



**Evaluating public and private Journalists' Trust and perception in
the Ethiopian Media Council**

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This is to certify that, the thesis prepared by Getu Lakew, entitled; Evaluating Journalists' Trust in the Ethiopian Media Council, and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in broadcast journalism comply the requirements of the university and meet the benchmarks for originality and quality.

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Acronyms

EMA: Ethiopian Media Authority

EBC: Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation

EFJA: Ethiopian Free Journalists' Association

EJA: Ethiopian Journalists Association

EMC: Ethiopian Media Council

EPA: Ethiopian press agency

FBC: Fana Broadcasting Corporate

ESA: Ethiopian Sports Journalists Association

ENA: Ethiopian News Agency

ENJA: Ethiopian National Journalists Association

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

MCT: Media Council of Tanzania

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

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Abstract

This research explores the level of trust Ethiopian journalists had in the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC), a self-regulatory body established in 2016. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, a survey of 100 media professionals and in-depth interviews with 5 key informants from media houses and the EMC leadership were conducted. The study delves into journalists' perspectives on the EMC's perceived independence, enforcement capacity, and overall effectiveness.

Grounded in the concept of social responsibility, the analysis reveals significant concerns regarding awareness, independence, and enforcement capacity of the EMC among Ethiopian journalists. These concerns contribute to a lack of trust and hinder collaboration between journalists and the council. Journalists perceive a lack of independence in the EMC, leading them to doubt its ability to effectively address issues and resolve professional and ethical conflicts. Additionally, a considerable number of journalists remain unaware of the EMC's specific responsibilities and demarcation of power.

To cultivate trust and collaboration, it is recommended that the EMC prioritize engagement and communication, emphasizing transparency and clearly outlining and address its functions. Addressing the identified challenges through interventions and collaborative efforts between the EMC and journalists is essential to enhance the council's effectiveness and foster a health media environment in Ethiopia. Keywords: **self-regulatory, trust, independence, enforcement capacity, effectiveness.**

CHAPTER ONE:

1. Introduction

The press is a vital pillar in the development of democratic societies. A robust and independent media is a hallmark of a thriving democracy. However, the media often faces immense pressure to operate beyond national regulations and maintain its objective editorial policy. This pressure often stems from governmental agendas and a political mind-set.

The media prioritizes entertainment, education, and providing a record of events for the public. Achieving these goals necessitates freedom of the press. This freedom is challenged by potential political interference and a lack of expertise within the media itself.

To address this challenge, many nations strive for an unrestricted media environment where the press maintains autonomy from governmental and other powerful entities while embracing self-regulation. While some countries have made significant progress in this regard, others continue to grapple with government or government-supported entities controlling the media.

The emergence of media councils is a testament to the media's desire for self-governance. These councils, established by the media itself, aim to regulate the industry while remaining impartial and inclusive of diverse media interests. This approach is exemplified by the establishment of the Ethiopian Media Council in 2016.

The Ethiopian constitution enshrines the fundamental right to free expression, encompassing media freedom. This constitutional guarantee aligns perfectly with the Ethiopian Media Council's (EMC) mandate to foster a responsible and ethical media landscape. However, for the EMC to truly flourish as a respected and successful institution, it must actively strive to fulfill its objectives. Mere existence is not enough. The council needs to demonstrate its commitment to upholding the principles of media freedom and ethical practice through tangible actions and visible results. Gaining legitimacy and public trust is paramount for the EMC. To be seen as a trustworthy organization, it must cultivate trust not only among the broader public but also, crucially, among the journalists who are working within the member organizations of the EMC.

1.1. Background Of The Study

The existence of an independent media regulator contributes to the Validation of the right to freedom of expression. According to Bussiek (2008), the establishment of a media council would enable the media to prevent deliberate acts and ensure media freedom by eliminating visible irregularities. The main aim of the Media Council is self-discipline in resolving disputes over media content. Professional behavior should also be addressed by an independent and non-partisan body. Andrew Puddephatt (2011) argued that self-control not only protects media freedom but also protects against partisan government interference. Accordingly, the Media Council is an institution where anyone who thinks that the media has acted irresponsibly may file a complaint. And the council's main task is to deal with complaints about the media in a joint decision-making process.

In doing so, the Media Council reaffirms the responsibility of the media professionals to ensure the quality of information available to the public. Therefore, the main task of the Media Council is to increase the accountability of the media to the public. According to Day (2003), the Media Council is an all-inclusive and participatory media outlet designed to investigate media grievances. It includes investigating allegations and making public the findings. And it will ensure the freedom of the media and reduce the risk of government interference and build trust between the public and the media. By establishing a Media Council on its own initiative, the media will be able to investigate deficiencies in social responsibility and identify defamatory issues together.

Constraints on the right to freedom of expression are dangerous for many reasons. Gordon and Kittos (1999). Each media council has its own identity or way of doing things. It will be the result of the history and media environment of the country in which the Council will be established.

Accordingly, the Ethiopian Media Council was established to promote self-control among its members and to take into account complaints from the public, the government, and the media

itself. As a result, the mandate of the Media Council of Ethiopia, as well as similar bodies around the world, is to promote media standards by developing a code of conduct.

Furthermore, it can ensure the protection of journalists' rights and privileges in the lawful performance of their duties, as well as promote the achievement and evaluation of the Ethiopian media council in regulating journalism practice and the maintenance of high professional standards by the Ethiopian media. Furthermore, the protection of Ethiopian journalists' rights and privileges is an essential component of the Ethiopian Media Council's functions.

According to the literature, the media industry practices self-regulation by establishing a regulatory body such as the Media Council. The main functions of this media council are to create codes of conduct relating to standards and fairness in order to increase the media's accountability to the public. Furthermore, the media council has the potential to promote media freedom by persuading governments to refrain from imposing oppressive laws on the media industry.

Although the formation of the Ethiopian Media Council is not a long history, it is comprised of journalists. The trust of journalists in the council may be an important test for the council.

1.2. Statement Of The Problem

The media must first be free and independent in order to play an important role in a country's democratic process. The media must be free of interference in order to entertain different points of view and opinions, which are important aspects of a democracy. Appointing a press regulator, establishing media councils, and establishing press complaint commissions can all help to establish inter media regulatory frameworks. As one of the self-regulatory mechanisms, the media council is responsible for adjudicating complaints and upholding freedom of expression by ensuring ethical compliance and reviewing media freedom in general.

As a result, the media council's mission is to protect media freedom by ensuring that it maintains or regains public trust, improving its informative and ethical quality, and becoming more socially responsible. Because alternative media self-regulation institutions, such as media ombudsmen

and press complaint commissioners, need to be developed in Ethiopia, the researcher anticipates that the newly established (Even though it is not considered new, it has not yet achieved many responsibilities) Ethiopian media council will make an important contribution to media self-regulation.

Despite the fact that it has only been a short time (Obviously, it is not new; it has been for much more than five years) since the Ethiopian Media Council was established, journalists make up the Council's membership. This is why the council may value the trust of journalists.

The Ethiopian Media Council has subsequently been restructured, even if it didn't immediately start effective properly. But the Media Council has established a system of oversight by the ombudsman and the appellate court to enable the media to effectively control each other's rights and to ensure the right to freedom of expression in a manner that respects journalism ethics.

According to the Ethiopian Media Council's amended bylaws, the panel members will come from a variety of professional backgrounds. Journalists' professional associations are one of these. When this council is in session, journalists are among the stakeholders, in addition to the media. It is also critical to investigate journalists' trust in the council. As a result, the study focuses on the journalist's trust on Ethiopia's media council.

The media can serve effectively if there's a nonsupervisory body that oversees their conditioning and affairs as they relate to journalistic practices. And the media are regarded as society's trolls, and the media council, in proposition, is anticipated to be the media's watchdog. (Day 2003:45). Despite the fact that tone- regulation in the media is critical to promoting a high position of professionalism as well as the growth and advancement of the media assiduity, no media council has been established in Ethiopian media since January 2016. According to Solomon (2011), an independent media tone-nonsupervisory body plays an irreplaceable part. Addition, translucency, responsibility, and a responsible, yet fiercely independent, engagement with all concerned bodies as part of the sweats to form the media council should be prioritized (Solomon, 2011p.64).

Nothing denies that an irrefutable media council would have supported intelligencers in being covered and regulated by their own mates rather than by obsessive law enforcement officers, as is presently the case in the country. The Media Council must be each- inclusive, effective, and financially tone- sustaining in order to maintain its independence.

The Ethiopian Media Council blazoned the conformation of a tone-nonsupervisory body to promote a high professional standard for the country's media and to deal with public complaints about the conduct of the media and journalists' in their professional capacity, as well as media complaints about the conduct of individualities or associations towards the media. Indeed though no exploration has been conducted on an analogous content, journalist and stakeholders are censuring the Ethiopian media council for not performing duly and for the query girding the council's fate, whether it'll continue or not.

As substantiation, they cited that the Media Council didn't get off to a good launch; issues with the fundraising system; class eligibility; and fear of government intervention. Since January 2016, thin-bearded arguments in favor of and against the council have been heard in a diversity of ways. Despite the fact that the media council is constantly mentioned, there are differing views on the issue of intelligencers, but there are not numerous strong bones. Intelligencers play an important part in the Council's work. The council's decision is only approved when intelligencers have complete trust in it. Of course, the council isn't yet completely functional, but there are problems regarding intelligencers.

As a result, this study will allow us to more understand intelligencers' trust in the Council. That's why this exploration is being conducted. Likewise, knowing intelligencers' trust in the Ethiopian Media Council can reflect the council's status.

1.3. General Objective Of The Study

This thesis aims to evaluate the level of Ethiopian journalists trust in the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC), a self-regulatory body. The research will identify factors influencing this trust and explore how the findings can inform strategies to enhance the EMC's effectiveness and legitimacy within the media landscape.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

Here are some specific objectives that align with the general objective of examining journalists' trust in the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC):

Assess journalists' awareness and understanding of the EMC's functions and responsibilities.

Examine the factors influencing journalists' trust in the EMC's independence.

Evaluate journalists' perceptions of the EMC's enforcement capacity.

Identify key areas for improvement in fostering trust and collaboration between the EMC and journalists.

Develop recommendations for strengthening the EMC's role in promoting responsible journalism and self-regulation in Ethiopia.

By achieving these specific objectives, the thesis will provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of trust between Ethiopian journalists and the EMC, paving the way for a more robust and effective self-regulatory framework for the media industry in Ethiopia.

1.3.2. Research Questions

1. What is the level of awareness and understanding among Ethiopian journalists about the EMC's functions and responsibilities?
2. How do Ethiopian journalists perceive the independence of the EMC from political and commercial influence, and what impact does this perception have on their trust in the council?
3. What are Ethiopian journalists' experiences with the EMC's enforcement capacity, and how do these experiences shape their trust in the council's ability to address professional misconduct?
4. What specific recommendations do Ethiopian journalists have for improving communication, transparency, and collaboration between the EMC and the media community?

Within those the above basic questions will organize other relevant questions that will assess the journalists trust on the Ethiopian media council. These research questions provide a framework for exploring the complexities of trust between Ethiopian journalists and the EMC, leading to a deeper understanding of the current journalist's observation and their thinking.

1.4. Significance Of The Study

While the Ethiopian Media Council includes media establishments, an important missing piece is the knowledge of reporters' perspectives on the council's position and effectiveness. This have a look at pursuits to bridge this hole via at once examining news hounds' perceptions and agree with in the council. By revealing those insights, the research offers the council treasured remarks for improvement. Moreover, this exploration serves as a crucial first step toward building a stronger, collaborative courting between the council and the newshounds it objectives to serve.

The thesis highlights a critical gap in understanding - while the Ethiopian Media Council exists, there's limited research on how journalists, the council's primary stakeholders, perceive its role and effectiveness. Filling this gap is crucial for the council's success and for the development of a healthier media landscape in Ethiopia.

The research offers the council valuable insights into how journalists view its work, its strengths, and its weaknesses. This feedback is essential for the council to adapt its strategies, improve its processes, and become more responsive to the needs of journalists.

The thesis emphasizes the importance of trust and collaboration between journalists and the council. By understanding journalists' perspectives, the council can foster a more supportive and collaborative relationship, leading to a more effective self-regulatory framework.

A strong, trusted, and effective self-regulatory council is vital for safeguarding media freedom in Ethiopia. The research provides valuable insights into how the council can better serve its purpose of promoting ethical standards and protecting journalists' rights, ultimately contributing to a more free and vibrant media environment.

This thesis serves as a crucial starting point for future research on media self-regulation in Ethiopia. By establishing a baseline understanding of journalists' trust in the EMC, it provides a foundation for more in-depth investigations into specific aspects of self-regulation, the challenges faced by the council, and the potential for future improvements.

The significance of this thesis lies in its contribution to a better understanding of the Ethiopian Media Council, its impact on journalists, and its potential to strengthen the media landscape in Ethiopia. By addressing a key knowledge gap, providing valuable feedback, and fostering trust and collaboration, the research offers a roadmap for building a more effective and sustainable self-regulatory framework.

1.5. Scope Of The Study

This study focuses on journalists' trust in the Ethiopian Media Council. As a result, selected journalists will participate in this study. Journalists from both council member and non-council member media may be included, in particular. However, not all journalists or media council executives are represented.

1.6. Limitations Of The Study

Despite the Ethiopian Media Council's claims of great progress given that its 2016 establishment, inclusive of trainings, organizational development, and various initiatives, its effect on addressing errors in journalism stays questionable. A lot of reasons have arisen for this. Despite the truth that it has been a long term because it was founded, studies inside the discipline have been restrained. This is one of the problems with facts get entry to.

Despite the study's efforts to include numerous views via random sampling, the shortage of complete participation from newshounds across all Media Council member establishments offers a drawback. While this sampling approach aimed to seize a consultant range of journalist viewpoints, however the absence of entire inclusion could not affect the comprehensiveness of the findings.

As a result, even as a few newshounds and media council executives took component on this study, it was no longer feasible to encompass them all.

Due to the absence of previous research on this particular topic within Ethiopia, this examine couldn't draw upon an instantaneous frame of nearby literature for reference. This highlights the unconventional and unexplored nature of investigating reporters' perspectives at the Ethiopian Media Council.

1.7. Organization Of The Study

Obviously the thesis has five chapters. In the first chapter background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the research and significance of the study, scope of the study are included. The second chapter briefly reviews the literature part of the concept and theoretical framework. On chapter three study designs has discussed. The forth chapter discusses on the presentation of information and overall evaluation. Finally, chapter five incorporates the conclusion and recommendation part of the research.

CHAPTER TWO:

2. Literature Review

2.1. Overview of Media Regulation

Regulation is a subjective system ruled through the state and usually centered on an unbiased regulatory body. In situations wherein there are competing pastimes, this body makes choices. Furthermore, regulation entails the utility of formal statutory rules set up via public government.

Legislation, this is, defining appropriate regulations; enforcement, including beginning movements against violators; and adjudication, that is, figuring out whether violations occurred and enforcing the ideal sanction, are the 3 components of law. (Thorpe & Stanley, 2011). The media, for example, is a state-regulated industry. As a result, media regulation encompasses all methods by which media organizations are formally controlled or directed in their operations.

