

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:
THE CASE OF ETHIOPIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION AGENCY'S
NEWS CENTER**

BY
ALMAZ BEYENE

JUNE, 2009

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NEWS CENTER**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF JOURNALISM AND
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ALMAZ BEYENE

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*Historical Analysis Organizational Structure:
The Case of Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency's
News Center*

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ALMAZ BEYENE

Approved By the Examining Board

Chairman, Department Graduate Committee

Signature

Internal Advisor

Signature

External Examiner

Signature

Internal Examiner

Signature

List of Acronyms

ERTA	Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency
ETV	Ethiopian television
ENA	Ethiopian News Agency
WIC	Walta Information Center
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples's Revolutionary Democratic Front
FG	Focus Group
II	In-depth Interview
FGDI	Focus Group Discussion with Senior journalists in Ethiopian radio and Television Agency
FGD2	Focus Group Discussion with Young journalists who are working in the Agency
II 1	In-depth Interview with a senior journalist who was working as a coordinator of the Ethiopian Radio News Center and recently a member of the Committee for the new organizational structure of the Agency.
II 2	In-depth Interview with a member of Plan and Research Department of the Agency
II 3	In depth Interview with a senior journalist who has been working in the news center of the Agency

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Abstract

The Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency redesigns its organizational structure in different times however it is criticized by all stakeholders including the government for its allegedly inefficient and ineffective services. Thus the aim of this paper is to look at the implementation of organizational structure of the Agency and it examines the causes of the overall changes of the structures, the decision making process in the news center, and the influences of the news center's activity with a focus on the news center management of the Agency. The qualitative research paradigm has been used as a method of study. Since qualitative research is more appropriate to examining words and ideas it is helpful to explaining complex social phenomena. Accordingly, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and participant observations were conducted to explore employees and management views to the operation of the organizational structure. It is known that triangulation helps to avoid a limitation in one method by using another method that is strong in the areas that the first is weak. The researcher also found out that it is important to take the contingency approach and critical theory of communication approach to organization as a theoretical framework.

The major findings of the study are indicated that, although the organizational structures have been changed repeatedly; fundamental changes have not been achieved within the news center. Insufficient capacity of journalists and officials, unnecessary bureaucratic system of decision making, and less readiness and commitment of subordinates to assume responsibility are among the main factors that affect the effectiveness of the news center.

In view of the fact the Agency has not been covering things based on public interest. Thus, they failed to meet public expectations. Finally, it can be concluded that lack of commitment and insufficient knowledge of officials' and employees' are the main factors that affect the effectiveness of ERTA towards meeting public expectations.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

The Ethiopian Radio and Television were introduced to Ethiopia in 1936 and 1963 respectively and since then the two stations have been trying to redesign their organizational structure in order to accommodate new technology and provide quality services.

Makuria (2005:10) stated that in 1936 the Radio Ethiopia started its transmission with a 7 kilo watt short wave transmitter and hardly covered the scale of Addis Ababa. Immediately, the Italians took control of the station and used it as an instrument of propaganda.

In 1941, after the withdrawal of Italian troops, the Ethiopian government used the Radio for disseminating Amharic news, government statements, declarations and music (Basic Information's of Ethiopian Radio and television, 2000:4). 1

In 1963, Foreign and Domestic Broadcast Services started. For example: the Ethiopian Radio for the first time broadcast news in English to West Africa, Europe, in French to the Middle East, East and North Africa and in Arabic to the Middle East audiences.

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After 1970, the Radio Ethiopia made changes by overcoming the problems of its formative years with coverage of 40 percent of the people in all major cities, towns and villages of the country under the direction and guidance of the Ministry of Information.

Following the 1974 Revolution, the Dergue regime changed the name of 'Radio Ethiopia' to 'Voice of the Revolutionary Ethiopia' so as to fit the name into the revolutionary changes which occurred at that time. As Makuria (2005:10) indicated the name Radio Ethiopia was restored soon after the incumbent government came to power 1991.

Meanwhile, the idea of introducing television service was initiated in Ethiopia when Silver Jubilee Exhibition of Emperor Hailesele which took place in 1963 (Basic Information of Ethiopian Radio and Television, 2000:19). Leykun (1997: 1) mentioned that television as means of mass communication was initially introduced to Ethiopia in 1963 on the occasion of the founding of the Organization of the African Unity (OAU).

A year later, on November 2, 1964, the Ethiopian Television was established by a British firm named Thomson Television International Limited and started its transmission in Amharic and English languages.

As Leykun (1997: 28) stated the first organization structure of Ethiopian Television served from 1965- 1976 (referred Appendix lx).

In 1991, all state media including the Ethiopian Radio and Television (at the same time the state radio and television were separate entities) designed new organizational structures for Ethiopian Television and Radio.

Moreover, the EPRDF transitional government in 1991 ratified a press proclamation that freed the print media from any censorship. As a result, the office of censorship was closed down and several private newspapers started to appear in the market.

Following this, in 1995, the two organizations merged and formed the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency in order to commonly use the Agency's human and material resources. The 1998's organizational structure was different from the previous structures and accordingly the employees of the Agency were made to be administered by two different administration systems, journalists and technicians under the Board and the other support staff under the civil service.

Furthermore, in 2006 the Agency redesigned their organizational structure. According to the Deputy General Director of News and Current Affairs Department of Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency, the aim of this structural reform was to administer and control the Agency's human and material resource. Thus, a new department known as Human and Material Resource Development was established (Restructured organization structure of ERTA, 2006 (referred in appendix VII).

Currently, the Agency is redesigning its organizational structure and it is suggested that there would be a shift from Agency to corporation. It is assumed that the new redesigning will enable the agency to attain dramatic change in its activities and it will also make possible for the Agency to apply "by media" operation, which allows the Agency to use multi skilled manpower.

However, the Agency redesigns its organizational structure in different times, it is criticized by all stakeholders including the government for its allegedly inefficient and ineffective services. The government often expressed the Ethiopian Radio and Television

did not promote government policies and strategies and had not played a supportive role to meet its interests. According to its editorial policy, it is expected to work to link the government with the people.

Similarly, there are comments from the public that indicated they are not satisfied by the contents which broadcast through the government media. Some said the content of the messages disseminated by the government media lack quality and some of them also said the message designed by the media should be impartial but most of the time programs which had political contents were unfair and biased towards government officials.

The opposition political parties also accuse the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency for not serving them fairly.

Based on this, assumption, the Agency is starting to implement a new organizational structure. Thus, the paper looks whether the cause of the poor service of the Agency has been related to its organizational structure or not. Accordingly, it examines the implementation of organizational structure of the Agency with a focus on the news center management of the Agency.

1.2 Statement of the problem

As explained above, the state media, the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency in particular is criticized for not serving its stakeholders, the public, the government and the political parties of the country. The managerial behavior, the ability of journalists and the organizational structure of the Agency has been described as causes of the ineffectiveness of the Agency. Based on this assumption, the management of the station has applied

different organizational structures over the years however the stakeholders remain unsatisfied.

Although different reasons are given as a cause of the Agency's poor service delivery; the researcher's motive is to examine the operation of the Agency's organizational structure with a focus on the news center management. It is clear that the entire journalistic work is almost carried out within a newsroom. Newsroom activity influences media management either positively or negatively. Thus, taking the news center of the Agency as a sample, the study examines the operation of the structure on the news center in relation with forces involving the manager, forces involving the subordinate, and the situations.

The managers value system, personal leadership inclinations whether they are authoritarian or participative; the subordinates' readiness to assume responsibility and their degree of understanding about organizational goals will be examined.

It is known that the goal of the Agency is focused on:

- building a capacity of gathering, analyzing, and disseminating information.
- in order to produce and broadcast quality programs, building a capacity of organizing information and manpower. And
- based on strong technology, boosting the national radio's and television's coverage to 100 % (Editorial service document of ERTA, 2009).

ERTA as a national media has an aim to deliver quality, informative, educative and entertainment programs and there by to build national consensus as well as to build democratic unity which is founded on equality among nations, nationalities and peoples

Having this in mind, the news center of the Agency is restructured for many years in order to meet its goal. Despite the change of the structures, the production of the news is going to be more or less similar. Stephen Lacy, Ardyth B. Sohn and Jan LeBlanc Wicks (1993: 29) describe any discussion of media organizational structure must focus on defining tasks, communication, and authority relationships, and accordingly the desired function is to be accomplished.

From 1965 till 1976, the Ethiopian Radio and Television newsroom functions were not separated from production activities and the accountability of the newsroom was to the program section (referred in appendixes IV and V). After the Dergue regime came to power in 1974, the news desks of the radio and television stations started broadcasting news in Oromifa and Tigrigna from Addis Ababa. Before 1974 news in Tigrigna was broadcast from Asmara. The news desks of the radio and television stations were also reorganized in 1991 and as a result Tigrigna and Oromifa entertainment news were launched by the Ethiopian Television.

In 1995, the radio and the television stations were merged and designed a new organizational structure. The reason for merging both stations was to use both human and material resources effectively. The news desks of radio and television also developed to a news center but they were operated separately.

The Agency's organizational structure designed in 2006 was applied only for about two years because the editorial activities of the Agency were not carried out effectively. (Organizational Structure document, 2006). The same as other departments of the Agency, the news center also faced bureaucratic challenges of the huge department, the Human and Material Resources Development. In general, the Agency redesigned

different organizational structures over the years and currently it is coming up with a newly designed organizational structure.

