	13	22	40.7%	16
38	25.0%	20	5	22	36.7%	17
39	25.0%	19	8	22	33.8%	18
41	23.3%	22	19	20	30.8%	19
41	23.3%	21	10	15	25.4%	20
53	19.4%	23	2	13	18.6%	21
47	16.7%		18	9	15.0%	23

APPENDIX-D

Aggregate Mean in Decision-making

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Mean
1	18	10	20	14	8	70	2.771429
2	6	15	24	14	11	70	3.128571
3	8	10	13	11	28	70	3.585714
4	7	9	44	6	6	72	2.930556
5	2	5	34	13	17	71	3.535211
6	7	7	23	8	29	74	3.608108
7	2	2	7	6	50	67	4.492537
8	43	10	6	2	5	66	1.727273
9	13	10	18	21	8	70	3.014286
10	25	10	15	19	8	77	2.675325
11	46	15	11	0	0	72	1.513889
12	49	0	17	0	0	66	1.515152
13	63	2	2	1	0	68	1.132353
14	56	6	3	5	0	70	1.385714
15	45	13	3	1	5	67	1.626866
16	18	15	13	20	4	70	2.671429
17	25	7	32	4	5	73	2.410959
18	51	8	6	2	3	70	1.542857
19	62	6	1	0	0	69	1.115942
20	26	7	3	0	32	68	3.073529
21	13	6	9	36	9	73	3.30137