Thus in accordance Francois (1975), the history of media law starts off evolved with the printing press's claim to eBook invention in Western Europe from the mid-fifteenth century onwards. As the printing enterprise improved, especially after 1500, each church and country have become an increasing number of inquisitive about the content material of what become revealed and published, specifically so that it will fight dissent. This resulted in the state licensing of all printers and the requirement for boost permission from church government for texts to be published.

Thus, media regulation is the use of legal means to control media ownership and media content. The state, in particular, issues licenses and regulates the media industry.

According to Selznick, as cited in Varney (2006), regulation is continuous and focused control exercised by a public agency over activities valued by a community. Because of the importance of the media in the social and political way the government has to regulate for the sake of benefit. In fact, the methods used by governments to achieve such control vary. David Croteau (2011) claims that certain nations have directly seized totalitarian control over the media by enforcing state ownership laws and outlawing opposing media outlets. However, most countries practice non-authoritarian media regulation.

The notion of overseeing a supposedly unrestricted platform for expression and dissemination of information within a contemporary community embodies an inherent paradox. Regulation inherently constrains liberty, a cornerstone principle of democratic societies. As Hitchens (2006) puts it:

To be an effective contributor to the democratic process, the media, as a conduit for ideas and information and a source of debate, must be able to provide a diverse range of voices and perspectives, as well as operate independently, free of undue influence from public or private power (2006, p. 32).

The idea is that the media, which provides a lot of benefits, should not fall under the control of a powerful group. When the media houses lose their freedom to those who are powerful groups, then the media automatically stops serving the mass society.

2.1.1. Why Is The Media Regulated?

There isn't one single reason why we need to regulate the media. The issue of media regulation is closely connected to freedom of expression, and sometimes, freedom of expression can have negative consequences.

Media regulation exists to address a complex interplay of social, political, and ethical concerns. It aims to protect the public interest by preventing harm from potentially dangerous or misleading content, upholding ethical standards in journalism, and safeguarding vulnerable groups. Regulations also play a crucial role in maintaining order and stability by preventing the dissemination of information that could threaten national security or public order, and by promoting social cohesion.

Obonyo and Nyamboga (2011) argue that we need regulations to address these situations. Lawmakers face a difficult challenge. We want journalism to be respected, but it can't be a completely free-for-all where anyone can say or do anything. We need to draw a line between journalists and the general public, setting clear expectations for how journalists should behave (2011, p. 73).

Additionally, media regulation strives to ensure fairness and access by preventing monopolies and unfair competition, promoting diversity within the media landscape, and ensuring marginalized communities have access to information. Ultimately, the challenge lies in balancing the fundamental right to freedom of expression with the need to protect the public good. This often leads to debates on the most effective form of media regulation: self-regulation by the industry or stricter government control. While controversial, media regulation is often seen as a necessary tool for promoting responsible and ethical media practices that serve the public interest.

2.2. Fundamental Media Regulation Models

There are many different ways to control the media. To deal with all the different problems that can arise, from government policies to community issues to market challenges, we need a variety of tools and approaches. Three common methods are self-regulation, co-regulation, and statutory regulation (Nyamboga, 2011).

Kimumwe (2014) suggests that more developed democracies usually have laws protecting press freedom, while also letting the media industry regulate itself. On the other hand, authoritarian governments often use laws to directly control the media.

Each model has its advantages and disadvantages, and the best approach depends on the specific context, the level of media freedom, and the priorities of the society.

2.2.1. Statutory Regulation

Government regulation models differ around the world and are not standardized, so the level of government involvement varies (Kimumwe, 2014). Statutory regulation occurs when the legislature passes laws governing journalism standards and establishes an institution with the authority to prosecute those who violate those standards.

The establishment, composition, and accountability of media regulators under statutory regulation are all dependent on the state. Furthermore, the statutes establishing the regulatory bodies establish the professional standards that the media must follow, as opposed to the self-

regulatory model in which the industry establishes the professional standards (Kimumwe, 2014). And the benefits of this type of regulation include resourcing, compulsion, legal enforceability, and universal coverage. It can, however, be criticized for being costly, inefficient, stifling innovation, and inviting enforcement difficulties. It is less adaptable and responsive to change than a self-regulatory or co-regulatory model because it is statutory in nature. It might also lead to more prohibitions on free speech and lower cooperation rates from industry.

According to the review of the South African Press Council (2011), statutory regulation tends to have arisen in specific historic context, usually when there was an apparent lack of freedom of speech and a lack of consensus among the press itself on ethical codes and their enforcement.

2.2.2. Self-Regulation

Self-regulation needs to begin with members of a sector forming a regulatory body to obtain shared goals that no single member could meet. The fundamental tenet of self-regulation posits that it constitutes a discretionary procedure wherein the sector formulates a set of ethical guidelines advantageous to its constituents Lewis (2007:10). Then, self-regulation in the media takes the form of journalistic codes of practice for accuracy and fairness, as well as some implementation procedures.

Furthermore, in self-regulation, the media bears total accountability for the guidelines and the sanctions imposed on those who fail to meet the standards. Individual journalists, editors, and news organizations may only be involved if they accept ultimate accountability for what they've done.

According to Ian and Lewis (2007:10), "a sector commonly prefers self-regulation to government or co-regulation, and thus has an incentive to make self-regulation work." As just a result, for self-regulation to be likely to succeed, the media must be capable of resolving the issue; in the other words, individuals and groups must be encouraged to develop and comply with the self-regulatory mechanism. This model is the focal point of this study and will thus be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

2.2.3. Co-Regulation

Co-regulation can refer to the development of regulatory arrangements, such as a code of professional practice or standards, by the media industry or a professional body representing the media in collaboration with the government (Johnson, 2014). According to Kimumwe (2014), in the co-regulation model, a statute creates an independent regulator with the authority to establish professional standards for all media and impose sanctions for violations. The control is not regulated by the government.

Furthermore, the establishment of a co-regulation mechanism combines legislative or regulatory measures with other measures adopted by other agents and based on practical experience. co-regulation provides a bridge between state regulation and industry self-regulation Kimumwe (2014). It allows the industry to partially regulate itself while also providing statutory support.

Many of the benefits and drawbacks of self-regulation and government regulation are shared by co-regulation. It may not be as adaptable or quick to respond to changing circumstances as a purely self-regulatory system, but it may be perceived as providing greater protection when important public policy goals are at stake (nzlqip27, 2010). And co-regulation is a strategy in which the government establishes broad regulatory parameters and the industry concerned is then responsible for developing detailed regulations, which are then approved and administered by a regulatory group.

Besides that, this is a situation in which the regulator and industry stakeholders collaborate, with the regulator establishing the framework to work within. It also appears to combine the flexibility of self-regulation with the binding nature of legislation.

2.3. Press Freedom

The notion of unrestricted press, fundamentally crucial for the liberty of expressing oneself, boasts a lengthy historical background. As per Jones, referenced in Netsanet (2007), the concept of unrestrained expression has deep roots, tracing back to the 17th century in the United Kingdom. Findings from a 1978 examination of 161 nations' constitutions revealed that 142 of them, equivalent to 87.3 percent, explicitly safeguard freedom of expression.

This observation highlights the transformation of freedom of expression into a universally acknowledged entitlement. Within several international legal frameworks, freedom of expression and press freedom are recognized as fundamental human rights. In a democratic system, fundamental human rights serve as indispensable elements.

The formulation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) took place in December 1948, positioning it as the cornerstone of global human rights law and the standard against which all societies and countries are measured. According to Article 19, “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and information from advertising, regardless of location.”

The United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 59(I) in 1946, which states that "freedom of information is a fundamental human right and the touchstone of all the freedoms to which the United Nations is dedicated." The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ("ICCPR") expands on many of the UDHR's rights, imposing formal legal obligations on state parties to uphold its provisions.

For example ICCPR, Article 19 guarantees the right to free expression is mostly similar to those Article 19 of UDHR. Also, European convention on human right guaranteed by the Article10 and Article 13 of the American Convention on Human Rights, and Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Freedom of press is the path to an accountable and transparent government free of corruption and tyranny, as well as the development of a professional and unbiased press. The concept of media freedom then holds that any government intervention is detrimental to the operation and functioning of the media. As a result, the press, in other words, must be free to criticize the government. The concept of media self-regulation is introduced in the following section.

2.4. The Media Self-Regulation Concept

Although self-regulation and freedom are two distinct concepts, there is a close relationship between the two. And the literature for this study is founded on the idea of media self-regulation

as a means of achieving media freedom. According to Campbell (1999), the term "self-regulation" means that the industry or profession, rather than the government, regulates itself. However, it is not entirely true that the government is not involved. Rather than taking over all three components (legislation, enforcement, and adjudication), the industry may only be involved in one or two.

Self-regulation is a set of standards outlining the appropriate codes of behavior for the media that are required to support the freedom of speech, as well as the process by which those behavior patterns will be monitored or held accountable. Self-regulation safeguards the media's independence and protects it from partisan government interference (Puddephatt, 2011).

According to Siebert et al. (1963), the first is the industrial and technological revolution. The technological and industrial revolutions had such an impact on people's lives that they influenced the nature of the press. Second, as the media grew in size and prominence, harsh criticism and implied threats became more prevalent. The third factor is the new intellectual climate, which caused people to question the basic Enlightenment postulates. Finally, self-regulation or "corrective identity" has become an important concept in advertising management because "journalism attracts privileged and educated people and the communication profession affects social responsibility." (1999) identified three current variables in self-governance: The first is whether there is government intervention or whether self-governance is purely personal. The second change is related to the role of actors in creating and monitoring policies. The third difference is the binding nature of the rules.

As a result, media self-regulation must be particularly encouraging of media freedom of expression, pluralism, and diversity. And this necessitates that the accepted regulatory framework seeks to protect and promote freedom of expression.

2.4.1. The Advantages Of Self-Regulation

Is self-regulation better than statutory regulation? Many scholars believe that self-regulation provides benefits that the command and control approach to regulation cannot.

Tambini (2008) contends that self-regulation is often seen as more appealing than state regulation because it has industry legitimacy, is more adaptable to change, and can provide an alternative to state and political interference with media content.

The benefits of self-regulation mentioned above involve a mix of principles and practical considerations. "Self-regulation is more prompt, flexible, and effective than government regulation," writes Pitofsky (1998).

Furthermore, self-regulation promotes sympathy among the general public, which may help reduce the need for state regulation. On the contrary, state regulation is portrayed as slower and more expensive, and some scholars point to a lack of expertise, i.e. government employees are outsiders to the industry. Furthermore, self-regulation, by definition, is better suited to facilitating the efficient coordination of policies and standards activities in the virtual world.

According to the literature, the benefits of media self-regulation mechanisms go beyond preventing unethical and unprofessional journalism. The system has a direct positive effect on media freedom. Self-regulation can also raise professional standards by requiring organizations to consider and, in some cases, develop their own standards of conduct. As the media environment becomes more global and questions of jurisdiction become more complex, self-regulation can fill the void. It is less expensive for the government because the cost is borne by industry, and it can be more flexible than government regulation (Puddephatt, 2011).

Typically, self-regulation has been described as a viable option in which industry develops, administers, and enforces its own solution to specific issues confronting the media with no formal oversight from the regulator.

As a result, media self-regulation is a collaborative effort by media professionals to establish voluntary editorial guidelines and adhere to them in a public process. According to Solomon (2011), self-regulation can also be defined as a framework in which the industry, through its own representatives, establishes a non-statutory tribunal that adjudicates the behavior of its members in accordance with certain professional standards. "Complaints about the media for bias, inaccuracy, unfair treatment, invasion of privacy, and so on are on the rise, with siren calls for tighter press control and regulation" (Solomon, 2011, p. 10).

Self-regulation, on the other hand, is frequently criticized for being overly flexible and too close to the industry to provide genuine public interest protection. Self-regulation sanctions are generally regarded as weaker than those imposed by statute or through the legal process. Self-regulatory lawyer Lord Wakeham (1998) said, "There is no answer to the question of whether law or self-regulation is better for free and responsible media management."

Both have their own advantages and disadvantages."Self-regulation has some limitations as well. They are not always limited to Self-regulation; the implication of the following section is to demonstrate what potential limitations exist.

As a disadvantage, self-regulation can be abused and is characterized by a lack of democratic accountability. When industry groups with a financial stake in the regulated industry set standards, there is a risk of bias toward weak standards that benefit business. When it comes to broader public interests, there is a risk that industry-based groups will not take a broad enough view of the world. To be effective, self-regulation also requires industry-wide commitment (NZLC IP27, 2010).

Where that support is lacking, the entire system's credibility and financial viability are jeopardized. In doing so, the independent press assumes responsibility for the quality of public discourse in the country while maintaining full autonomy in shaping public discourse.

Participation in self-regulatory bodies must be voluntary by definition, though the most effective self-regulation initiatives have an industry-wide membership that encourages participation from all stakeholders. Furthermore, the success of media council self-regulation schemes can be measured in a variety of ways. It could be measured by whether or not self-regulation through media council meets the stated goals, or whether the stated goals are the correct or best goals. Similarly, self-regulation may be considered successful if it achieves industry goals such as avoiding intrusive government regulation or limiting competition, even if those goals may not benefit the public.

The focus of this research is journalists' trust in the Ethiopian Media Council in achieving its self-regulation goals. As the media council is the foundation of this paper, it will be expanded on later in this chapter.

2.5. African Media Self-Regulation

According to Street, as quoted by Meron (2006), one of the greatest threats to freedom of expression in several transitional democracies in Africa has been the implementation of media laws, which have effectively limited the media's ability to report freely. Hulin, A., and Smith, S. (2008) suggested that in societies on the path to democracy, constitutional and legal safeguards are required to make press freedoms enforceable. Constitutions, for example, should prohibit censorship and protect freedom of expression; laws should ensure free access to government information and protect journalists from being forced to reveal confidential sources of investigative stories; and regulations should ensure the fair and transparent administration of media businesses such as registration, licensing, ownership disclosure, and taxation.

Over the years, significant efforts have been made to build effective journalism in new democracies in Africa and elsewhere through self-regulation. The argument is straightforward: a strong democracy necessitates a strong media (Kruger, 2009).

As a result, encouraging self-regulation as a possible regulatory mechanism is not limited to Western countries. The Africa countries have since the 1990s promoted media self-regulation for citizen's protection, particularly 'high-quality media based codes of conduct'. However, self-regulation has not had a long or consistent history in Africa (Elizabeth & Guy, 2007).

According to the 1991 Windhoek Declaration, a free press is a basic human right and a prerequisite for democracy in Africa. In line with the same declaration's Article 1:

According to Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the establishment, maintenance, and promotion of an independent, pluralistic, and free press is critical to the development and maintenance of a nation's democracy, as well as economic development (Windhoek Declaration, 1991)

This declaration seeks to apply Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to African conditions. According to Mafeje, cited in (White, 2012), it was this conceptual position that inspired media activists, policy advocacy groups, and civil society in the early 1990s to demand press freedom and self-regulation in order to strengthen the role of the mass media in the

democratization process. While the media in Africa faces varying degrees of enabling policy and legislative environments, there are common concerns across the continents regarding the lack of common media standards and enforcement mechanisms.

Even though there will always be doubts about the media's ability and capacity to develop a functional peer review mechanism, the African Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression supports media self-regulation, declaring that effective self-regulation is the best system for promoting high media standards (Kimumwe, 2014).