The current organizational structure is totally different from the previous structures. The news centers of the Radio and the Television merged and other support staff such as transport and technical services became parts of the news center. It is believed that the 2006 structure had not been able to bring the service provider section and the beneficiary closer. The management of the Agency is hopeful about the effectiveness of the new structure but it has not been identified the reason for not meeting the public expectation, is whether the organization structure of the Agency or not. Thus, the study aims to examine the historical analysis of ERTA with a focus on its news center management.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The broader aim of this study is to describe the historical analysis of the organizational structure of the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency after the EPRDF came to power in 1991.

Within the broader context the paper will:

- examine the implementation of the Agency's organizational structures.
- look at the operation of the news center whether it has been goes in line with the organizational structures.
- examine the decision making process of the news center.
- explore situations that influences the news center management.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study is expected to have the following advantages:

- It gives an over all description about the background of the historical organizational structure of the Agency.
- It shows the implementation of the designed organizational structures within the news center.
- It also indicates what situations has been influenced the news center management.
- It also contributes to the Agency's current organizational structure by pointing essential ideas which are based on various practitioners' experiences.
- It also serves as a background document for people who need to conduct a basic research about the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency.

1.5 Research questions

- How is the implementation of the organizational structures within the news center?
- How is the decision making process within the news center in reference to the structures?
- What are the factors that have been affecting the effectiveness of ERTA's news center?

1.6 Limitation of the study

The paper also has its own limitations, and to mention the few:

It is difficult to get enough data and other information of the past decades because of limitations of having strong filing system of the Ethiopian Radio and Television.

The other limitation is lack of similar studies conducted about the topic because this is the first study which carried out for MA thesis.

1.7 Organizational Structure

The paper is based on the standard outline of a master's thesis work at Addis Ababa University.

The first chapter includes a general background of the problem statement, objectives of the study, significance of the study, research questions, limitations and organization of the study.

The second chapter focuses on the reviews of related literatures. The main issues are organizational structure versus effectiveness work, factors influencing organizational structure, newsroom management, theories, contingency approach and theory of critical communication approach to organization, organizational communication versus decision making. .

Chapter three discusses the methodology employed in the study.

The management of the newsroom of the Agency since 1991 will be discussed in chapter four. The chapter discusses legal establishment proclamations of the broadcast media with regard to organizational structure of the media. It has also discusses the operation of news center management in relation to its decision making process and organizational communication.

Furthermore, it will discusses the socialization, professionalism, and division of labor within the news center of the Agency. Interviews conducted with employees and officials of the media will be taken into account and accordingly findings are found out.

Finally, conclusions are treated in the fifth chapter.

Chapter Two

Review of relevant literature

2.1 Introduction

The first chapter described the background of the study and the research question with its significance and objectives. The organization structure of the study is also included in the chapter.

The use of media organizational structures in defining tasks and responsibilities within media organizations and effects which are related with internal and external factors as well as media management theories which are employed for the study will also discuss in the next chapter.

2.2 Media Organizational structure Versus effectiveness of work

Organizations are structured in a variety of ways, based on their objective and culture. Through organization structure it is possible to arrange the responsibilities for different functions and processes to be clearly allocated to different departments and employees as well as to other external clients.

Lacy et al. (1993:29) mention that some people believe a good employee should be able to perform well regardless of the structure of the organization and others believe that in the right organization structure, any one should be able to perform well but he stated that there is not right answer for this argument. Moreover, the authors state that an organization chart illustrates how the parts of an organization, such as the persons and things that motivate members and coordinate the actions of employees to achieve organizational goals.

In relation with organizational structure and effectiveness of work Richard L. Wiseman (1995:247) proposes the investigation of the influence of various communication-processes on decision quality in order to understand effectiveness. He also states that effective communication has a decisive role for creating good working environment and for allowing groups to make effective decisions are satisfied.

It is believed that horizontal and vertical relations within media organizations directly affect the effectiveness of the work performed by the media staff. In fact:

An organization is pattern of relationships in which many interwoven, simultaneous relationships through which people, under the direction of managers, pursue their common goals. In this matter managers must consider what is going on now, and what is likely to happen in the future when they design organization structure (Stone, G., Singletary, M., and Richard, P. V., 1999:324).

In other words, the term organizational structure is defined as a tool that facilitates the organization's work. Herbert A. Simon (1976:338) defined organizational structure as the way in which an organization's activities are divided, organized and coordinated provides stability and helps organization members work together to achieve goals.

James A. F., Edward R., Daniel A. & Gilbert JR. (1996:324) also pointed that when managers designed organizational structures they have to look into things in two directions simultaneously: inside their organization and outside their organization.

Like other organizations the work of journalists and the media industries that employ them also depend on the structural context within which they are generated.

Based on this fact, the study examines the management of the news center in relation with the implementation of the structures.

2.3 The effect of Structure on Media organizations

As media organizational structures have vital role in defining tasks, communication, and authority relationship within the organization, they have also influences on media organizations. According to Lacy et al. (1993:43), organizational influences on media management come from many sources and may be formal and informal.

2.3.1 Formal organizational influences

Formal approaches to media organizations are concerned with how the parts of an organization fit together in terms of division of labor, and departmentalization.

Division of labor is an efficient way of utilizing employee's skills. They mention with the computerization of media organizations, employees are expected to handle many more production aspects. According to the authors however, if all employees' were to participate in each step of producing a news cast, all would have to have the skills necessary to perform both the most and least demanding jobs and this is an inefficient method of utilizing workers skills (Wicks L. et al.).

Lacy et al. (1993: 33) also argues that instead of being responsible for an entire activity, employees specialize in doing part of an activity. The author considers division of labor as an efficient way of utilizing employees' specific skills. He indicates specific examples of media organizations.

The other element of formal influences to organizations is departmentalization describes how specialists are placed together in departments under the direction of a manager (Lacy et al. 1993:34). Lisa Taylor and Andrew Willis (nod) also describe departmentalization as the process of grouping activities into departments.

Newsrooms have different departments based on their size and coverage. The news editorial, the local news, international news, current affairs and other departments can be formed within newsrooms. There are also other departments their function is related with a newsroom. Lacy et al. (1993: 34) these departments are engaged in functions such as preparing information, reproducing information, distributing information, promoting the service, financing operations of the media, and coordinating processes.

2.3.2 Informal Organizational Influences

Informal organizational influences are include the socialization process that takes place within the organization, the degree of professionalism within organizations, and management behavior and the effects of such behavior on employees.

Socialization plays a vital role in performing work of the news room. Because of socialization process within media organizations, journalists were left on their own to discover and internalize responsibilities (Lacy et al. 1993:46). Moreover, Jennifer A. Star and Nanette Fondas (1992) indicated that organizational socialization perspective focuses attention on the adaptive intra-personal and inter-personal processes that occur during the newcomer's entry into a new organization or passage across organizational boundaries. In relation this argument, the scholars stated that the socialization perspective seems particularly promising for the study of organization formation because

the socialization perspective specifies the types of attitudinal and behavioral changes that occur in organizations.

Professionalism also affects media management because journalists work is to serve the public interest. Accordingly they have an obligation of respecting the profession.

As Taylor and Willis, Professionalism in journalism is based on such routine competencies as factual accuracy, speed at meeting deadlines, styles in presentation and a shared sense of news values (gogglebooks.com).

They also suggested that the idea of media professionalism is strongly linked with the media's ability to present itself as an arbiter of good taste and correct behavior.

Thus, professionalism is the exercise of autonomy, the right of workers to control their own work, frequently with reference to norms developed by professional agencies in which they work(Lacy et al.1993:46) .

The author mentions professionalism also provides journalists with a power base that can be used against management policies. For example if managers are resist to broadcast a news story which has controversies with interest of an advertisers , journalists can refuse to accept the idea of managers because professional journalists believe the public has a right to know.

Denis McQuail (2000:151) also relates professionalism with organization into associations, the formation of press councils, and the drawing up of principles of good practice in the form of codes of practice and ethics.

Management behavior also considered as one of the informal factors of media organizational structure which influence the management's relationship with employees. Giles (1995:225) mentions that behavior of managers in an organization results from the interaction of style and expectations. Lacy et al. (1993:47) also pointed out that as one management problem that continues to surface in media organizations is that of too little opportunity for subordinates to be involved in the decision making process. Therefore, it is assumed news room directors should learn to manage news rooms effectively and involve journalists in the decision process.

Having the above ideas in mind, Robert H. Giles (1995: 214), point out that managers with rigid and simplistic personalities view management as simply making correct, deductive decisions. They also considered employees who ask challenging questions or push for change are thought as disloyal.

Having the above explanation of formal and informal organization influence, I selected the contingency approach to use as a theoretical background for the study.

A contingency approach of Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) contended that different combinations situational elements require different management behaviors Giles (1995). In addition to that I want also to use Stanly Deetz's a critical theory of communication approach to organizations because it has a supportive role in examine the communication aspects of the media.

2.3.3 Contingency Approach to management

The contingency approach suggested that there are three important factors that organizations must consider. Lacy et al. (1993:41) describes the three important factors

that organizations must consider are forces involving the manager, the subordinates, and the situations. Thus, based on contingency approach a manager has to systematically try to identify which technique or approach will be the best solution for a problem which exists in a particular circumstance or context.

Furthermore, Giles (1995: 19) supports this idea and he described an example of contingency theory and he stated:

In a news room where the editor is trusted and respected and the task structure is moderate, the editor is in a position to be an effective leader. This capacity for leadership exists because everyone knows what to do, yet there is an abundance of variety and room for creativity, and the editor's position gives him or her power to hire, fire, promote, and give pay increase.

Encyclopedia of management (contingency approach to management) also mentions similar point of regarding contingency theory and stated that Fred Fielder, the early pioneer in this area was suggested on the degree to which subordinates like or trust the leader, the degree to which the task is structured, and the formal authority possessed by the leader are key determinants of the leadership situation. As a result the contingency approach to management (also called situational approach) assumes that there is no universal answer to all questions because organizations, people and situations differ and change over time.