Southern African countries such as South Africa, Tanzania, Botswana, and Zambia have historically had functioning self-regulatory media councils, with Namibia establishing an ombudsman's office as part of its editors' forum. However, times are changing.

The media that are currently members of the voluntary Media Council should persuade those media that are not members of the mechanism to join (White, 2012). However, media self-regulation is becoming more popular in Africa. For example, the Zambian media is now governed by the Media Council of Zambia, a non-statutory, voluntary self-regulation body (MECOZ).

According to Elizabeth and Guy (2007), professional alliances have given rise to two distinct types of structures that are becoming more common in African countries today: presshouses and ethics watchdogs. The watchdog for press freedom, ethics, and professional conduct (OLPED), founded in Côte d'Ivoire in 1995, and was a pioneer in Francophone Africa. It was followed in 1998 by the establishment of ODEM in Benin (a watchdog for professional conduct and ethics in the media), and CRED in Senegal (Council in respect of ethics and professional conduct). Kenya and Ghana have established similar independent media councils.

Besides this, in 1995, Tanzanian media practitioners and civil society supporters established a voluntary, independent, and non-statutory council to guide self-regulation of mass media as an integral part of liberal democracy (White, 2012). Since then, many African and other countries have sent pilgrims to Tanzania to learn from the MCT's apparent success story in spearheading self-regulation of mass media (Ibid). Although self-regulation promoted by independent media councils is seen as a better alternative to government control through legislation, there is still

uncertainty about how effective it is, or can be, in the context of young democracies like those in Africa.

In fact, self-regulation encompasses all mechanisms used by media practitioners to ensure accountability. Furthermore, media self-regulation aims to support the profession's development toward greater responsibility in the treatment of information, as well as to combat government interference and pressure on the media. As a result of homegrown parameters, practices, and situations, an African self-regulation mechanism led by an independent body should be established to carry out self-regulation and on the continent's media.

2.6. Ethiopian Legal Framework

According to Way (2001), a strict analysis of advertising laws and regulations is important because they have many effects on guaranteeing freedom of expression, as also stated in Meron (2006).

A free, independent and diverse press is essential for freedom and the realization of all human rights. Resolution 59(I), adopted by the first session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1946, recognized this and stated that "freedom of information is one of the fundamental principles of human rights and the cornerstone of all freedoms in the United Nations."

Under it with this, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) Constitution provides for press freedom and access to government information, and the legal framework for these rights is in place.

Article 29 of the constitution, which guarantees freedom of expression, expressly prohibits any form of censorship that unreasonably restricts press freedom. The new media proclamation outperforms the previous one in many ways and reflects the government's commitment. However, in order for this law to be implemented, democratic institutions had to coexist. In this light, attempting to implement the new media legislation with current and unmodified institutions makes little sense.

Besides, it acknowledges the importance of a free, independent, and diverse media with high ethical standards and professional competence in bolstering the democratic process. These rights,

however, can be limited (concerning national security, public order, youth protection, and public morality) through laws that are guided by the principle that freedom of expression and Information cannot be restricted based on the implications or content of the opinions expressed.

In terms of legal framework, some articles in Ethiopian media proclamations have been enacted to criminalize certain practices of media professionals. The researcher analyzes and discusses these laws below to demonstrate how harsh they are in the media.

2.6.1. Media Proclamation

As previously noted, article 29 of the Ethiopian constitution clearly provides everyone with the right to free expression, including the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of borders, orally, in writing, or in print, or through any media of one's choice. In support of international human rights instruments, the constitution prohibits all forms of censorship. It also takes a position on the limitation of these rights, stating that they can only be limited through legislation.

The country has several proclamations governing the media, the most important of which is the media proclamation of 1238/2021, which is in accordance with article 29 of the constitution.

Overall, the new law makes significant changes to the media regulatory body's independence, the media self-regulatory mechanism, media ownership rules, registration and licensing requirements and procedures, media rights and obligations, and administrative and legal measures for violations of the law, particularly content standards. It primarily introduces institutional restructuring; considers technological development and changes; and attempts to strike a balance between the media's freedom and autonomy on the one hand and their obligations and responsibilities on the other. The new Media Proclamation, among other things, provides for the decriminalization of defamation.

Censorship is widely regarded as incompatible with the fundamental principles of an open and democratic society in most Western democracies. Most states impose only criminal or civil penalties for any speech-related offenses. However, in some other countries, including Ethiopia, the media law allows for prior restraint in exceptional circumstances that threaten the state's national security or public order. Some argue that due to the fragile nature of these polities and

the fear of ethnic strife and conflict, publications should be limited to exceptional circumstances (Rakhmanova, 2020)

Given the importance of registration of print and online media outlets in preventing name duplication, recording shareholders and the identity of owners, and compiling information on media outlet dissemination, registration is preserved under the new media proclamation (Giannakouloupoulos et al., 2022) Furthermore, rather than the executive branch of government, it was proposed that the registration be carried out by an independent media regulatory body to avoid improper government pressures and interference. Furthermore, the new media proclamation clearly states the criteria and conditions required for registration by federal and regional organs conducting registration.

According to Ethiopian media law proclamation no 1238/2021, article 36, the detailed issues stated on any licensee's application as well as those prescribed in the license pursuant to this Proclamation and Regulations and Directives issued hereunder shall be deemed license terms and conditions.

There is detailed information on the criteria for awarding licenses for broadcast media, information that should be included in the application, categories of broadcasting service licenses, and license terms and conditions. The criteria for granting a license include the applicant's financial capacity and means, reliability and adequacy to run the service, and business record, if any; the expected technical quality of the proposed service and the capability of equipment and technologies listed in the applicant's project proposal to render the service, taking into account developments in broadcasting technology; and the applicant's organizational capacity, experience, and expertise.

These criteria are provided to allow the license holder to provide services with greater responsibility and capacity, as the operation and management of a broadcasting media, the establishment of a transmission station and studio, the production and purchase of programs, and the administration of media professionals all necessitate a greater initial investment.

The media ownership rules are being amended to ensure that they promote plurality of ideas and provide opportunities for different sections of society to access media, diverse information, and

points of view. Previously, the broadcast law prohibited all foreigners from owning media outlets in Ethiopia. Articles 23/1 and 3, 2021).

The main reason for this exclusion appears to stem from a general understanding of democratic citizenship and the idea that only citizens should have a voice in domestic political processes.

The Ethiopian media law prohibits foreigners from owning media outlets in the country. Articles 23/1 and 3, 2021). Allowing foreigners to own a limited amount of media was proposed for two main reasons. To begin, it should be noted that the media industry requires significant financial investment. (Gray, 1992). Ethiopia's fledgling media sector cannot be improved unless the Ethiopian diaspora and some foreign investors invest in it. Furthermore, the media sector is by definition diverse, encompassing not only political content but also an interest in working in the entertainment sector, which includes music, cinema, and other forms of artistic production.

Second, the Ethiopian diaspora already owns a number of media outlets that focus on Ethiopia (Tadeg & Shiferaw, 2021). Instead of outlawing all of these media outlets, it would be preferable to allow them to operate with some level of ownership restriction through appropriate state regulation. The new media proclamation allows foreigners to own up to 25% of Ethiopian media outlets (Articles 23/1 and 3, 2021).

Another major issue raised in the media proclamation is the re-establishment of the media regulatory body, the Ethiopian Media Authority, and ensuring its independence and impartiality. Comparative experiences and international standards clearly show that a body responsible for media regulation should be separate from the executive branch of government, (Dokeniya, 2013). The new Media Proclamation altered the regulatory body's composition, appointment process, and powers and functions. The Broadcasting Authority is renamed the Media Authority to reflect the new powers and functions in regulating print, broadcasting, and online media (Article 4/1, 2021). This also corresponds to the names of regulatory bodies in other jurisdictions. One way to ensure its independence is to ensure that its members are not chosen by the executive and that its accountability mechanism is not reliant on the executive organ. The Broadcasting Authority reports to the Prime Minister following the dissolution of the Ministry of Information. The newly established Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA) is accountable to the

House of Peoples' Representatives under the new media law, (Article 4/1, 2021). According to the new Media Proclamation, the EMA Board is made up of nine people. Board members are chosen for their expertise and experience in the media sector, as well as the fact that they are not members or employees of any political party and have a high moral character (Article 9/1&2, 2021). The Board members are appointed by the House of People's Representatives on the Prime Minister's recommendation (Article 9/4, 2021). The new Media Proclamation also states that the selection of candidates and the appointment of Board members will be open and transparent. Two members of the Board shall be drawn from civil society organizations, two from the media sector, and two from other institutions relevant to the media sector; the remaining three will be drawn from relevant government organs, to ensure a balanced membership and a decision-making body that represents the public interest, (Article 9/5, 2021).

Right of reply ensures that an aggrieved party has the right to respond to an alleged defamatory statement or something that does not truly represent the character and behavior of a person or an institution in most media regulations. Article 50/1 of the media proclamation states that when the media disseminates false and inaccurate information in their reports and programs, they must respect the right to publish a response or demand correction. This allows the complainant and the media outlet to resolve the issue before the formal charge is brought before a court of law. The media law also states that the right to respond should not be used to undermine accurate reporting based on facts by providing false responses (Article 50/3, 2021). Article 50/4 refers to the timing of the exercise of the right to reply and correction in normal times and during election periods in order to provide a better and timelier opportunity to exercise the right to reply.

The freedom of expression and the media are the lifeblood of democracy, ensuring the vitality of democratic public debate. This is especially useful in developing democracies like Ethiopia to foster democratic culture and consolidate the country's democratic trajectory by accommodating diverse political views. In this regard, freedom of expression and the media have a one-of-a-kind relationship with democratic self-government. Ethiopia has made bold political reforms since the political change that occurred in 2018 under the leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, providing a significant opportunity to entrench democratic principles and practices. (Tadeg & Shiferaw, 2021)

The modified legislation contained clauses that had a chilling impact on free expression and were criticized for criminalizing incitement of unlawful conduct, publication of false information, defamation, and promoting hate speech in a broad and ambiguous manner.

The new Media Proclamation 1238/2021 makes defamation against members of the legislative, executive, or judicial departments of government illegal. Defamation now only carries civil liability under the current legislation, and the maximum monetary compensation for defamation has been cut to less than a third of what was given under the revised proclamation.

The broadcast authority has been rebuilt under current law as the Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA), with management board members obliged to be non-affiliates of any political organization. The new proclamation also makes the EMA answerable to HoPR, whereas the broadcast authority was previously accountable to the prime minister's office.

In this regard, the media proclamation no 1238/2021 provides a tremendous opportunity to create a vibrant media environment.

2.7. Ethiopian Media Self-Regulation

Freedom of expression is the bedrock of any democratic society. Constitutional or legal safeguards are required to ensure media freedom, prohibit censorship, and ensure the free flow of information.

Article 29 of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) (1995) recognizes freedom of expression and freedom of the press as fundamental rights. Article 29, paragraph 2, defines freedom of expression as "freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of territory, whether orally, on paper or in print, through works of art or through any other medium preferred." The right to freedom of expression is guaranteed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

However, in order to reconcile certain imperatives of public interest, the Constitution provides that some restrictions on freedom of expression may be imposed (Article 29 (6)). Furthermore, this article states:

These rights [the rights stated in five sub-articles of Article 29 on freedom of expression] can only be limited by laws that are guided by the principle that freedom of expression and information cannot be limited based on the content or impact of the point of view expressed. Legal restrictions can be imposed to protect the well-being of children as well as individuals' honor and reputation. Any propaganda for war, as well as any public expression of opinion intended to harm human dignity, are illegal (Article 29 (6) of the FDRE Constitution).

It is clear from the preceding statement that only the laws of the country limit freedom of expression. Despite the fact that restrictions on freedom of expression are left to the laws in Ethiopia, there are regulatory bodies in place to oversee media activities. According to the Article 19 (2005) report, the independence of media regulatory bodies is a necessary condition for the promotion and protection of the right to free expression. To ensure the free flow of information and ideas in the media, regulatory bodies must be adequately protected from government interference, particularly of a political or economic nature.

Furthermore, as previously stated in the literature, perspectives on media self-regulation differ from culture to culture and continent to continent. Self-regulation goals, primarily to protect the media from political censorship, economic dependence, and upsetting court cases. Some view media self-regulation as a teaching tool because it requires greater attention to media literacy and sets high professional standards for journalists as well as the general public.

Understanding the fundamental political, economic, and social conditions under which the media operates in the country is critical for appreciating the complex environments in which the media self-regulatory council operates. Furthermore, there aren't many studies that acknowledge the situation of media freedom, laws, or the efforts of Ethiopia's self-regulatory media council.

As a result, ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of self-regulation through an established Ethiopian media council would pave the way for a more accountable media and transparent

government. As a result, this paper focuses on the practice of media self-regulation in Ethiopia through a media council.

2.8. Media Council

Press freedom must be preserved and protected, both from outside and internal interference.

The need to make people aware and understanding of the issues is at the heart of all self-regulatory mechanisms and systems. Apart from the economic, cultural, and social environment in which the self-regulatory system is being established, this fact is universal. The Media Council, the Ombudsman, and letters to the editor are some of the mechanisms in place to ensure media self-regulation. However, for the purposes of this study, the media council is more important than the others.

As a result, the concept of the media council was not novel. It all started in 1916, when Sweden established the first press council to act as a liaison between the news media and the general public (Ristow, 2009).

According to various types of literature, many other nations had established press councils since 1916, with the British press council, which was established in 1953, standing out as quite successful. The press councils in Sri Lanka and the Philippines were under state control in early 1980. The Turkish Press Council, which was formed in 1960, was disbanded in 1968. The Press Council of India, which was established in 1965 under the Press Council Act of that year, was disbanded in 1976.

Similarly, Norway, Germany, and the Netherlands have long had press councils, and there are councils in transitional contexts such as Montenegro, Armenia, Serbia, and Kosovo, where recent democratic changes facilitated the explosion of independent media and thus increased the need for self-regulation (Zlatev, 2011).

As evidenced by the diverse study, the establishment of a media council followed government control of the press or the threat of government regulation in many countries. This is comparable to the Ethiopian Media Council.

According to Ian and Lewis (2007), “Governance is based on the following levels: a) Funding, for example the German Press Conference receives around 30% of its funding from the government, but is not a legal entity.” b) Appointment powers, for example, the Government of India controls the appointment of the Press Council of India; b) Appointment power, for example, the Indian Government controls the appointment process to the Indian Press Council; and c) appointee types, some media councils have government or parliamentary representatives on the council itself. The legislature generally consists of independents. In some cases, freedom of expression in Sweden is expressly enshrined in law and regulated by financial sector ombudsmen and press councils. Desire is related.

As a result, media councils were established in various countries at various times, depending on the need of the time. Furthermore, the Ethiopian Media Council was established in January 2016, despite the fact that media has been around for decades. As a result, the goal of this study is to go over in depth the self-regulation arrangements of a media council for the country's media.

2.8.1. Media Council Functions

Self-regulation bodies, such as the Media Council, may be used to improve the quality of information and, as a result, the social responsibility of the media. This concept of media social responsibility was first advocated in a report by the Commission on Press Freedom known as the "Hutchins Commission" (Hutchins Commission, 1947).