On contrary, the contingency approach to management is criticized for not having a universally correct solution to management problems (Sylvia et al.)

However the above critics is expressed, the researcher selected contingency approach because as indicated earlier it is impossible to select one way of managing that works best

in all situations. Hence, contingency approach integrates different methods to use into a solution which is most appropriate for a specific circumstance (contingency approach to management, 2007). Thus contingency refers to the immediate (contingent or touching) circumstances.

2.3.4 A Critical Theory of Communication Approach to organizations

As a theoretical frame work the contingency approach is chosen for combining different solutions to managerial problems. In addition to that I want also to use a critical theory of communication approach to organizations.

Deetz' theory basically seeks to balance corporate and human interests. Furthermore, the author states that if more organizations took a critical approach there would be greater likelihood of job satisfaction (strategic communication management, 2005).

Similarly, Griffin (2003:286) point out that Stanley Deetz' theory of communication is critical in examining communication practices in organizations that undermine fully representative decision making, thus reducing the quality, innovation, and fairness of company policy.

However Deetz' approach to corporate decision making is inherently attractive for those who work in the field of communication, it is also criticized for doesn't make much sense to assume that employees have a right to participate in every decisions that affect them.

It is known that media organization structure is not working powerfully without creating a humanistic approach and this idea also similar to the humanistic approach of

management but it also includes the issue of communication based on loyalty and respect of employees within their organizations.

I also have chosen it in order to look into the loyalty and respect of the journalists who work in the news center of ERTA.

2.4 News Room Management

Newsroom management is characterized by distinctive management skills related with deadlines and urgent decisions. Learning to understand and use the authority and responsibilities of supervision is the first essential step in acquiring the skills that can lead to a higher management level (Giles, 1995:113). The news room has several layers of managements. Starting at the top, the chief executive may hold the title of editor or executive editor. The scholar added that working in the news room is a highly social process, involving much discussion, challenge, give-and-take, and many questions in the sometimes restless, sometimes painful process of deciding how to play the day's news.

Another behavior of the newsroom is routine contact of boss and worker. As a result of the nature of the work, individuals within the newsroom honor both team work and disagreement. Giles described their ability to work together effectively depends as much on their human skills that is their interaction with others.

The role of management includes planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling, and each of these roles utilize human, and material resources. Regardless of their title, position, or level, every member of the newsroom management team performs these five management functions.

With regard to the above idea, Lacy et al. (1993) describe three keys to being an effective editor-manager and the first is to understand why people behave as they do. The second point is the ability to predict how people might behave in the future. And third is to use this knowledge to control the news staff, give it direction, and introduce change.

Similarly, Lewis Wolman (2002:33) mentioned that the manager of the newsroom has the duty and responsibility not only to internally organize the newsroom staff and functions so that they work smoothly, on time within budget and to a high standard, but also to oversee the end product of the newsroom, the news bulletins broadcasting. The author also elaborates an editor is both a journalist and a manager of journalists. Therefore, because of the dual as manager and journalist, the editor must be well organized if he or she is to successfully juggle time demands.

Therefore, it is possible to understand the management of broadcast newsroom can more than just gather stories and audio feeds from news wire services.

It is also vital to discuss about the work group of the newsroom because the manager of the newsroom has to manage the groups properly and fairly. Accordingly, Giles (1995:39) explains work groups as important building blocks in the newsroom. And he identifies two kinds of groups. First, the formal groups, such as the city desk, where management assigns the roles, writes the rules, and selects the leaders; and second, informal groups, or peer groups, in which individuals come together out of common interests.

2.5 Organizational Communication Versus Decision making

Organizational communications are important in accelerating activities and strengthening employees and employers' relationship. Lacy et al. (1993) underlines that editors should find to have a trusting relationship with peer group leaders, who may be willing to share information about their groups' concerns and frustrations. The editor who is a good listener gathers valuable information, learns about co-workers, and strengthens his or his ability to motivate staffers or influence colleagues. Furthermore, the author describes good communication as the heart of newsroom performance. It is known that effective communication contributes to create common understanding and decide quality decisions. Giles (1995:97) mentions that effective communication techniques differ, depending on whether the information moving up or down the chain of command. The Author adds that if editors used good communication skills, the remaining link in the in newsroom environment is to open communication channels from the staff to the management.

Making decisions is one of the editors primary directing responsibilities. As Giles (1995:167) the editors understanding of problem and the choice to be made is enhanced by a diversity of opinions and a clash of ideas. Thus the organizational communication established in a newsroom determine by the decision-making process.

The author also states that managers invite more participation when the hazard is high and acceptance of the decision by subordinates is critical. Participation also is encouraged by relationships built on trust and where there is minimal conflict among subordinates.

Here it is possible to understand that communication is the main instrument to implement the designed structure of an organization and helps for effective working performance of. As Jerome Kanter, (1998) recognizing who performs the processes within a business is very important to understanding the purpose and function of information

systems. The author also adds that the people who perform the processes are the ones who are well informed.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented review of literatures related to the study. Overall pictures of organizational structure versus effectiveness of work, factors that influences organizational management, newsroom management and media management theories were discussed in the chapter. In order to gather appropriate data different methods within the qualitative approach tradition are designed. These methods will discuss in the next chapter together with sampling techniques employed and the introduction of the respondents who took their part in the study.

]

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The main aim of this research is to look at the implementation of organizational structures of the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency with particular assessment of the management of its news center since 1991.

Therefore, the present chapter attempts to show the basic foundations of qualitative research, justify the methods used to collect data, the process of data gathering, selection of data sources and introduced the respondents involved in the research and their ideas.

The research method employed in the research is broadly qualitative and based on document analysis, focus group discussion and interviews. It is known as one important methodological option in conducting management research is a use of qualitative

methods for data collection and analysis. Based on this method, data was gathered from primary and secondary sources. Primary sources were key informants and documents such as organizational structures and establishment proclamations of the Agency.

3.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is more appropriate to examining words and ideas rather than counting numbers. As a research strategy, qualitative research methods are used to understand and explain social phenomena in their natural setting (Stone et al. 1999:334).

Qualitative research is characterized by an emphasis on describing, understanding and explaining complex phenomena on studying, for example, the relationship among factors; or the context in which activities occur (Methodological Challenge). In evaluating the historical analysis of the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency, this thesis mainly concerned in examining the understandings and beliefs of the employees and leaders of the agency with regard to the past and existing structures. Therefore, by using qualitative research, the knowledge, understanding and interpretations of the agency's community are evaluated and the different parts of the agency were explored through in depth interviews and focus group discussions.

3.2.1 Uses of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is used to develop understanding, provide detailed description, discover truth about events or generate hypothesis that can be tested using other methods, (Stone et al. 1999:334).

It is known that qualitative research is used to understand meanings rather than knowing or counting numbers.

In qualitative research, one interviews people to understand their perspectives on a scene, to retrieve experiences from the past, to gain expert insight or information, to obtain descriptions of events or scenes that are normally unavailable for observation, to foster trust, to understand a sensitive or intimate relationship, or to analyses certain types of discourses (Lindlof, 1995: 5).

Therefore, the kinds of explanations that researchers seek in qualitative study are almost exclusively one of understanding, not prediction or control.

According to Bryman (1998: 270-271) qualitative research paradigm would be used to refer generic research approach in social research to which research takes its conclusion to insider perspective in social action. The author also mentions that qualitative research uses to study human action from the perspective of the social actors themselves or groups which are engaged in any kind of work. For these reason, the study which focuses on evaluating historical analysis of Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency based on qualitative research methods such as in-depth interview and focus group interview.

Furthermore, by using qualitative research one can understand actions in terms of the actors own beliefs, history and context. Thus, it is possible to evaluate historical documents of the Agency's organization structures and to find knowledge or understanding about the topic. For the historical research which is focused in Ethiopian Radio and television Agency, it is vital to consider documents and other relevant files because the study concerned stories about the agency: restructuring formats, research reports, and so on.

Adding this, qualitative methods are well suited to investigate topics about which little is known because unstructured or semi-structured approaches allow researchers to examine issues which are raised by participants during a study.

By doing so, qualitative research offers opportunities to identify and address clients need and concerns.

Hence, the study's meeting point is to identify why the selected agency needs to make repeated rearrangements of structures and this is done by addressing groups of the agency's need and concerns.

3.3 Data Gathering Procedure and Sampling

The study is concerned with exploring meanings and reasons why the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency made repeated changes of organization structures and then identifying the main causes and reasons. Therefore, data were collected from focus group and in-depth interview arrangements. Given the time constraint and that the research exercise basically attempts to identify the reasons which made the re-arrangements of the organizational structure of the agency over years.

Understanding from related literature reviews, most sampling techniques in qualitative inquiry depend not on random probability, where every population element has an equal chance of being selected instead they depend on purposeful selection. As Deacon et al. (1999:54) mentions what is common to all qualitative sampling procedures, is that selection of sample units is deliberately shaped by research agenda. Thus, the sampling

technique for the study was non-random in that the research purposely selected sample units.

The consultation of secondary data also relevant to the restructuring which is made at different times has been very vital in describing the picture of the past situations and the intention of the restructures.

The inclusion of the above data sources implies that the study design calls for triangulating methods of data gathering. Triangulation helps to avoid a weakness in one method by using a second method that is strong in the areas that the first is weak (Triangulation data gathering).

3.3.1 Focus Group Interview

Focus group discussions are one of the most commonly used qualitative research techniques. They allow forming groups of people and sharing their views under the guidance of the researcher.

According to Lindlof (1995:174), focus group interview offers a methodological response to those problems which researchers face in conducting individual interviews. Unlike interviews conducted with individual interviewee focus groups create settings in which diverse perceptions and ideas on particular topics can surface.

By discovering the meaning attributed by groups who are working in organizations like Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency, it can help to draw conclusions about the reasons that the agency needed more and more restructuring. Thus semi structured

group interviews are research approaches which allow to get the researcher wider reflections of different groups who are working with in the agency.

Stone et al. (1999: 341) mentioned that focus group interviews can be an excellent way to gather information quickly from several people. The authors also mention that groups offer other advantages by stating what an individual says may trigger a response from someone else and that kind of response may not be thought of if interviewed singly. However, focus group interviews are vital for communication researches, it also requires great skill and caution to insure that one or two individuals don't monopolize the conversation. Regardless these side effects, focus group studies in media research are seldom representative of the general population of communication studies.

Respondents were sampled based on harmony groups, where participants share a particular behavior or attitude. Accordingly, segmented first in-terms of their working area, journalists, administration workers, technique groups and those are in different stages of leadership. This kind of grouping is suitable in creating homogeneous focus groups.

The operation of focus groups is deceptively simple. A sample 6 to 12 persons who are demographically homogeneous or who have certain experiences in common, is selected to meet at a neutral site to discuss subjects of interest to the researcher, Lindlof 1995: 174).

Accordingly, two groups are formed which have 6 participants for each of them. Based on the formed groups, in-depth examinations of meanings of participants make out of their experience are undertaken. The focus group interviews were conducted with a group of young and veteran journalists and examined the application of the structures within the news room of the agency.

3.3.2 Individual In-depth Interview

In-depth interviews are useful learning mechanisms about individual perspectives. They are also effective for getting people to talk about their personal feelings, opinions, and experiences. It is known that those who are afraid to talk in front of people about a topic would explain if they get chance of talking in front of one person or the researcher.

In-depth interviews also are useful in the field of qualitative research for its effectiveness in giving in a human face to research problems. According to Lindlof (1995:169-171) it is believed that the interview is a remarkably adaptable tool because it can be conducted any where and it can be conducted for short or long period of time as it is necessary. Different informants can offer a variety of insights because they have had unique experiences in the scene.

In-depth interviews involve not only asking and answering questions, but also the systematic recording and documenting of resources combined with a deep probing for deeper meaning and understanding of the people's responses. Unlike focus group interviews, in-depth interviews occur with one individual at a time to provide a more involving experience.

Thus, the researcher has conducted in-depth interviews with people who are working at the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency and have their own opinions and beliefs about the effectiveness of the organizational structures changed through different times. In-depth interviews used to collect related information and facts about the impact of the organization structure of the agency on day to day activities of the employees and the

leaders of the agencies. It has also its limitations and one of the limitations is individual factors make it difficult to draw general conclusions (Deacon et al. (199). Furthermore, in-depth interviews are based on personal experience and as a result they suffer from subjectivity. Therefore, focus group interviews and participant observation can use as a means of getting additional information. Thus, three informants were employed both in the form of formal interviews and more informal talks.

The informants have different viewpoints regarding the organizational structures of the agency and their opinions are reflected in the responses they gave. Detailed examples also described by the informants.

3.3.3 Participant Observation

One of the most common methods for qualitative data collection is participant observation. In participatory observation, the researcher performs its work as a part of the community of ERTA, in order to verify that the observed information is of the natural phenomenon.

That is why the strength of participant observation derives from being there and following the day to day activities of participants of the study. That is why Lindlof (1995: 135) describes that in participatory observation the researcher becomes skilled in the standards of performance honored by the group or individual.

While observing, normally it is possible to record points that can't be discovered in interviews and documents. Therefore, by using participant observation, it is possible to have a full description from the notes as soon as the observation is over.

According to Stone et al. (1999: 339) observation over time will reveal patterns of behavior that the researcher may have been unaware of even in familiar settings.

The topic of the study also needed to use participatory observation in order to observe the informal activities and talks of different groups who are working in the Ethiopian radio and television Agency.

3.4 The Interview Questions

In this study employees are the central perspective in attempting the research questions. Therefore, it is important to give respondents the chance to react freely to the questions relevant to the research inquiry.

Thus, semi-structured interview questions were administered in the interview sessions with the respondents. Semi-structured interviews are chosen by their characteristics of modification according to the context of the conversation. Accordingly, some interview guides were designed for all of the respondents.

Furthermore, the designed questions were open-ended questions and the objective of this kind of question is to encourage the interviewees to talk. This enabled the researcher to probe for examples and asking for clarifications.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, the methodological approaches to be used in this thesis have been outlined. The researcher utilized a qualitative perspective since it is most appropriate to examine and interpret meanings of employees and leaders of the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency and their experiences and practices.

By using qualitative method, it will be possible to adapt interaction with the study participants in such a manner that the researcher gets elaborated and detailed responses which will allow his/her to provide a fairly description of actions and experiences.

The techniques that will be employed in the study include the analysis of secondary sources, participant observation, focus group discussions and individual in-depth interviews. The results of the investigations are to be presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation and Findings

4.1 Introduction

In chapter three, the appropriate methodological paradigm, the qualitative approach with participant observation, focus group and in-depth interviews were chosen for approaching the research questions. Accordingly, the researcher has interviewed a total of 16 relevant people. Two focus groups were formed comprising of 6 young journalists and 6 senior journalists. The senior journalists were chosen because of their long years of experience and for having enough knowledge about the history of their Agency's organizational structure. The focus group of senior journalists also included three editors and three section coordinators. Among the three editors there were two female editors and all of the section coordinators are males. The focus group of young journalists were selected to know the youth's point of view about the News Center Management by comparing it with opinions of the senior journalists.

The age range of the young journalists was between 26 and 30 and their experience is from 3 up to 4 years. For senior journalists the age range is 43 and 56 with professional experience ranging from 23 to 36 years.

The in-depth interview consists of three informants. The first informant is from the plan and research department of the Agency and who has been working for 35 years. The second informant also a senior journalist working as coordinator of the Ethiopian Radio News Center and recently who was the committee member of the new Business Reengineering of the Agency with 35 years of experience in journalism. I chose him because of his knowledge about the news center of the Agency and he has also better understanding about the past and current organization structures. Furthermore, another in-depth interview also conducted with Director of the General Director's office. I also conducted interview with the Deputy Director General of the News and Current Affairs of the Agency because he is an appropriate person to answer questions regarding the news management and other issues which are beyond the responsibility of the focus group members and the other informants. The Deputy Director General is 47 years old.

4.1.2 Data Analysis

The legal proclamation for organizational and operational autonomy of government owned broadcast media with a view to ensuring the free expression of opinions and views does not appear before 1995. For many years, the broadcast media was operating as a department in the Ministry of Information.

It was in 1995, the government issued a proclamation to provide for the establishment of the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency. The reason for issuing the proclamation was to establish the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency and thereby provide for the better management of its growing tasks and enhance its efficiency.

According to Proclamation 114/95 the Agency's organizational structure comprises of a Board, a General Manager, a Radio Service Deputy General Manager, a television service Deputy General Manager and the necessary staff.

However, there was legal ground to merge the Ethiopian Radio and Televisions news centers, practically the Agency had operated separately. According to the Deputy General Director General of News and Current Affairs Department of the Agency, there are several reasons and one is the organizational structures applied before 1998 were structured the news centers to perform their work separately. He also said the organizational structure designed in 2006 was restructured a unify news center for both of stations but he said this also not applied. Currently the news center is merging and applies by media operation. As indicated on the new restructuring document of the Agency, the establishment proclamation of the Agency has not been allowed for the Agency to interact with other foreign media in order to share best experiences instead the Board and the Committee for Media and Culture of the Parliament has been decided on matters of the Agency. The document also mentioned that the power and responsibility of the Board, the Agency and the Parliaments Committee for media and Culture has not been separated and this also affects the performance of the Agency.

4.1.1 Organizational structure

The focus group members of FGD 1 and 2 as well as the interviewees including the Deputy Director General of the News and Current Affairs of the Agency, agreed that the former news centers of the Ethiopian Radio and Television did not achieve the desired changes from the designed organizational structures but they said there has been gradual improvements of working conditions.

They also agreed in 1977, during Dergue regime, the Radio and Television were reorganized as two departments under the Ministry of Information and the government used the newsrooms of the two departments as an instrument of propaganda. They said there was office of censorship within the Ministry of Information that organized to control the contents of all news topics.

From 1974 to 1991, all of the FGD 1 members agreed to have only one Amharic newsroom and other languages were handling the news work within the production work. They said after the demise of the Dergue regime in 1991, the news activity has continued to operate under production sections. However, Giles (1995: 4) argues specialization allows employees and managers to acquire ability, certainty, and accuracy that will increase output. The author also mentions that by applying division of labor more and better work will be produced with the same effort. But all the participants described that with the exception of the Amharic news there was no division of labor in other departments and the news activity was handled by the production sections. In addition to this they also agreed that the newsroom was not carried out activities according to the organizational structure. As an example FGD 1(B and F) said:

The Amharic news was responsible to the editor-in-chief and assigned editors, news producers, assistant news produces, senior reporters and reporters were included as a team of the newsroom however the work was done by assigned editors, senior reporters and reporters. Journalists

were hired because of their political background instead of their working ability. Moreover, it was difficult to get journalists who are trained in journalism as and the best alternative was hiring those who graduated in Amharic and literature.

All of the FGD interviews and the in-depth interviews also mentioned that the situation which had inside and outside the media also difficult to perform news activities effectively because every thing was passed through highly censorship and journalists were scared of political allegations.