According to the literature, the Media Council has authority over all forms of news media, including print, broadcast, and online. Furthermore, its core functions will include educating journalists and the general public about the roles and responsibilities of the media, as well as the purpose of the Media Council; developing and maintaining an enforceable Code of Practice; and receiving and addressing complaints about Code of Practice violations. Furthermore, the purpose of the media council is to protect media freedom by ensuring that it maintains or regains public trust, improving its informative and ethical quality, and making it more socially responsible. The provision of an accessible and effective complaints handling service to the public should be the top priority of media councils.

Furthermore, the main responsibilities of the media council are to accept complaints, act as a mediator between the plaintiff and the media, make decisions on complaints based on rules and regulations, identify violations of the code of ethics by the media, ensure transparency and publicity for all decisions made, and set professional standards for journalists (Ibid, 1947). According to Quick (Ed.) (2003), the primary goal of any media council is to enforce the public's right to respond and other access issues. Moreover, one of the primary responsibilities of media councils is to protect press freedom while also upholding professional standards and access rights. As a result, the media council serves two functions: self-defense and self-control. Furthermore, the media council is involved in other activities such as ensuring free flow of information, preventing media concentration and monopoly, supporting technological advancements, and representing the media.

As previously stated, the Media Council has played an important role in preserving public trust and confidence in the media industry by promoting professional ethics, fairness, accuracy, and balance. Furthermore, a true media council benefits from the fact that it brings together and represents the people who have the power to inform, the talent to inform, and the right to be informed. Also, it is a permanent institution that is democratic, independent, flexible, multifunctional, and harmless, with the sole purpose of improving public media service. It can also afford to do more than just settle complaints (Bertrand, 2007).

As a result, the mandate of the Media Council of Ethiopia, as well as similar bodies around the world, is to promote media standards by developing a code of conduct. Furthermore, it can ensure the protection of journalists' rights and privileges in the lawful performance of their duties, as well as promote the achievement and evaluation of the Ethiopian media council in regulating journalism practice and the maintenance of high professional standards by the Ethiopian media. Furthermore, the Ethiopian Media Council's functions include the protection of Ethiopian journalists' rights and privileges.

According to the literature, the media industry practices self-regulation by establishing a regulatory body such as the media council. The main functions of this media council are to create codes of conduct relating to standards and fairness in order to increase the media's accountability to the public. Furthermore, the media council has the potential to promote media freedom by

persuading governments to refrain from imposing oppressive laws on the media industry. Overall, the following are the major benefits of media council:

- It gives members of the media industry more leeway in running their organizations.
- The media council's rules and procedures are less formal.
- The costs of developing, interpreting, amending, and enforcing standards are lower.
- Self-regulation through media councils can harness a shared interest in the reputation of those involved in the activity and foster a sense of ownership among those in the media industry.
- Because the rules (code of conduct) are developed by those directly involved in the media industry, they are practicable and can best reflect the issues and needs of the media.
- The media council makes decisions more quickly and is easily adaptable to changing circumstances.

As a result, while promoting media self-regulation is undoubtedly critical to the existence of media freedom in a democratic society, it is worth emphasizing some of the mechanisms of media self-regulation. And trust is required to carry out this work. This is why this study must also assess journalists' trust in the Media Council.

2.9. Media Codes Of Ethics

Codes of ethics publically define journalists' functions, rights, and duties, providing journalists with guiding principles on how to best practice their profession. These codes' names vary: ethics standards, ethics charter, code of conduct, code of practice, code of ethics, and so on. However, they all serve the same purpose: to protect the autonomy of the profession while also serving the public interest. And codes of ethics are intended to establish ground rules for behavior.

All members of the media, according to (Corne, 2002), have a responsibility to uphold the highest professional and ethical standards. In doing so, they should keep the provisions of the code of practice in mind, as well as the public's right to receive information. And codes of ethics

are practical, with real-world applications for everyday conduct, as well as public relations implications. According to MacDonald and Petheram (1998):

There are numerous ways for the media to offend without breaking the law, including inaccuracy, lies, distortions, bias, propaganda, sensationalism, trivialization, lapse of taste, vulgarity, sexism, racism, smears, character assassination, deception, and invasion of privacy (1998:79).

According to Cohen-Almagor (2014), "the Code of Practice should take into account the importance of freedom of expression, public interests, and individual rights." This means that a code could define privacy and private spaces, as well as the grounds for people to complain about media intrusion into their private lives. Codes of conduct, according to Frost, are "introduced to reassure the public that a profession has standards of practice and to imply, at the very least, that professionals who disobey those standards will be disciplined."

Then, according to the literature, practicing self-regulation code of conducts, if properly enforced, could reduce journalistic malpractice and hold journalists accountable for their actions. There are two types of codes: those developed by media companies (in-house codes) and those developed by professional associations. In the latter case, the code will apply to all media outlets in the country.

According to Krüger (2009), journalists approach the concept of self-regulation from a slightly different angle, the ethics of their profession. As a result, it is understandable that this provides a set of rules aligned with general morality in society, which strengthens audience trust - something practitioners require in order to do their work effectively. The ethics of the profession address issues such as fairness and accuracy, the avoidance of conflicts of interest, the treatment of vulnerable people, source protection, and many others.

2.10. Theoretical Framework

In order to describe the theoretical framework, this topic highlights the theory, namely social responsibility theory. The goal is to provide an understanding of the theory that underpins media

self-regulation. Here's a potential theoretical framework for your thesis, incorporating key elements relevant to your research on journalists' trust in the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC):

2.10.1. Theory Of Social Responsibility

It stems not only from academic knowledge, but also from practical experience, that the media are social institutions in addition to being an industry. In the field of media studies, the self-regulation approach is supported by the social responsibility theory. This theory is concerned with the relationship between the media and society.

As a result, understanding structural principles and media dynamics necessitates consideration of socio-cultural aspects in addition to economic, political, and often technical-judicial ones (McQuail, 2005: p. 204-207). He contended that the social responsibility theory is a modified version of the free press theory that places a greater emphasis on the media's accountability in society. Although the media is free, it must accept obligations to serve the public good. Professional self-regulation or public intervention can both be used to ensure compliance with these obligations.

The Hutchins Commission recommended the introduction of the social responsibility theory in 1947. Since the Commission, self-regulation has been regarded as an essential component of a system based on a social responsibility approach. It affirmed that the media should serve the public and, in doing so, should be free of government interference. According to the theory, the media could self-regulate if the following principles were followed:

- In order to preserve freedom, the media has obligations to a democratic society.
- The media should self-regulate.
- Professionalism and objectivity, as well as truth and accuracy, should be held in high regard by the media.
- The diversity of the cultures they represent should be reflected in the media.

- The general public has a right to expect professional service. (Supporters of this theory believed strongly in the public's ability to discern right and wrong and act to protect the public good when necessary.)

In essence, self-regulation is an attempt to strike a balance between the need for accountability and the desire to protect media freedom.

Although different people define socially responsible media differently, one requirement is that the media, while remaining free, be fair and responsive to society. Thus, social responsibility theory is one of the most important theoretical frameworks for understanding the research questions of this study. This theory justifies society's expectation of high performance standards from the media, as well as journalists' accountability not only to society but also to their employers. The social responsibility theory advocates for self-regulation of the media within certain guidelines or established institutions such as media councils. McQuail (2000) went on to say that:

The main advantage of a developed public responsibility framework is that societal needs can be expressed directly through media claims to provide for these needs.

Furthermore, this frame is predicated on the notion of a continuous, interactive relationship between media and society (2000, p. 186).

According to the literature, social responsibility theory allows for free media without censorship. At the same time, the media's content should be debated in a public forum, and the media should accept any obligations imposed by public intervention, professional self-regulation, or both. Furthermore, the theory aided in media professionalism by establishing a high level of accuracy, truth, and impartiality. The media council also included some tasks based on the social responsibility of the media, such as developing a code of conduct for the media, improving journalism standards, and protecting the interests of journalists and journalists.

Based on these, the establishment of a media council to deal with public complaints rather than referring such cases to courts to impose sanctions on those found guilty. As a result, the social responsibility theory serves as the primary theoretical framework for this research.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Methodology

The primary purpose of this study is to look into journalists' trust in the Ethiopian Media Council. Although the majority of the council's members are media outlets, there are some journalist associations who are members of EMC. Thus, understanding journalists' trust is important and might possibly provide insights that can be used to strengthen the institution.

This chapter discusses the study design, beginning with the methods employed and progressing to data sources, data collection tools, sampling techniques, data presentation and analysis, reliability and validity issues, and finally ethical concerns.

This chapter discusses the methodologies used in the study, beginning with study design and progressing to data sources, data collection tools, sampling techniques, data presentation and analysis, reliability and validity issues, and finally ethical concerns in conducting research. As a result, the methodology section became a critical section for obtaining the data used in chapters four and five of this study.

3.1. Research Design

Choosing the right research design is a key decision. It involves balancing several important factors, including how much time and money you have, what kind of information you need to collect, and how much trust you have in the people you're studying. As Browning and Walter (2016) emphasize, the specific exploration pretensions and characteristics of the challenge at hand significantly impact this choice. Likewise, it's important to note that a single exploration design may not always be sufficient to address the complications of an exploration problem. In this environment, the study's decision to employ a mixed-styles approach, combining qualitative and quantitative designs, demonstrates a sound understanding of methodological strengths. Journalists' different data collection styles allow for a further comprehensive disquisition of the exploration content, enhancing the trust ability and validity of the findings. Qualitative data, similar as in-depth interviews, provides rich perceptivity into individual gestures and perspectives, while quantitative data from checks or questionnaires offers broader trends and generalizable

results. This combination allows experimenters to triangulate their findings, strengthening the overall substantiation and furnishing a more nuanced understanding of the exploration problem. Also, to condense the former with the ultimate, this study used a blend of qualitative and quantitative designs, because using different styles of data collection strengthens the trust ability of an exploration. Creswell (2009) contends that mixed exploration methodology, which combines both qualitative and quantitative styles, is superior to either qualitative or quantitative exploration styles. This is due to the fact that it reduces the threat of bias in the experimenter's conclusions by furnishing the experimenter with a broader understanding of the issue under disquisition. Using both qualitative and quantitative styles at the same time is also known as triangulation, and it can help alleviate or compensate for the sins of one system by using the strengths of the other (Gray, 2004; Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). The primary advantage of combining exploration styles is that the results aren't vestiges of a single system of analysis. Likewise, a quantitative approach was used in this study to ground an implicit gap. Combining two distinct approaches in this design has likely strengthened the credibility of the findings. (Marope, P., Chakroun, B., & Holmes, K. (2015). Despite the Ethiopian Media Council's ongoing efforts since its establishment, a noticeable gap exists between its actions and the real-world experiences and expectations of journalists.

While the Council is actively engaged in a range of endeavors, journalists express dissatisfaction with the alignment of their needs and objectives. To address this discrepancy, the research opts for a mixed-methods framework. The quantitative analysis highlights the disparity between journalists' expectations and their perceptions of the Council's efficacy. Furthermore, a qualitative methodology yields a more profound comprehension of journalists' real-life encounters and perspectives regarding the council's effectiveness. This combined approach enhances the credibility and comprehensiveness of the data, presenting a comprehensive examination of journalists' trust in the Council.

Data represents a crucial and indispensable element within the context of any research endeavor. Moreover, information utilized in a research investigation may be categorized as either primary or secondary. A primary source is when a researcher deals with data in the form of original evidence (Remenyi, Williams, Money, & Swartz, 1998). Secondary data are those that have

previously been published or are otherwise indirectly available. As a result, appropriate data from primary and secondary sources were gathered to examine the trust of journalists on the Ethiopian Media Council and the roles it could play in the media industry.

For this study, primary data was gathered through in-depth interviews with key informants such as senior journalists and senior editors from various media outlets, leaders of journalist associations, and council executive committee members. Surveys were additionally utilized in the process of gathering data.

In terms of secondary data, relevant literature from books, journals, and some relevant websites have been reviewed. Secondary data sources included documents from the Ethiopian Media Council. Secondary data gathered from libraries and the internet was assembled, synthesized, critically evaluated, and conclusions were drawn.

As a result, the primary reasons for using primary and secondary sources were to obtain a broader range of ideas and opinions of journalists on the Ethiopian Media Council as a self-regulatory body, which served as the foundation for data findings, analysis, and discussions in chapter four.

3.2. Research Approach

This thesis employs a mixed-methods research approach to comprehensively examine the level of trust Ethiopian journalists hold in the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC). This approach combines both quantitative and qualitative methods to capture the multifaceted nature of trust and its determinants. The quantitative component involves a structured survey administered to a representative sample of Ethiopian journalists. This survey will measure awareness levels, perceptions of the EMC's independence, and experiences with its enforcement capabilities.

Complementing the quantitative data, qualitative in-depth interviews will be conducted with key informants, including journalists from diverse media outlets, members of the EMC, and other relevant stakeholders. These interviews will delve deeper into factors influencing trust, specific experiences with the EMC, and recommendations for improvement.

By combining quantitative and qualitative data through triangulation, this research aims to provide a more robust and nuanced understanding of journalists' trust in the EMC. This understanding will be crucial for identifying key areas for improvement and developing actionable recommendations for strengthening the EMC's role as a self-regulatory body in Ethiopia's media landscape.

3.3. Data Sources

Data is one of the most important and necessary aspects of any exploration design. Likewise, data used in a study can be classified as either primary or secondary. A primary source is when an experimenter deals with data in the form of original substantiation (Remenyi, Williams, Money, & Swartz, 1998). Secondary data are those that have preliminarily been published or are else laterally available. As a result, applicable data from primary and secondary sources were gathered to examine the trust of journalist on the Ethiopian Media Council and the places it could play in the media discipline.

For this study, primary data was gathered through in-depth interviews with key informants, including experienced journalists and editors from various media outlets, leaders of journalist associations, and members of the council's executive committee. In addition, questionnaires were used to collect data.

In terms of secondary data, applicable literature from books, journals, and some applicable websites have been reviewed. Secondary data sources included documents from the Ethiopian Media Council. Secondary data gathered from libraries and the internet was assembled, synthesized, critically estimated, and conclusions were drawn.

As a result, the primary reasons for using primary and secondary sources were to obtain a broader range of ideas and opinions of journalists on the Ethiopian Media Council as a self-regulatory body, which served as the foundation for data findings, analysis, and discussions in chapter four.

3.4. Data Collection Techniques

This research delves into the crucial relationship between Ethiopian journalists and the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC), a self-regulatory organization established in 2016. The study focuses on understanding the level of trust journalists hold in the EMC, recognizing its significant role in fostering a healthy and responsible media landscape.

Including observation, interviews and questionnaires which are the primary data are gathered through several methods Kothari (2004). For this study in-depth interview and questioners are more important technique's among other data collection methods.

To achieve a comprehensive understanding of this complex issue, the research employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques.

For collecting data to this study a combination of quantitative and qualitative research strategies are used. Semi-structured interview with open ended and structured questionnaires with close ended questions included.