On the other hand, all members of the FGD 1 and all the interviewees agreed that following the change of political ideology of the country, in 1991 a new organizational structure was designed and new assigned editors were hired in order to lead the newsroom's activity. As a result of the change of political ideology, some senior news producers also resigned their work.

The organizational structure introduced in 1995 to some extent enabled the Ethiopian Radio's news room to broadcast sport news and they believed that was the golden age for the newsroom because the media managed to enjoy diversified age group audience. FGD 1 (B) said:

Most of the journalists who were working for the newsroom became famous after the newsroom started presenting Sport news in the news bulletin of the station. Not only sport news but also we started presenting fresh international and local news. We used the name **ዜና ፋይል** "News File" for our news bulletin.

FGD 1(A, D, and C) also supported the idea of FGD 1 (B) and they also recalled that the newsroom of Ethiopian Television had included sport news to its news hour two months

after the Radio Ethiopia introduced it. But they said this doesn't mean an over all shift was achieved in the newsroom. In fact it brought some how a new operational system.

Most of the discussants believed that although the Radio and Television was merged in a Proclamation No. 114/1995, the news centers of the Radio and Television operated separately until recently. According to the FGD groups and interviewees less commitment of officials to lead the news center in a cohesive system of management is the main problem that led the Radio and Television Agency to operate with poor communication system among both stations. In addition to this, the long bureaucratic system of the Agency, lack of skilled media leadership and insufficient knowledge of journalists has been among the problems of the news center as mentioned by the study participants.

All of the study participants also believed the organizational structure designed in 1998 had its role in improving the news center's activity and by establishing a news center embracing Amharic, Tigrigna, Oromifa, English and Afar languages.

They also expressed the 1998 organizational structure also had an advantage of establishing the Ethiopian Radio News Center with technological equipment such as connected computers and internet services. In addition to this the two news centers started connection with wire services such as ENA and WIC to get wire news through servers.

According to them the news centers had structured in the way the General Manager of the Agency is responsible for all activities including the news centers and the Deputy General Managers of the Radio and Television also took accountability for the news center in their respective stations. Accordingly the activities of the news centers used to

be supervised by the editor -in - chiefs of the Radio and Television and there were assigned editors for desks of aforementioned languages. Producers, assistant producers, senior reporters and reporters were also structured to engage in the daily news activity. On the other hand the 1998 organizational structure had its influence in dividing the workers in to two administrations, the board and civil service.

They also agreed the 2006's structure had its role in integrating the Afar, Somali, Arabic, and French news to the Ethiopian Radio News Center. At the same time, the Ethiopian Television News Center also included the Tigrigna, Ormifa and English news desks. All of the FGD 1 members supported this fact. The other new title created in 2006's structure was the Current Affairs section that had parallel position with the newsroom editor - in - chief as well as Sport head and three of them were accountable to the editor -in -chief of the news center.

The members of FGD 1 and 2 as well as the interviewees including the Deputy General manager of the ERTA described that the 2006's structure could not work after two and half years. The insufficient capacity of the employees and officials of the Agency has been among the main factors of the Agency for not providing quality services. According to all of the participants of the study, the in sufficient capacity of decision makers of the Agency also became bottleneck for the organization in decision making process. They also said the then structure was not implemented properly. According to them any news should edited by editor-in-chief or assigned editors but most of the time senior reporters and reporters act as editor-in-chief and as a result low-quality news has been broadcast.

They also agreed that it has been impossible for the news center to hire full time or freelance because of the unnecessary bureaucratic channel of the Agency's administration. All of the study participants said that the management of the news center

has been focused on controlling and supervising employees instead of working together and discuss about issues.

Lacy (1993:29) also mentions that many people believe a good employee should be able to perform well regardless of the structure of the organization and others also believe that in the right organizational structure, any one should be able to perform well. I also asked the informants which is true in the case of Ethiopian Radio and Television news center.

All of the informants said “organizational structure has its role in defining tasks and relationships within an agency but it is also possible to perform newsroom activities without structures.” They mentioned as an example the structure of 2006, the chief editor organizes all activities of the news centers and the assigned editors also assigned for the daily news editing and selection, furthermore secretaries are assigned to perform their works. Nonetheless, it was almost a norm to work as a team and see even an ordinary a news producer acting as an editor with no salary change.

All of the study participants believe the Agency has not controlling mechanism whether the news center activities were performed according to the organizational structure or not. Instead organizational structure used to work for applying long bureaucratic system of controlling journalists’ promotion, request of office materials and hiring employees and flow of expenditure for field works which have little to do with media management.

Regarding departmentalization, all of the study participants and the Deputy Director General of the Agency’s News and Current Affairs stated that claiming of introducing Business Process Reengineering; the Agency has reestablished itself categorizing the news and related departments. Accordingly, local news, foreign news, Sport news and

current affairs departments in the news center were put in place. They believe this structure is new and it can be modified in the future as necessary.

Similarly some of the interviewees and the FGD groups supported the practical merging of the Radio and Television's News Centers for which all are optimistic to see a better organization but most of them have doubts about the effectiveness of the new organization structure. Designing organization structure by itself is not a problem solving mechanism. Rather they believe that the Agency has to examine the readiness of employees and management body to meet the organizational goals.

4.1.2 Organizational Communications

All of the FGD 1 members **said that** the overall communication among workers of the news center is established in a good manner. But they emphasized that there were also problems that affected the over all communication with all supportive sections of the news center. All members of the FGD 1, and the interviewees as well as the Deputy Director of the Agency's News and Current Affairs Department agreed that the organizational structure redesigned in 1998 divided the employees in two camps: the Board and the Civil Service. They said that starting from that time on the editorial section had suffered from challenges of the supportive staff.

The amending Proclamation **that established** the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency, (Proclamation 73/97) which made some amendments on Proclamation No. 14/1995 clearly states the responsibility and power of the General Manager of the Agency. Accordingly, the General Manager has the mandate to employ and administer as well as decide on salaries and allowances of journalists and the production staff in accordance

with directives issues of employee and administer the other staff of the Agency in accordance with the Federal Civil Service law.

As a result of the above article, members of FGD 1 and 2 explained that they faced similar problems from the transport section when their editors send them with a formal paper which is prepared for using transport service to cover news reports. They added that most of the time they **keep on waiting** for transport service **usually** for hours. Due to the poor services offered by the supportive sections such as the transport section, they stated **that significant numbers areas or issues that were supposed to be covered are usually missed** of reporting were missed.

All of the interviewees also shared this idea and they said always when they go out of their office to cover news they had to wait for an hour or more than to get the Agency's transportation services. The interviewees **also** added **that** this is a trend which many journalists consider as a norm and till recently it used to hamper the immediacy of news broadcast by the news centers of the Agency.

In a way that corroborates this situation, Wiseman (1995:247) described that to understand effectiveness, the influence of various communication-processes on decision quality have **to be examined** been examined. The author also added that effective communication has a decisive role for creating good working environment and **also it allows groups to make effective decisions are satisfied**.

On the contrary, FGD 2 (C and D) said **that** they haven't faced transport service problems, because **as** they have been working for television, **for the sake of the** Camera and other Ethiopian Television News Center equipment, **there is no transport problem as such, and**

the driver from the transport section usually waits for them until they finish their news gathering and other reporting tasks.

The participants of the study also mentioned that the cause of communication barriers between the journalists and the supportive staff who work for the news center is the organizational structure redesigned in 1998. Since it divides the workers of the news center in two administrative branches, the journalists and technicians under the Board and the support staff such as office secretaries, drivers and finance personnel under the Civil Service, it negatively affected the activities of the news room, according to the interviewed participants.

Lacy et al.(1993:41) describes three important factors that organizations must consider are forces involving the manager, the subordinates, and the situations.

Similarly, Griffin (2003:286) states that Stanley Deetz's theory of communication is critical in that he wants to examine communication practices in organizations that undermine fully representative decision making, thus reducing the quality, innovation and fairness of company policy. Thus, when managers design organizational structure they have to see their decisions from various perspectives.

With regard to the journalists' communication and cooperation within the news center, II (2) said that although there are some obstacles among the horizontal communication of journalists and support staff, there has also been a smooth interaction of work groups inside the news centers. All of the FGD groups also agreed up on the idea of II 2 and they said because of the nature of the newsroom journalists who work within the news centers of the ETV and Ethiopian Radio perform their job in a team. They also added, in a newsroom when a journalist translates news or transcribes reports the members of the

newsroom must discuss the issue at hand in order to use the standard language of the newsroom and accordingly for every activity the members of the news center cooperates and communicates strongly. On the contrary all of the study participants also confirmed that the worst communication difficulty has been the one usually witnessed vertical communications. II 2 added:

The horizontal communication of the news center was better than the vertical communication. Some departments' officials does not even identify employees who work in their departments. This kind of situation can be an obstacle while carrying out and performing journalistic duties because journalism requires team work.

II (3) also said the number of employees increased from year to year and the span of control is wider than before. Therefore, to some extent it might be difficult for the top management body to create an effective communication with most of the employees of the Agency.

The interviewed Deputy Director General also admitted the above view and he said:

The different administration branches, the Board and the Civil Service might have created a negative influence on the over all communication of the news center and other departments. As to my understanding however, the organizational structures had their influence on activities of the news center; the main problem is the understanding and commitment of the Agency's community towards the goals of their organization. Right now, we are starting to implement a new organizational structure and the previous problem is already being solved.

He added recently the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency is on the move to become a Corporation and now the news center also is on the right track for change.

In my research results, although the horizontal communication inside the news center has been going smoothly, the over all communication and interaction of the Board and the Civil Services staff of the news center were not established in a cooperative manner.

Most of the FGD 1 and 2 members agreed that the new structure could not solve the problem observed towards the news room because they assume that human beings have to make ready their mind to go inline with new circumstances. Thus, they emphasize that the cause of ERTA's ineffectiveness is insufficient knowledge of officials and employees of the Agency.

4.1.3 Decision Matters

Newsroom management is characterized by typical management skills related with deadlines and urgent decisions. Thus, journalists who work on news gathering and reporting need quick and fair decisions from media officials.

Regarding decision making process in their working place, almost all the respondents under the category of FGD 1 argued that the Ethiopian Radio and Television news centers decision making process has been based on events. Furthermore, they elaborated that as a government controlled media, ERTA's news center decisions usually have been passed through different bodies. The assigned editor should inform the editor- in -chief ahead about an event, and if the issue is complicated he refrains from making decisions. But if the issue is not controversial he makes a decision immediately. The interviewed Deputy Director General admitted that some times good stories remain uncovered because of unnecessary bureaucratic problems. Lacy et al. (1993:47) also pointed out that one management problem that continues to surface in media organizations is that of too little

opportunity for subordinates to be involved in the decision making processes. Therefore, it is assumed that news room directors should learn to manage news rooms effectively and involve journalists in decision making processes.

All the FGD 1 and 2 as well as interviewees agreed that in the history of Ethiopian Radio and Television, there was no worst situation than the challenging organizational structure of 2006. All of the study participants explained the then department was an obstacle for all issues which needed urgent decisions from the highest management level. FGD 1 (A) said:

Every issue which needed urgent decision has to wait for about four or five months before getting a solution. Every body was aware of this bureaucratic problem, but nothing was done. Let alone the news center, the management body of the editorial section of the Radio and the Television suffered from the then complex bureaucratic bottle neck of the Department of Human and Material Resource Development. I think there was no strong communication between the defunct department and the management of the editorial. We observed that even the top management of the editorial faced problems when it wanted to send reporters to field works and when they wanted to extend the employment of freelance journalists.

FGD 1(B) had the following to say:

The bureaucratic system developed in Ethiopian Radio and Television has made the Department of Human and Material Resources Development, an absolute monarchy of the Agency. That department was considered by the employees of the news centers as a problem creator rather than problem solving. For the editors who were engaged in the activities of the news center it was impossible to send their reporters out of Addis within one or two days. Every body knows that news and current affairs need urgent decisions but in our Agency it was unthinkable and leaders of the news center as well as reporters who were assigned to do field reports were faced with the challenges of belated decisions.

Members of FGD 2 also shared the above idea. In this regard FGD 2 (A) said:

I remember that there was an issue which remained for more than five months with out getting an appropriate decision and about 40 employees were signed at the backside of the request paper. I used to wonder about the decision making of that department. By then no one expects a quick decision from that department. Not only the editorial staff but also the support staff suffered a lot by the already defunct department.

The Deputy Director General was aware of the problems related with decision making processes around the news center and the whole ERTA. He said that the 2006 organizational structure was composed of the Department of Human and Material Resources Development, because it was assumed that the Agency is governmental and it should have a department which controls its huge resources in order to use the resources appropriately. He also admitted that the department's role was not constructive and supportive to the news center as well as the whole Agency.

Here it is necessary to raise the issue of decision making in governmental and private media organizations. In governmental media like ERTA, sources of income are annual budgets in the form of subsidies by the government, license fees and advertise and annual budgets allocate according to the decision of the Parliament. As a means of controlling mechanism every decision is also made through long and protracted bureaucratic channels. Whereas the means of income of private media such as Radio Fana, Adei Promotion, Tinsaye Kinetbebat and FM 102.1, is purely sales of advertisements and incomes from sponsorship programs. According to the Manager of Radio Fana, Weldu Ymesel, in private radio stations decisions are made quickly because in order to survive in the very competitive market, they have to be able to generate

income by performing their jobs efficiently. He also added that organizational structure of Radio Fana is not complicated, and many problems are also solved based on the requirements and demands of situations.

According to Giles (1995), managers should systematically try to identify which technique or approach will be the best solution for a problem which exists in a particular circumstance or context, based on contingency approach.

According to the Deputy Director General of News and Current Affairs of ERTA, the reason for the inconvenience of decision making was:

I think all the problems were not made deliberately. As to my understanding the person who was a leader of the department was not aware of his supportive roles. Most of the time he concentrated on controlling and he needed time to check every thing and this was time taking for the activities of the news center and the whole community of the Agency.

Almost all participants admitted that the 2006 organizational structure was very complicated when compared with the previous years because the decision makers of the Agency could not performed their job in a flexible way. They agreed that human beings have a capacity to make situations helpful instead of hurting work environment by creating unnecessary reasons.

4.1.4 News Room Management

The findings from group discussions as well as in-depth interviews have indicated that the news center's management has tried to solve some of the problems although there have been various problems within the news center. All of the participants said that the

management of the news center had not been able to use different approaches to different issues. Rather it used similar approaches to different issues and as a result several issues were left unsolved. Contingency approach to management (also called situational approach) assumes that there is no universal answer to all questions because organizations, people and situations vary and change over time (contingency approach to management).

The first question about contingency theory in relation to newsroom management is about the behavior of the news center management of ERTA especially under different situations, and all of the FGD 1(A) said:

Most of the time, the management of the news center is assumed as an autocrat. For instance, if there is an epidemic, the editor-in-chief acts as a task oriented and every thing is performed under heavy supervisions. In addition to this, there would be no discussion or participation when elections are held because she/he might be suspicious of different political views among journalists. Thus, every news is critically viewed and supervised by the editor-in-chief without considering the role the other and the society at large. Some times such kinds of news were prepared by wire services like ENA and are distributed to all governmental media including the ERTA's news center.

All of the study participants shared the idea of FGD 1(A). They Said there are times when the management of the news center tried to act as participatory. For instance, when social issues were public agenda, the management of the news center acts as participatory but most of the time, especially regarding political issues, the editor's behavior was observed as a task oriented rather than humanistic. In the news center, it is impossible to use different opportunities or solutions to different problems. Rather it can be described as an autocracy, because ERTA is a governmental media and hence everything has to be done

in accordance with the interest of the government. They also said the management of the news center prefers to give orders rather than trying to make things clear for employees and paving ways for discussions. Hence, contingency approach integrates different methods to use as a solution which is most appropriate for a specific circumstance (bizcovering.com). Deetz' theory also basically seeks to balance corporate and human interests. Furthermore, the author states that if more organizations took a critical approach there would be a greater likelihood of job satisfaction.

The second question related with newsroom management is about new comers and the socialization process within ERTA's news centers. All of the FGD 2 interviewees agreed that new comers often engage on trainings focused on editorial policy, constitution, and government polices trainings.

FGD 2 (5) said, she is a graduate of Bahrdar University in 2008, and when she joined the Ethiopian Radio she got trainings in editorial policy of ERTA. Then she was also trained about government polices and constitution of the country.

According to Star and Fondas (1992) organizational socialization perspective focuses attention on the intra-personal and inter-personal adaptive processes that occur during the newcomer's entry into a new organization or passage across organizational boundaries.

Similarly, almost all of the FGD 2 interviewees mentioned that they got trainings on editorial and government polices almost two or three times and that helped them to go with the working conditions of the news center.

In addition to this, they also said technological trainings which can help new journalists to work together within the news center such as networked computers, internet and Adobe audio digital recordings were introduced to them.

FGD 1 (E) Most of the time the working environment of the news center of the Ethiopian Television and Radio is fine, because new comers are trained to cope up with situations. The nature of news is team work, and meeting deadline is very crucial. Therefore, in order to perform effectively every body should work together. Working with a deadline also needs genuine editors who encourage journalists to do their best. With regard to our news center there are reporters, translators, and especially assigned editors must be very interested to work cooperatively.

As FGD 1(E) explained, newsroom activity needs working cooperatively and needs genuine editors who encourage employees to meet deadlines. Therefore, based on contingency approach editors should systematically try to identify which technique or approach will be the best solution for a problem which exists in a particular circumstance or context.

The other point of discussion was professionalism within the news center. All of the journalists agreed that it is difficult to say journalists are respecting and observing the ethical principles of journalism. Almost all of the study participants said currently half of the journalists working for the news center are youngsters and have BA degree in journalism. They also added that others also are on the way to get their BA Degree. What they mention as a problem is there are times that they have-not been performed their work based on professional or ethical guidance. They mentioned that they haven't courage to uncover controversial issues because free press exercise not developed. In view of the fact that they have not been cover things based on public interest they failed to meet public expectations.

Furthermore, they believed that the Agency hadn't given its workers any training focused on principles of journalism and code of ethics and there is also no mechanism within the news center to enforce code of ethics and to punish individuals who abuse the profession.

McQuail (2000:151) relates professionalism with organizational associations, the formation of press councils, and the drawing up of principles of good practices in the form of codes of practice and ethics. In the case of ERTA news center except two, most members of the FGD 1 and 2 as well as the interviewees were not members of journalist's associations. They also said there are journalists who work out of ethics and instead of serving the public they try to abuse the profession for generating income.

Another point of discussion was whether the participants know the goal of ERTA or not. Most of the FGD 2 answer was no.

The interviewed Deputy Director General of ERTA also said "formal journalism training is a recent phenomenon in Ethiopia and some of the journalists who have been working for the news center are not trained in journalism." He also said now ERTA is establishing in-house training institute and it has already started giving trainings on basic principles of journalism and related issues.