3.4.1. In-Depth Interview

In-depth, one-to-one interview opting for a semi-structured approach, as advocated by Ann Courneya (2005), allowed for flexibility and adaptability during the conversations. This format, with its blend of predetermined and emergent questions, empowered interviewees to express their views and experiences openly, while also enabling the researcher to explore insightful avenues that arose organically during the interview. The semi-structured approach fostered a dynamic and engaging exchange, enriching the depth and quality of the data collected.

"In-depth interviews provide thorough context for the explanations behind respondents' specific responses," write Wimmer and Dominick (2006). Extensive information about respondents' beliefs, motivations, memories, experiences, and emotions is gathered " (2006, P: 139). Consequently, the researcher heavily depended on the in-depth interview.

As Wimmer and Dominick (2006) emphasize, the richness of information gleaned from in-depth interviews is invaluable.

This method allows for rich, qualitative insights into the factors influencing journalists' trust in the EMC. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with key five informants, including experienced journalists and editor in chief, leaders of journalist associations, and members of the EMC executive committee. These interviews explore in-depth perspectives on the council's effectiveness, perceived independence, and overall impact on the media landscape.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the Ethiopian Media Council's (EMC) establishment and its on-going challenges, it was crucial to gather information directly from the council itself. Therefore, interviews were conducted with key individuals within the EMC to obtain their perspectives.

Furthermore, recognizing the significant role of journalists' associations as stakeholders in the EMC, interviews were conducted with representatives from two prominent associations with large memberships.

Finally, to gather perspectives from a diverse range of journalists, interviews were conducted with two of the EMC's member institutions that employ a considerable number of journalists, specifically focusing on discussions with their respective editors-in-chief.

This multi-faceted approach ensured a broad range of viewpoints were captured, contributing to a more complete and nuanced understanding of the EMC's impact and the challenges it faces.

For the in-depth interviews, the research employed broad, open-ended questions designed to encourage expansive and insightful responses. Each interview, lasting approximately 10-20 minutes, was audio-recorded to ensure accurate data capture. No incentives were offered for participation, ensuring responses were genuine and unbiased. In this study, journalists who participated in in-depth interviews, as well as members of the Ethiopian Media Council leadership, are identified by their full names and professional roles. This decision reflects their willingness to be openly acknowledged for their contributions to the research. Transparency and

proper attribution are essential ethical considerations in academic research, and we respect the participants' choices in this regard. (Further details regarding the interview protocol can be found in the appendix.)

3.4.2. Questionnaires

The response from journalists is essential for gauging public understanding of media self-regulation. Fisher (2007) asserts that a structured questionnaire approach is the most effective if the researcher intends to quantify the study data. For this reason structured questionnaires were crafted to get the primary data for this study from participants.

The questioners are direct for the participants are able to answer without any confession and ambiguity. It comprised of two sections: the initial section inquired about the respondents' demographic details such as their educational background, professional experience, and role in the institution; the subsequent section focused on soliciting essential general information to assess their familiarity with and confidence in the Media Council.

Given the significant number of journalists employed by media institutions that are members of the Ethiopian Media Council, a stratified sampling approach was employed to ensure representation from a wider range of journalists. To complement the in-depth interviews and broaden the study's reach, a survey was conducted, encompassing 100 journalists representing diverse media organizations across both public and private sectors. These included 25, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), 15 Fana Broadcasting Corporation (FBC), 15 Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), 8 The Ethiopian Reporter, 7 Sheger FM, 10 Ethiopian Press Agency, 10 Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency, 5 Ahadu FM, and 5 Bisrat FM. those journalists were randomly chosen because of to represent all expected journalist and questionnaire with 20 question to assess the exception, perception and knowledge on the Ethiopian media council. Regarding the number of participants, it was chosen to use a random sample method based on the number of journalists the media institutions have this survey aimed to provide quantitative data and broader trends, bridging any potential gaps in the qualitative insights gathered through the in-depth interviews.

3.4.3. Sampling Techniques

The specimen is described as "a subset of the population that exemplifies the entire population," as asserted by Wimmer and Dominick (2006, p. 87). Irrespective of its magnitude, a sample that lacks representatives of the population is inadequate for experimentation as the results are not generalization to the population of origin.

This study places significant emphasis on primary data gathered directly from journalists, senior editors, and media managers through in-depth interviews and surveys. While encompassing the entire spectrum of media members within the Ethiopian Media Council was not feasible, efforts were made to ensure a representative sample. Given the government's control over state media in each region, it was crucial to include federal-level government media organizations to capture a comprehensive range of perspectives and experiences within the Ethiopian media landscape.

Within a purpose sampling approach, the investigator chooses a subset from a demographic that encompasses diverse persons with unique characteristics, as indicated by Rebecca et al. (2010). One or more of the following seven factors will affect the size of the sample needed for a study: Project kind, purpose, complexity, degree of mistake permitted, time and financial restrictions, and prior research in the field are the first five factors to consider. A big sample is typically not necessary for research intended as a preliminary search for general indications (Wimmer& Dominick, 2006).

Therefore, within the context of purpose sampling, the investigator carefully chooses individuals who, in their discernment, are deemed pertinent to the specific research inquiry.

Participants in this study will be people who have a significant impact on how to boost trust on the Ethiopian media council. Ten interviews with experience and knowledge of the topic of media self-regulation were chosen by the researcher using his understanding of the media population.

Key sources include the chairman of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), the chairman of Abay FM 102.9, Deputy Editor of Fortune magazine, a member of the Ethiopian

Broadcasting Commission (EMC) and a member of the Ethiopian Journalists Association (EJA). Three journalists and editors who are members of the Ethiopian Sports Journalists Association (ESA) and selected by government and private media organizations.

For this reason the sample size is determined by the resource and time that will take to do this study by seclude. Additionally, it was chosen in accordance with the research examiner (the researcher had faith in data collecting, and new data no longer added new information to the study topics).

According to Krippendorff, each component of a study should have the qualities of validity and reliability (2004). According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2007), in order to maximize reliability, the researcher should ensure that data is gathered precisely and in sufficient quantities throughout the data collection stage.

To make sure our research findings are trustworthy, we used a method called "dependability". This means we checked that our research techniques were consistent and reliable, regardless of the specific situation.

To ensure dependability, we took extra steps like Double-checking our coding: We had another person, who wasn't involved in the research, look over our data and make sure we were using the same categories consistently. This helped to avoid errors in how we analysed the information.

These steps help to strengthen the reliability and trustworthiness of our research.

Intra-coder reliability: To ensure that the material was consistently coded, the researcher coded the data set twice, at different times. This was done to ensure intra-coder consistency. The study's validity is then discussed.

3.4.4. Validity

The analysis will only be deemed valid if the findings accurately reflect the level of trust that journalists actually possess in their respective media positions. Bhattacharjee (2012) states that

this study took into account a variety of validity types, including face validity and external validity. These can be reduced to the following simpler form:

Face validity means that a measure appears to be measuring what it's supposed to measure. In simpler terms, if the results from a questionnaire or interview seem reasonable and make sense based on what we expect, then we can say they have face validity.

External validity pertains to the degree to which the study's conclusions can be regarded as accurate in other contexts and characterizes the study's generalization. Because this study used purpose sampling, external validity did not apply.

Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2007) assert that a number of factors might emotionally sway a researcher's perspective and lead to bias. The information that the researcher has collect, the question type, experience, background also conducted in this study the researcher may have accidentally altered the process of data collecting and analysis for the study since she was aware of the cultural and social circumstances that naturally affect how people view their environment.

To minimize every possible bias on this study effort was made to be engaged. Additionally, great effort was taken to guarantee that the detailed in-depth interviews were conducted with precision during the data collection and analysis phases.

In order to make a perfect and minimize biases several steps were taken to achieve this:

- Sample diversity: from various media organization journalists who are working in private and public media are participated aiming to get wide range of data.
- Open-Ended Questions: open ended question are important to gather valuable information from participants in time of interview. And participants are get freedom to express what they are thinking on the matter.
- Reflexivity of the researcher: on doing this study researcher should have to know or aware of their own potential biases and took steps to prevent in time of data collection and data analysis steps.

- Audio Recordings: in time of in depth interview it should be recorded to be accurate data in the field and also perfectly transcribed.
- Transcription Verification: Transcripts were carefully reviewed and verified for accuracy.
- Data triangulation: by triangulated data to get more qualitative and quantitative the combination of this are allow to cross check data.
- Ethical Considerations: Informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality were prioritized throughout the research process to protect participants and maintain data integrity.

By adhering to these rigorous strategies, the observe aimed to generate reliable and honest findings, minimizing the impact of capability biases and ensuring the ethical and accountable behaviour of studies.

For this examine, the researcher ensured that moral standards have been followed. These protected, amongst other things, retaining the concept of voluntary participation, in which the selected respondents participated voluntarily rather than being obligated.

This factor is emphasized by using Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill's (2007) emphasis at the contributors' possibility to choose out of the interview manner totally or in part. Similarly, Payne and Payne (2004) asserted that informant anonymity in very last reports is needed to preserve informant identification.

In this observe contributors freely agreed to be interviewed and privacy might be reputable. Also on this observe participants are aware to go away any time as they want without any objection. Particularly all the statistics get from the individuals are saved secretly and used for most effective for academic purposes.

Because media self-law and accept as true with have been certainly sensitive troubles in Ethiopia, the researcher respected the members' privacy.

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

The findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses were combined and interpreted in light of the theoretical framework (social responsibility theory). This involved examining the extent to which the findings align with the theory's predictions and providing a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing journalists' trust in the EMC.

The information gathered from the examiner's records was first analyzed to identify the main idea. Then, the data was further examined to see how the findings relate to the research questions, the goals of the study, and the existing research on the topic.

The researcher matched more than one response from respondents with desires and formerly studied literature. There have been discrepancies among what became investigated and what the research determined whilst collecting records.

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, requiring both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques:

Descriptive Statistics: The survey data was analysed using descriptive statistics to summarize key findings and trends. This included calculating frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for various variables like awareness levels, perceptions of independence, and trust in the EMC.

Thematic Analysis: The in-depth interview transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis. This involved identifying key themes, patterns, and recurring ideas related to journalists' experiences with the EMC, perceptions of its independence, and overall trust in the organization.

Content Analysis: The interview data was further analysed using content analysis to identify specific examples, quotes, and narratives that support the identified themes. This helped to provide a richer understanding of journalists' perspectives and experiences.

Triangulation: The findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses were triangulated to ensure consistency and provide a more comprehensive interpretation of the data. For instance, if

the survey data showed a lack of awareness about the EMC's functions, the interview data could provide specific examples and insights into why this lack of awareness exists.

Finally, the findings of the study were offered for you to assess journalists' agree with within the Ethiopian Media Council. In this look at the interview members were agreed to dis-dress their identification so, all of the records approximately their identification is covered inside the examine.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1. Introduction

This chapter embarks on a journey to analyze and present the data collected, illuminating the intricate dynamics of trust between Ethiopian journalists and the Ethiopian Media Council. A robust mixed-methods approach, intertwining qualitative and quantitative data, forms the foundation of this exploration, offering a comprehensive and nuanced understanding.

To get a complete picture of journalists' trust in the Ethiopian Media Council, we used both in-depth interviews and a survey. We talked to five experienced media experts to get their insights, and we also surveyed 100 journalists from both public and private media. Almost all of the journalists we surveyed (96%) responded, giving us a strong base for our analysis.

4.2. Demographic data

The study more participants identified as male (74%), possessed 10-15 years of experience (45.2%), and held bachelor's degrees (52.9%). A majority belonged to the 25-35 age groups (67.3%) and worked as reporters (61.3%). This demographic snapshot provides valuable context for interpreting the findings.

We combined the information from the interviews and the survey, a process called triangulation, to make our findings stronger and more reliable. This way, we could get a more complete understanding of journalists' trust, since using just one method could have missed important information.

To journalists' accept as true with within the Ethiopian Media Council is essential to establish a company information of the Council's origins, and its function inside the Ethiopian media ecosystem. This contextual backdrop serves as an essential framework for decoding the findings and drawing meaningful conclusions approximately the dynamics of accept as true with between the Council and the journalists it serves.

4.3. The Ethiopian Media Council

As covered in Chapter 2, the media established the Media Council as a self-regulatory organization to uphold public trust through self-regulation. Therefore, the very desire to create a media council indicates a strong desire to enhance and preserve the public's perception of the media.

According to Zlatev (2011), the media council is arguably the most well-known machine in area to implement media self-regulation. There is not any set version for media councils; rather, it is a fluid framework this is usually fashioned according with the neighborhood cultural, historical, and political settings and traditions. Furthermore, in January 2016, the Ethiopian Media Council became based. At the time the data was collected, 29 media organizations had signed the Code of Conduct and were members of the Council. However, no individual journalists or editors were directly part of the Council's structure.

The survey findings display a fantastic gap in consciousness and knowledge of the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) among journalists. While a majority (63.5%) indicated they had heard of the EMC, a massive portion (19.2%) pronounced no previous information of its existence. Furthermore, even amongst those acquainted with the EMC, 17.3% expressed a lack of enough records approximately its role and capabilities. This lack of awareness become further reflected in their responses regarding their perceptions of the Council, with many indicating a lack of readability or know-how approximately its purpose and activities.

Variables	Frequency	Percent
I know	65	63.5
I don't know	19	19.2
I have heard but not enough information	16	17.3
Total	100	100.0

Table 1

The survey findings display a fantastic gap in consciousness and knowledge of the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) among journalists. While a majority (63.5%) indicated they had heard of the EMC, a massive portion (19.2%) pronounced no previous information of its existence.

Furthermore, even amongst those acquainted with the EMC, 17.3% expressed a lack of enough records about its role and capabilities. This lack of awareness is further reflected in their responses regarding their perceptions of the Council, with many indicating a lack of readability or know-how of its purpose and activities.

The survey effects gift a complex photograph regarding journalists' perceptions of the Ethiopian Media Council's (EMC) importance. A clear majority (73.1%) acknowledged the importance of the EMC, indicating an expertise of its capacity value within the media panorama. However, a tremendous element (19.2%) expressed the notion that the Council is not crucial, suggesting a lack of conviction in its relevance or effectiveness. Additionally, 6.7% of respondents remained unsure about the EMC's significance, highlighting a level of uncertainty and possibly a want for greater clarity concerning the Council's function and impact.

The information suggests ability disconnect between spotting the theoretical significance of the EMC and understanding its practical importance inside the expert lives of reporters. While a majority renowned they want for such an institution, a massive minority stay unconvinced of its cost. This discrepancy underscores the need for the EMC to now not most effective exist but additionally to actively demonstrate its relevance and effectiveness in addressing the demanding situations confronted through journalists and upholding ethical standards within the Ethiopian media panorama.