4.2 Findings

The researcher gathered data through individual in-depth interview, focus group discussions and participant observation with ERTA's news center's editor - in -chief, assigned editors, and reporters and found the following:

- The ERTA's news center has not achieved fundamental changes from the designed organizational structures over the years instead some improvements of working conditions are attained.
- Although the Ethiopian Radio and Television was merged in a Proclamation No. 114/1995, they operated individually until recent months.
- Less commitment of officials to lead the news center in a cohesive system of management is the main problem that led the Radio and Television Agency to operate with poor communication system among both stations.
- The organizational structure redesigned in 1998 divided the employees in two camps: the Board and the Civil Service. They said starting from that time the editorial section had suffered from challenges of the support staff.
- The 2006 organizational structure was very complicated when compared with the previous years because the decision makers of the Agency could not performed their job in a flexible way.

- The long bureaucratic system of the Agency, lack of skilled media leadership and insufficient knowledge of journalists as well as the limited focus of government are among the problems of the news center as mentioned by the study participants.
- However, organizational structures have their role in defining tasks and relationships within an agency; it is also possible to perform newsroom activities without structures.
- In the case of ERTA's news center, organizational structure used to work for applying long bureaucratic system of controlling journalists' promotion, request of office materials and hiring employees and flow of expenditure for field works which have little to do with media management.
- The organizational structure was not implemented properly. As a result low-quality news has been broadcast.
- It has been impossible for the news center to hire full time or freelance because of the unnecessary bureaucratic channel of the Agency's administration.
- The management of ERTA's News Center has been a task oriented because everything has been done based on the government's interest instead considering different situations.
- Although the horizontal communication inside the news center has been going smoothly, the organizational structures redesigned in 1998 and 2006 had influence on the over all communication and interaction of the Board and the Civil Services staff of the news center.

- As a government media the ERTA news centers decision passes through different bodies and this makes the decision process of the news center complicated and bureaucratic.
- .Trainings on government and editorial polices as well as constitution of the country are given to the news centers' journalists in order to enhance socialization within the news centers.
- The Agency has not given short trainings to its journalists on principles of ethics and code of practice.
- Journalists do not perform their work based on professional or ethical guidance.
- They mentioned that they haven't courage to uncover controversial issues because free press exercise not developed. In view of the fact that they have not been cover things based on public interest they failed to meet public expectations.
- The Agency is dismantled the 2006's organizational structure in order to achieve fundamental changes.
- A new in-house training institute is established by the ERTA to give trainings on ethical principles and other related issues.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have attempted to examine the implementations of the organizational structure of Ethiopian Radio and Television with a focus on the news center management.

The qualitative research paradigm has been used as a method of study. Qualitative research is more appropriate to examining words and ideas. It is also helpful to explaining complex phenomena. Accordingly, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and participant observations were conducted to explore employees and management views to the implantation of the organizational structure. Justified by the fact that the study has aimed at examining ERTA's news center management, the researcher found out that it is important to take the contingency approach of Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) and Stanley Dietz's theory of communication approach to the organization as a theoretical framework.

The major finding of the study is indicated that, ERTA news center has not achieved fundamental changes however it has been applied different organizational structures. One of the factors are the organizational structure redesigned in 1998 based on the amended establishment Proclamation of ERTA /No.73/97/ which created division among the workers of the news center in two administrations, that is under Board management and the Civil Service regulations . Accordingly it loosed the employees' sense of belongings on the part of the employees under the civil service. The decision was not considered the subordinates interest. In addition to this the Human and Material Resource Department which was structured in 2006's structure has made the decision making process of ERTA's news center very slow.

Furthermore, as a government media ERTA news center's decision passes through different bodies and this makes the decision process of the news center long and bureaucratic.

However, organizational structures have their role in defining tasks and relationships within an agency; it is also possible to perform newsroom activities without structures. It was almost a norm to work as a team within the news center. In the case of ERTA's news center, organizational structure used to work for applying long bureaucratic system of controlling journalists' promotion, request of office materials and hiring employees and flow of expenditure for field works which have little to do with media management.

Having this idea, it is mentioned that ERTA's organizational structure was not implemented properly. As a result low-quality news has been broadcast.

It has been impossible for the news center to hire full time or freelance because of the unnecessary bureaucratic channel of the Agency's administration. ERTA news center's decision passes through long channel of the Human and Material Resources Department and this makes the decision process of the news center long and bureaucratic.

In addition to this, within the news center jobs are carried out by assigning producers and reporters because when senior journalists leave the Agency, it is difficult to hire other editors or to give promotion for other junior journalists. As a result the overall professional activities are operated by reporters who haven't acquired enough skill in journalism profession.

With all the above indications, the management of the news center has acted Most of the time in autocracy instead of participatory.

Looking at enhancing socialization process of the news center, it has been trying to integrate workers by introducing the in-house working culture. Trainings on government

and editorial policy as well as on constitution of the country have been given to the news center's journalists.

Currently ERTA has dismantled the 2006's organizational structure in order to achieve fundamental changes. As a result a new in-house training institute is established by ERTA to give trainings on ethical principles and other related issues.

In general, however the organizational structures have been changed repeatedly; fundamental changes have not been achieved within the news center. Insufficient capacity of directors, Traditional understanding of decision making, lack of courage to uncover controversial issues, less readiness and commitment of subordinates to assume responsibility are among the main factors that affect the effectiveness of the news center.

In view of the fact that they have not been cover things based on public interest. Thus, they failed to meet public expectations.

Finally, it can be concluded that lack of commitment and insufficient knowledge of officials' and employees' are the main factors that affect the effectiveness of ERTA towards serving its stakeholders and meeting public expectations.

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APPENDICIS

Appendix I

Thematic Questions

A. thematic Questions for Focus Group Discussions

1. Personal Detail

1.1 Age-----	1.4 Current job
1.2. Educational Status	1.5 Sex
1.3 Years of Experience in Journalism	1.6 Professional Status

2 Organizational Structures

How do senior journalists explain the structural changes occurred in Ethiopian Radio and Televisions News Center?

What factors are affected the operation of the news center's structures?

How dose the division of labor and departmentation works within and out of the news center?

Do they observe any hopeful opportunities of the news center from the currently redesigned organizational structure?

3. Organizational Communications

How do they describe the horizontal and vertical communication within the news center?

How do they explain the team work of the news center?

What are the factors that affect the organizational communication of the news center?

4. Decision making process

How do the senior and young journalists describe the decision process within the news center? Is it quick or delayed? Why?

Who are the decision makers of the news center?

The editorial or the administrative body had a role in deciding on matters of the news center?

Is there any problem faced the news center with regard to decision making process?

5. News Room Management

How do you evaluate the managerial behavior of the news center?

How do directors of the news center manage different situations such as elections, droughts and epidemics?

Is there any efforts ongoing to integrate new comers into the socialization process of the news center?

How do you describe professionalism within the news center?

What are the main problems that affect the operation of the news center?

Appendix II

A Interview Guide for Individual In-depth Interviews

How do you describe the news center's structural changes in relation with organizational change of the Agency?

Do you believe that any results achieved within the news center in relation with the changes of organization structures?

If there what are they?

If not what is the problem?

How do you explain the socialization of the news center?

How do you evaluate the decision process of the news center?

How do you describe the managerial behavior of the news center?

How do you explain the level of professionalism within the news center?

How do you evaluate the applied structures comparing with performance of the management of the news center?

What are the main problems that affect the performance of the news center?

What should be done to improve the News center's performance?

A Interview Guide for Individual In-depth Interview with Deputy Director in chief of Ethiopian Radio and television agency's News and Current Affairs Department

What is the reason behind the changes of organizational structures particularly the news center?

How do you explain the decision making process of the news center?

What is your opinion about the horizontal and vertical communication of the news center?

What efforts are underway by the Agency in order to improve the socialization within the news center?

Which department of the Agency plays the dominant role in leading the performance of the news center --the editorial or the administration?

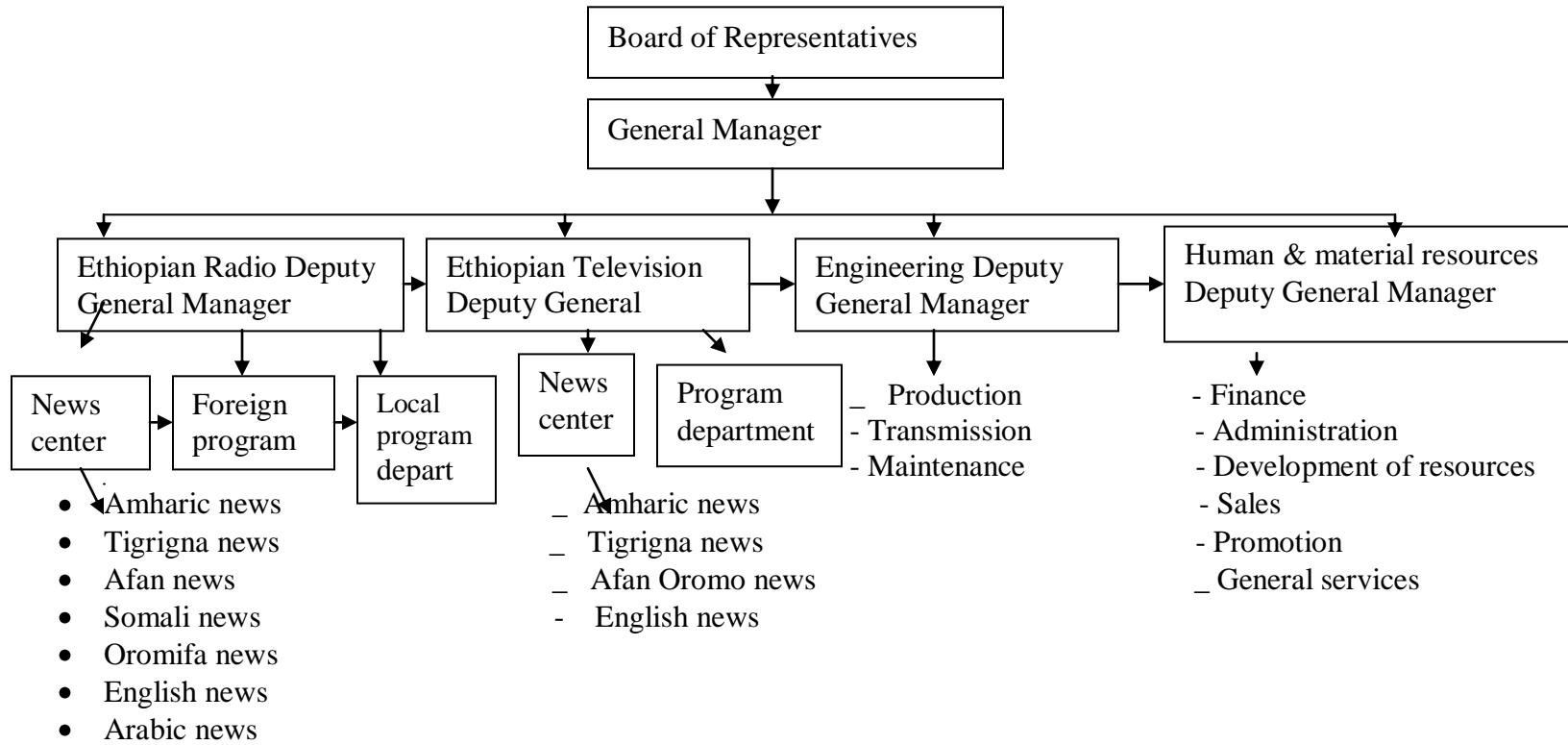
What are the main problems that affect the performance of the news center?