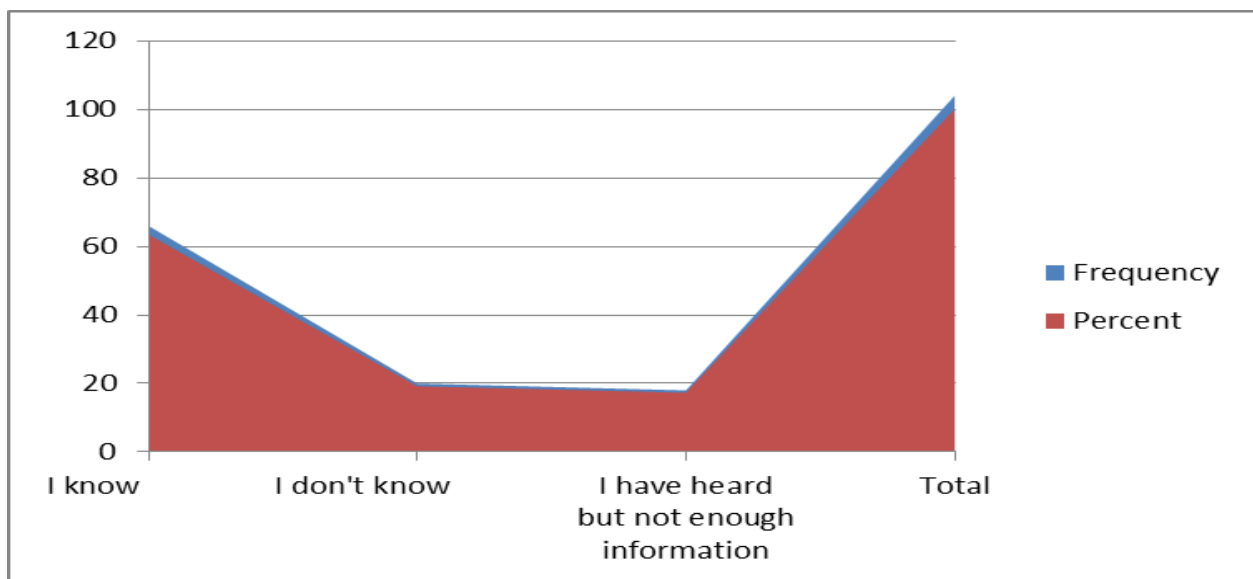
As previously highlighted, a lack of awareness and understanding of the EMC's activities and achievements ought to lead a few reporters to underestimate its importance. The other element is that Skepticism about the EMC's effectiveness in pleasant its mandate and addressing key problems within the media would possibly make contributions to doubts about its significance. Underlying considers issues between reporters and the EMC may want to affect their perception of the Council's importance.

As a result, the take a look at indicated that there is nevertheless no consensus concerning the roles, significance, and obligations of the Ethiopian Media Council. Some informants say that the council's sole duty is to shield the rights of newshounds'; others declare that the council also handles complaints and protects the media from interference from the authorities.

As formerly noted, there are signs and symptoms that the Ethiopian Media Council nevertheless wishes to do a great deal of labor to be taken into consideration a respected and truthful corporation with the aid of reporters. In spite of this, the high quality remarks from journalists show that the council would possibly use it to affect exchange. Regarding the importance of the council, for example, it is able to be visible that it is right to have a few data about the council and so on. In light of this, allow us to have a look at the finished surveys in this research to check the nature of the reporters' agree with in the Council.

The survey outcomes concerning reporters' awareness of the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) paint a mixed image, revealing each familiarity and knowledge gaps within the journalistic community:

More than half of the journalists we surveyed (63.5%) said they had heard of the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) in some way. This shows that there's a general awareness of the council among journalists. Whereas an amazing portion recounted having heard of the EMC however (17.3%) admitted to lacking enough statistics approximately its function, functions, and activities. However, even those who had heard of the EMC often didn't know enough about what it does. And a significant number of journalists (19.2%) had never even heard of the council. This shows that there's a real lack of knowledge about the EMC among some journalists.



Graph 2

These findings spotlight the want for the EMC to prioritize outreach and verbal exchange projects to raise awareness and know-how in the journalistic community. Bridging the understanding gap is essential for fostering trust, encouraging engagement, and in the end, ensuring the EMC's effectiveness in enjoyable its mandate.

While it's encouraging that a majority of take a look at participants own some know-how of the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC), the findings additionally display an opening in focus, specifically thinking about the period of the Council's life. Ideally, given the time on the grounds that its establishment, one could anticipate a higher degree of familiarity and know-how amongst journalists regarding the EMC and its function inside the media landscape.

While the Ethiopian Media Council's (EMC) efforts to raise consciousness amongst journalists are commendable, the information reveals an enormous records hole. A substantial 36.5% of reporters both lack attention of the EMC and possess inadequate records about its functions and sports. This deficit is concerning, because it hinders engagement and agree with-building between the Council and its primary stakeholders - the reporters themselves.

Despite a level of cognizance approximately the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) amongst journalists, the survey findings screen a concerning lack of expertise concerning the Council's unique capabilities and responsibilities.

The survey results show that many people don't fully understand what the EMC does.

- Almost 37% of respondents answered the question, but didn't correctly identify the EMC's main functions and purpose.
- Over a third (33.8%) admitted they didn't know what the EMC does.
- Nearly 27% didn't answer the question at all, which suggests they were unsure or lost interest.
- A very small percentage (2.6%) gave answers unrelated to the question, further indicating confusion about the EMC's role.

These findings advocate that actually being privy to the EMC's life isn't always sufficient. A deeper knowledge of the Council's mandate, activities, and effect is critical for fostering

consider, encouraging engagement, and enabling journalists to efficaciously make use of the resources and support the EMC gives.

When requested about their preferred approach to media law in Ethiopia, survey participants expressed number viewpoints, reflecting the complexity of this trouble:

Most people (75%) want the government to be in charge of regulating the media.

- A significant number (23.1%) prefer private companies to take the lead on media laws.
- A very small number (1.9%) are interested in exploring different options for regulation, beyond just government or private companies.
- Interestingly, nobody supported a shared approach to media regulation, where both the government and private sector work together.

Ethiopian journalists are divided on how to regulate media. Some favor government control, perhaps because they believe the government is best equipped to oversee the media landscape or because they doubt private companies' ability to self-regulate. Others prefer private sector control, prioritizing independence from government interference and trusting the industry to hold itself accountable.

The absence of assist for a hybrid model indicates a perceived incompatibility among government and private area involvement in media law. This may want to stem from worries approximately ability conflicts of hobby, electricity imbalances, or a loss of readability regarding how one of these gadgets would function efficaciously.

The survey explored journalists' views on the appropriate manner to deal with mistakes or misconduct in commercial enterprise. This reaction raised a few thoughts:

Most journalists (75%) think the government should be responsible for fixing journalistic mistakes. However, a significant number (21.2%) believe the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) is better suited for this role. A small group (1%) believes mistakes should be forgiven without any formal intervention. None of the respondents suggested using the court system to address these errors.

The sturdy preference for government intervention shows a notion among journalists that the kingdom ought to play a critical position in upholding journalistic requirements and addressing misconduct. This ought to stem from a belief in the authorities' authority and capacity to put in force regulations or a loss of trust in alternative mechanisms.

The aid for the EMC's role, while no longer as dominant, suggests reputation of the Council's capability as a self-regulatory frame. However, the incredibly low percentage suggests a need for the EMC to further set up its credibility and effectiveness in managing such subjects.

The absence of assist for felony recourse implies reluctance amongst reporters to involve the courtroom device in addressing expert mistakes. This may be because of issues approximately capability limitations on press freedom, lengthy legal methods, or a lack of information inside the judicial system regarding media-precise issues.

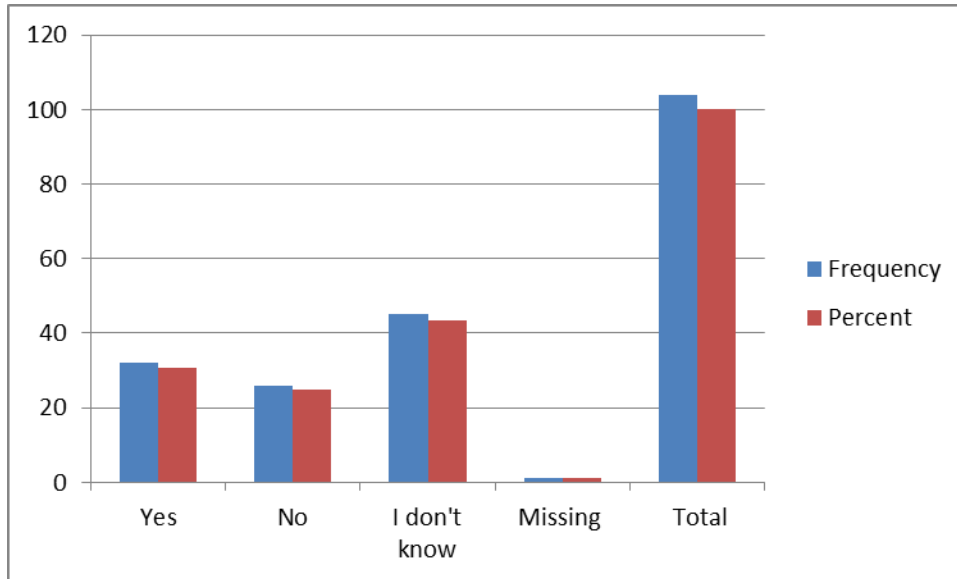
The survey results show a worrying lack of trust in the Ethiopian Media Council's (EMC) independence among journalists. Over half of the respondents (53.8%) doubt the Council's ability to operate freely from external influence. While a significant number (45.2%) believe the EMC is independent, the overall feeling is that there is a trust deficit that could hinder the Council's effectiveness and credibility within the media landscape.

The findings highlight two vital challenges confronting the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC): confined recognition among newshounds and doubts regarding its independence. These elements integrate to create a trust deficit that hinders the Council's effectiveness and legitimacy in the media panorama.

The survey revealed a lack of trust in the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) among journalists. A large majority (70.2%) disagreed with the Council, while only 28.8% agreed. This suggests that journalists generally don't trust the EMC. While the survey reveals this distrust, it's crucial to understand the reasons behind it to better address the concerns of journalists and improve the EMC's standing.

The survey findings boost concerns approximately transparency regarding media organizations' membership in the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC). While 30.8% of reporters had been aware

of their media organization's club inside the Council, a big portion (43.3%) remained uncertain about their organization's association. Additionally, 25% confirmed that their media outlet become no longer a member of the EMC.



Graph 3

The lack of knowledge among journalists regarding their own media agencies' membership status with the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) highlights a potential transparency issue. Clear and readily available information about member agencies is essential for building trust and understanding within the media landscape. If journalists are unclear about their agency's relationship with the EMC, it could contribute to a sense of disconnect and skepticism towards the Council's role and authority.

4.3.1. Awareness of the Council

This study focuses on the perception of the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) among journalists, examining factors that influence their trust and acceptance of the council. We investigate key elements impacting the EMC's success in Ethiopia: awareness of the council, its perceived independence, membership structure, and enforcement capabilities. To gather insights, we will distribute questionnaires and conduct in-depth interviews with key informants.

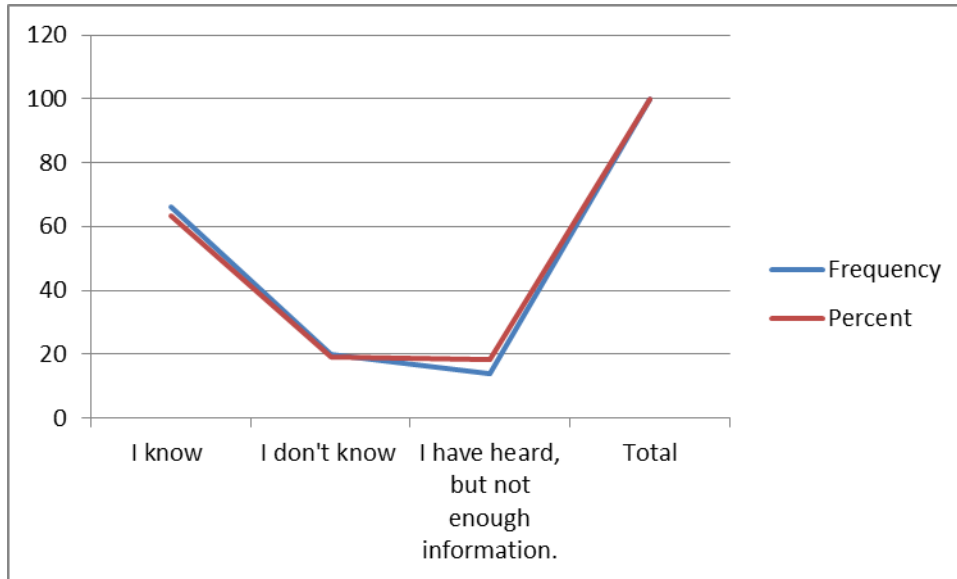
Although predicted the take a look at famous a lack of readability and consensus among journalists concerning the Ethiopian Media Council's (EMC) core capabilities and purpose. While many newshounds grasp the Council's important role, some tend to misread it as an expert affiliation akin to the Ethiopian Journalists Association. This false impression, highlighted by EBC Editor-in-Chief and Ethiopian Journalists Association member Demis Mekuriaw, underscores the want for clearer conversation and cognizance-elevating projects to ensure shared information of the EMC's distinct position within the media landscape.

"My interaction with the Media Council has been minimal, to say the least. While I recall its formation, my knowledge beyond the occasional news snippet is limited. As an editor at a national station, I recognize I should be more informed about the Council's work, but unfortunately, that hasn't been the case. Despite my lack of familiarity, I acknowledge its establishment as an institution within the media landscape."

The Ethiopian Media Council, which has been hooked up and identified for the beyond nine years through many ups and downs, indicates that now not a whole lot has been executed to make it an area for all reporters. However, in line with Meseret Atalay, President of the Ethiopian Journalists Association, Founder, and Executive Committee Member of the Ethiopian Media Council, the attempt to establish a robust organization is a hit. While recalling the paintings done to boom the range of participants:

A lot of efforts have been made to establish the Ethiopian Media Council. After that, it went through a lot of processes to get recognition according to the law and order of the country. Because the council had a new form and function, since it was recognized, it has been working, focusing on creating members, customizing laws and regulations, creating strategies, finding financial sources, and making the council an institution. And it was possible to make it a big council by increasing the number of founders to 84.

The Ethiopian Media Council shows that there is a gap, especially for journalists to be aware of it and to be well informed about its activities. If we look at the responses of the participants in this study, we can see that there are journalists who have never heard of the council.



Graph 4

Variables	Frequency	Percent
I know	66	63.5
I don't know	20	19.2
I have heard, but not enough information.	14	18.3
Total	100	100.0

Table: 5

4.3.2. Independence

Another significant challenge facing the Ethiopian Media Council is the question of its neutrality. The study findings reveal a perception among participants that achieving true impartiality for the Council, free from influence by other entities, is difficult and that it struggles

to operate effectively within the existing legal framework. While Meseret Atalay claims that the Council was initially independent and impartial, concerns persist regarding its current status.

Meseret Atalay explains this idea:

Council members are media institutions. And because journalists are members of their institutions, they are not required to believe or not. It aims to solve problems in the media without going anywhere else. However, some members of the council are not fulfilling their responsibilities. Because when we make announcements about the council, there are those who broadcast it through their media, and some do not consider it much of an issue. To make this institution credible, it has been done by making it clear through the organization. The Council started its work by holding a very clear and credible election in terms of procedure and organization.

According to the responses obtained in this observe, journalists have doubts approximately the independence of the Ethiopian Media Council. Although the Media Council became recognized to be democratic and impartial while it was established, the question is whether or not it will likely be able to accomplish that when its miles placed into operation. Here, Meseret Atalay, a member of the Executive Committee of EMC, explains that despite the fact that many stuff have been performed since the council came into operation, the issue of media freedom is a concern.

When I look at it personally, I see two things: one is how independent it is, and the other is whether it has strong capabilities. The media is a center of politics, and it is a big question whether the journalist can work independently and the council can work with professional discipline. If the Media Council is said to work independently, it is the foundation of freedom of the press. And the freedom of the press is guaranteed by the constitution, but it is not yet in practice. So the council may be a victim of this problem. The Media Council exists physically and is seen as one of the institutions of democracy. However, it would be good if we could see

cases to see how strong it is, but we have not seen it, and we believe that we will work independently. I have never seen the intervention of the government in the work of the council, and it is organized in an independent way. But what matters is the strength of the members. If members follow strong and professional discipline and pay council dues properly, the council is bound to be strong.

Here is the response of the participants in this study to the question of whether the council will be independent:

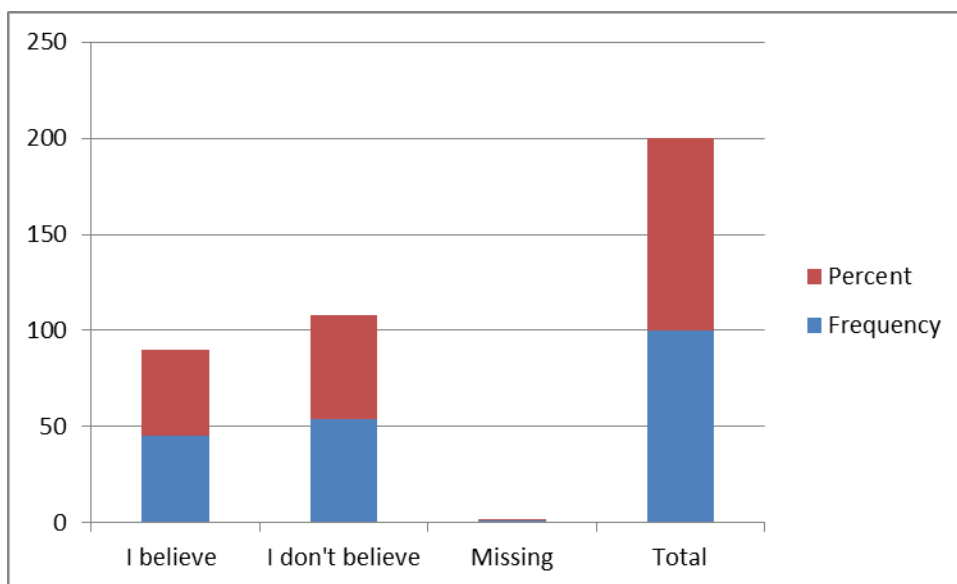


Table: 5

The study results indicate a clear division in opinion regarding the Ethiopian Media Council's (EMC) impartiality. While a minority (45%) believes the Council is impartial, a majority (53%) believe it is not. Mr. Meseret Atalay challenges this perception, arguing that the lack of media issues or misconduct cases brought before the Council makes it difficult to assess its neutrality. He suggests that the EMC's claims of independence and impartiality remain untested without concrete examples or evidence to examine.

Following the meeting of the Ethiopian Media Council, the reporter shared the information on its website. This information also indicates that the problems are not being introduced to the council, as Mr. Meseret Atalay claims.

According to the news published by the Ethiopian Media Council on its website,

March 11, 2024

The Ethiopian Media Council stated that despite the establishment of an arbitration system to resolve complaints and grievances related to journalists and media institutions through mutual control, cases are not coming to it.

Although the council's arbitration team has been organized by 18 members and started working, the issues that are coming to it for resolution are not related to media institutions and journalists, the chairman of the council's arbitration, Mr. Philipos Ainalem, announced.

Amare Aregawi, chairman of the executive committee of the council, said, "Even though the bodies that provide arbitration are organized at the office level, cases are not coming to the council. Journalists' cases are not only going to the council; cases are not going to court, he said.

When Ato Amare explained the issues that come to the council for resolution, he said, "Sometimes they evict me from my house; I have not received the condominium I paid for. Since they do not concern the council, it is necessary to make further announcements and educate them," he said.

Mr. Tamrat Hailu, the Deputy Chairman of the Council's Executive Committee,

Said, "We are seeing media organizations and journalists taking up all the cases that need to be decided in court," said Tamrat Hailu, chairman of

the commission's executive committee, with many judges losing their jobs as a result.

"A very big party is held; the food and drinks are prepared, but there is no audience; what should be done?" he said. "However, when we go to court, we hear that there are still journalists walking around." He said it is necessary for journalists and media institutions to use the council, as mutual control will provide a solution.

The council said this to state that it is working independently, but the lack of issues indicates that it was not possible to ensure the council's neutrality. But during interviews, they raise cases that do not go to the council because the council is not credible. In an interview conducted for this study, the practice of going to the council when faced with problems was low.

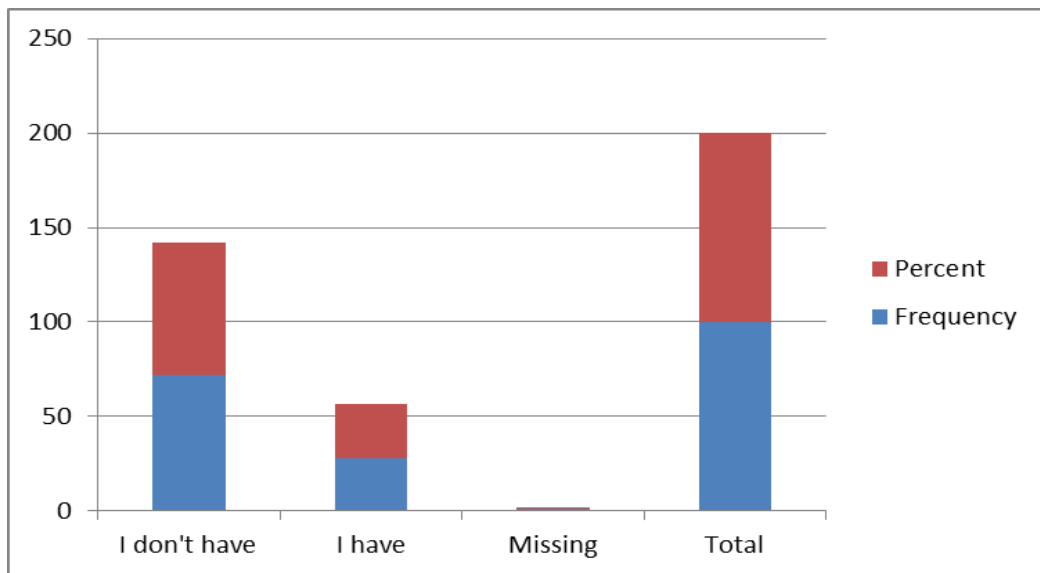
The editor-in-chief of the EBC Investigative Department and a member of the Ethiopian Journalists Association say as follows:

I remember a little bit when the Ethiopian Media Council was established. I remember several times a series of discussions were held with people of various experience and knowledge in the field. We face many issues related to work behavior for which we need to go to the council, but not only I, but also my colleagues, do not have the experience of taking the matter to the council. Even the council occasionally provides training together with other institutions, but the experience of coming to the journalists is very low.

While the lack of enforcement capacity is a major concern, the issue of credibility also contributes to the low trust in the Ethiopian Media Council among journalists. Despite the initial hope surrounding the Council's formation, with professionals from the media sector actively involved in its establishment, concerns remain. Merkeb Reda, for example, expresses hope, highlighting the participation of individuals with significant contributions to the media landscape.

The people who run the council are experienced professionals, but I don't think they treat it as their own institution or job. I think my lack of passion and commitment is a big underlying problem. There were things that should have been done after the establishment of this institution, but they were not.

What strengthens this issue is the questionnaire used for this study. Based on this questionnaire, the response to the question of whether the media council is credible supports the above idea.



Graph: 6

Looking at this information, it suggests that reporters' agree with in the council is low. 70 percentage of participants expressed that they've no accept as true with, while only 28 percentage indicated that they've consider in the council. This means that the Council has a low degree of accept as true with among journalists for various reasons.

The data accumulated for this observe and the interviews conducted with the leaders and members of various journalists' institutions show that the Ethiopian Media Council has a low level of agree with among newshounds. The truth that newshounds suppose that the Council isn't impartial will make the Council ineffective.

4.3.3. Enforcement Capacity

The study identified a significant obstacle to building trust in the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) among journalists: limited enforcement capacity. Nebiu Wendeson, an Executive Member of the Editors' Association, points to this challenge, acknowledging that while the Media Council has a worthy mission; it faces a common problem with journalists' associations. This suggests that the Council's ability to effectively implement its regulations and hold members accountable is a crucial factor in gaining the confidence of journalists.

I see different associations, just like before. Many associations are formed, but I don't see them doing much work to protect journalists' rights. I think this council is in a similar situation. In fact, when the council was set up, it was established under the strong influence of big journalists. The purpose for which it was established is great, but I don't believe that it has actually done anything.

When the Ethiopian Media Council turned into mounted, it had set many desires, and plenty of journalists had hopes for them, because the responses from the interviews and questionnaires imply. However, the members of this take a look at imply that the council isn't always doing the equal paintings because it became while it became established. The principal problem of the council is fear and finance, and Nebiyu Wendeson explained that this is the purpose why the council isn't sturdy:

In Ethiopia, one of the reasons why such associations are not strong is fear, and there is no proper media freedom, so there is a fear that we will face problems in this. Of course, I don't know of unions that have worked and had problems, which means they didn't work. Another is that their financial capacity is not strong.

Demis Mekuriaw is a member of the Ethiopian Journalists Association According to him; the Ethiopian Media Council has no longer completed a sturdy task considering its established order. And he defined that the most important trouble with this council is its incapacity to enforce the main motive of its status quo.

The council operates in Ethiopia. If the media gets into a conflict, it is mostly with politics. And it is difficult to say whether the council will not be pressured to fix this. Recently, the council said in a statement that, as far as I know, no arrests have been made for being journalist. However, journalists' rights activists who have set up their base outside say that journalists have been arrested. Now here is where to believe. However, as the council is an institution that works in Ethiopia, it is impossible to say that the political conflict that makes the journalist a victim does not affect the council. It is impossible to say that this council is not as afraid as the journalist is. Who is the reason the council protected him? When you protect a journalist, the protector wants protection for himself. Can this group work in a country where the judicial system is very weak? This is impossible if you ask me. You might think that even a brave few could survive. I don't think the Security Council will be strong enough to take further action. I've never heard him argue with a reporter, and I don't think he ever will. I have never heard him argue with any journalist, and I don't think he will in the future.

The fact that the Ethiopian Media Council does not care about the rights of journalists and is not seen to be doing real work has made it untrustworthy among journalists. This research shows that the lack of enforcement of the rule of law and freedom of the press has made the council's enforcement capacity low.

In order for the council to be strong, since the members of the council are the media, the strength of the members can be the strength of the council, says Demis Mekuriaw.

Who are the members of the council? Do these media operate freely? It is not convincing to say that the council will work independently without the members working independently. The lack of independence may stem from various pressures, such as from the government, media owners, and

sponsors. I think the work of the council is related to whether the political context changes or not.

In an interview, a journalist who participated on this research, Merkeb Reda, Editor-in-Chief of the EBC Investigative Department and member of the Ethiopian Journalists Association, says that the primary hassle is that it permits reporters to have information about the organization without going to the council. For a journalist who is aware of the level of democratic establishments inside the council, it isn't tough to realize the capability of the council.

The journalist does not go to the council, thinking that the council cannot enforce it. For example, we feel that going to the Council, which is smaller than these institutions, is not feasible for journalists who know how much pressure they are facing, which is supported by large budgets and human resources. Therefore, lack of credibility and lack of enforcement capacity are the fundamental problems.

The council's enforcement function is decided primarily based at the troubles that come to it, however one motive is that the group has published on its website that it has no longer finished enough paintings for this evaluate. However, in order to make the paintings of the council powerful and for journalists to have faith, it's miles essential to work out the authority given via law. According to Merkeb Reda, the council ought to be reinforced to resolve this trouble.

The government should give full responsibility to institutions established by law, but I don't think it will. For example, if a journalist makes a professional mistake and goes to court, the government body, from the police to the court, should look into this matter. Instead, it is more likely that I am the one who is looking at me. Here, too, authority is important. The council will be inferior compared to these institutions, so it will not respect its rights. Therefore, all laws passed must be enforced. I think that the leaders of the council are holding back because they do not see hope when looking at this issue. Therefore, to correct this, it is necessary to be able to enforce the written law by law.

In order for the Ethiopian Media Council to do a success activity, many changes are wished, but which will growth its credibility amongst journalists, it has been recognized in this look at that it have to tell the work of the Council, ensure that it is unbiased, and boom its enforcement potential via nicely appearing the duties given by way of the law. The neutrality of the council is an issue raised by using reporters who participated in interviews and surveys.

The council additionally says its miles too early to evaluate whether it will likely be impartial, as no cases are coming to it. However, in order for newshounds to believe within the Council, it was determined out on this take a look at that informing the Council is vital. The outcomes of this examine indicate that constructing the capability of the Council to carry out this is any other trouble that needs time but desires to be started out.

CHAPTER FIVE:

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

While Ethiopia's constitution guarantees media freedom, challenges in its implementation have been evident. To address these issues and ensure the media is regulated by an impartial body, the Ethiopian Media Council was established about a decade ago. A significant amount of effort has been invested in setting up the Council, and its formation has been successfully completed.

After assuming his role within the Ethiopian Media Council, he dedicated himself to training numerous journalists, clarifying the council's functions and responsibilities. He also undertook a significant process of reorganizing the council, securing financial resources, and developing operational systems and guidelines.

According to the outcomes of this examination, it is indicated that there may be nevertheless a whole lot of work to be accomplished in order to confirm that the Council is trustworthy among journalists'. Of course, the council can show its credibility within the paintings it does, but the modern process suggests that there are doubts about its credibility. It may be understood from the consequences of this have a look at that the council has been successful in making itself recognized by journalists.

As the members of the council are media establishments, it averted journalists from being direct members of the council. This made it thru the group alternatively of having statistics about the council at once. The fact that the media establishments do now not see it as their regular work to supply statistics to reporters has precipitated reporters to stay far away from the council. It has been shown in this take a look at that the Council, which is about 10 years old, is good at informing journalists' and media owners about its work. However, this year, the presence of journalists' who've no information approximately the council in different approaches is an indication that the problem is critical. This approach that the Council does not have a manner to find journalists in various trainings is no longer a restricted range of newshounds.

There is not any steady manner to discover facts approximately the Council, especially whilst new newshounds be a part of media establishments. And the Council's approach to journalists and the way to trade records have grown to be slender. That is why, on this take a look at, there had been participants who stated that they had no statistics about the council.

Another problem observed in this observation is the low range of newshounds who definitely recognize approximately the duties and duties of the council. Most of the responses have been about protecting the rights and hobbies of journalists and serving as a bridge between the authorities and the media. However, the dearth of a journalist who knows exactly what the council does is an indication that there is a gap between the council and journalists.