Do you believe the current organization structure will create good working environment for the news center?

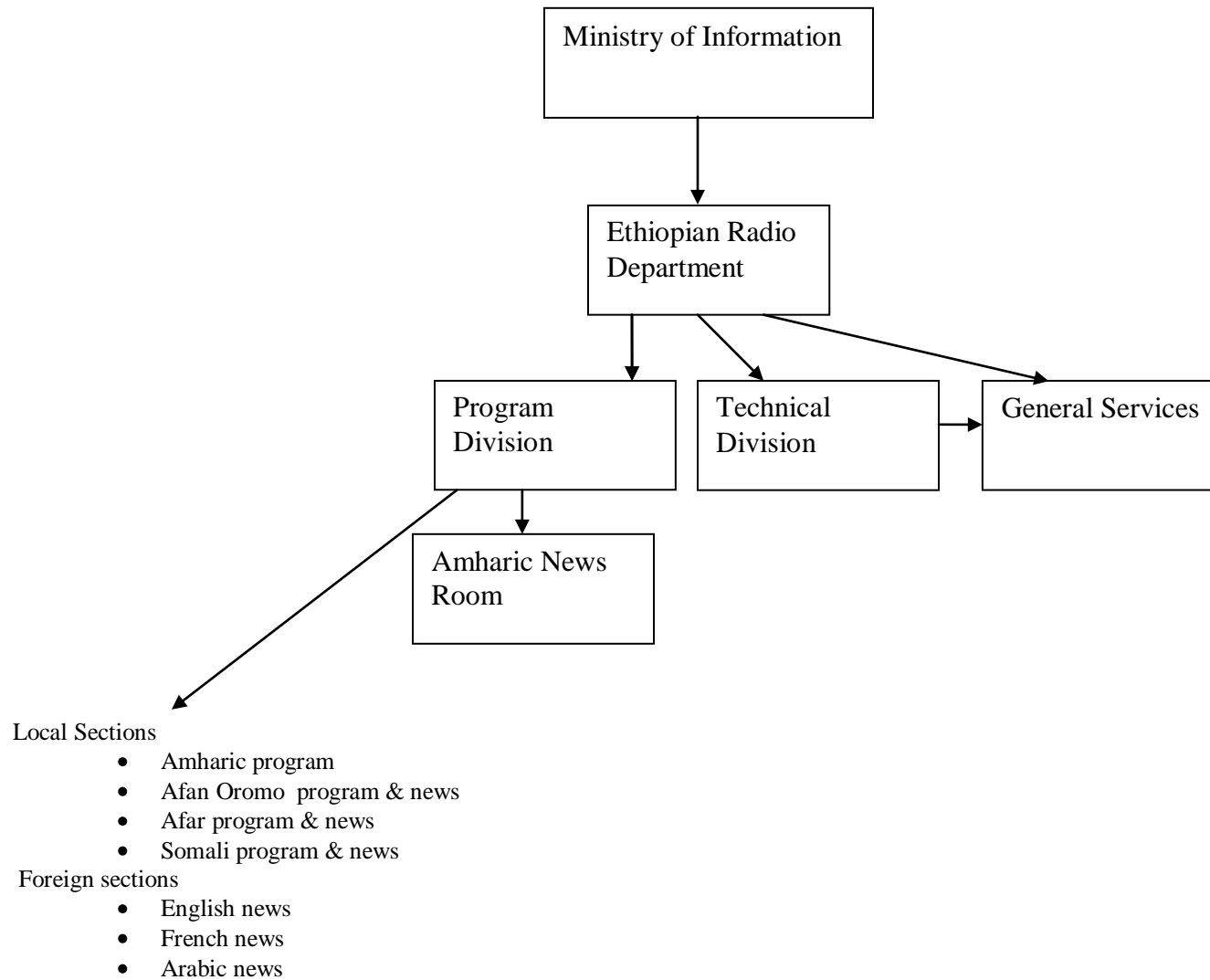
Appendix III

Proclamations

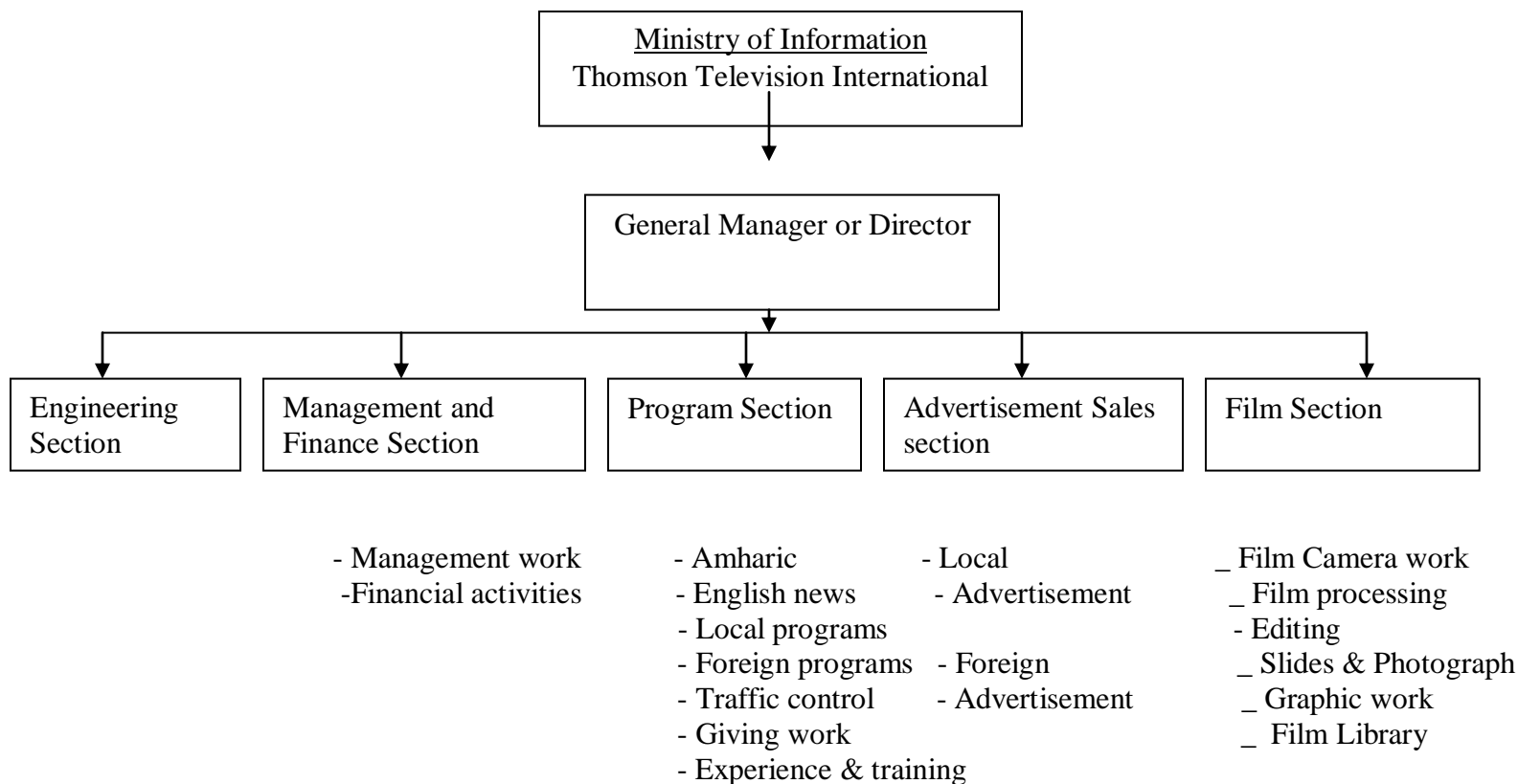
ERTA Organization Structure
2006



ETHIOPIA RADIO ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE 1968 - 1976



The first organizational structure of Ethiopian Television
From 1965- 1975



ERTA's Organization Structure
2009