It additionally shows that the drift of records is fragmented among the council and journalists. The commentary of reporters at the neutrality and importance of the Council is right. For the most element, their accept as true with that the organization is impartial and important is positive. Regarding neutrality, it needs to be widely implemented, as the choices given in a few instances may be beneficial. But their trust that this group is vital is the primary and critical trouble for the continuation of an organization, so it will be an illustration that the achievement of the institution can be feasible if it's far endured. However, the truth that reporters have little information approximately the council, that they understand about its work even in a fragmented way, that they agree with that the council is a critical organization, and that there is a superb View of the council despite the question of its neutrality, is an indication that the council can prove its credibility to journalists.

The findings of this look at offer precious insights into the challenges and possibilities surrounding media law in Ethiopia, prompting important questions on the feasibility of different regulatory fashions. The idea of media self-law, in which the enterprise assumes primary obligation for upholding moral standards and addressing misconduct, holds potential blessings: Self-law can foster a sense of possession and duty among newshounds, encouraging adherence to moral principles and excellent practices.

A self-regulatory system can adapt extra without difficulty to the evolving media landscape and address rising demanding situations with more agility than government-led models. Self-

regulation can shield media freedom and independence from potential government interference or censorship. However, the look at's findings additionally highlight challenges that might preclude the effectiveness of an in basic terms self-regulatory version in the Ethiopian context: The current loss of acceptance as true with inside the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) amongst reporters increases concerns about the enterprise's potential to efficiently self-regulate.

The EMC might also require extra resources, know-how, and infrastructure to efficaciously fulfill its mandate as a self-regulatory body. Concerns approximately capacity for political or business influence ought to undermine the independence and effectiveness of a self-regulatory system. Given the challenges associated with both pure self-regulation and direct government management, a co-regulatory the model should offer a capability center ground. This approach could involve a collaborative effort between the media enterprise, government bodies, and civil society groups to set up and put into effect ethical standards and regulations.

Distributing obligations for media regulation amongst diverse stakeholders can foster extra accountability and transparency. Co-regulation can assist balance the want for media freedom and independence with the general public hobby of ethical and responsible journalism. Leveraging the information and sources of different stakeholders can enhance the effectiveness of the regulatory framework. For Implementing Co-Regulation Establishing a nicely described legal and regulatory framework outlining the jobs and obligations of each stakeholder is crucial. Ensuring an unbiased body or mechanism for oversight and accountability in the co-regulatory machine is vital to prevent undue having an effect on any unmarried entity. Building believes and fostering open communication amongst all stakeholders is prime to the fulfillment of a co-regulatory model.

The preference between self-regulation, co-regulation, or different regulatory models call for cautious attention to the specific context and demanding situations inside the Ethiopian media landscape. Open communication, stakeholder engagement, and a dedication to upholding moral requirements and press freedom are vital for navigating the direction toward higher and accountable media surroundings in Ethiopia.

This study shows a considerable undertaking facing the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC): a perceived lack of potential to effectively work its authority and deal with professional misconduct within the media panorama. While the significance of the Council itself is normally acknowledged, concerns rise regarding its capacity to correctly take care of cases of moral violations and expert transgressions. The look indicates that empowering the EMC to address such issues is critical for demonstrating its ability and relevance.

However, it additionally acknowledges the capacity danger of politicization if the Council assumes extra manipulation over media topics. Therefore, a balanced method is wanted, making sure the EMC has the capability and independence to efficaciously deal with professional misconduct while safeguarding in opposition to undue political affect. From the findings, it follows that there might be guidelines on a way to sustain journalist trust in EMC with a view to make self-regulation paintings extra effective.

Establishing a relied-on and sturdy media council in Ethiopia requires a concerted effort from various stakeholders, each gambling a crucial function in fostering a healthy and colorful media ecosystem. The look at's findings underscores the need for collaborative efforts to set up a reputable and relied-on media council in Ethiopia. Each stakeholder within the media panorama has an essential role to play in this system: The EMC have to prioritize transparency in its operations, selection-making methods, and investment sources. Regular communication with stakeholders and open engagement with public inquiries are critical. As it keeps the Council ought to actively exhibit its independence from any undue influence, whether or not political or commercial. Fair and unbiased choice-making, based totally on moral principles and professional requirements, is critical for constructing believe. In addition, investing in ability-building tasks for Council individuals is critical to beautifying their expertise, professionalism, and capacity to effectively address media-related problems. Finally, actively engaging with journalists, media groups, and the public through workshops, seminars, public boards, and media campaigns can foster knowledge, collaboration, and aid for the EMC's work. Beyond the Ethiopian Media Council's sturdy working surroundings and engagement media organizations have to actively help the EMC's projects and cooperate with its investigations and rulings. This includes respecting the Council's decisions and taking corrective movements whilst essential.

Additionally that Media homes need to set up and uphold high ethical requirements inside their companies, fostering a subculture of accountable journalism and accountability.

Finally, Investing in education and expert development opportunities for newshounds can enhance their knowledge of ethical standards and quality practices. To be a relied on the media council the journalist even has a role like actively have interaction with the EMC, imparting remarks, participating in its tasks, and utilizing its sources for expert support and guidance. In addition, Commitment to moral behavior and accountable journalism is essential for constructing believe in the career and assisting the EMC's position in upholding those standards. Also, Journalists must help their colleagues and preserve each other liable for upholding moral ideas, fostering a lifestyle of professionalism and integrity within the media network. In this factor the authorities need to ensure get right of entry to information and authorities' transparency helps media duty and strengthens the media's position in informing the public. Furthermore, uphold and guard freedom of expression and press freedom, creating a surrounding conducive to a thriving and impartial media landscape.

By running collaboratively and enjoyable their respective roles, these stakeholders can contribute to the development of a depended-on and sturdy media council, in the end fostering a media panorama is ethical, responsible, and serves the public hobby in Ethiopia. Before it could begin operations, the Ethiopian Media Council needs to overcome several barriers. The Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) has successfully secured the important backing of each media specialist and the authorities, paving the manner for its registration as a legal entity. This accomplishment lays a stable basis for the Council's operations and underscores its legitimacy within the media landscape. And what comes subsequent for the Ethiopian Media Council? Is to boost public and press understanding of the council's functions.

Therefore, the council has to begin a complete communication marketing campaign to teach the general public about their crucial obligations and duties and to counteract the effect of outdoor forces on the state's media. In this method, it is vital to increase the practice of providing statistics about the media council, of which the member media establishments are same to the editorial rules that they inform their newshounds. In the present observation, it's been proven that

even though there are media establishments that tell journalists approximately the nature and paintings of the Media Council, it isn't always regular. Therefore, when newshound painting in a media organization, they should also get facts approximately the Media Council, just as they have to recognize the group's editorial coverage. This needs to be resolved by talking to member media establishments. So some distance, the Council has carried out focus-elevating activities for newshounds through numerous education systems.

However, there's a need to develop distinct options for newshounds to method the council. For example, via technology, it's miles viable to attain journalists and alternate facts. Beyond the media institutions, it calls for more newshounds to turn out to be members individually and to accept as true that the organization is not unusual. In addition to media institutions, it miles acknowledged that newshound's institutions can end up individuals of the council, but many associations did not become contributors. In a country in which there are numerous institutions, it's miles vital to paint so that everyone in these associations can emerge as participants of the council. As those institutions comprise many journalists, they provide possibilities to meet with journalists.

5.2. Recommendations:

This look delves into the vital difficulty of journalists' acceptance as true within the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC). The trust serves as an aspect of a strong and wholesome media atmosphere Solid acceptance as true between the Council and journalists' is essential for:

- **Effective Self-Regulation:** The media industry's robust self-regulation relies upon on journalists' confidence inside the EMC's capability to pretty and correctly handle ethical troubles and expert misconduct.
- **Cooperation and Collaboration:** Trust creates a cooperative atmosphere wherein the Council and newshounds might also cooperate to resolve troubles, appreciate ethical standards, and increase accountable media.

- **Credibility and Legitimacy:** Journalists and the overall public are more likely to view a truthful EMC as a valid and credible authority, which increases the EMC's capacity to carry out its mandate.
- **Freedom of Expression and Press Freedom:** The media environment is greater conducive to the improvement of freedom of expression and press freedom when journalists have agree with inside the EMC to shield their rights and uphold moral standards.

However, a lack of trust in the EMC could have negative consequences:

- **Undermined Self-Regulation:** If reporters have worries about the Council's impartiality or efficacy, they might be unwilling to engage with it or observe its rulings.
- **Erosion of Credibility:** Low believe can undermine the EMC's reputation and impair its potential to efficaciously fulfill its activity as a regulatory frame.
- **Increasing Polarization:** Lack of consider can deepen rifts in the media, impeding cooperation and fruitful conversation.

To ensure the success of the Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) and foster a healthy media environment in Ethiopia, it's crucial to address the factors impacting journalists' trust in the Council. By understanding and addressing these issues, Ethiopia can move closer to a media landscape characterized by ethical conduct, responsible reporting, and a vibrant exchange of ideas.

This study provides valuable insights and actionable recommendations for strengthening the Ethiopian Media Council's (EMC) effectiveness, sustainability, and ability to fulfil its mandate. These key takeaways offer a roadmap for building trust, fostering collaboration, and ultimately strengthening the Council's role in the Ethiopian media landscape.

5.3. Further Research:

This study provides a starting point for further research. Future studies could delve deeper into the specific reasons behind the trust deficit, examine the impact of government interference on journalists' perceptions, and explore the potential of co-regulation models.

This study offers a vital snapshot of the current state of media self-regulation in Ethiopia. By taking decisive steps to address the challenges identified, the EMC can become a cornerstone of a strong and independent media sector, ultimately contributing to a more informed and engaged public sphere.

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6. Appendices

6.1. Appendix 1: Interviewee List

Meseret Atalay, President of the Ethiopian Journalists Association, Founder, and Executive Committee Member of the Ethiopian Media Council, March 27, 2024.

Merkeb Reda, member of the Ethiopian Journalists Association and Editor-in-Chief of the EBC Investigative Department, March 10, 2024.

Nebiu Wendeson, Executive Member of the Editors' Association and Head of Content and Creative Department at Cyber Media EBC, March 20, 2024.

Demis Mekuriaw, Editor-in-Chief of EBC and member of the Ethiopian Journalists Association, March 12, 2024.

7. Appendix 2:

7.1. In Depth Interview for Editors and Journalists

7.1.1. Participation Request for the Ethiopian Media Council Survey

My name is Getu Lakew. I encourage you to engage in a study for my MA thesis, 'Evaluating Journalists Trust in the Ethiopian Media Council'.

I am a graduate student at the University of Addis Ababa, School of Journalism and Communication. My thesis research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Getachew Dinku. This study aims to look at journalists' trust in the Ethiopian Media Council. This study will use questionnaires to collect information from individual participants in Addis Ababa. If you want to participate, you will answer questions about the Ethiopian Media Council, a self-regulatory agency.

The survey consists of 15 questions, and answering them should not take longer than 24 minutes. Participating has no known potential risks and only costs you time.

Your participation in and replies to this activity are 100% confidential. If you reply, your information will be pooled with that of other respondents and given as grouped data for this research. Only the researcher will have access to the raw information from your questionnaire.

All data will be kept in a secure area accessible only to the researcher. Additionally, the study's findings are going to be explained in a classroom setting for thesis defence without identifying you. Moreover, there is no payment for taking part in this research. Your involvement will advance knowledge of the Ethiopian Media Council's function as a self-regulatory organization and encourage more study in this area.

Do not hesitate to ask questions if you have any. You can reach me by email at yihudabush@gmail.com. If you have any requests about your rights as a research participant, please contact the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Addis Ababa.

Please,

1. Do not write your name.

2. I urge that you return the form before the end of Friday.

8. Interview Questions

Name.....

Age

A/ 18-24 B/ 25-35 C/ 36-47 D/ 48-59 E/ above 60

Sex.....

Organization.....

Position.....

Level of Education:

A/Diploma B/First Degree C/Second Degree D/Three Degree (PHD)

Your experience in journalism

A/1-5 B/5-10 C/10-15 D/15-20 E/ >20

1. Do you know anything about the Ethiopian Media Council?
A) What I am aware of; B) What I am unaware of; and C) What I have heard but lack sufficient details

2. How does the Council of Ethiopian Media function?

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.....

3. How are Ethiopian media laws put into practice?

- A/ by the government
- B/ by the private sector
- C/ by the government and private sector together
- D/ An additional choice

4. How to fix errors in journalistic writing

- A/ by the law and institutional order
- B/ by an excuse or pardon
- C/ by a court
- D/ by the Ethiopian Media Council

E/An additional choice

5. Do you think it is appropriate to judge the Ethiopian Media Council if the case is more than the institution where they work?

- A/ It's acceptable
- B/ It's not acceptable.

6. If not, what is the reason for your answer?

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7. If journalists commit an offense at work, how should the offense is judged?

- A) The institution's disciplinary law
- B) The court
- C) The media council.

8. Do you believe that the Ethiopian Media Council is an independent and professional institution?

A/ I believe I don't believe

9. If you don't believe it, please tell us the reason for your answer.
.....
.....

10. If the problems encountered in your work are brought to the attention of the Ethiopian Media Council, do you have trust in the institution?

A/ I don't have B/ I have

11. The media institution you work for is a member of the Ethiopian Media Council.

A/Yes B/No C/ I don't know.

12. If the media institution you work for is a member of the Ethiopian Media Council, the institution you work for has given you an explanation of the council's procedures and you are familiar with its procedures.

A/ I am aware; B/ I'm unsure; and C/ I was given an explanation, but I don't think it's credible.

D/ They didn't explain anything to me, but I understand how it operates.

13. How significant do you consider the Ethiopian Media Council to be as an organization that oversees the media in Ethiopia?

A. Extremely essential; B. Significant; C. Insignificant

D. I'm not sure.

14. What do you believe to be the Ethiopian Media Council's main issue? Multiple options are Available for selection.

A. Money

B. A lack of trust among journalists in the Media Council C. A lack of collaboration among experts.

14. What do you think is the major problem facing the Ethiopian Media Council? You can choose more than one option.

A. Finance

B. Journalists' lack of confidence in the Media Council

C. Lack of cooperation among professionals.

D. Lack of managerial and professional knowledge

Please provide any additional information.....

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.....

15. In Ethiopia, how important do you think the Ethiopian Media Council is as a body that regulates the media?

A/ Yes

B/ No

Thank you so much!

9. Appendix 3:

9.1. Interview Questions for EMC and Journalists Association Leaders

9.1.1. Interview Questions

Name (Option) Age Sex.....

Organization position.....Level of education.....

1. How was the establishment of the Ethiopian Media Council? What work was supposed to be done?
2. What do you think of the problems and successes of the Ethiopian Media Council after its establishment?
3. Do you think the Ethiopian media council has brought all professionals and stakeholders together?
4. To what extent are the duties of the Media Council understood by the public and journalists?
5. According to the Ethiopian Media Council, there haven't been any problems lately. Why do you suppose this is the situation?
Do you believe that the media and government have given the Ethiopian Media Council meaningful consideration and support? Why?
6. The members of the Ethiopian Media Council are media institutions. There must be a way to meet journalists or go the same way?
7. What should be possible for the Ethiopian Media Council to do the work given by law?